

**Evaluation of the work of the
Forest Governance Learning Group
2005 – 2009**



**Report prepared for the International Institute for Environment and
Development (IIED)**

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Tom Blomley
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Executive Summary

Background

The Forest Governance Learning Group initiative is implemented by the International Institute for Environment and Development (UK) with a grant from the European Commission totalling €1,995,143 (EC Action Number: EuropeAid/ENV/2004-81661) and co-financing from the Dutch Government (DGIS) of €570,000. Following an earlier inception period starting in 2003, the project was operational in ten countries in Africa and Asia, from February 2005 to January 2009 (and has been granted a no-cost extension to September 2009). The specific objective of the initiative is “Improved governance of forest resources in ten countries in Africa and Asia”. The initiative has supported the establishment of “learning groups” in each of the ten countries which share a common goal of exploring some of the drivers of poor forest governance and aiming to influence decision making at the national and sub-national levels. A new proposal to extend the activities of the initiative for an additional five years from January 2009 has been approved by the EC and support will continue to all ten countries – with the exception of Niger (which will be replaced by Tanzania).

This independent evaluation, commissioned by IIED, provides an overview of the progress, achievements and impact of the initiative to date and concludes with a range of recommendations for consideration with regard to future support. The review was conducted over 32 days, spread over a five month period between February and August 2009. Country visits were made to Uganda, Mozambique and Vietnam and interviews held with participants in the other seven countries.

Design

The learning group concept is one developed by IIED over the past 15 years as a tool to build capacity and catalyse change. At the heart of the learning group approach, lies the concept of small, carefully selected groups of self-starting, “governance-connected” individuals who meet, engage, exchange ideas and information, learn together and put these skills into action within their own working environments or networks. As an approach to addressing governance, it contrasts with (and compliments) others being implemented by external agencies – such as bilateral reform programmes, trade-based initiatives, or civil society coalitions. The FGLG, learning groups have been established across all ten countries, with a careful and deliberate selection of individuals and institutions, representing diverse stakeholder interests and institutional affiliations. Their immersion in the working of the country teams has provided important platforms around which governance solutions could be identified and pursued beyond the glare of formal multi-stakeholder processes. Strong examples of this come from Ghana, South Africa and Indonesia where important policy changes have been effected as a direct result of the work of the learning groups in those countries. IIED provided a broad framework and comprehensive support system for in-country teams to identify and pursue locally relevant themes and focal areas related to forest governance. Within these broad headings, considerable flexibility has been given to the respective country teams to engage in areas that are locally relevant. As it is driven by in-country priorities, the programme has become tailored to suit local circumstances and priorities and is able to take advantage of emerging opportunities as they arise.

Selection of the ten countries was driven in large part by previous in-country experience – either by IIED or partners. The presence of IIED’s “institutional capital” in a number of countries accompanied by a solid understanding of the relevant institutions, players and issues meant that quick start-ups were possible and early impact was achieved. As a result, the process of selecting focal countries represented a pragmatic and practical approach.

However, this approach did mean that countries with known forest governance constraints (such as Liberia, DR Congo or Sierra Leone) were not prioritised as highly as countries where IIED had a strong track record, but where perhaps forest governance challenges were less significant (such as Niger).

Efficiency and effectiveness

The total amount of funds released to each participating country is modest – totalling between €72,000 and €100,000 over four years. Despite this, the level of impact generated in terms of learning, as well as improved governance is high. The reason for this high level of effectiveness is due to a number of factors. Firstly, membership and participation in the learning groups across all ten countries is voluntary. Secondly, in a number of countries, learning groups, or the institutions hosting them, have been able to leverage additional funding support. In some cases this is in the form of a separate grant to fund one or more pieces of work relevant to the learning group. However, in most cases, learning group members have been able to identify opportunities for integrating their work-plans and priorities within those of government agencies or donor-funded projects which are pursuing similar interests, and thereby leverage additional support and resources. Thirdly, efficiency and effectiveness have been achieved at the country level by virtue of the fact that members of the learning groups, are themselves members and participants of wider formal and informal networks which they can influence and access. There are many examples of how individual members of the learning groups have been able to carry information, knowledge or learning outwards to their own wider networks – leading to wide ranging impacts such as more informed journalism, improved parliamentary debate, or enhanced civil society action. Finally and perhaps most importantly, a strong and committed team at IIED has played a central role in facilitating and supporting country teams over the four year initiative. This role has changed over time from launching the initiative through supporting the careful selection of members, hosts and convenors, helping teams think through and identify nationally relevant governance challenges, supporting the identification of tactics and approaches as well as contributing to the studies, applied research and policy briefs.

Performance and Impact

Over the project period (2005 – 2009) IIED, with support from international partners such as RECOFTC, has successfully established and facilitated learning groups in ten countries, all of which are undertaking a series of strategically identified activities based on agreed annual work plans and budgets. The performance of individual country teams is in general strong and continues to evolve, adapting to new and emerging trends in the forest governance arena (tackling for example issues such as climate change/REDD, bio-fuels and forest trade). Of the ten country teams being supported by this initiative, four teams (Ghana, Uganda, Vietnam, South Africa) are achieving impact in terms of improved learning, governance decisions with national applicability and demonstrating signs that this has been translated into tangible and widespread impact on the ground for the ultimate target group. Four country teams (India, Indonesia, Malawi and Mozambique) have achieved impact in terms of both improved learning and governance decisions, with some impact for the ultimate target group – although conditions for wider impact appear favourable. Two country teams (Cameroon and Niger) have achieved impact in terms of improved learning as well as some impact on generating improved forest governance decisions, but with limited tangible signs of impact for the ultimate target group.

The project logframe lists a total of 8 impact indicators (at the level of the specific objective) and 20 indicators spread across the four project outputs. The 8 impact indicators are either likely to be completely met, are well on their way to being met or are likely to be largely met. With regard to the 20 output indicators, 17 are either entirely met, likely to be completely met or well on their way to being met. 3 output indicators have demonstrated slightly weaker performance – (3.3 relating to the implementation of tools and incentive mechanisms, 3.5 – relating to private sector reporting and monitoring and 4.5 participatory monitoring by civil

society) and are either likely to be partly met, or met to a limited extent. Due to the fact that country teams have developed a strategic focus on one or two of the particular themes (such as small and medium forest enterprises in India and Indonesia), different indicators are more applicable in some countries than others.

Given the above assessment, it is likely that the specific objective defined in the project logframe as “Improved governance of forest resources in ten countries in Africa and Asia” will largely be met in most of the ten countries. Furthermore, it would appear that clear and demonstrable signs of impact have been obtained to date in supporting learning among the participants of the learning groups. Furthermore, clear impacts have been realised in influencing decisions and changed policies within government. However, with regard to how these impacts have been translated into tangible and widespread impact in times of improved livelihoods and reduced vulnerability of the ultimate target group (communities living on the forest edge and members of small forest enterprises) it is harder to assess.

Conclusions and lessons learned.

Conclusions and lessons learned are clustered under six general headings and are summarised below:

- *Success criteria for functional learning groups.* A number of success criteria are identified that contribute to the formation and maintenance of vibrant, innovative and effective learning groups. This includes factors such as: a strong and well connected convenor; a carefully selected membership with common interests but divergent opinions and alliances; the convergence of group and personal interests; well developed and strategic linkages from members to wider networks and processes; a strong host; an ability to plan and engage strategically and the ability to attract additional financing.
- *Forestry as an entry point to a wider debate about governance drivers.* Examples from many countries indicate that governance challenges in forestry are simply mirrors of wider governance gaps facing society at large. The forest sector provides a compelling entry point into a range of wider debates – such as the interplay and conflict of interests at local national and international levels, the failure to effectively capture and utilise revenues – and the impact this has on society and the economy, as well as issues relating to land tenure, control and access. By framing these challenges in forestry terms, learning groups in a number of countries were able to explore, unpack and communicate some of the deeper, underlying root causes. Being forestry professionals, and approaching the problem as essentially a forestry issue, their legitimacy or mandate was never questioned. Had the same groups attempted to address these deeper issues in more abstract terms, and without the practical anchor provided by the sector, they may have had a great deal less success
- *Innovation and best practice.* The decentralised manner in which FGLG has worked across the ten countries has provided an important testing ground for locally-driven and innovative approaches, as typified by the sheer variety of forms and functions of different country groups. IIED has played an important role in fostering this innovation – challenging country teams both individually and collectively to innovate, take risks and experiment. At the same time, IIED has sought to provide a unifying framework to each of the country teams – a broad set of objectives and a process to follow, to ensure that incentives for learning between teams and generic similarities prevail. There are clear trade-offs to be made between an approach that provides rigid guidance and structure from the top (but potentially stifles local creativity) and one that provides limited support and direction (but potentially risks the creation of 10 entities that share no common characteristics and cross-country learning becomes meaningless).
- *Harnessing the media for forest governance reforms.* One lesson learned by many country teams relates to the power of the media and ways in which it can be harnessed to promote governance reform. Experiences from Uganda particularly show how

perceptions of (and by) the media can change over time. Prior to the Uganda FGLG engaging with the media, many of the members were distrustful of the media, feeling that all too often they were only interested in sensationalism and less interested in real facts. The media, likewise, characterised the forest sector as uniformly corrupt, with little nuanced understanding of the different forces and counter-forces operating. By identifying key individuals within the Ugandan media, and reaching out to them and including them within the learning group, these mutually reinforcing negative perceptions, were completely reversed. Members from the media are able to use outputs from the learning group studies and meetings as raw material for producing accurate and timely news items. Armed with this accurate information, and more aware of the debates that surround the forest sector, the quality and focus of media reporting around forestry has improved massively. As well as illustrating how the media can be engaged proactively in participating countries, this example provides a neat summary of how learning groups can help create new linkages and expand learning.

- *Changing approaches to changing circumstances.* Successful governance work requires an ability to accurately assess the external operating environment, to identify opportunities or changed positions, and to develop strategies in response to this. The experiences from Ghana provide an important lesson on how one country team were able to do just this. In the report titled “Legality and the impacts of forest utilisation”, produced by FGLG members, the failures of government to follow official procedures when engaging with the private sector (such as issuing Timber Utilisation Permits) was made clear. Faced with stone-walling from the Forestry Commission, and limited impact of more formal advocacy processes, a new opportunity emerged when IIED was invited to prepare a set of policy options (and their associated impacts) within the context of a VPA agreement. At this point, FGLG was able to begin to engage more directly with the VPA negotiation process – and to more broadly discuss a number of the policy options being put on the table. Furthermore, FGLG-Ghana was quick to see the potential opportunities offered by the VPA – namely that both the private sector and government were active players and ready to engage at the highest levels. This ability to identify a changing external environment and to see the opportunities (or threats) that this may offer – and then to develop a strategy around it, is a key aspect of a successful advocacy and engagement process.
- *Effective facilitation of multi-country teams* There are also important lessons to be learned from this review regarding the effective facilitation of country teams. IIED has played a central and critical role in introducing the learning group concept in 10 countries, and establishing a team of persons who are now engaged in important discussions, learning and reforms within the arena of forest governance. Over time, and with strong facilitation by IIED, the country teams have become increasingly organised with a clearer shared vision of goals, strategies and direction – and IIED’s role has gradually shifted to a more supportive role, providing inputs to studies, written outputs and participating more as a member of the discussion – rather than a leader. This important and positive development does however raise an important issue regarding the degree to which IIED (as contract holder with EC) has a mandate or legitimacy to influence or steer the work and direction of the in-country teams.

Recommendations

Seven broad recommendations are provided with a view to informing and guiding activities of the FGLG in the upcoming five year phase of support from the EC:

- *Clarifying the underlying rationale and approach:* Given the diversity of opinions regarding how learning groups operate – as well as the diversity of forms under which learning groups function operate across the ten countries, it is recommended that IIED facilitate a process of reflection, together with participating members from the ten

countries around the role, function, composition and trajectory of successful learning groups, as well as a shared vision around the underlying theory of change.

- *Reviewing FGLG Membership:* Following the review described in the above recommendation, and the development of a broad consensus on some of the underlying factors behind successful learning groups, it is recommended that country teams consider a review of their membership to ensure that opportunities are being optimised with regard to achieving learning, fostering cross institutional dialogue and promoting change.
- *Reviewing the limits to delegation:* As a facilitator of the country teams, as well as a contract holder with the EC, IIED faces some difficult choices with regard to growing and legitimate demands for delegation of decision-making power to country teams and their responsibilities to the donor in terms of reporting, indicators and outcomes. It is recommended that this is discussed at the next international learning event – as well as in more concrete terms through the recently established steering committee, which now has representation from country convenors.
- *Supporting one-off advocacy initiatives:* It is recommended that in subsequent support to the ten countries, a portion of the overall budget is allocated to supporting one-off, opportunistic advocacy that falls outside the annual plans developed. These funds should be available to country teams based on a request and following simple guidelines developed by IIED, which will allow for funds to be transferred at short notice so that they can be used for maximum effect
- *Clarifying the role of international partners:* The role of the international partners in this phase of support has on occasions, been unclear, particularly with regard to longer term backstopping functions, resulting in dissatisfaction among some of the country teams and a divergence of expectations between those offering support and those receiving it. Given that RECOFTC will continue to provide backstopping support to Vietnam, India and Indonesia, it is recommended that IIED facilitate a more focused discussion between RECOFTC and the three Asia country teams to clarify expectations and deliverables, as well as to clarify the division of labour between IIED and RECOFTC.
- *Linking to complementary EC-supported initiatives:* A number of peer institutions are exploring forest governance and trade in many of the countries where IIED operates (notably Vietnam, Indonesia, Cameroon, Ghana), with support from the EC. To date, the links between the FGLG initiative and these complementary projects have been limited. Given that all of these projects are seeking to support governance reforms in forest harvesting and trade, it is recommended that more deliberate efforts are made to engage with them and multiply their collective impact.
- *Promoting thematic linkages:* One of the clear added values of this initiative is the opportunity for cross country learning and sharing of international experience. A number of common focal areas are beginning to emerge across countries and regions – for example VPA/FLEGT processes in Ghana, Cameroon and Vietnam; small forest enterprises in South Africa, India and Malawi. Given their global overview, IIED staff members have a unique opportunity to make connections between country experiences and lessons, which may not be apparent during the two or three day international learning events that take place on an annual basis. As such, it is recommended that IIED play a more pro-active role in supporting such exchanges, including the possibility of limited additional financial support, for example, in the facilitation of cross-country exchange visits.

1. Introduction

The Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG) is an informal alliance of in-country teams and international partners, currently active in seven African and three Asian countries¹, facilitated by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Since February 2005, FGLG has been financed with a grant from the European Commission totalling €1,995,143 and co-financing primarily from the Dutch Government (DGIS) of around €570,000. The initiative was scheduled to January 2009, but has been granted a no-cost extension up to September 2009. An inception phase, supported by DFID from June 2003 to March 2005 was used to support start-up activities in Mali, Niger, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa.

In January 2009, IIED commissioned an independent evaluation of the FGLG with the objective of “assessing the FGLG initiative’s approach and performance, and to draw out lessons from the experience to guide further work”. The evaluation was conducted between February and August 2009.

As indicated in the terms of reference for this assignment (Annex 1), the review was to be achieved in four principle ways:

- To assess the approach of the FGLG initiative;
- To assess the performance of the FGLG initiative to date;
- To draw out lessons from the experience of the FGLG initiative;
- To make recommendations based on the evaluation

Given the wide scope and geographical coverage of the project, it was agreed that the evaluation would be undertaken by one consultant evaluator using a range of methods. Firstly, three out of the ten participating countries were selected – namely Uganda, Mozambique and Vietnam. This selection was done by IIED, in consultation with the convenors of all the country teams and the evaluator and designed to provide the team leader with exposure to three very different country contexts – in both Africa and Asia. These three countries were visited by the consultant and a range of meetings held with people from within and outside the FGLG country teams. A local facilitator was recruited by the FGLG Convenor in each of the three countries. This person was able to identify key resource persons and arrange meetings for the lead consultant, as well as organising a half day, round-table session with the FGLG members themselves.

For the other seven countries that the consultant could not visit, telephone interviews were arranged with at least two persons per country (the convenor and one other FGLG member). This provided an opportunity for discussion on progress, successes and challenges. Visits were made by the consultant to the IIED offices in London and Edinburgh – and meetings held with all key staff in supporting the initiative, as well as other senior staff based in London.

A range of resource persons, both within and outside IIED have also been involved in supporting the FGLG initiative. Where possible, and practical, face-to-face meetings were arranged between the consultant and facilitators – but again, where this was not possible, telephone interviews were held as an alternative. In addition, a number of persons working in the forest governance arena – but not directly connected with the FGLG – were approached and interviewed, in order to obtain an independent assessment of the overall FGLG rationale and approach, as well as complementary approaches to addressing the

¹ Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Niger, Vietnam, Indonesia, India

same problems. The names of these resource persons, and the institutions they represent are listed in Annex 5.

Finally, the FGLG initiative has produced a wealth of reports, studies, policy briefs, news items and other printed materials (Annex 6). These too, have been reviewed as part of this evaluation.

While this report serves as an independent assessment of the achievements and outputs of the FGLG initiative to date, it is hoped that it may also stimulate reflection and learning on the very nature and approach of the initiative itself – both at national and international levels.

The report is structured into five main sections covering the approach, the performance, the impact, lessons learned and recommendations for the future. Additional, cross-cutting considerations prioritised by the EC in all evaluations – namely relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability have been included throughout the report. Annex 2, 3 and 4 contains short country reports from the three countries visited as part of this review and includes country-specific recommendations as well.

2. The overall approach of the FGLG initiative

2.1 Global trends in addressing forest governance

“Forest governance” is a term that has increasingly been used over the past decade in development discourse to describe the way in which people are able to secure access to, rights over and benefits from forest resources. There is an increasing realisation that forests can and do play a vital role in sustaining the livelihoods of millions of people in developing countries and play an important part in both reducing poverty and buffering vulnerable households from shock and stress. Furthermore, in line with the wider governance debate, it has become increasingly clear that if citizens are to become empowered and are to be supported to take greater control over their own development – they need to increasingly be in a position to influence decisions being made on their behalf by institutions of government as well as the corporate private sector and international institutions.

The underlying drivers of governance reform are complex and intertwined. In many cases, improvements in governance emerge gradually over time, with increasing education, press freedom and deepening democracy. At the same time, external agents such as donors are increasingly interested to understand how these internally-driven processes can be supported and facilitated externally. Donors, who largely work through bilateral or multi-lateral development programmes, have tended to focus most strongly on support to reforms within government – rather than embracing the wider considerations of governance reform, such as support to civil society, journalists, free press and so on. Within this somewhat limited, government-focused approach, catalysing change within the forest sector has been approached by external agencies using a range of approaches which have evolved over time as thinking has developed. For a number of years, poor performance and weak governance of government institutions was widely seen as a consequence of limited human and physical capacity. As a result, bilateral and multi-lateral interventions were directed towards training of government staff and the provision of technical assistance. However, over time, it became increasingly apparent that capacity was a necessary but not a sufficient condition to achieve change – but that broader institutional and legal constraints existed. Following a realisation that these sorts of interventions were having only limited impact, focus then turned towards a process of influencing and shaping policies, laws and the architecture of government institutions operating within the forest sector.

National and International NGOs, who are not bound by providing support to government, have often adopted alternative approaches – either by engaging with the private sector, or with civil society. With the realisation that support to state-driven reform programmes succeeds in certain contexts (where there exists strong political will) but in many cases, the underlying cause restricting positive change is governance failures, NGOs are increasingly working to support processes outside government with a view to building external demands for change. Consequently, resources are directed towards civil society actors to develop advocacy campaigns with a view to holding government accountable to stated norms of governance, or prevailing laws and policies.

A further approach that complements many of the strategies described above, is more of a market-based approach. By engaging with the private sector and the value chain (and the agencies that regulate the actions of the private sector) it is hoped that more progressive, socially and environmentally responsible behaviour will prevail. These different approaches are summarised below in Table 1:

Approach	Agencies	Actions
Capacity building	FAO, WB	Training of key government staff in technical

programmes	Bilateral Donors, RECOFTC	and administrative functions
Institutional and legal reform programmes	WB, Bilateral Donors (eg DFID, MFA Finland, DGIS)	Transformation of forestry administration Formulation of new laws and policies Development of Sector-wide approaches (SWAs) and forest investment programmes
Civil society support programmes	NGOs (WWF, CARE), Bilateral and multi-lateral donors (through Civil Society support initiatives)	Support to coalitions and networks working on forest governance and advocacy
Trade reform programmes	WWF, EU, IUCN	Linking trade to governance reforms (eg VPA, FLEGT) Supporting corporate social responsibility among traders and producers Supporting establishment of sustainable supplies of timber (eg certification) Supporting green marketing and labelling (eg FSC, fair trade etc)

Table 1: Different approaches to externally supporting forest governance reforms

Clearly the approaches described above are not mutually exclusive – and any given support programme may combine elements from a number of these approaches. Furthermore, different programmes may work separately but in a complementary manner. For example, a programme supported by a bilateral donor, working on legal and institutional reforms within government, may well be supported by a separate initiative, working outside government that aims to strengthen accountability and governance processes more broadly. Given that many of the countries selected for support by the FGLG initiative had been subject to a number of the approaches described above, the approach developed by IIED (and described below in greater detail) represented a new and innovative development.

The FGLG model is somewhat different to these four more mainstream approaches described above. The FGLG methodology is based on the “learning group” model that has informally emerged from IIED work over the past ten to fifteen years as a tool to build capacity and catalyse change. At the heart of the learning group approach, lies the concept of small, carefully selected groups of self-starting, “governance-connected” individuals who meet, engage with each other, exchange information and learn together and put these skills into action within their own working environments or networks. Learning groups are voluntary – and are entirely demand driven, responding to members needs and aspirations. The approach has been used by IIED in the drylands and pastoralist sectors for example, initially as a process with which to learn about and use participatory and inclusive approaches at the community level – but increasingly it has begun to incorporate a policy or legal element. In recent years (and as exemplified by the FGLG initiative), learning groups are increasingly trying to bridge the gap between political rhetoric and practical implementation on the ground.

Despite some concerns relating to the rationale that underpin this approach (discussed in more detail in the following sections), the FGLG model developed and promoted by IIED and used in this initiative represents an innovative and appropriate approach across the diverse country contexts in which it was used, and appears to have provided a sound foundation on which to foster learning and achieve impact upon governance.

2.2 The FGLG Programme

IIED initiated FGLG activities and began facilitating the development of country teams in Mali, Niger, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa with support from a DFID grant from June 2003 to March 2005. With the award of the EC grant from February 2005 to January 2009, activities were continued in Niger, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi, South Africa, and Mali replaced with Cameroon. Given the time and effort required to support and sustain FGLG activities across seven African countries (with three languages), support to Asia was deferred to late 2006, when activities began in India, Vietnam and Indonesia.

FGLG focuses on four generic governance challenges within the forest sector as follows:

- i Poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes, decentralisation programmes
- ii Tackling illegal and corrupt forestry that degrades livelihoods
- iii Forestry enterprise initiatives and private sector associations
- iv Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks

These four overarching themes have been translated into four defined outputs within the project logical framework as follows:

- i **Output 1:** Poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes, decentralisation programmes and related processes enable improved forest governance
- ii **Output 2:** Illegal and corrupt forestry that degrades livelihoods is reduced through the adoption and spread of practical approaches to improve forest governance
- iii **Output 3:** Forestry enterprise initiatives and private sector associations comply with the law and spread practical approaches to improve forest governance
- iv **Output 4:** Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks are improved to support local control and benefit from forestry

Within the framework of these outputs, a number of sub-themes have developed which are being explored by different FGLG country teams. A summary of the general themes being explored by different country groups appears below in Table 2:

Theme	Country teams active in this area
Inappropriate political interference in the forest sector	Uganda, Mozambique, Cameroon
Illegal logging, corruption and trade in the forest sector	Mozambique, Niger, Ghana
Small and medium forest enterprises	South Africa, Mozambique, India, Malawi, Cameroon
Transformation of the charcoal sector	Malawi (and to some degree Niger)
Mainstreaming forestry priorities into higher level government strategies, budgets and plans	South Africa, Uganda
Conversion of forest land to industrial crops (such as bio-fuel or sugar)	Uganda, Indonesia
Community Forestry	Vietnam, Malawi, Indonesia
Forest rights and access within the context of decentralisation	Malawi, Niger, Ghana
Timber legality and forest governance initiatives (notably Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) with the EU under the FLEGT programme)	Ghana, Cameroon, and to some degree Indonesia and Vietnam
Indigenous rights to forest access	India

Table 2: Main focal areas of the FGLG teams

The themes identified by IIED and then translated into more specific focal areas by each of the country teams represent important and relevant issues that confront forest governance across the developing world. The challenges identified above reflect the growing consensus across the academic as well as political spheres that if the poor are to get secure access to forest goods and services, this must be done by analysing and addressing underlying causes. Furthermore, many of the themes and topics central to this initiative are ones in which IIED had developed significant capacity as well as intellectual leadership – often in previous projects working in many of the same countries (such as the “Policy That Works for Forests and People”, and “Power Tools” projects)

2.3 The FGLG model and its underlying rationale

The “learning group” as an approach developed by IIED is essentially a process that aims to provide an environment where individuals from very different backgrounds and sectors can come together and explore particular thematic areas of common interest. It has been used by IIED to work in a number of sectors including forestry agriculture, pastoralism, urban development as well exploring the linkages between poverty and conservation.

Under the general heading of “learning groups”, there appears to be rather wide range of approaches which have been adapted and modified by IIED to suit the particular sector or thematic area being explored. The poverty-and-conservation learning group, for example, is a broad network of different organisations from the conservation and development sectors – many of which previously rarely interacted. The assumption is that interaction between these organisations with very different aims and objectives will lead to greater understanding of each other’s viewpoints and interests, and ultimately to change at the organisational level. In other learning groups, there is a more deliberate attempt to engage those people most impacted by policy decisions – such as the urban poor or farming communities – and make direct and explicit linkages to those responsible for policy formulation and implementation

Although not explicitly mentioned or described in the EC programme document, the rationale and underlying basis for FGLG is described in an earlier document prepared by IIED for the DFID-funded phase of FGLG (2003 – 2005). Learning groups are defined here as a forum for exchange, dialogue and discussion, as a way of understanding the complexities of forest governance, and as a forum for taking governance decisions. This is summarised in the following statement: “Experience in governance really does suggest that as long as the decision making process is right, the decision is right²”

During the course of the evaluation, and in discussion with both participants and observers of the FGLG, a range of different (and sometimes overlapping) rationales were provided, none of which necessarily contradict the overall approach defined by IIED above. These are summarised below:

- Policy formulation and governance reforms takes place in both formal and informal settings. Learning groups provide a more informal space - away from established, deliberate and moderated policy processes - where ideas, options and concepts can be explored jointly. Learning groups provide an informal space where such processes can take place. A good example of this is the VPA process in Ghana – where the FGLG provided a more informal opportunity for key parties to the negotiations to meet and explore options, and hear the views of a wider set of stakeholders, that would not have occurred in more formal settings
- Learning groups provide a “safe” environment, where people have the opportunity to talk openly, but anonymously, and without fear that what they say might impact upon their professional or institutional affiliation. This might include government whistleblowers for

² Project Concept. Forest Governance Learning Group. 4th June 2003. IIED.

example, wanting to find an avenue for sensitive but reliable information to be “leaked” to the press, civil society or parliament. A good example of this comes from Uganda, when staff from National Forest Authority were able to use the FGLG as a channel for feeding accurate but sensitive information on forestry to members of the press or civil society.

- Learning groups provide an opportunity to bring together people working on similar issues – but who may not be connected, or have opportunities for interaction. This may lead to the establishment of horizontal linkages between government, private sector and civil society groups – and enable different stakeholders, with different interests, to meet, discuss and share their views in an informal environment. In some cases, learning groups allows vertical linkages to develop – for example between policy makers, policy implementers and the recipients of policy decisions (often poor, forest-dependent households with limited voice). The development of new linkages and growing appreciation of divergent views and interests, it is assumed, will lead to better policies and improved governance. An example of where successful vertical linkages have been forged comes from Vietnam, where learning has taken place at national, provincial and community levels.
- Learning groups provide a cost-effective means to invest in building the long term capacity of key champions / opinion makers within a given country and sector context. This investment allows decision makers to be exposed to a range of inputs which they may otherwise not have the chance to benefit from. An example of this comes from Uganda, where members of parliament have been able to draw upon their participation in FGLG to raise key issues at parliamentary debates.
- Learning groups are effective when the collective actions of the group support individual members in their own professional or personal capacity. This could be support to on-going policy formulation processes that government FGLG members are involved in (and which are enriched from FGLG learning), support to NGO members (who are involved in campaigns) or support to journalists (who are able to enrich their reporting with information gained through the FGLG)
- Learning groups provide an opportunity to link forest-dependent communities (who have a limited political voice and influence) the space and opportunity to interact with government staff, NGOs, or representatives of large scale private sector interests (be it logging, bio-fuels, oil palms or other agro-industrial crops) in a forum that grants participation equal status in the discussion. Examples of this can be found in the local level FGLG forums in Indonesia and Vietnam.

An underlying assumption is that by exposing members of FGLG processes to the diverse views within the group, and by generating solid, evidence-based policy research, better governance decisions will take place. A good example of this comes from South Africa - where a strong partnership of government, private sector and civil society appears to be making significant gains in supporting small forest enterprises to function more effectively and efficiently. However, in countries where this broad “community of interests” is not represented within the learning group, some of the basic assumptions behind learning groups may become questionable. This is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

2.4 An overview of the FGLG country teams and processes

Ten countries were selected for support from the FGLG initiative. In many cases, countries were selected where IIED had an established network of contacts and strong linkages as a result of work undertaken previously – most notably the “Policy that works for forests and people” initiative that also catalysed and worked with country teams. Where “institutional capital” existed already (such as in Mozambique, Ghana, Niger, South Africa and Uganda) start-up tended to be fairly rapid and progress strong. In other countries, where IIED had less of a track record, it engaged the services of other organisations who were able to supplement those already established by IIED. The services of LTSI, an Edinburgh-based

consulting firm with established linkages across Africa, were engaged to help identify additional linkages and contacts across many of the countries in Africa, which had the effect of accelerating progress in the early stages of the project. In Asia, RECOFTC worked together with IIED to develop initial contacts to key resource persons and institutions – particularly in India and Vietnam where it had established strong local linkages. In retrospect, this pragmatic approach to the selection of focal countries appears to have been justified and resulted in strong progress and a smooth start-up in many areas. The diversity across the different countries (in terms of local context, governance challenges, natural resource base and language) has not been without challenges – many of which are discussed later in this report.

In summary, the selection of the ten countries appears to have been driven by a range of practical factors, including previous in-country engagement by IIED (or other members of the consortium) and the presence of on-going government-driven reform processes (such as in Uganda, Ghana, Malawi, South Africa and Indonesia) many of which were supported by bilateral or multi-lateral donors. This represented a pragmatic choice and did mean that opportunities for achieving impact and co-financing were increased. However, on the other hand, choosing a country such as Niger (where IIED had strong links) but which has little similarity (in terms of forest governance challenges) with countries such as Uganda, Cameroon or Mozambique may have been taken at the expense of considering other countries with well-documented forest governance challenges (most notably Congo, Liberia or Sierra Leone).

The FGLG has tended to work in a highly decentralised manner – building upon initiatives or interests that exist within each participating country team. As a result, the composition and activities of each learning group has been very different from place to place. Despite the very clear differences that one can see between countries, the in-country process has been heavily supported and facilitated by IIED staff (and international partners) through, for example, support to processes by which the team members emerged, helping to identify critical issues, development of work plans and intellectual input to the studies, policy briefs and other outputs.

Each country team is supported by a host and a convenor. The host maintains a contractual relationship with IIED as the in-country partner – through which finances are channelled and from whom financial and activity progress reports are obtained. In most cases, the host institution is a local NGO, but not exclusively – for example in Vietnam and Malawi, the host institution is a small consulting firm with strong forestry interests. In South Africa, the host is a larger forest enterprise. The function of the convenor is to facilitate and lead the group. Again, in many cases, this role is played by a local NGO – but other countries (such as Malawi and South Africa) are convened by persons working within the government.

An overview of the different country teams, their membership, areas of interest and administration is provided in the Table 3 below:

Country	FGLG Membership and identity	Host / Convening institution	Core areas of interest	Links to government?
Cameroon	Members drawn from government, NGOs and donor funded projects / agencies and private consultancies	Hosted by NESDA (Local NGO) and convened by International Model Forests Initiative	- Illegal forest trade and logging (VPA) - Small forest enterprises	Strong links to government and has played an important advisory role
Ghana	Members drawn from government (Forest Commission, Ministry of Agriculture), parliament, NGOs, and consultants	Hosted and convened by Civic Response – National NGO	- Stimulating and shaping reforms in Forest Trade (VPA) - Local rights and benefit sharing in	Strong links to both political and executive branches of government

India	Small core group of three members drawn from NGO and academic backgrounds – who interact with a wider network of partners	Convened and hosted by India Institute of Forest Management	forestry - Small scale forest enterprises – particularly non-timber forest products (NTFPs)	No membership from state or national government on core team, but present on wider team
Indonesia	Small core group of facilitators drawn from NGOs, government and research community. Learning groups operating at national and district levels	Hosted by Inspirit Innovation Circles, a private consultancy specialising in change processes. Convened by a staff member of CIFOR.	- Community forestry / logging, (resource rights, enterprise opportunities - Land use planning (forestry versus alternative uses such as palm oil)	Government membership on core team and significant interactions with staff from Ministry of Forestry
Malawi	Members drawn from government and NGO staff, academia, plus key staff in major forest sector projects	Hosted by Centre for Development Management (Local consulting firm) Convened by Dept of Forestry	- Guidelines for community forestry Reform of charcoal sector - Small scale forest enterprises	Convenor is deputy director in Forest Department. Good links
Mozambique	Members drawn originally from government, academia, NGOs and private sector but then shifted towards from civil society organisations operating at national and regional levels. FGLG does not exist as separate entity, but supports local popular movement – “Amigos da Floresta”	Host and Convenor: Originally Uinversidade Eduardo Mondlane but then shifted to Justica Ambiental (a National NGO)	- Illegal logging and trade in coastal forests with community forestry and enterprises an emerging theme	Initially strong links but this changed once focus shifted to a civil society forum. Currently no direct links to government. New links currently being explored
Niger	Members drawn in equal proportion from government and civil society. 10 members in total.	Host and convenor: Cellule de Recherche Action Concertée en Gestion des Ressources Naturelles – a local NGO in Zinder	- Corruption in the forest sector - The national domestic energy strategy	Strong links to government, but location of host means links are occasional
South Africa	Members drawn from government (municipal, provincial and national), trade associations, private sector, small scale entrepreneurs and members associations.	Hosted by Forestry South Africa (a private enterprise association). Convened by Department of Water and Forestry	- Institutional solutions to governance constraints facing small forestry enterprises - Mainstreaming forestry into municipal, provincial and national plans & budgets	Very strong links to government – 7 out of 15 members of FGLG SA are from various key government agencies
Uganda	Members from academic, consultancy, NGO, and media sectors. Occasional participation by members of parliament and some government staff. FGLG exists as a separate entity.	Host and Convenor: ACODE (National NGO)	- Illegal excision of forest reserves - Political interference in forest sector Illegal logging	In early stages – strong links with a number of government representatives. This has declined recently due to staff changes in government
Vietnam	Majority of members drawn from academic	Hosted and convened by	- Community Forest	Good links to government at both

and research community with some strategic representation from government at both provincial and national levels	independent consultant working part time for RECOFTC	Management: Constraints and obstacles to achieving impact	national and provincial levels
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Table 3: Overview of country teams, management and interests

As can be seen from Table 3, the size and composition of the country learning groups is quite different. In India, FGLG is composed of three to four persons, who then link out to a wider more loosely defined network of persons, while in Malawi, FGLG is composed of around 25 persons drawn from across the country. In Vietnam and Mozambique, FGLG operates at national and provincial levels, while in Uganda it operates only at national level. In Mozambique FGLG is composed entirely of activists working in local civil society while in Vietnam, the majority of members are researchers or government staff.

A wide range of policy research reports, policy briefs, and governance tools were developed, mostly at the country level, by the individual country teams. A list of the main published and written outputs of the FGLG initiative (both country teams and at the international level) is presented in Annex 6 of this report.

2.5 Cross country learning initiatives

In addition to the activities at the country level, IIED has been actively facilitating a process of exchange and mutual learning between participating countries. This has been achieved by a variety of means, but most significant among these has been through “international learning events” which are held on an annual basis. This has been supplemented by frequent email exchanges both within and between participating countries which in turn has resulted in a number of useful, more thematic exchanges around particular areas of shared interest. These are discussed, and assessed in more detail in Section 3.4 of this report.

3. The performance of the FGLG initiative to date

3.1 Overall performance of the initiative

Over the project period (2005 – 2009) IIED has successfully established and facilitated learning groups in ten countries, all of which are undertaking a series of activities based on annual work plans and budgets. The performance of individual country teams is discussed in greater detail in the following sections (and in Annex 2 - 4), but in general has been strong and continues to evolve, changing to new and emerging trends in the forest governance arena (tackling for example issues such as climate change/REDD, bio-fuels and forest trade). Overall, it is likely that the specific objective defined in the project logframe as “Improved governance of forest resources in ten countries in Africa and Asia” will largely be met. Furthermore, there appears to be good progress on achieving the majority of the outputs and activities described in the logframe – and in particular the most important ones.

The impact of the initiative (particularly with regard to the impact indicators in the logframe at the level of specific objective) is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this report. In this section, an assessment is made of the overall performance of the initiative by assessing progress made against defined indicators and a qualitative assessment of the degree to which the indicator is likely to be met. This assessment is made using a scoring system, adapted from one used by DFID in their evaluation reports, and is defined as follows:

Score Assessment

- 1 Indicator likely to be completely met. The output is well on the way to completion (or has been completed)
- 2 Indicator likely to be largely met. There is good progress towards completion of the output
- 3 Indicator likely to be partly met.
- 4 Indicator likely to be met to a very limited extent.
- 5 Indicator unlikely to be achieved. No progress on achieving output
- X X= It is impossible to say whether there has been any progress meeting indicator because
 - a) output is postponed because of conflict
 - b) external constraints
 - c) recruitment delays.

Output 1: Poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes, decentralisation programmes and related processes enable improved forest governance

Indicator	Progress	Score
1.1 Entry points are identified, in the formation and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs), national forest programmes (NFPs), decentralisation and related programmes, to make forest governance improvements such as tackling illegality, increasing local ownership and access, and enabling sustainable community forest management	Diagnostic studies undertaken in all ten countries to identify entry points and these used to shape annual workplans and identify themes and focal areas for interventions by country teams. Initial work began in six African countries and then spread to the three Asian countries and Cameroon between 2006 and 2007. The specific issues now being addressed across the ten country groups can be seen in Table 2.	1
1.2 Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG) - of key decision makers both inside and outside the forest sector - agrees to implement well targeted change within the above programmes.	By the end of February 2006 (Year 1) country groups, hosts and convenors had been identified in Niger, Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Indonesia and India. Work plans had been developed and activities started. Teams convened in Cameroon and Vietnam by February 2007 (Year 2). These teams have undergone changes (particularly in Mozambique, where convenor, hosting and membership were overhauled) but are increasingly consolidating.	1
1.3 FGLG work plan defines practical steps to tackle illegal and corrupt forestry, develop responsible forest	All countries have prepared annual work plans and budgets, which translate priority themes into specific actions. These plans and budgets have been presented, discussed and peer-	1

enterprise and its associations, and improve ownership and access for communities in each of the above programmes	reviewed at annual learning events and their progress monitored through regular reporting to IIIED.	
1.4 Lesson learning, capacity and support for FGLG develops within national and international programmes	A range of events held within participating country teams and with wider cross section of national stakeholders; international learning events held on an annual basis in Ghana (2004), South Africa (2005) Uganda (2006), India (2007), Malawi (2008); experiences of FGLG profiled at international forestry events and conferences, as well as to key international institutions and networks (such as World Bank, DFID, EC, DGIS, Nordic Donor Group, IUCN, WWF, CARE, ODI and others)	1

Overall assessment of output: All of the indicators have been achieved across all participating countries. Activities implemented are relevant and appropriate to local context, being based on detailed analysis and sound problem identification. Activities have been implemented in a timely manner and in accordance with workplans.

Output 2: Illegal and corrupt forestry that degrades livelihoods is reduced through the adoption and spread of practical approaches to improve forest governance

Indicator	Progress	Score
2.1 Initial findings from Sub-Saharan Africa, on practical approaches to address the impacts of illegality-poverty links, promoted widely	A range of written outputs on linkages between forest illegality and poverty generated from Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Niger, Mali, Uganda, Mozambique and South Africa. These outputs have been circulated widely on CD Rom and are available on IIED and partner websites. Many of the written outputs have been presented at international forums.	1
2.2 New assessments in South Asia complement body of knowledge and refine approaches to tackling impacts of illegality-poverty links	Case studies on NTFP governance s conducted in India for six commodities. Case studies conducted in Vietnam in two provinces looking at the underlying constraints of community forestry. In Indonesia there is no assessment as such, but recent newspaper article written by FGLG member on the role of community logging in combating illegal harvesting and raising local incomes	2
2.3 Findings shaped into specific guidance materials and tools to effect change within strategic frameworks (PRSS, NFPs, decentralisation and related processes)	A number of countries have prepared targeted policy briefs which have been important catalysts of change. Most notable examples include Uganda where targeted policy work contributed towards doubling of financing allocated by the government towards natural resources management. A policy brief in Malawi on the charcoal trade has triggered a wide-reaching debate on reforming the sector.	1
2.4 Key decision makers in the above strategic frameworks support practical changes that directly contribute to in-country implementation of the EC Action Plan for FLEGT	In Ghana, FGLG facilitated a broader interaction of stakeholders in the VPA process and played a critical role in ensuring that more marginalised voices and concerns were raised, both formally and informally. Country teams in Vietnam and Cameroon are well positioned to engage in upcoming VPA processes. Likely that direct interventions in FLEG processes in Vietnam and Cameroon will take place in next phase of funding	2
2.5 Training events developed and held to build long term capacity relating to tackling illegality and enhancing livelihoods	Annual learning events have been facilitated covering issues such as social justice in forestry, small forest enterprises, governance options for local tenure and frameworks to foster community based forest management. Significant interaction and exchange of experiences between country teams around country-specific case studies Significant local level training carried out in a number of countries.	1
2.6 Evaluation of progress carried out	Independent evaluation conducted March – August 2009	1

Overall assessment of output: In general, all the indicators are either achieved, likely to be achieved or mostly achieved. Activities planned and implemented under this output found to be very relevant to local governance context. Activities implemented in a timely manner

Output 3: Forestry enterprise initiatives and private sector associations comply with the law and spread practical approaches to improve forest governance

Indicator	Progress	Score
3.1 Understanding developed of the main opportunities and constraints for enterprises in legal compliance	Reports and studies undertaken on small forest enterprises in India, South Africa, Malawi, Niger and studies on compliance of private sector timber harvesting operators undertaken in Mozambique and Ghana. In some cases, this work was facilitated by complementary IIED project – “Forest Connect”	2
3.2 Necessary steps to foster greater compliance - through changes in policy, technical support, finance, private sector organisation and action within the labour force - identified and widely accepted	FGLG Uganda studies, research and advocacy played an important role in reversing government decision to degazette forest reserves in favour of agro-industrial production. Strong campaign through civil society implemented in Mozambique with regard to illegalities in forest harvesting. A number of policy measures secured through FGLG in South Africa, in terms of improving the operating environment for small and medium forest enterprises	1
3.3 Practical tools and incentive mechanisms implemented to foster strategic change and greater compliance	Difficult to assess the degree to which tools, policy briefs and guidelines produced by the initiative have generated positive change and greater compliance. Signs are promising in many countries that increased debate, exposure and dialogue is leading to positive change over the medium to long term but impacts likely to be realised in next phase of support (eg South Africa, Malawi, Uganda, Ghana, India)	3
3.4 Best-practice groups established and supported within enterprise associations to implement solutions for greater compliance	A series of training events organised for small and medium forest enterprises in South Africa on new approaches to ownership and governance. Barriers to NFTP enterprises lifted in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. Limited progress in Malawi and Uganda	2
3.5 Private sector reporting and monitoring network successfully piloted to exchange information on progress	Limited progress. Log tracking system developed (but not used) in Mozambique.	4

Overall assessment of output: Most of the indicators likely to be met, apart from 3.5. The topic of forestry enterprises has not been selected across all countries – but concentrated in South Africa, Malawi, Indonesia, India and Cameroon. In many cases it is difficult to assess or attribute the contribution of the project to achieving strategic (long term) change and greater compliance (Output 3.3) although many promising signs exist.

Output 4: Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks are improved to support local control and benefit from forestry

Indicator	Progress	Score
4.1 Participatory review completed, and reform options identified, on local land tenure and forest resource access and the impact of governance processes	Reviews of land tenure and forest access conducted in a number of countries (Malawi, Niger, Ghana, Mozambique, Vietnam and Cameroon) and compiled into international synthesis report	1
4.2 Tools and guidance materials delivered to communities and their supporters about how to improve their control over ownership and access rights	Guidance provided at the local level in India, Indonesia, Vietnam and Mozambique through FGLG members. In other countries, NGOs and service providers with a presence at the local level have been provided with tools and guidance materials	1
4.3 Key decision makers from appropriate sectors governing land and resource ownership and access	In Uganda, FGLG spearheaded campaign to reverse decision to alienate communities of forest access rights. In Ghana, FGLG helped incorporate forest rights into VPA negotiation	1

engaged by FGLG to strengthen the control by local communities in sustainable forest resource management	process. In Indonesia, FGLG helped facilitate local rights to forest and timber harvesting. In Malawi, leadership in government and parliament engaged on governance in the charcoal sector. In South Africa, engagement with Department of Land Affairs to support improved forest rights. In India, Forest agencies at regional and national level engaged on issues of access rights for NFTP	
4.4 Lesson-learning and training events held in new governance options for secure local tenure and frameworks to foster community based forest management	Training events and learning events facilitated in all countries using a variety of approaches – such as cross visits (Vietnam), workshops at national and sub-national levels (Indonesia, Malawi, South Africa), study tours for policy makers (Vietnam and Indonesia), theatre, music and cartoons (Mozambique).	1
4.5 Process of participatory monitoring of changes in ownership, access and policy frameworks installed amongst active community organisations and local NGOs	Limited progress. Local monitoring has been emphasised in VPA agreement in Ghana. Independent Forest Monitoring explored in a number of countries (such as Malawi) but little progress in getting process established. More broad-based monitoring by civil society of ownership, access and policy has been developed amongst FGLG-participant NGOs in Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi, Indonesia, India, but on less formalised basis	3

Overall assessment of output: All of the indicators are either achieved or likely to be achieved. Activities implemented are relevant and appropriate to local context, being based on detailed analysis and sound problem identification. The only exception to this is 4.5 relating to participatory monitoring where more limited progress has been made.

3.2 Performance of FGLG within the ten participating countries

FGLG has worked in ten countries on a range of different processes and themes. A short summary of the different country FGLG processes are described below, together with a summary of the outputs and impact achieved to date. The short summaries provided below can be supplemented by longer reports written for the three countries visited as part of this review, in Annexes 2 – 4. Despite the risks of being somewhat subjective, an assessment of overall performance of each country team is provided following the summary using the following sliding scale:

Score	Assessment
1	Impacts achieved in terms of improved learning, governance decisions with national applicability and demonstrable signs that this has been translated into tangible and widespread impact on the ground for the ultimate target group.
2	Impacts achieved in terms of improved learning, governance decisions with some tangible impact for the ultimate target group. Conditions for wider impact are favourable.
3	Impacts achieved in terms of improved learning. Some impact on generating improved forest governance decisions. Limited tangible signs of impact for the ultimate target group.
4	Limited impacts in either learning or improved governance. No signs of tangible impact for the ultimate target group.
X	Not possible to assess overall performance

Finally, it is important to recognise the fact that certain country teams were established at a later stage than others (particularly those in Asia), and therefore the possibilities these teams may have in achieving wider impacts may be rather more limited.

3.2.1 Cameroon

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG-Cameroon (known locally as GREG-Forêts or *Groupe de Réflexion d'Etude sur la Gouvernance des Forêts*) was initially hosted by CIFOR, who have a regional office in Cameroon. However, complications over administrative procedures (which involved liaison with the head office in Indonesia) meant that the host institution moved to a local NGO – NESDA – who had been active members in the FGLG since its inception. The convenor,

has remained the same throughout - although the individual concerned, Chimere Diaw, who previously worked for CIFOR has now moved to African Model Forests Initiative.

GREG- Forêts has a relatively broad membership and comprises representatives from government as well as the NGO and research community.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

GREG has focused broadly on the issue of social justice in forestry – and the underlying governance constraints to this. To help with the identification of core areas for GREG, it was decided to undertake a comprehensive “governance mapping exercise” to provide a common understanding of the governance drivers in Cameroonian forestry as well as some of the specific areas – or “governance gaps” that require collective action. This was undertaken in 2008 and decisions taken by the team to focus on two main areas – namely supporting trade reforms (through participation in the VPA process) and to explore and address issues connected with illegal logging.

Achievements, progress and impact to date

Progress in Cameroon has been rather slow during the initial stages of GREG-Forêts. This appears to have been for a range of reasons. On one hand, key members of the group appeared to be heavily over-committed and their workloads did not permit a strong engagement with the group. Secondly (and linked to the first reason), there was no clear vision or strategy for members to get behind – which could provide a rallying cry for group based learning or action. Thirdly, unlike in some other countries (notably Uganda, South Africa, and Malawi) the group was unable to identify or leverage additional resources from other on-going initiatives – and as a result the impact of activities were somewhat limited. Finally, support to Cameroon has been rather inconsistent due to the lack of a francophone forest governance specialist at IIED. Consequently, this support function was outsourced by IIED to LTS, an Edinburgh based consulting firm. Staff changes at LTS meant that the contact person has changed on a number of occasions – and as a result continuity of support appears to have suffered. As a consequence, IIED reassumed the role of providing backstopping support and have recently engaged a francophone staff member with extensive Cameroonian experience.

Recent signs from Cameroon would suggest that the period of relative inactivity is changing. The governance mapping exercise appears to have sparked an interest among members and now government appears to be increasingly recognising GREG-Forêts as a trusted informer with which it can engage around governance issues in the forest sector. Furthermore, the announcement by the government that it plans to embark on negotiations around the signing of a VPA appears to have gained interest – particularly the opportunities that now exist for learning from colleagues in Ghana.

Overall assessment score: 3

3.2.2 Ghana

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG in Ghana is convened and hosted by Civic Response and comprises a relatively small group of around 10 – 15 people most of whom are drawn from national NGOs, government agencies and consulting firms in Accra. The overall approach adopted by FGLG-Ghana has changed significantly (and continues to do so) since its inception. Initially, the team engaged with governance issues exploring the interaction of bottom-up reform initiatives like “Forest Forums” which Forest Watch Ghana (FWG) had been actively establishing at the district and national levels with top-down initiatives like the EU FLEGT. Originally fairly consensual as Industry and civil society agendas clearly began to diverge and under pressure to deliver FGLG membership tended to revolve increasingly around

core civil society players and their more direct, advocacy agenda . FGLG increasingly became an informal “space” where civil society, state and Industry players could engage beyond the formal stand-offs and explore real options for forest trade and governance reform.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The core interest of FGLG-Ghana is the equitable sharing of benefits from sustainable forest management in Ghana – and the challenges faced by forest-dependent communities in this regard because of weak laws and the Forest Commission, which appears to be more aligned to supporting the timber industry (which itself has a very mixed record) than to supporting the long term development needs of the rural population.

FGLG-Ghana work has helped shape the governance reform agenda in Ghana since 2004. It strengthened the evidence basis of calls for reform – drawing Forestry Commission, ministerial and parliamentary attention to important policy and legislative problems in the sector. For example, FGLG studies established wholesale violation of Ghana’s permits regime and huge financial losses to the state and society. This helped inspire a civil society campaign and commitments led by the Ministry of Lands, Forestry and Mines for achieving compliance. FGLG-Ghana also supported the institutionalisation of district forest forums – where forest-dependent representatives could inter-face directly with local government representatives to challenge prevailing law and practise. However this focus began to shift when opportunities for engagement in the VPA materialised. FGLG members felt that if the concerns of forest access and rights could be integrated into the VPA (which would in itself determine the conditions on how legally traded timber would be harvested), this might represent a better opportunity, or lever, for change.

Achievements, progress and Impact to date

The forest sector in Ghana is well supported by a number of bilateral, multi-lateral and civil society initiatives – many of them directed towards the arena of forest rights, trade and governance. As such, it is very difficult to disentangle the specific contribution of the FGLG initiative to the rapidly evolving forest governance work being conducted by FGLG-Ghana members. A number of the key persons within the negotiations around the VPA were directly included as members of the FGLG. This meant that the FGLG provided an important opportunity, outside the more formal confines of the negotiation process, where different policy options could be explored. Furthermore, through work done in the earlier phase of FGLG work, critical but marginalised voices were supported to communicate directly with key members of the government team. This ensured that the negotiation process was expanded from a bilateral (government to government) process to one that was increasingly involving a diverse range of stakeholders. In a sense, the VPA process provided a new incentive for civil society, government and the private sector to start communicating again. A key challenge in the future (now that the agreement has been signed) will be to ensure that these re-established linkages remain and can continue to be built on, so that monitoring the implementation of the agreement can be pursued in a collective manner. IIED’s long involvement in the Ghana forest sector and established interests in forest governance have also played an important role in reinforcing the successes of the FGLG-Ghana team and has in large part, contributed to the relatively crowded field that now exists working on forest governance (notably IUCN, FERN, CARE, RRI and others). IIED’s complementary role in furthering the aims of FGLG-Ghana were strengthened when the Forestry Commission requested IIED to undertake an assessment of the potential impacts of policy options that might be taken under a VPA. This strategic piece of work meant that a range of policy options were placed on the negotiating table at an early stage. Linking this to the work of FGLG-Ghana meant that many of these recommendations found their way into the final agreement itself.

Overall assessment score: 1

3.2.3 India

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG India is composed of a rather small core-group of individuals (there are currently four active members and an additional three occasional members) who come from research / academic or NGO backgrounds. This core team meets periodically with a larger group of resource people - practitioners and policy makers - who share and debate information. This wider group considers itself to be 'FGLG-India' even though some of these wider members only come infrequently, but they do lend their own credibility to the group. In the new phase, this wider group will be expanded and more formalised – to include members drawn from national and state government, NGOs, and private consulting firms, while the core group will be expanded to include 5-8 members. FGLG India is currently hosted and convened by the Indian Institute of Forest Management in Bhopal, which is a training institution for government forestry staff. Prior to this and up to July 2007, the host and convenor of FGLG India was the Centre for People's Forestry in Secunderabad, an NGO with interests in forest rights and participatory forest management.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The main focus of activities in India has been to identify and work on key governance, institutional and legal constraints to the successful operation of NTFP enterprises. However, linked to this theme, a new but growing area of concern is that of the rights of indigenous people to access NTFP in state forest areas.

Achievements, progress and Impact to date

Rather than engaging in confrontational advocacy, FGLG India has chosen an approach which has stressed the importance of undertaking solid policy research and presenting this information to key policy makers at the national and state levels in the form of well-presented policy briefs. The group has interacted with both the ruling party and opposition members with a view to reviewing sections of the Forest Rights Act (2008) – particularly with regard to the recognition of collective tribal rights, rather than just individual rights to forest products within reserved forests. More recently, at the state level, FGLG members have held a number of meetings with decision makers. Furthermore, by virtue of their involvement in FGLG activities, FGLG members are increasingly being asked by government to become involved in task forces or committees that are designed to advise government on areas such as sustainable forest management, forest rights, and fair trade policies for NTFPs.

Overall assessment score: 2

3.2.4 Indonesia

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG Indonesia has adopted a different model to learning and engaging in policy processes and is basically structured into three different units, or groups as described below. A Facilitator group oversees the development of strategy for the overall initiative and catalyses activities. This group is made up from two members from a local private sector service provider with strong background as civil society activists in forestry - Inspirit Innovation Circles, one member from CIFOR, one member from Ministry of Forestry, and two members who are no longer active, one from DFID MFP programme and one from WWF-Indonesia. Since its inception, this facilitator group has been convened by a representative from CIFOR – and hosted by Inspirit Innovation Circles. However, as of July 2009, the role for both hosting and convening will be transferred to Inspirit. A National group operates much as in many other countries as the equivalent of the learning group and is constituted by middle-level Ministry of Forestry staff – deliberately Ministry only to provide a safe space for honest

discussion of contentious issues away from the NGO glare. The membership is around 20 persons with people moving in and out depending on their post in the Ministry. Two District groups, one in Sulawesi and one in Sumatra are active, multi-stakeholder forums that the national FGLG has adopted and provided a home for after they were orphaned at the end of previous externally-funded forestry programmes. These bring together stakeholders to discuss difficult issues such as negotiation with palm oil companies in Sumatra and trying to get legal recognition of community logging in Sulawesi. The link with the national group provides the regional groups with advice, credibility and leverage, while the national group benefits from real field experience.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

FGLG Indonesia has been engaged on a wide range of governance issues – including a particular focus on community forestry and community rights to timber harvesting. A further focal area of discussions has been the conversion of forestland into commercial oil palm plantations – and the implications this has on local livelihoods and revenues.

Achievements, progress and impact to date

The impact of FGLG Indonesia's work is probably felt most at the local level. In one district, Jambi (in Sumatra), FGLG has supported the establishment of platforms which allows local level forest managers to interact with local leaders and NGO staff and has resulted in a range of exciting new pilot initiatives related to community forest management and logging. On Sulawesi the action of FGLG members has resulted in growing interest in community forestry from regional and national leaders – which in turn has led to local policies that supports community based forest management. Recently, the work of FGLG members has resulted in a number of community groups being granted permits for forest management and harvesting.

At the national level, the long hard job of interacting with teams of middle level forest managers is slowly paying dividends. At national level, in 2008 the Ministry began the establishment of a dedicated Forest Governance Research Division. The Director of the new division is a member of the FGLG and has called upon the national-level group to determine the research agenda of the Division. Another key impact of the activities so far has been the gradual realisation by the Ministry regarding the need to engage with stakeholders outside government. This is particularly the case with regard to policy formulation processes which are now increasingly involving stakeholder dialogue from a range of key sectors and interest groups. The group is looking planning to become engaged in the upcoming FLEGT / VPA process being planned for Indonesia.

FGLG Indonesia has successfully linked to the DFID Supported Multi-stakeholder forestry programme – and this has resulted in growing financial support around issues of mutual interest. Additional co-financing has been obtained through CIFOR who have on-going programmes that are similar in nature to the FGLG and have provided both staff time and facilities to the network.

Overall assessment score: 2

3.2.5 Malawi

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

Prior to the establishment of the FGLG initiative, IIED had been actively involved in the forest sector in Malawi and worked to support the development of a National Forest Programme. Initial support was used to undertake a number of pieces of applied research, and to support the establishment of the FGLG itself. FGLG Malawi is convened by the Deputy Director of the Forestry Department, but is hosted by the Centre for Development Management, a local consulting firm. FGLG has a broad cross section of members from

both government (national and local), the research community, civil society and traditional leaders – and has around 25 core members. A key aspect of FGLG Malawi has been the development of national thematic annual meetings, to which a wider group of interested stakeholders are invited to attend and as a means of communicating some of the work of the FGLG beyond its core membership. FGLG has been very successful at leveraging additional resources above and beyond the budget provided through IIED. This has been achieved by deliberate efforts to identify complementarity and establish links between FGLG work plans and on-going initiatives with more significant levels of funding. Key partners in this regard have been the EC funded forest support programme (IFMSLP) and the USAID funded COMPASS project (which supports CBNRM and sustainable natural resource based enterprises, which has now all but closed)

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The core areas addressed by FGLG-Malawi are:

- Illegality in the forest sector – and specifically the issue of charcoal
- Community rights and community based forest management
- Small and medium forest enterprises

Achievements, progress and Impact to date

FGLG have produced an substantial range of applied research and policy briefs, many of which have been supported by complementary initiatives within IIED. This has included studies on charcoal consumption, trade and production (and how ineffective regulation is resulting in massive deforestation and lost revenues), a study on the challenges and opportunities facing small and medium forest enterprises, work on local government accountability, and support towards the development of guidelines and standards for participatory forest management. More recently, work has been directed to understanding the relative effectiveness of traditional institutions and imposed institutions in supporting local level participatory forest management.

With regard to translating these well researched findings into impact on governance, policies and practise, there is an increasing realisation that more pro-active measures are needed – and that it is not enough to expect that the involvement of government in FGLG alone will be sufficient impetus to achieve change. Increasingly FGLG “learning” is moving to how policy processes can be influenced – and as a result work of the group is now more directly supporting media work, as well as providing briefings to parliamentary advisory committees and high-level government representatives.

Overall assessment score: 2

3.2.6 Mozambique

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG support to Mozambique can be divided broadly into two distinct phases. Following IIED’s involvement in the forest sector since 2001, FGLG was initially hosted by the Eduardo Mondlane University. A number of key pieces of research were undertaken which began to explore the impact of governance failures in the timber harvesting industry. However, despite good links to key decision makers within government, progress in advancing a range of recommendations on improved governance stalled – due in large part to high-level political involvement within the timber industry. Some NGO members within the FGLG group began to call for and enact a high profile advocacy campaign against the government, some of whose representatives also formed part of the initial FGLG group. This created an unworkable situation for the convenor who was closely allied to both sides. In the light of these problems, in 2007, a decision was taken to shift the focus of FGLG towards the more advocacy-based activities of the newly emerging popular movement called Amigos da

Floresta (some of whose key members had already been part of FGLG). Hosted by a national NGO – Justica Ambiental – Amigos da Floresta is essentially a coalition of players from within civil society who campaign around issues to do with social and environmental justice. In the forthcoming phase of FGLG support, the host and convenor of Amigos da Floresta (and by implication FGLG) will shift to a partner NGO who have also been heavily involved with the movement since its inception – the Centro de Integridade Publica (CIP).

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The core area addressed under both phases of FGLG support to Mozambique has centred around the social, economic and environmental impacts of illegal logging and trade. This has increasingly been complemented by a drive to present real community forestry alternatives to industrial logging and to push for enterprise support for small and medium forest enterprises.

Achievements, progress and Impact to date

The first phase of support to Mozambique generated a number of important studies that looked at the relationship between forest legislation and compliance – particularly within the realm of timber harvesting – and how poor forest governance was negatively impacting poor rural communities and the long term integrity of the forest resource. Following this, more targeted support was given on the development of concrete proposals (such as log-tracking) that could help with implementing forest governance reforms. Due to high level vested political interests in timber harvesting, few, if any, of the recommendations of these later studies ever saw the light of day. Following the shift in support to Justica Ambiental and Amigos da Floresta in 2007, FGLG support went to both strengthening the evidence base for forest crime – but also communicating these messages to the wider public, through the media, music and drama.

Overall assessment score: 2

Note: Mozambique was one of the three countries that were visited as part of this review. A more detailed trip report can be found in Annex 3 of this report.

3.2.7 Niger

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG Niger (known locally as GAGREF, the Groupe d'Apprentissage sur la Gouvernance des Ressources Forestières) is convened by a local NGO based in Zinder, in eastern Niger. Membership of GAGREF has been carefully selected to ensure a balanced and representative set of viewpoints. Out of 12 members, five government institutions are represented (including the Department of Forestry, the Syndicate of Magistrates of Niger and the Executive Secretariat of the Rural Code). In addition a number of NGOs with established interest in natural resource management, lands and agriculture are members (including Farmers Platform of Niger, National Network of Natural Resource Management and Decentralisation). Membership also includes the National Association of Timber Users, which represents a number of community based fuelwood marketing co-operatives. GAGREF is Niger's first example of a government-civil society initiative in which forest governance, including such delicate issues as corruption, have been examined and discussed in an informed and candid manner.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The key areas identified by GAGREF as priority themes are corruption in the forest sector, as well as the implementation of the national domestic energy strategy.

Achievements, progress and impact to date

The work of GAGREF has been of two main types. Firstly, the learning group have commissioned a number of pieces of strategic research which have investigated the

application of the new forest legislation, and the ways in which this is impacting positively or negatively on the livelihoods of pastoralist communities. Furthermore, policy research was conducted into the operationalisation of the national domestic energy strategy. Based on these studies, the group has facilitated a number of forums at both regional level (in Zinder) and at national level, where diverse groups of stakeholders are encouraged to exchange views and perspectives, following the presentation of the policy research. In 2008, for example, they successfully brought together the Syndicate of Magistrates, the Union of Water and Forest Workers, the Association of Municipalities of Niger and the National Federation of Pastoral Association to discuss the practical implications of the forest law for pastoral communities within the context of decentralisation. This clarified the nature of the legal provisions and the role and responsibilities of the different actors

The overall progress of the Niger learning group has not been as evident as in other countries. This has been for a range of reasons. Firstly, the locus of activities (and the location of the host) has been in Zinder, approximately 1200 km from the capital, Niamey. This has resulted in logistical constraints with regard to ensuring a regular engagement with national level policy makers. The host organisation, CRAC-GRN, is an NGO with its roots in field based work and has relatively limited exposure to, and capacity for, national level policy work, beyond those specific issues of relevance to individual projects or programmes. Furthermore, the benefits enjoyed by other FGLG countries (namely an opportunity to exchange experiences with countries facing similar governance constraints) has been limited due to two factors. Firstly, language has constrained participation in cross country exchanges. Secondly unfortunate last minute circumstances meant that GAGREF could attend annual learning events on two occasions. Thirdly, but perhaps most critically, the social, environmental and legal issues in Niger (a Sahelian country) have little in common with others included in the programme. However, within Niger the team is now largely putting its effort into a broader learning network across natural resource sectors supported through other means and with good prospects. For these reasons, IIED has opted to discontinue support to GAGREF in the future phase, and instead the focus of support will switch to Tanzania.

Overall assessment score: 3

3.2.8 South Africa

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG South Africa is currently convened and hosted by a private enterprise association – Forestry South Africa. A very deliberate effort has been made to include a wide representation of people within the FGLG, including representatives of central, regional and local government, people in government working outside the forestry administration (representatives from Departments of Trade, Lands and Planning), representatives from associations representing small and medium forest enterprises, small scale forest growers, representatives from larger forest enterprises, and NGOs. Its strong representation from private sector (both small and larger) reflects the interest of FGLG South Africa on supporting small forest enterprises. By its very nature and inclusive membership, FGLG has been very successful in identifying opportunities to advance its own agenda as well as supporting government. This has in a number of cases, resulted in leveraging additional financial resources from government and other donor supported initiatives.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

The key focal area for FGLG SA has been looking critically at the economic, legal and institutional barriers to small and medium forest enterprises – and working in a structured manner to address, remove or overcome these constraints. Furthermore, the group have been supporting measures to mainstream forest sector priorities into development plans at national and provincial levels.

Achievements, progress and Impact to date.

The achievements of FGLG SA have been impressive and been advancing on a number of fronts. This has included supporting the development of the “Forest Charter” – a document that describes how the Department of Water Affairs and Forests (DWAF) commits to support rural transformation, economic development and the forest sector as a whole. In addition, FGLG has supported the development of government’s strategy on small forest enterprises, a toolkit for small timber growers, a business information booklet for small forest enterprises, and a substantial new forest sector initiative in KwaZulu Natal.

In addition to this, FGLG have successfully identified opportunities for integrating (or mainstreaming) forestry priorities in government planning frameworks. This has included mainstreaming the National Forest Action Programme in the new “2030 Vision”, supporting Provincial Growth and Development Strategies as well as working in a number of areas on the development of Integrated Development Plans at district or municipal levels.

In addition to this results-oriented policy work, FGLG have also supported regular events and forums held with and for small-scale forest enterprises, to explore emerging governance challenges. In addition, four events were organised for small-scale forest enterprises and owners to learn about the details of new ownership models in South African forestry.

Overall assessment score: 1

3.2.9 Uganda

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

IIED support to FGLG processes in Uganda began in 2003 through support from DFID. This was initially co-ordinated through the Forestry Secretariat within the Ministry of Lands and Water. A core group of persons working within government began to meet regularly with opinion leaders within the forest sector, working in NGOs, consultancies and academic/research institutions. This start-up work was then rolled into the longer support under EC and around this time, many of the staff working within the Forestry Secretariat moved into full-time positions within the newly launched National Forest Authority. It became apparent that if the FGLG was to be able to operate most effectively, it would need to be hosted outside government – and ACODE – a national NGO with a track record in advocacy and legal rights offered to provide this service – a function it continues to perform today.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

FGLG learning and action has focused on a range of fronts in Uganda and includes:

- Conflicts over land-use. This has included strong pressure from government to support international investors for the establishment of agro-industrial crops (such as sugar and palm oils) – often in existing forest reserves
- Political interference in decision making and legal processes under the mandate of the National Forest Authority
- Mainstreaming forestry concerns into high level government plans and budgetary allocations

Achievements, progress and Impact to date

Since its inception, FGLG-Uganda facilitated a wide range of processes, but largely it provides an efficient mechanism for information to be exchanged between members. This information then assists individual members in their own endeavours to further forest governance either by presenting issues to parliament (for MPs); providing raw materials for writing journals in newspapers (for journalists), for dissemination to other networks (for NGO members) and so on. However, when concrete action and some form of statement is required, ACODE are then tasked with the responsibility of undertaking a range of tasks

such as focused research, preparing policy briefs, issuing press releases, participating in text cases in court and writing to the Sessional Committee on Environment & Natural Resources on behalf of the FGLG members.

One of the most significant results of the FGLG was critical support to a public campaign against the President's approval of de-gazetting a third of the Mabira Forest Reserve in 2006 and transferring this to the Sugar Corporation of Uganda, despite its value for tourism and local livelihoods. The result of this broad based movement was a large public demonstration in Kampala, massive outcry against the government and finally a decision to reverse the planned de-gazettement.

Overall assessment score: 1

Note: Uganda was one of the three countries that were visited as part of this review. A more detailed trip report can be found in Annex 2 of this report.

3.2.10 Vietnam

FGLG Composition, hosting and approach

FGLG is hosted and convened in Vietnam by a independent consultant, who works part time for RECOFTC and with a strong technical background in Vietnamese forestry – and in particular community forest management. FGLG is composed largely of researchers from various state universities and research facilities, as well as a number of carefully selected staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. FGLG Vietnam retains a very limited profile at national level, but has instead invested heavily in operations at the provincial level - working in the three provinces of Dak Lak, Thua Thien Hue and Bac Kan. A number of applied research and comparative studies have been carried out within and between these three regions and the findings of these reports have been presented through the national FGLG forum in the form of stakeholder workshops and policy briefs. Overall, the approach of FGLG has been to work closely with government and in a manner that supports the governments own policy formulation process. Given the rather limited political space that exists in Vietnam, and the absence of any national civil society organisations this appears to be a prudent and relatively productive approach. FGLG activities in Vietnam started in 2006.

Focal areas addressed by FGLG

FGLG Vietnam has chosen to focus strongly on the issue of Community Forest Management (CFM). This was selected as it represents a relatively new approach in the country, is currently being piloted by government and a range of international partners, and opportunities for shaping future CFM policies are strong. In particular, FGLG Vietnam has focused on:

- Security and strength of tenure rights – formal and informal processes.
- Viability of CFM under different forest and social conditions. This includes an analysis of traditional and introduced CFM, well stocked forest as compared with heavily degraded forest, planted or natural forest and a range of other variables.
- Equity and benefit sharing modalities at community levels – looking particularly at aspects such as poverty, gender and ethnicity.

Achievements, progress and impact to date

FGLG activities in Vietnam have been developed in three distinct phases. Phase I, from September 2006 – August 2007 was essentially a scoping period, where the group sought to get an understanding of some of the key issues within CFM within the selected provinces. Phase 2, from September 2007 – August 2008, revolved around fostering learning – principally between participating communities in the different provinces – but also by extension the regional and national learning groups. Phase 3, centred on documentation of

what had been learned, and presenting this learning to a wider community of stakeholders – including policy makers - at the national level. Some of the key outputs include a synthesis of major findings of the initiative to date – and in particular some of the key governance and institutional constraints facing CFM in Vietnam. Many of the findings of this work have been converted into a well-presented policy brief, in both English and Vietnamese.

Overall assessment score: 2

Note: Vietnam was one of the three countries that were visited as part of this review. A more detailed trip report can be found in Annex 4 of this report.

3.3 Documentation and written outputs

Over the course of the four year initiative, considerable efforts have been deployed in the generation of a wide range of written outputs that have been used to reinforce learning, distil lessons learned and effect policy change. They include:

- Applied research from the country level on current governance issues
- Policy briefs
- Lessons learned documentation
- Tools that can be used in the analysing and influencing power and governance processes (power tools)
- Reports from national and sub-national workshops
- Documentation of international learning events
- FGLG “updates” prepared by IIED and circulated to country teams, partners and other interested stakeholders in the forest sector
- Annual progress reports
- Articles that have been published and presented at international forums and networks
- Press coverage (newspapers – both national and international), radio and TV broadcasts

While the majority of these written outputs have been conceived and produced within participating countries, they have benefitted considerably from the inputs and contributions of IIED staff (and RECOFTC / LTS with regard to specific country outputs). Across many of the countries, attention has been paid to ensuring that messages are presented in a clear, focused and strategic manner – deploying a range of mediums such as written and spoken media, cartoons and theatre – as well as more mainstream policy briefs. In terms of communicating learning across country teams, this has been strongly supported through the sharing of documentation from country teams and reporting from international learning events. The production of “FGLG Updates” – concise, annual summaries from country teams, including key lessons learned and documentation produced during the period – provides an effective way of communicating externally to stakeholders working outside the FGLG initiative.

A full bibliography of written outputs generated as a result of this programme appears in Annex 6.

In addition to the written outputs, IIED is currently preparing a film documentary on forest governance issues as part of this project. The key message in the film is that many key issues facing the forest sector are problems of social justice, and the film presents how learning groups have tackled these issues. The film will include footage from the international learning event held in Malawi in December 2008; from the field in Malawi showing specific forest governance issues; and from Uganda, Ghana and Vietnam. In each country, the film will focus on key forest governance issues particular to that country. As well as an overall film to be used at international level (and possibly a shorter film of 3-5 minutes), there will be individual films for use by the FGLG teams in each of the four

countries. A draft film showing forest governance issues and debates in Malawi was used enthusiastically by members of the FGLG team in various teaching forums. All film outputs will be completed in the autumn of 2009.

3.4 Cross country-learning and sharing of experiences

Above and beyond the activities of the country learning groups, described in summarised form above, the programme seeks to foster international linkages between participating countries. This is done through a range of mediums as discussed below.

- **International learning events** have been facilitated on an annual and rotational basis. It provides opportunities for core members of each of the learning group teams in the ten countries to come together, share experiences and progress and to jointly strategise and plan for the future. Presentations are made by each country team on achievements, tactics used, lessons learned as well as challenges faced. More recent learning events have included a one-day field visit to a site that illustrates either the work of the local learning group, or some of the key governance challenges. Informal peer review is used as a means to discuss and critique the plans and reports of participating countries and to promote informal, healthy competition between teams. The meetings also provide an opportunity for country teams to present their ideas for upcoming annual work-plans, and for bilateral meetings to take place between IIED staff members and the individual country teams concerned. So far, international learning events have been held in Ghana (2004), South Africa (2005) Uganda (2006), India (2007), Malawi (2008). These international learning events have been well received by participants, in large part due to the good planning, organisation and facilitation methods used during the events as well. Due to timing issues, it was not possible to include participation in an international learning event as part of this evaluation. However, it is clear from reviewing the written outputs of the learning events, as well as in discussion with participants that they have proven to be increasingly important aspects of the programme. As country processes have matured, the benefits to be gained from sharing lessons have increased. This has been reinforced by a growing social capital that has developed between country members (many of whom return year after year) and the international facilitators. The participation of non-English speakers in the fast-moving discussion has been inevitably limited by language abilities of individual country teams (particularly with regard to Cameroon, Niger, Mozambique and Vietnam), despite deliberate efforts to provide translation services.
- **Bilateral learning around specific themes:** In addition to these formalised opportunities for exchange, there appears to be growing bilateral linkages developing between country teams around areas of mutual interest. This includes cross visits of one team to another and email communication around tactics or lessons learned in similar situations. One good example of this un-prompted bilateral learning between two country teams can be found in Ghana and Cameroon, who have agreed to work more closely on lessons learned in the facilitation of Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) which has recently been completed in Ghana and now soon to be launched in Cameroon. A second example is the immersion of the convenor of the Malawi team in the detail of the Mabira campaign in Uganda on a study tour there. A further example comes from Cameroon, where the convenor of FGLG-Ghana invited and hosted FGLG-Uganda members in Cameroon at a meeting of the Africa Community Rights Network.
- **“Governance gossip”:** Frequent email exchanges within and between country teams has been another form of communication (known by participants as “governance gossip”). In many cases, IIED staff members actively prompt or provoke discussion and exchange – and in this way, retain strong linkages with the country teams. Again, language constraints appear to have affected the participation of some non-English speakers in these cross-country discussions and exchanges. Governance “gossip” appears to have worked extremely well in some countries – but less well in others. In Uganda, members are well linked by email, and there are numerous examples of

members spontaneously engaging in email traffic, often around contentious issues, or as a “call to arms”. In other countries (such as India and South Africa), email has been used as a means to engage members, many of whom may be too busy (or dispersed) to meet on a regular basis. However, in some countries there appears to be a reluctance to engage in more open ended discussions (such as India where gossip was viewed with negative connotations) – highlighting the importance of face to face contacts if communication is to take place at a level beyond the mundane and ordinary. Furthermore, it has taken time in some countries (such as India and South Africa) for country teams to engage with IIED on contentious issues, rather than the more formal reporting on progress, achievements of outputs and expenditures.

- **Development of thematic analyses and generic governance tools that can be used by country teams.** In collaboration with a separately funded IIED programme called “Sharpening policy tools for marginalised managers of natural resources”, or Power Tools Initiative (which was funded by DGIS and BMZ) funds were provided to countries such as Mozambique, Uganda and Malawi to document successful approaches and methodologies and to convert this into simple tools that could be use in a variety of contexts. Examples of tools developed include guidelines for supporting associations of pit-sawyers (Uganda); tools for engaging local government in forest governance (Malawi); tools for supporting communities to engage in negotiations with higher level bodies (Mozambique) and tools for securing forest justice in the timber supply chain (Uganda). These tools have been made available to all country teams and disseminated through international learning events. As the end of the current FGLG initiative approaches, most FGLG country teams have written up or are in the process of writing up at least one key governance-influencing tactic that they have developed and used in their work. Several of these are likely to be produced in another ‘set’ of ‘Power Tools’. Over the course of the initiative IIED has also generated several thematic analyses that have been targeted to respond to shared issues requiring information identified by country teams. One of these recently produced was: *‘Tenure and REDD: start point or afterthought?’* which has provoked comment suggesting it will be useful in making the transition from current to future FGLG country-team work

3.5 Assessment of risks and assumptions

The programme design identified a total of 23 assumptions, operating at overall objective, specific objective and output level that could potentially impinge upon the performance of the initiative. The assumptions were listed in the logframe and are presented below in Table 4 with a short statement regarding their validity and whether the assumptions have held.

Level	Intervention Logic	Assumption	Validity and Status
Overall Objective	Conservation and sustainable management of forests in developing countries so as to meet the economic social and environmental demands placed on forests at local, national and global levels	1. Sufficient interest, political space and practical opportunity are maintained and developed at international, national and local level.	Assumption valid and has held at both national and international levels
Specific Objective	Improved governance of forest resources in ten countries in Africa and Asia	2. Sufficient momentum and buy-in from key individuals and institutions exists, especially following staff changes, to maintain useful networks and implement well-targeted improvements 3. Sufficient high level political will exists to tackle persistent illegal activity and corruption 4. Private sector perceives sufficient	2. Assumption valid. Heavy workload has constrained participation in some country teams 3. Assumption valid – but in some cases has not held. Entrenched elites and vested interests have predominated (see discussion below)

		incentive to unite in the interests of long term sustainability and national reputation 5. Entry points can be found across different institutions and areas of legislation to foster cooperation and simplification of policy and management frameworks	4. Assumption valid and has held in those countries focusing on SMFEs (eg India, South Africa, Malawi) 5. Assumption valid and has held
Output	Output 1: Poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes, decentralisation programmes and related processes enable improved forest governance	6. Aid programmes and national development processes are sufficiently free of inflexible mandates and conditions to accommodate evidence-based thinking on forest governance 7. Sufficient interest can be generated for non-forestry decision makers to actively participate in learning and change implementation processes 8. Key actors are sufficiently freed up to take advantage of opportunities for change and drive them forward 9. Effective change is sufficiently visible and well promoted to encourage further investment in the process	6. Assumption valid and has held in general. 7. Assumption valid and where deliberate efforts have been made to reach out to non-forest decision makers (eg South Africa) - has held 8. Assumption valid and in general has held although heavy workload of some members has constrained participation 9. Assumption valid and has held
	Output 2: Illegal and corrupt forestry that degrades livelihoods is reduced through the adoption and spread of practical approaches to improve forest governance	10. Sufficient evidence is matched with careful packaging and targeting to ensure widespread uptake of findings 11. There are commonalities between key forest governance issues in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa 12. The processes of forming and implementing PRSs, NFPs, decentralisation and related processes have sufficient space to incorporate evidence-based thinking on forest governance 13. Sufficient incentives can be developed for policy and practice changes in institutions, and for all the main actors to contribute to the EC Action Plan for FLEGT 14. The forest losses and livelihoods concerns associated with illegality are sufficiently high to stimulate interest in training events and to take learning forward into long-term capacity development	10. Assumption not valid – within the control of the project to influence. 11. Assumption valid and held – with exception perhaps of Niger (see discussion) 12. Assumption held and valid 13. Assumption valid and has held in countries active in FLEGT processes (Ghana, Cameroon, Vietnam) 14. Assumption valid and held
	Output 3: Forestry enterprise initiatives and private sector associations comply with the law and spread practical approaches to improve forest governance	15. Different categories of enterprise are sufficiently open to analysis and investigation 16. Forest enterprises are willing to organise and try out new working procedures 17. There is a critical mass of like-minded and progressive enterprises to catalyse the formation of a best-practice group 18. Sufficient reputational rewards can be perceived to make self-monitoring worthwhile	15. Assumption valid and has held 16. Assumption valid and has held in those countries engaged with SMFEs 17. Assumption valid, but progress towards forming best practise group somewhat limited (See Section 3.1) 18. Assumption valid, but limited progress gained in supporting self monitoring (see Section 3.1)
	Output 4: Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks are improved to support local control and benefit from forestry	19. Sufficient time-series information can be generated and cause-effect links can be established; and a sufficient depth and variety of national to local institutions are willing to share information 20. There are effective networks of local government agencies, CBOs and NGOs with whom tools and guidance materials	19. Assumption valid and has held 20. Assumption valid and has held 21. Assumption valid and has held 22. Assumption valid and has

		<p>can be shared</p> <p>21. Champions for community access and control rights exist in key institutions</p> <p>22. Networks of local government agencies, CBOs and NGOs are prepared to invest time in training of trainers and spread of learning</p> <p>23. Local community groups have an interest in monitoring progress around ownership and access rights.</p>	<p>held</p> <p>23. Assumption valid but difficult to assess if it has held as progress on this output has been somewhat limited (See Section 3.1 for details)</p>
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Table 4: Programme assumptions and their validity

Of the 23 project assumptions operating at both objective and output level, the majority appear to be both valid and have held over the course of implementation. However, in one or two instances, there have been examples of where the assumptions have not held entirely. One assumption refers to incentives (and political will) for change (in terms of development and implementation of policy) – such as assumptions 3 and 13. In some countries where FGLG works, illegalities in the forest sector are highly entrenched and linked to powerful patronage networks (such as Mozambique). These networks are not easily displaced – and it may take more than the three to four years of this initiative to see any real impact. A second assumption that in some instances has proven to be a little shaky refers to incentives to participate by members of FGLG. Membership and participation is entirely voluntary. People who tend to be selected or participate in such networks are by nature self-starting, dynamic and driven individuals – who also tend to be very busy. One persistent constraint mentioned (particularly by convenors) was the fact that members are persistently busy and finding times that are suitable to all members was often impossible. The assumption that “interest” alone provides sufficient incentive to participate was also said to be particularly questionable among government staff. This was for a range of reasons – but mostly the difficulties of wearing “two hats at one time” (split loyalties when working within a government institution, but maintaining a critical stance at the same time). Finally, assumption 11, regarding commonalities between different countries appears to have held, perhaps with the exception of Niger. As mentioned in 3.1.7, being a Sahelian country, with very limited forest resources of marginal economic value, the relevance of international FGLG discussions to Niger, on issues such as trade, illegal logging, lost revenue were of limited value.

The programme design identified an additional three risks that could negatively impact upon the performance of the programme. These are presented below, together with an assessment of whether these risks ever materialised, and how the programme adjusted accordingly:

- The currently proposed relationships with country partners may not develop as expected.
- Installing better knowledge and information systems in forest governance may prove difficult.
- Institutional weaknesses may limit the degree and intensity of take-up of the work.

In most of the cases, these risks did not materialise. In a few rare instances, a decision was taken by IIED to change the host institution and convenor because progress was limited – which reflected the first risk above. One example of this was in Mozambique where the initial host was the university. Progress was slow and in 2007, following a visit by IIED, the host institution was transferred to Justica Ambiental and support directed towards supporting the emerging popular movement – Amigos da Floresta. Limited progress with the learning group in Niger appears to be as a result of a number of factors, some of which have been highlighted in Section 3.1.7. Principle among these is the fact that while the host and convenor selected to undertake this work has many advantages, its location, over a 1000

km from the capital means that its ability to engage on a regular basis with national processes is necessarily limited.

3.6 Funding and accounting arrangements

Funding to individual countries takes place through a host organisation – most commonly a local NGO. Before funds are released, an agreement is signed between IIED and the in-country host. If the host changes, or rotates, as is common in some countries, new agreements are then developed.

The contribution from IIED to each of the participating country learning groups was around Euros 72,000 to Euros 100,000 over the project period. For most African countries this was received over a four year period, while in the three Asian countries, the period of support was three years only. The total grant was disbursed in instalments on the basis of deliverables over the course of the three or four year period. Despite the fact that different country teams appear to have very different needs in terms of accessing external financing, an agreement was made to provide equal amounts to all country teams. While from a programmatic perspective it might have been more prudent to tailor grants according to the local country context (such as the availability of other sources of in-country funds), this represented a pragmatic decision which reduced conflicts between country teams.

The release of funds to country hosts was contingent upon the development of annual work plans. This function is usually undertaken by the host organisation together with the convenor – and through consultation with FGLG members. Work plans and budgets are presented, reviewed and agreed on during the annual learning events and then based on this, funds are released directly to the host institution. Once budgets are agreed, there is relatively little room for modification during the course of the project. However, up to 15% deviation from budget lines is accepted, in accordance with EC reporting norms. In general, this has not proven to be too much of a constraint to in-country partners. Financial reporting at the country level is undertaken in local currencies, and then reconciled back to Euros at IIED in London. Auditing is undertaken in-country using local audit firms selected by the host institution. Managing grants and agreements between IIED and host institutions in ten countries (and in ten currencies) has been a challenging task, given the relatively small amounts of money being administered, but has progressed relatively smoothly. As one might expect, the major problem has been delays experienced in reporting from some countries, which has slowed the transfer of additional funds. However, this does not appear to have adversely affected progress at the overall project level.

Despite the fact that there were relatively small amounts of funding released each year to participating country teams, the use of the funds are almost entirely driven by in-country decisions and priorities. Apart from legitimate concerns from IIED on ensuring that funds are not disproportionately used to cover core costs of host institutions, there seem to be few limits constraining local creativity. Furthermore, in a number of countries, FGLG members have been able to leverage additional financial resources from participating partners or external donors. This has had the effect of multiplying the impacts of the rather modest finances available from IIED / EC. Examples of this co-financing can be found in Malawi (through the EC funded forest support programme), South Africa (through national and provincial government) and Indonesia (through CIFOR). In countries where additional external financing has not been forthcoming (such as Cameroon and Mozambique) the constraints of limited financing has to some degree constrained the range and scope of activities that FGLG teams have been able to engage in and perhaps additional support given to such country teams to identify and pursue additional funding opportunities in-country.

As different country groups become increasingly involved in advocacy work there may be additional needs for financial resources directed towards specific advocacy opportunities (that might not have been foreseen during the planning period). Within the current phase, there is no room for additional, financial support to opportunity-driven advocacy – but this might be a useful area to consider in the following phase of support.

3.7 Management of the initiative

3.7.1 IIED co-ordination and support

The role played by IIED in the management and leadership of this project has been central since its inception. It has involved the careful selection of key persons and institutions within all participating countries (assisted in some cases by RECOFTC and LTS), facilitating country teams through the identification of convenors and hosts, supporting the country teams to begin to explore and developed shared notions of forest governance. As issues have begun to emerge from country groups, analysis of these concepts has been strengthened and supported with inputs from IIED, who have provided intellectual input to the development of Terms of Reference for particular studies. As the country teams have developed a clearer vision and approach, further support has been provided in the development of tools, tactics and written outputs. Increasing international linkages have been fostered through the medium of international learning events, processes which have required considerable planning and facilitation, to ensure that learning and impact is maximised.

IIED has appointed individual staff members to act as focal persons for between one or two specific countries. The allocation of countries to specific individuals tends to follow their particular country interests, previous experience, or specific language skills. Country focal persons make one or two supervision missions each year to their respective country teams, to discuss tactics, strategy, to support individual pieces of work and to attend key learning events. Additional support is given to country teams in the editing and production of policy briefs and applied policy research, or when requested to do so by FGLG members. Finally, regular email and phone contact is maintained between country focal persons at IIED at convenors / hosts in focal countries. IIED must be commended for the establishment and retention of a strong team, with complementary sectoral and geographical skills, who throughout the course of the initiative have been able to provide a consistency and continuity of support of a high overall standard. Many persons consulted within participating country teams clearly valued their partnership with IIED. This was for a number of reasons as presented below:

- Support to a number of countries and partners is often multi-layered and covers complimentary initiatives. For example, partners in Malawi and Mozambique mentioned and commented positively on the fact that in addition to FGLG, they were receiving support from the “Forest Connect” and “Power Tools” projects.
- FGLG participants were happy with the overall level of support given by IIED staff members. Focal persons within IIED have been allocated to specific country teams – and these individuals provide a range of support functions to individuals and the learning group as a whole. During in-country visits, teams are supported to develop work-plans and to think creatively about their strategy and approach.
- Specific support is provided to country teams with regard to editing and in some cases drafting sections of reports and policy briefs.
- IIED’s strong links to the media, both internationally but also within the countries concerned, has added value to the work of learning groups. For example, IIED was able to quickly provide linkages and postings to international news networks (such as the BBC) during the Mabira forest campaign in Uganda). In addition, linkages are made between IIED in-country networks to local journalists and learning group members

Financial administration and reporting matters are co-ordinated by one member of the programme team who acts as a liaison point between the country hosts and the finance department within IIED London. It is her responsibility to communicate with hosts and ensure that reports are timely and accurate. Once they have been reviewed from a programme perspective, they are then submitted to the finance department who are responsible for compiling reports from the 10 participating countries, reconciling the ten different currencies back into Euros and preparing consolidated financial reports.

3.7.2 International partners

The programme document submitted to and approved by EC lists three international partners to the programme. These named partners are LTSI and Savcor-Indufor (international forestry consulting firms based in Scotland and Finland, respectively) and the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre (RECOFTC), which is a non-profit training institute based in the University of Bangkok in Thailand. These institutions were selected due to their in-depth knowledge and history of involvement in a number of the selected countries (for example, LTSI had an established engagement in Uganda, Malawi, South Africa and Ghana).

Initially, these partners were identified because of their established track record in many of the countries selected for FGLG support and because of the presence of certain key individuals who it was felt could complement and support the skills of IIED. Specific contributions were provided by the three organisations with regard to the identification of key individuals in a number of countries (including India, South Africa, and Uganda). LTSI were then used to provide on-going support services to some of the country teams (including Uganda and Cameroon), undertook some of the early analytical studies, as well as providing a consultant as primary facilitator of the international learning events. Savcor-Indufor provided support to Mozambique. In particular they produced a number of reports during the early stages of FGLG support to Mozambique, analysing revenue loss and illegalities in the timber harvesting arena – and proposing some concrete recommendations including a log-tracking system which they then designed. However, despite their strong links to government, and their contractual obligations to drive the learning group progress forward, their overall engagement in facilitation of the initiative was weak.

RECOFTC have played a more regional support role, providing on-going support to the three countries of India, Vietnam and Indonesia. Given the fact that the country convenor for Vietnam has now been engaged on a full-time basis by RECOFTC, it now looks highly likely that they will assume the role as both convenor and host institution. Initially, the focal person at RECOFTC was able to provide support to India, given her connections there – and at that stage support was mostly directed towards India. Two years ago, the contact person at RECOFTC changed to an individual with strong linkages to Indonesia – and following agreements with IIED - the focus of support from RECOFTC shifted to Indonesia, where it was felt to be needed most. RECOFTC support to Vietnam operates through the convenor – and little additional support is provided to wider FGLG team members. The country team in Indonesia expressed considerable satisfaction with the services provided by RECOFTC over the past two years – which in large part was facilitated by the strong personal relationship that existed between the individuals concerned before and during the period of support. In India, the country team expressed satisfaction with the support provided initially, but were less happy given the changing direction of support provided from Bangkok. In Vietnam, the strong links enjoyed by the convenor to RECOFTC have meant that many of the benefits offered by RECOFTC (particularly with regards to access to international networks and learning) have been realised by FGLG-Vietnam team members. The role and type of support provided by RECOFTC to the three learning groups in Asia has changed over time (often following agreements between RECOFTC and IIED), but in some cases, these changes appear not to have been clearly communicated to country teams.

Given the fluid, demand-driven and changing nature of support provided by RECOFTC over time – it is proposed that some effort is made to clarify the tripartite roles and contributions provided by the two international partners with respect to the three country teams. This is discussed in more detail in the recommendations section.

With regard to support provided by the two consulting firms (LTSI and Savcor-Indufor) this appears to have been most fruitful with regard to one-off studies or time-bound facilitation exercises. With regard to longer term or intermittent support, (such as the back-stopping of the Cameroon country team, or facilitating the work of FGLG Mozambique in its early stages), results have been more mixed. Consultants, by their very nature, tend to work towards defined deliverables and milestones. Open-ended, process facilitation work (such as backstopping country teams) may be more challenging – as it is hard to define, up front how much time may be needed and also hard to define when a job is “completed”. Perhaps in recognition of these limitations, coupled with an increase in capacity at IIED over the course of the initiative, the subsequent phase of the programme does not specify for-profit consultancy partners. Rather a pool of unallocated funds has been made available for sourcing short term technical support on a demand-driven basis. At the same time, some of the capacity gaps within IIED that meant that outsourcing of some work was needed – have now been filled (including a French speaker who will move forward with supporting the Cameroon country team).

3.7.3 Project Steering Committee

The programme proposal states that IIED will convene an Action Advisory Group – composed of three international partners and three national actors with a view to “steer and optimise” activities. In the early stages of the FGLG initiative, IIED convened a number of meetings with LTSI and Savcor-Indufor, with the expectation that RECOFTC would join at a later stage when the three Asian countries became more operational. However as the role of both LTSI and Savcor-Indufor became more anchored to specific tasks and services, their role (and interest) in participating at a higher, more strategic level began to wane.

Currently, a different model prevails – of in-country convenors, IIED and RECOFTC, which appears to be working more effectively and which was launched during the international learning event held in Malawi in December 2008. With improvements in communication (such as conference calls), it is becoming easier to meet on a “virtual” basis, in addition to face to face meetings at annual international learning events. The rather late establishment of a more formalised steering committee does not appear to have adversely affected performance. IIED has been able to maintain a high degree of contact with individual country teams – and any particular issue or constraint has been dealt with effectively on a bilateral basis. The establishment of the steering committee does, however, present interesting new opportunities for bringing the beneficiaries of the initiative (country teams) into a position of decision-making authority.

4. Programme Impact

4.1 A note about assessing impact

A major part of this review is concerned with an assessment of impact and performance of the FGLG to date. Assessing and attributing impact of FGLG interventions on improved governance (the stated goal of the specific objective) has proven to be a considerable challenge for a range of reasons as discussed below:

- **The “invisible” nature of FGLG** In almost all countries, FGLG is a highly informal association of members who rarely communicate externally as FGLG – but more often find other channels, networks or platforms for communicating their concerns. For example, in Uganda, when FGLG wishes to communicate collectively, it does so through the host institution (which in this case is ACODE – a national NGO specializing in advocacy). Other members of the same network may carry messages and then communicate them individually through the press, through their NGO coalitions, or through parliament.
- **Co-financing of FGLG activities:** FGLG teams and respective host institutions have often been most successful in achieving impact when they have been able to attract additional funding for activities being implemented (such as in Uganda, Ghana and South Africa). In many cases, deliberate efforts have been made to identify partners who are pursuing similar objectives with their own source of funding. This means assessing the specific and unique contribution of IIED is problematic.
- **Institutional nature of IIED support:** IIED often operates in any given country through a range of different but complimentary entry points – which may end up supporting the same institutions. For example, in a number of countries (like Malawi, Uganda and Mozambique) support from the Forest Connect programme helped the development of strategies around facilitating Small Forest Enterprises. This overlapped in some cases with support from FGLG funding. Similarly, the “Power Tools” project worked with some FGLG teams (such as Malawi) to develop more generic policy and governance tools that were published and disseminated globally. While this has clearly created a multiplier effect in terms of generating overall levels of impact, it becomes difficult to disentangle different strands of IIED support within a given country or initiative.
- **Complementary reform initiatives:** In a number of countries, there are a number of separate but mutually supportive initiatives that are working to reform governance in the forest sector. This may include bilateral / multi-lateral sector programmes that are supporting legal and institutional reform (such as DFID involvement in Ghana and EC involvement in Malawi), or more modest support to NGOs and civil society coalitions (as with FAO in Uganda and CARE in Ghana). Given the fact that these separate initiatives are all working to achieve similar goals, (albeit in different ways), it becomes hard to attribute a specific change in policy or action by a government actor to a specific input from a particular source
- **Changes in governance and learning take time to be realized.** FGLG is essentially a long term commitment to supporting the capacity of key individuals within participating countries and to their use of such capacity to achieve change and impact. Learning takes time – and furthermore, for this learning to be translated into change and impact (in terms of laws, policies, and action) takes even longer. For these changes at the structural and policy level to feed down to the local level and impact on poverty and livelihoods may arguably be beyond the reach of a four year initiative.

Measuring aggregated impact above the country level (at the overall programme level) is also complicated by the fact that FGLG activities and processes are so very different across different countries. To take an example – in Mozambique – FGLG supports a popular movement of civil society actors challenging illegal logging and trade – while in neighbouring South Africa, FGLG is a network of players drawn from government, private sector and civil

society, working on supporting small forest enterprises. As a result, it becomes hard to identify and compare “like with like”.

4.2 Impact to date

4.2.1 Impact on target groups

The programme document recognises three broad categories of target groups – and then anticipates how the programme will impact them differentially. This is presented in summarised form below, together with a broad assessment of the degree to which impact has been realised:

Beneficiary Category	Description of beneficiary	Anticipated impact	Assessment of impact realised
Immediate target group	Key change agents and advocates for reform in the forest sector Leading allies in important adjacent sectors (e.g. agriculture and finance ministries) Well connected forest-friendly power-brokers and deal makers (government or NGO) Leaders in forest enterprise	Stronger forest alliances both nationally and regionally Higher profile and credibility Greater practical effectiveness More sustainable financial support Deeper long-term capacity	High levels of impact achieved, in terms of improved learning, access to improved internal and external networks and alliances, increased knowledge and use of practical tools and tactics with which to influence forest governance decisions
Intermediaries	National representatives of the very poor – CBOs, NGOs National government departments including forest, agriculture, land and works, planning and finance and industry departments National and international forest industry associations, labour organisations and trade unions International forest governance institutions, including regional and national government, investment and finance agencies, donor agencies and international policy shapers	Joined-up governance – installing forest objectives in framework policies governing multiple sectors Greater capacity More sophisticated approaches Wider connectedness Working examples of success Greater capture of learning More reliable revenues - increased registration of and tax recovery from forest enterprise	Good overall levels of impact. All countries have interacted and impacted positively wider stakeholder groups, beyond FGLG teams. Some have developed vertical linkages to the community level (eg: Indonesia, Vietnam); others have developed links to associations of SMFEs (South Africa, India), while all have established strong links to government agencies
Ultimate target group	Local communities at the forest margin who own or use forest products and services especially during times of hardship, often seeking off-farm and off-season employment. Community based or privately owned small and medium forest enterprises (SMFEs) excluding large national and international firms) using timber or NTFPs.	Enhanced security Greater sustainability Structured employment opportunities Improved working conditions Deals and partnerships Greater access to useful information Stronger development assistance Channels to influence government and private sector policy Higher profile in international policy processes	Demonstrable, tangible and widespread impact on ultimate target group achieved in five countries which has resulted in more secure forest management rights for local communities (eg: Ghana, Indonesia, Uganda) and improvements for SMFEs (eg: South Africa and India)

Table 5: Planned and achieved impact on three target groups

Feedback provided by team members of participating country teams would indicate the immediate target group of FGLG have realised impact in terms of their personal and professional development as well as improved linkages and alliances at the national, regional and international levels. Indeed, it is at this level where the impact of the initiative is strongest and most visible. As mentioned previously, it is the realisation of personal benefits from the participation in FGLG that provides the catalyst that supports and maintains FGLG activities at a wider level. Members of learning groups in all countries that were consulted as part of this review have all spoken of how their interactions within their country teams has enhanced their understanding and appreciation of forest governance challenges. This has been particularly strong and effective where learning groups have been deliberately composed of persons who come from different stakeholder groups – and where new horizontal or vertical linkages have been forged. In addition, FGLG participants across a number of countries felt the additional benefit of this being an international initiative, manifested through the sharing of lessons and experience across different country contexts. Finally, participants of FGLG processes reported benefits from IIED as an institutional partner, providing support to a range of initiatives, as discussed in Section 4.1.

Intermediaries – namely representatives of local NGOs, trade networks and government departments have also benefited through direct or indirect participation in the activities of FGLG at the country level. Although some of the country teams do not have specific representation from government within the FGLG (See Table 3 – notably India and Mozambique), while others lack membership from marginalised forest-dependent groups (with the notable exceptions of Vietnam and Indonesia), or associations of SFEs, there have been deliberate efforts to reach out to these groups in a number of countries – either through targeted studies and evidence-based research – where these groups have been consulted, or through multi stakeholder forums at which these views are represented and aired – and at which FGLG members participate.

The degree to which the ultimate target group, composed of local communities from the forest margin, or persons engaged in small scale forest based enterprises, have realised impact during the limited time period this programme has been operating is difficult to assess quantifiably. However, evidence from a number of countries would suggest that impact is beginning to be felt at this level. Some illustrative examples of how communities and rural entrepreneurs are beginning to realise impact at this level include:

- forest-dependent households living around Mabira forest, in Uganda, who have more secure livelihoods as a result of civil society action (partly supported by FGLG) which successfully reversed a government decision to degazette the forest and convert it to sugar plantations
- small scale forest enterprises in South Africa, who can now operate within a framework of simplified, rationalised and improved policies
- increased access rights to collect and manage NTFPs in state forest land by indigenous community groups in Orissa state
- practical actions for locally beneficial community forestry are better enabled by governance frameworks in Vietnam
- several investments in logging deals that were over-exploitative of local forests and livelihoods have been questioned and prevented by high-level action in Mozambique
- new policy has legitimised and supported community-controlled logging at district level in Indonesia
- New thinking on community enterprises permeates first co-management agreements in forest reserves in Malawi – and the new Director of Forestry has agreed to pilot sustainable charcoal production.

The programme document states that FGLG will “develop strategic links with those typically marginalised within the forest sector”. The degree to which this has happened is somewhat mixed. Deliberate efforts to link to local level actors has been made in some countries – such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Niger, where local level platforms and processes exist. In other countries (Ghana and Uganda) membership of the learning group has been dominated by those with strategic links to policy processes, and located mostly in the capital cities (albeit with strong and regular links to the issues or marginalised groups).

4.2.2 Impact against key indicators

The specific objective of the FGLG initiative is stated in the log-frame as “Improved governance of forest resources in ten countries in Africa and Asia”. Eight objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) are listed against which the achievement of this objective can be met, and overall programme impact assessed. Table 5, below, lists the specific impact indicators and then provides a narrative assessment regarding the degree to which these have been met. An indicative scoring system, as presented in section 3.1, is once again used here (ranging from 1 – 5, with 1 indicating likely to be completely achieved and 5 indicating unlikely to be achieved).

Impact indicators	Assessment of progress	Score
Implementation of improved forest governance provisions in poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes and decentralisation processes	A number of countries have pursued goals that relate to this indicator, in many cases, acting in concert with on-going complimentary initiatives implemented both inside and outside government. As a result a number of policies and national processes have been impacted. It may be too early to see if these changes have resulted in new implementation modalities as this can take some time to filter down to changed action on the ground.	2
Greater forest awareness and coordination between key decision makers at national and international levels driving sectoral and inter-sectoral strategies and processes	Key decision makers have been influenced by all FGLG country teams. A number of issues have been given exposure internationally through a range of different processes and forums.	1
Implementation of strategies to reduce illegal or corrupt forestry activities	Effective strategies to reduce illegal or corrupt forestry activities, in-part attributable to FGLG work, have been supported in around 4 – 5 countries. It may be rather early to say if these strategies are now reducing illegalities and corruption.	2
Improved and transparent processes to monitor, discuss and address illegality in place	Limited impact in the introduction of formal legality monitoring (such as IFM), but increased civil society awareness and scrutiny has increased transparency in a number of countries	2
Increase in forest enterprise compliance with legislation	This has been a strong focus in a number of countries – such as India, South Africa, Malawi and Indonesia and is increasingly resulting in an improved legal and policy frameworks at national and sub-national levels, and in turn leading to greater levels of compliance.	1
Stronger enterprise associations and information sharing networks on legal and sustainable practice	Networks of forest enterprises have participated actively in a number of country networks. However, their role (and that of the private sector generally) in other country learning groups has been rather limited	3
Clearer administrative rules and processes governing ownership and access rights	A number of country teams (Malawi, Ghana, India) are focusing on rules and regulations that govern access and ownership rights to forest land and products. This has resulted in changed rules in some countries – and in other countries, looks likely to occur	2

Inclusive policy and management frameworks linking local with national and international levels.	In some countries, there is a growing appreciation of the linkages between local, sub-national and national (eg South Africa and Vietnam), and this is being translated into new legal and policy frameworks (such as the VPA process in Ghana and the Land Policy in Uganda).	2
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Table 6: Assessment of progress in the achievement of impact indicators

4.2.3 Types of impact realised at country level

In the eighth and most FGLG Update report prepared for this project a range of different impacts that have been achieved across the ten countries. This is reproduced below in Table 7, with some modifications, as it provides a very useful summary.

Type of impact	Examples
Improved understanding of governance issues and on-the-ground realities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Research used and evidence based advocacy effective (such as Community Forestry in Vietnam and NTFPs in India) ❑ Awareness raised of illegal activities and the costs this presents to society and to the economy (for example with regard to charcoal study in Malawi and ongoing research on timber trade in Mozambique) ❑ Improving understanding by different stakeholders of what good governance and social justice means (for example campaign ongoing in Mozambique on illegal logging)
Improved understanding of tactics that can change governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Developing a range of different tools for use in advocacy campaigns (policy briefs, study tours for policy makers, breakfast meetings for politicians, theatre and cartoons) ❑ Building strong coalitions of actors through both horizontal and vertical linkages to influence policy makers e.g. in Mozambique and Ghana: influencing forestry staff/ law
Strengthened capabilities to influence or change governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Improved capacity of FGLG members to influence decisions/ policies in favour of community priorities and transparency (such as in Ghana, South Africa, Ghana, Indonesia and Vietnam) ❑ Participants learning - thinking in a different way (e.g. Indonesia local government actors, SME attendees at South Africa forums) ❑ Organisational change influenced (e.g. enabling Indian politicians to push for governance reform as 'their' issues)
Improved engagement mechanisms and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Platforms created/ facilitated by FGLG and other processes for multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary engagement on forest governance (e.g. VPA negotiations in Ghana) ❑ Participatory policy making processes facilitated and institutionalised ❑ Experience sharing across countries facilitated through international events and other networking opportunities ❑ Policy briefs used to inform, influence and support design of mechanisms
Changed discourses and decision-making processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Forestry's profile raised and awareness increased of forest governance: recognition of forestry as a priority area within the government development agenda ❑ Questions of social justice in forestry installed in national forestry discourse ❑ Particular policies, laws and strategies promoted that influence the wider forest sector (e.g. on combating illegalities and making decentralisation work)
Changed decisions and influenced policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Government decisions on investment proposals changed (for example de-gazettement in Uganda, reserve give-aways and logging permits in Mozambique) ❑ Policies influenced lead to better 'deals' for local people/'the country' (for example: VPA in Ghana; community logging revised and approved in Sulawesi, Indonesia) ❑ New institutions and innovative approaches that are informed by clear, convincing evidence (e.g. forestry SME funds and policy statements in South Africa; community based forest management in Vietnam)

Table 7: FGLG impact – a typology with examples from FGLG work

4.2.4 Impact at the international level

The programme document anticipates that the impact of the programme will be felt primarily at the country level in terms of increased capacity, improved policies and better governance, all of which will provide real benefits for the ultimate beneficiaries – local communities living at the forest margin, or small and medium forest based enterprises. However, given the applicability of this programme to other on-going governance reform processes and IIEDs strong connections with a wide range of multi-lateral and bilateral donors, research institutes as well as NGOs, efforts have been made over the course of the programme to disseminate the results, lessons and findings of this programme widely. At the country level, FGLG teams are also strongly connected to other country-specific governance reform processes and these networks are also being kept actively informed regarding the outcomes and progress of the initiative. Some of the organisations and initiatives that have been involved in co-operation and information sharing with FGLG include Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); European Forestry Institute; the World Bank's Forest Law Enforcement and Governance and Programme on Forests (PROFOR) programmes; CARE; Rights and Resources Initiative; WWF-UK; Tree-Aid; The Forests Dialogue; DFID's Multi-stakeholder Forestry Programme; IIED's Poverty and Conservation Learning Group and IIED-FAO *Forest Connect* initiative and RECOFTC. Collaboration has also been fostered with European Tropical Forest Research Network, Tropenbos, NORAD, The Global Mechanism, Prince's Rainforest Project, and a key Ad-Hoc Working Group of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Interviews conducted as part of this evaluation would indicate that the FGLG initiative has had influenced thinking and programmatic directions of a number of the institutions described above. This has particularly been the case, with regard to in-country partnerships where organisations with similar aims and objectives have been addressing issues in different, but complementary ways. One concrete example comes from Ghana, where a number of organisations (such as IUCN, CARE, Rights and Resources Initiative and FERN) have engaged directly and supported key members of the FGLG-Ghana, and have provided financial support to undertake similar work, using many of the tactics and tools developed during the FGLG support. One representative of a bilateral donor, consulted during this review, who had been overseeing support to government-centred forest reform processes indicated the important role that FGLG had played in shaping and complementing more formal processes.

In summary, it would appear that clear and demonstrable signs of impact have been obtained to date in supporting learning among the participants of the learning groups. Furthermore, clear impacts have been realised in influencing decisions and changed policies within government. However, with regard to how these impacts have been translated into tangible and widespread impact in times of improved livelihoods and reduced vulnerability of the ultimate target group (communities living on the forest edge and members of small forest enterprises) it is harder to assess. Clear signs are emerging from a number of countries where this sort of impact is occurring – such as Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Vietnam), and promising signs are emerging from a number of other countries that indicate that the conditions for realising impact at this level are being created (Mozambique, India, Indonesia, Malawi).

4.3 Sustainability

The FGLG is essentially a long-term investment in building the capacity of small groups of individuals within ten countries, with a view to fostering learning and change. Rather than the development of specific skills (which may have a limited use and applicability), the initiative aims to develop understanding and experiential learning around the drivers of poor forest governance and most crucially, how governance processes can be positively influenced. Given that almost all of the members of in-country learning groups are persons

who are likely to be engaged in the forest sector over an extended period, the learning and experience they gain from the initiative will be carried forward into the future, with or without future support from IIED.

As with the discussion around impact, the degree to which governance changes are sustained over the medium to longer term is hard to assess. The overall rationale for focusing on governance is, however, a realisation that if lasting change is to be achieved, interventions must begin to address underlying causes. By engaging with laws, policies and national frameworks, it is likely that impact will be sustainable over the medium term. In countries with critical governance challenges (such as Mozambique, where corrupt forest and trade networks exist between the private sector and senior government figures), support from the FGLG initiative to a network of civil society organisations is creating a growing external voice which aims to hold government accountable for its actions.

With regard to the sustainability of the process – namely the long term operations of learning groups, it is likely that in some countries, sharing of experiences and learning would continue to function without support from IIED. This is particularly the case where learning groups have been successfully integrated within the operations (and available budgets) of host institutions, where additional resources have been leveraged and where the activities of the group continue to serve the individual interests of its members (such as in Uganda and Ghana). In countries where support from IIED constitutes the only form of external assistance to the learning group, it is highly unlikely that without additional resources, the group and its operations would be maintained (such as in South Africa, Cameroon, Vietnam or India).

Given the fact that achieving sustainable impact in forest governance is a long term goal and only partially achievable in a four year initiative, additional support has been requested (and granted) from the EC, with which to continue to support both learning in governance across ten countries.

5. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Lessons have been learned at different operational levels of the programme. At the country level, learning groups have been engaged in a learning process – much of which has provided lessons in effective tactics to address governance. This includes lessons in effective advocacy, lessons in the composition and roles of learning group members and lessons on the development of partnerships. Many of these are documented in the various progress reports, international learning events and in the trip reports to Uganda, Mozambique and Vietnam that appears in Annexes 2-4 of this report. Rather than repeating these lessons here, an attempt is made to provide an overview of conclusions and lessons learned at the level of the overall initiative, and across the six years of supported provided by the EC, DFID and others. As an important footnote to this section it is worth pointing out that much of what appears below is a reformulation of higher-level lessons that have been learned by IIED staff members through their support to the initiative since its inception.

5.1 *Success criteria for functional learning groups*

The diversity of forms and functions of learning groups across all ten participating countries points towards an important lesson – namely that there are a number of important conditions that foster the development of vibrant and effective learning groups. The “learning group” is a concept that has been developed and adapted by IIED over the past ten to fifteen years, but with little deliberate reflection on the rationale and assumptions that under-pin the approach. To help move this process forward a little, the following section tries to assess under which conditions FGLG-supported processes have achieved greatest results (expressed in terms of generating learning and governance impact). These pointers may be of additional use to IIED when starting new initiatives of this kind which use the learning group methodology – or when plans to launch FGLG in Tanzania materialise in the next phase of support to FGLG.

Having looked closely at the progress and impacts of individual country teams it would appear that some countries have achieved higher levels of impact (expressed in both terms of learning and policy / governance). Similarly the learning groups are constructed around very different models, with a wide range of membership types, vertical and horizontal linkages, size and approaches. Although it may be rather difficult to isolate the range of different internal and external factors that contributed to the success of any given country team, some initial ideas appear below, many of which have been generated through discussions with members of the IIED team in Edinburgh and London.

- **Convenor:** Successful learning groups have a convenor who is well connected, has the ability to inspire and motivate others and who sees a close convergence between the objectives of the group and his/her own personal or professional interests.
- **Membership:** A key descriptor of successful learning groups is a group of people who share similar interests, who have the ability and willingness to work on the practical politics of changing decisions, and who come from diverse interests and backgrounds. In general, learning groups have tended to work best when members are from diverse backgrounds and representing divergent interests. In the selection of members there are trade-offs to be made: On one hand, making a learning group too large (for example, above 20 members) makes it impersonal, unwieldy and cumbersome – but making a learning group too small and familiar (for example 5-7 members) risks the creation of a group of members who knew each other already with limited added value.
- **Convergence of group and personal interests:** FGLG membership is voluntary and members generally participate in an individual (rather than institutional) capacity. Given that it takes place largely during working hours, the individual incentive to participate

must be able to compete favourably with professional demands on time, which are often considerable given the fact that most members are busy people with heavy workloads. FGLG has worked best when there is a convergence between the professional (or personal) interests of the individual members with that of the wider group.

- **Strategic linkages:** Learning groups tend to function best when the group – or members within a group have access to a range of external networks with the potential to impact upon governance decisions. This could be networks relating to the media and journalism, informal or formal networks, forums of committees within government, or coalitions of civil society interests. In some countries, learning groups have taken on identify and recognition of their own – and are increasingly been seen as “trusted informer” by government (for example in Malawi, South Africa and Vietnam). In both cases, however, this access to external networks and processes tends to multiply the impact of the initiative
- **Host:** A successful host is characterised by an organisation that is pursuing similar goals and objectives to the FGLG with a capacity to handle funds and account for them in an efficient manner. In many cases, the identity of host organisations is rooted in activism and works through a charismatic convenor (for example Civic Response – Ghana; ACODE – Uganda and JA! – Mozambique). While this tends to provide a certain degree of dynamism and energy (essential ingredients to a host institution), their strong “activist” identity may discourage participation from certain stakeholder groups, who may see the organisation as hostile to their interests (such as, potentially, government or large scale private sector). Similarly in South Africa, the representative from the host institution (Forestry SA) is an individual who is widely respected for his vision and charisma. This contrasts somewhat with the perceptions of the host institution – which has some public image issues regarding its alignment with “big business” interests. Experience from Ghana, Uganda and South Africa suggests the importance of making a clear distinction between the identity of the host institution – and that of the learning group itself, particularly if the participation of the a diverse range of stakeholders (private sector, civil society and government) is to be encouraged. The experiences from Niger have highlighted the importance of selecting a host with strong links (both institutional and geographical) to national processes, experiences with policy work and good access to key decision making processes.
- **Strategic planning and engagement:** An additional factor is the ability of the team or convenor to define clear and achievable goals, within a niche that is appropriate to the size, skills and budget of the FGLG team - and which remains useful to the broader governance debate. In addition, an ability to identify and seize upon opportunities as they occur appears to be critical.
- **Additional funding and support:** FGLG processes at the country level appear to work best when they are able to leverage additional funds (such as in Malawi and Ghana) to complement the rather modest funds made available from IIED. In countries where FGLG funding is unsupported by other funds, activities and impact have been somewhat constrained. Where hosts have injected additional internal resources (such as CIFOR in Indonesia) either in terms of supporting staff or specific activities – this also appears to have played an important role in sustaining and expanding FGLG activities.

Some country convenors spoke of the tensions between activism and lobbying on one hand, and the creation of a forum, or space where decisions can be taken and ideas exchanged, on the other. As indicated above, the character of the host institution may play a role in this regard. Where a host has a strong identity and a track record in more confrontational, direct advocacy processes, there may be less willingness to join the group from members who may feel “targeted” by existing members (such as more conservative members of government, or entrenched private sector interests). As an example, the Ghana group felt that if they were to get broader engagement (particularly from private sector) it would be important to clearly differentiate the image of the learning group from that of the host, and to

ensure that the learning group does not run the risk of mutating into a lobby group – but that it retains its identity as a platform or space where dialogue can take place, and where a range of opinions can be heard.

5.2 Forestry as an entry point to a wider debate about governance drivers

Examples from many countries indicate that governance challenges in forestry are simply mirrors of wider governance gaps facing society at large. The threats to Mabira and Kalangala Forests in Uganda were due largely to a dis-respect by the President for normal political processes and a disregard for the views of mandated government agencies. Illegal logging in Mozambique was a symptom of broader governance challenges in which the private sector is becoming increasingly entangled with political processes and creating a corrupt network of inter-dependency. The lack of benefits from forest resources enjoyed by forest dependent communities in Ghana was largely due to a prioritisation by government of private sector interests above those of local stakeholders. Failures to reform the charcoal sector in Malawi are again, a result of strong economic interests, many connected politically, which benefit from the status quo. The forest sector provides a compelling entry point into a range of wider debates – such as the interplay and conflict of interests at local national and international levels, the failure to effectively capture and utilise revenues – and the impact this has on society and the economy, as well as issues relating to land tenure, control and access. Mozambique provides an interesting example of how forest governance issues have been championed by members of the Amigos da Floresta movement – notably Centro de Integridade Publica, and Centro do Formacao Juridica, to highlight issues of forest corruption and crime, but also working at higher levels to try and combat corruption in government moiré generally.

By framing these challenges in forestry terms, learning groups in a number of countries were able to explore, unpack and communicate some of the deeper, underlying root causes. Being forestry professionals, and approaching the problem as essentially a forestry issue, their legitimacy or mandate was never questioned. Had the same groups attempted to address these deeper issues in more abstract terms, and without the practical anchor provided by the sector, they may have had a great deal less success.

5.3 Innovation and best practice

The decentralised manner in which FGLG has worked across the ten countries has provided an important testing ground for locally-driven and innovative approaches, as typified by the sheer variety of forms and functions of different country groups (Table 3). IIED has played an important role in fostering this innovation – challenging country teams both individually and collectively to innovate, take risks and experiment. At the same time, IIED has sought to provide a unifying framework to each of the country teams – a broad set of objectives and a process to follow, to ensure that incentives for learning between teams and generic similarities prevail. There are clear trade-offs to be made between an approach that provides rigid guidance and structure from the top (but potentially stifles local creativity) and one that provides limited support and direction (but potentially risks the creation of 10 entities that share no common characteristics and cross-country learning becomes meaningless). On the whole, IIED has walked this difficult path well. As discussed in the following section on recommendations, it may now be a good time to begin to take stock across the ten participating countries and review the variety of FGLG configurations, memberships and forms, with a view to assessing how these different forms influence the achievement of both learning and governance goals.

5.4 Harnessing the media for forest governance reforms

One lesson learned by many country teams relates to the power of the media and ways in which it can be harnessed to promote governance reform. Experiences from Uganda particularly show how perceptions of (and by) the media can change over time. Prior to the

Uganda FGLG engaging with the media, many of the members were distrustful of the media, feeling that all too often they were only interested in sensationalism and less interested in real facts. The media, likewise, characterised the forest sector as uniformly corrupt, with little nuanced understanding of the different forces and counter-forces operating. By identifying key individuals within the Ugandan media, and reaching out to them and including them within the learning group, these mutually reinforcing negative perceptions, were completely reversed. Members from the media are able to use outputs from the learning group studies and meetings as raw material for producing accurate and timely news items. Armed with this accurate information, and more aware of the debates that surround the forest sector, the quality and focus of media reporting around forestry has improved massively. As well as illustrating how the media can be engaged proactively in participating countries, this example provides a neat summary of how learning groups can help create new linkages and expand learning. In addition to harnessing the power of the local media, the Uganda FGLG were also able to link to and benefit from the international media, with strong support from the IIED FGLG facilitator and press officer in London. Bringing the international media spotlight on Uganda helped reinforce local pressure on policy makers and provided an additional tool in the advocacy campaign. Other examples can be found from the work of Malawi team on Charcoal, or the creative media work of Amigos da Floresta group in Mozambique.

5.5 Changing approaches to changing circumstances

Successful governance work requires an ability to accurately assess the external operating environment, to identify opportunities or changed positions, and to develop strategies in response to this. The Ghana example provides an important lesson on how one country team were able to do just this. In the report titled “Legality and the impacts of forest utilisation”, produced by FGLG members, the failures of government to follow official procedures when engaging with the private sector (such as issuing Timber Utilisation Permits) was made clear. Faced with stone-walling from the Forestry Commission, and limited impact of more formal advocacy processes, a new opportunity emerged when IIED was invited to prepare a set of policy options (and their associated impacts) within the context of a VPA agreement. At this point, FGLG was able to begin to engage more directly with the VPA negotiation process – and to more broadly discuss a number of the policy options being put on the table. Furthermore, FGLG-Ghana was quick to see the potential opportunities offered by the VPA – namely that both the private sector and government were active players and ready to engage at the highest levels. This ability to identify a changing external environment and to see the opportunities (or threats) that this may offer – and then to develop a strategy around it, is a key aspect of a successful advocacy and engagement process.

5.6 Effective facilitation of multi-country teams

There are also important lessons to be learned from this review regarding the effective facilitation of country teams. IIED has played a central and critical role in introducing the learning group concept in 10 countries, and establishing a team of persons who are now engaged in important discussions, learning and reforms within the arena of forest governance. Over time, and with strong facilitation by IIED, the country teams have become increasingly organised with a clearer shared vision of goals, strategies and direction – and IIED’s role has gradually shifted to a more supportive role, providing inputs to studies, written outputs and participating more as a member of the discussion – rather than a leader. The increasing confidence and engagement of the country teams has been recognised by IIED, and reflected in the fact that a steering committee has recently been established composed of country facilitators, IIED and RECOFTC, providing significantly more voice to the country teams in the overall management of the initiative. (See section 3.7.3). This important and positive development does however raise an important issue regarding the degree to which IIED (as contract holder with EC) has a mandate or legitimacy to influence

or steer the work and direction of the in-country teams. One useful example of this dilemma comes from Indonesia where IIED have encouraged the country team to engage with the upcoming FLEGT process – given the strong successes achieved in Ghana, growing interest from Cameroon and Vietnam and significant in-house expertise within IIED. FGLG Indonesia have, for a variety of valid and justifiable reasons resisted these advances. Clearly this example points to the need for a wider discussion within FGLG on the degree to which decisions regarding the overall direction and management of the initiative can be effectively delegated to country teams – given that IIED operates under a contractual agreement with the EC and is ultimately accountable for the generation of key outputs and impact.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations are provided below at the overall programme level, rather than specific recommendations targeted to individual country initiatives. A limited number of thoughts and ideas regarding the future development of the learning groups in Uganda, Mozambique and Vietnam are presented in Annex 2-4 of this report. The recommendations presented in this section have evolved over the four months of this evaluation in discussion with country teams, IIED as well as RECOFTC.

6.1 Clarifying the approach that underpins learning groups

During the course of this evaluation, a range of opinions have been given both within and outside the confines of this initiative as to the rationale, assumptions and theory of change that under-pin the establishment of learning groups. Whilst there appears to be general agreement that learning groups provide a safe and moderated space for divergent groups of stakeholders to meet and exchange information and learning, beyond this, it becomes less clear how this is translated into changed decision making, improved governance and ultimately impact upon poor forest-dependent communities. The matter is further complicated by the fact that in a number of the country teams in FGLG, the membership does not necessarily allow exchange of interests, views and ideas between those who make and enforce policy – and those who are affected by it. In some cases, country teams are composed exclusively of representatives from civil society (see current support to Mozambique) – while in other cases, learning groups are largely dominated by government decision makers (see for example the first phase of support to Mozambique, where representation from civil society was low). Given the diversity of opinions regarding how country teams groups operate – as well as the diversity of forms under which learning groups appear to operate across the ten countries, it is recommended that IIED facilitate a process of reflection, together with participating members from the ten countries around the role, function, composition and trajectory of successful learning groups, as well as a shared vision around the underlying rationale and approach. This discussion may help country teams to clarify their thinking and to analyse the trajectory and path of their learning approaches as well as the direction of their governance work. For example, there are active discussions going on in a number of countries (such as Uganda) regarding the evolution of FGLG activities there. Should the focus of FGLG now move “upstream” to begin to address some of the real underlying drivers of governance failures (the rule of law, the power of parliament, the power of the president and the executive, centralist versus decentralisation tendencies) or should it now move “downstream” to work on supporting the development of guidelines, laws and legal provisions?

For those learning groups with few or no links to government, due perhaps to the difficult operating environment found in that country, a similar dialogue is needed with a view to identifying how an engagement process can take place. In Mozambique, for example, the composition of the FGLG network is most suited to confrontational advocacy and popular opposition. However, given recent changes in the forestry administration, there may be real

opportunities for engagement. Helping the local learning group there to identify these opportunities, to set the conditions for their engagement (to avoid risks of being co-opted) and to equip them with the skills to do so is now an urgent priority. Perhaps experiences can be gained from Ghana, where the learning group there was able to re-position itself and modify its own approach from an external critic to one that used the opportunity of the VPA process to identify opportunities for engagement and change.

Given that the concept of a “learning group” is largely an IIED creation, and that it now has over 15 years experience of facilitating learning groups in different sectors, across very different country contexts and using very different models, it is also recommended that IIED document some of their own experience in the establishment and maintenance of learning groups, again with a view to clarifying internal thinking and logic. There is an important role for IIED in working with partners to think through the rationales for both impact and learning – much of which has already happened through the development of tools and tactics. Questions that might usefully be asked include: What are the objectives of learning groups? What is the underlying rationale? How does learning about governance translate into improved governance decisions? How does “change happen” in each country? Under which conditions do learning groups meet their own objectives? Why do they perform better in some countries than in others? Interestingly this debate has now begun within IIED, when in June 2009, IIED staff and its board spent several hours exploring the approaches, impacts and futures of several learning group-based projects currently operating within its organisation.

6.2 Reviewing the membership of FGLGs across the ten countries

In light of the above, it is also recommended that a more systematic approach is applied by country teams to the selection of its members and greater guidance given to country convenors. In some countries, there is a concern that the membership of the learning group may be too small, or too limited to one specific stakeholder group. In some countries, a rather passive approach has been adopted to membership, using a demand driven approach which selects based on interest and engagement, while in other countries, deliberate efforts have been made to identify and engage members who it was felt could contribute strongly. Given the fact that the programme is embarking on a new phase, and that a number of country teams are reviewing their overall approach and membership, opportunities may exist for identifying allies within government institutions and bringing them pro-actively into FGLG membership. Similarly, the overall representation of private sector forest enterprise interests across the ten countries remains surprisingly limited (apart from a few notable exceptions such as South Africa). In countries such as Vietnam, where the private sector is one of the biggest drivers of change in the forest sector (and the economy as a whole) and where there is growing interest to engage, their absence in the learning group is an avoidable omission. In Uganda, the emergence of the Uganda Timber Growers Association, which is now increasingly taking on a leading role in representing the interests of small and medium afforestation enterprises, presents opportunities for engagement – potentially opening new pathways to power. Finally, FGLG has as an explicit aim the development of strategic links with those typically marginalised within the forest sector. Again, it will be important in the new phase to seek out opportunities for identifying institutions, associations or CBOs that can effectively communicate the voice of marginalised forest users and managers. In a number of countries (such as Tanzania), the emergence of associations of community forest managers (modelled along the FECOFUN concept of Nepal) represents one such opportunity.

Without this constant search for new and strategic partnerships of these sorts, there remains a risk of stagnation. It is always important to strike a balance between creating a safe space, where people feel comfortable enough to talk openly and without fear of recrimination, and ensuring that new, contrasting and on occasions, conflicting voices are heard. This

recommendation is given with one caveat however. Learning groups have been most effective, strategic and tactical when their numbers do not become too large. Once the group membership exceeds around 15 persons, the costs and inertia associated with engaging with such a large group of people begins to limit effectiveness. Consequently, it is important to ensure that during the process of reviewing membership, the temptation is resisted to simply continue to add new members, without questioning the contribution and inputs of existing ones. With regard to the establishment of a new learning group in Tanzania, lessons from the first phase regarding the careful selection of complimentary members from different stakeholder groups must also be incorporated.

6.3 Providing additional financial support to opportunistic advocacy

By its very nature, influencing governance processes involves elements of opportunity and luck. A number of countries consulted in this review expressed a certain level of frustration over the fact that when these unanticipated opportunities arise, the availability of funds from IIED may not be sufficient to support such actions, due to the fact that budget guidelines issued by IIED (reflecting EC regulations) tend to be rather rigid and additional resources may not always be available. It is recommended therefore that in the next phase of support, in addition to providing core funding to activities in the respective country work plans, an additional pool of funds is retained within IIED with a view to supporting one-off, opportunistic advocacy that falls outside the annual plans developed. These funds should be available to country teams based on a request and following simple guidelines developed by IIED, which will allow for them to be transferred at short notice so that they can be used for maximum effect

6.4 Clarifying the role of international partners

Three international partners have been engaged over the course of this current phase of funding – one of whom has been selected to continue into the next phase of support. As discussed in section 3.7.2, the contribution of these institutions, while generally being useful, has not been without challenges – largely related to changes of staff acting as focal or liaison persons. With regard to RECOFTC (the only partner selected to continue in the next phase) a different relationship appears to exist in all three countries – and in some cases, this relationship has changed over time. Given that FGLG is now embarking on a new phase, and RECOFTC will continue to play a strategic, backstopping role within the programme, it is recommended that IIED facilitate a more focused discussion between RECOFTC and the three Asia country teams to clarify expectations and deliverables, within the context of a demand-driven approach. In addition, this discussion could usefully clarify the division of labour (in terms of programmatic support) between IIED and RECOFTC.

In terms of providing effective and representative decision-making at the project level, the recently constituted steering committee described in 3.7.3 offers an interesting and participatory model for the next phase of project support. It is recommended that the move towards a new phase of support could provide an opportunity for IIED to reflect on forest governance more generally. Peer institutions using complementary, but different approaches to addressing forest governance have expressed an interest to engage more directly with IIED on exchanging experiences and lessons – and as a means to ensure greater harmonisation of activities within shared country support is operating. Possible candidates for such a forum might include FERN, WWF, IUCN, CARE and Global Witness.

6.5 Clarifying the limits to delegation

Section 5.6 pointed to potential tensions that IIED faces as both contract holder with EC and an organisation wishing to delegate as much decision making power to country teams. As country teams develop and mature further over the coming phase, legitimate demands for delegation and autonomy will grow, and as much as possible be encouraged by IIED. However, it is important that this issue is addressed pro-actively and discussed at the next

international learning event – as well as in more concrete terms through the recently established steering committee, which now has representation from country convenors.

6.6 Improved linkages to other EC funded in-country forest governance initiatives

In a number of countries where FGLG operates, there are other EC-supported NGO initiatives which are working on forest governance. This includes the IUCN-supported “Strengthening Voices for Better Choices” which currently operates in (among others) Vietnam, Ghana and Tanzania. A second project, “Building multi-stakeholder coalitions in Central and West Africa and China for the negotiation and implementation of nationally defined and innovative actions in support of FLEGT/VPAs” works in Ghana and Cameroon. WWF currently are operating in Vietnam with EC funded support to their Global Forest and Trade Network (GF&TN) and are helping to engage forest sector entrepreneurs in FLEGT processes. While some contacts have been developed between these different initiatives and FGLG, there is still scope for improved linkages and collaboration. Given that all of these projects are seeking to support governance reforms in forest harvesting and trade, it is recommended that more deliberate efforts are made to engage with them and multiply their collective impact.

6.7 Increasing opportunities for thematic, cross country learning.

One of the clear added values of this initiative is the opportunity for cross country learning and sharing of international experience. A number of common focal areas are beginning to emerge across countries and regions – for example VPA/FLEGT processes in Ghana, Cameroon and Vietnam; small forest enterprises in South Africa, India and Malawi. In some cases, this has begun to happen, unprompted by IIED. Given their global overview and international networks, IIED staff members have a unique opportunity to make connections between country experiences and lessons, which may not be apparent to country teams working at the national level, and through the linkages provided through the project at present. As such, it is recommended that IIED play a more pro-active role in supporting such exchanges, including the possibility of limited additional financial support, for example, in the facilitation of cross-country exchange visits.

Annex 1: Terms of reference for the evaluation

Evaluation of the work of the Forest Governance Learning Group, 2005 to 2009

1. Background to the initiative

The Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG) is an informal alliance of in-country teams and international partners, currently active in seven African and three Asian countries, facilitated by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). It aims to connect those marginalized from forest governance to those controlling it, and to help both do things better. A shared belief motivates the Group: that forestry can contribute to the eradication of poverty and sustainability, but only with good forest governance – the right leadership, institutions, policy decisions and practical systems. After an inception phase starting in 2003, it has been supported since 2005 by the EC and the Dutch government – to the value of approximately 2.5 million Euros.

The work in the current phase is focused on the following four objectives:

1. Poverty reduction strategies, national forest programmes, decentralisation programmes and related processes enable improved forest governance
2. Illegal and corrupt forestry that degrades livelihoods is reduced through the adoption and spread of practical approaches to improve forest governance
3. Forestry enterprise initiatives and private sector associations comply with the law and spread practical approaches to improve forest governance
4. Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks are improved to support local control and benefit from forestry

In each country there are four interconnected parts to the work:

- Team of 'governance-connected' individuals from a mix of agencies with experience and ideas
- Policy work on forest livelihood problems due to people being marginalized from decisions
- Development of practical guidance and tools for making progress
- Creating and taking opportunities to make governance improvements

FGLG country teams are well networked, motivated and targeted in their approach – each has a communication strategy within its work plan, and these are made publicly available on the web. Country teams, backed by IIED and international partners, carry out focused studies, learning and training events, network building, supported uptake of governance tools, and taking direct opportunities for governance reform. Inter-country capacity-building work and engagement with key international policy processes aims to achieve creative transfers of insight from one location to another, and to install findings in international policy.

The main partners involved in FGLG are:

- International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) – facilitates the group
- Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and Pacific (RECOFTC) – backstops the work in Asia
- LTS International and Indufor have provided some consultancy services to the initiative. The former to country teams in Malawi and South Africa, Uganda and briefly in the Cameroon. LTS also provided a facilitator for three annual learning events where all teams take part.
- Civic Response – convenes the team in Ghana
- Forestry South Africa – convenes the team in South Africa
- Justicia Ambiental and Terra Firma – convene the team in Mozambique

- Centre for Development Management – convenes the team in Malawi
- Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment – convenes the team in Uganda
- NESDA-CA and the African Model Forests Network – convene the team in Cameroon
- Indian Institute of Forest Management – convenes the team in India
- Inspirit and Centre for International Forestry Research – convene the team in Indonesia
- A researcher with good links to government convenes the team in Vietnam (he was independent until late 2008 when he joined RECOFTC as its Vietnam country leader)
- CRAC-GRN – has convened the team in Niger (the team in Niger will evolve into a broader natural resource-focused group and will be independent of the FGLG initiative from 2009).

By 2008 FGLG had produced:

- Increasingly effective impact such as: President in Uganda forced to back down from give-away of forest reserves to agribusiness; high-level action on illegal logging and Chinese investment in Mozambique; rights and governance reform installed back on the agenda in Ghana by shaping the Voluntary Partnership Agreement on legal timber with the EC; and governance frameworks more astutely enabling community forestry in Vietnam
- 10 country teams continuing to be active in Ghana, Niger, Cameroon, Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Indonesia, India and Vietnam – 5 of them leveraging support from other sources for extension of action
- An FGLG team has also been formed, with independent funding, in Burkina Faso
- Major learning events in Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, India and Malawi – the three most recent on social justice in forestry, involving participants from all the country teams and other international players, with lessons learned, specific tactics used and impacts achieved by the country teams recorded
- 66 policy research outputs and tools
- 49 press, TV and radio advocacy outputs
- International collaboration to exchange learning and install findings – with more than 21 international organisations and participation in more than 20 international forums

The website for the FGLG, where news, reports and work plans for the FGLG country teams can be found, is: <http://www.iied.org/forestry/research/projects/forest.html>.

An independent evaluation is now needed of the current phase of the FGLG initiative – the phase of work supported since February 2005 by the EC and the Dutch government, and recently extended to 30 September 2009. This evaluation is required under the terms of the EC funding and will be vital in taking stock of success and failure before moving into a new phase of work.

The new five-year phase of work has been developing since March 2008 and will begin in January 2009 thanks to a new grant secured with the EC of approximately 2 million Euros, with some initial co-financing from UK DFID. It can thus be seen that there will be a 9-month period of overlap between the two phases of the initiative. The new phase of work on social justice in forestry is to be focused on: forest rights and small forest enterprise; legitimate forest products; pro-poor climate change mitigation and adaptation through forestry; and trans-national learning and preparedness.

FGLG at both international and country level is an ambitious initiative. However, resources are limited. The extent to which these limited resources have been used tactically and effectively to lever other resources in pursuit of this ambition will be a key issue for the evaluation.

2. Objective of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is:

- To assess the FGLG initiative's approach and performance, and to draw out lessons from the experience to guide further work.

3. Tasks for the evaluation

The evaluation will involve four main tasks. An indication of the relative time and effort expected to be devoted to each task is given below. A more precise balance of the evaluator's effort across these tasks will be worked out with the evaluator. Similarly, the balance between conducting these tasks for the initiative as a whole and within each country context will need to be discussed and agreed upon:

3.1 Assess the approach of the FGLG initiative [about 20% of the evaluation effort]

- Reflect on the context of forest governance action and discourse in the countries involved in the FGLG initiative and internationally - before and during the inception period of the initiative – and assess the general premise, political timeliness and appropriateness of the approach of the initiative
- Assess the approach and design of the initiative that came to be supported by the EC and Dutch governments – its internal logic (and theory of change), objectives, outputs, objectively verifiable indicators and their means of verification. This will include explorations of appropriateness, specificity, efficiency, creativity, innovation, flexibility and institutional relationships.
- Reflect on issues of appropriateness and flexibility of the approach to changing context and timeliness during the course of the initiative

3.2 Assess the performance of the FGLG initiative to date [about 40% of the evaluation effort]

- Assess what progress has been made to date in achievement of the initiative's overall objective, specific objective, outputs and objectively verifiable indicators
- Determine whether the activities undertaken by the initiative have been timely, adequate and appropriate in terms of meeting the outputs and specific objective
- Determine the extent to which identified risks/assumptions have impacted on the project or have been mitigated by the project (and assess whether the right risks were identified)
- Assess whether the funding resources made available to the project have been adequately accounted for
- Assess the management and administration of the initiative: how effectively and efficiently IIED coordinated and led the initiative; the capacity of IIED and its key partners (including the international partners and consultants) to implement the initiative; collaboration between IIED and its partners, and amongst partners, through the initiative; administration, including finance, by IIED and its partners; reporting within the initiative and by IIED to the EC and others on the progress of the project.
- Assess the impacts of the initiative – direct and indirect, expected and unexpected - the evidence of changed decisions and discourse, of levels of engagement and relevant activity catalyzed. Why have certain expected impacts been achieved and why have others not? How effective have the methods used been? What effects can be attributed to FGLG and how? Which cases illustrate this best? What is the added value of country teams being part of a wider group?

3.3 Draw out lessons from the experience of the FGLG initiative [about 30% of the evaluation effort]

- Identify lessons on working with partners: the extent to which the FGLG initiative has played a useful catalytic and facilitative role across a range of stakeholder interests, and what can be learned from this approach
- Identify lessons on innovation: the extent to which the FGLG initiative has been successful or not in developing and/or implementing innovative approaches and best-practice

- Identify lessons on project management: lessons learned about the organisational arrangements for managing the FGLG initiative
- Identify lessons on communications and paths to policy influence

3.4 Make recommendations based on the evaluation [about 10% of the evaluation effort]

Based upon the assessment of the approach, performance and lessons learned, make recommendations to IIED and its partners as appropriate, with a particular focus on the next phase of work of the FGLG.

4. Evaluation methodology

The evaluator will provide independent opinion and assessment. The evaluator will have the assistance of IIED staff (and FGLG country teams where appropriate) to:

- Undertake a thorough review of all the project documents and communication products. This will include the work plans agreed between IIED and its partners, and all progress reports, policy analysis documents, tools and advocacy outputs (a USB flash-drive with all documents will be prepared)
- Review annual reports submitted by IIED to the EC
- Visit country teams in Uganda, Mozambique and Vietnam (this group of countries was arrived at following discussion and agreement with FGLG country teams). Country teams will facilitate appropriate field and stakeholder visits for the evaluator.
- Using the experience from the site visits the evaluator will engage through email and telephone with the other country teams and project partners where a personal visit was not possible.
- Identify a sub-set of stakeholders from the global community interested in forest governance issues – and contact and interview these people.

5. Expected outputs

- The evaluation will be presented in a single report. IIED and its project partners will receive a draft of the report, including an executive summary and annexes as appropriate, upon which they will be able to comment.
- The evaluator will prepare an accompanying PowerPoint presentation that highlights the key findings of the report. The evaluator will present his evaluation to a meeting that will include: EC representatives; the IIED FGLG team; and selected other individuals from IIED and other institutions, potentially including DGIS and DFID. This meeting may occur in either Brussels or London.
- The evaluator will consider comments on the draft report and presentation in the preparation of the final report. This final report should not exceed 30 pages – inclusive of executive summary and exclusive of annexes.

6. Management and coordination of evaluation

The evaluation will be coordinated by IIED through the manager of the initiative (James Mayers) and a facilitator of the evaluation (Alastair Bradstock). The terms of reference and approach of the evaluator will be agreed with the EC.

7. Time-frame for evaluation

The evaluation will take place between March and June 2009. Due to the wide geography of the project, the evaluator is not expected to commit the budgeted time in a single block. A work plan and timetable will be agreed by the IIED project manager and the evaluator. The estimated input from the evaluator will be 28 days.

Visits to the three selected countries are likely to take place as follows:

- Uganda: week of 2nd March 2009.
- Mozambique: week of 6th April 2009.
- Vietnam: week of 11th May 2009.

The draft report will be due on 1st June. Comments on the draft report from FGLG country teams, IIED and others will be delivered to the consultant by 15th June. The revised draft is due on 22nd June. Subject to availability of those attending, the consultant will be asked to make a presentation on the evaluation during the week of 29th June. The evaluation will be completed (and final payment made) once any comments from the presentation have been taken into account in the final report, and once that report has been accepted by IIED.

Annex 2: Uganda Report

Introduction and background

The findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in this short report were formulated during a visit to Uganda by the lead consultant between Tuesday 3rd and Saturday 7th March 2009.. Meetings were held with NGOs, FGLG members and government representatives in Kampala. Where necessary, additional resource persons (such as senior, former NFA employees) were contacted by phone. A full list of all persons consulted can be found in Annex 4. A local consultant, Steve Nsita, supported the visit.

The origin of the Uganda FGLG began following an invitation to IIED from the Forest Secretariat – an institution supported by DFID, established to oversee and support the transition of the Forest Department to the National Forest Authority. Following a scoping visit by IIED, and using the one-year DFID seed funding, a small group of interested persons was facilitated to meet and begin discussions around issues of forest governance. These persons were largely government staff, working within the Forest Secretariat, but this was soon broadened to include other interested resource persons drawn from national NGOs, and Makerere University. After the establishment of the National Forest Authority in 2005, the focus of the FGLG moved from the Forest Secretariat, but it soon became apparent that if it was to remain effective and retain an independent voice, an institutional home should be found outside government. Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), a local NGO with a track record in advocacy, public litigation and lobbying in the fields of environmental governance offered to host the group – a function it retains to this day.

FGLG is a loose coalition of Ugandans who share a common concern for forest management and forest governance. The group, convened by ACODE has membership drawn from parliament, the press, local NGOs involved in forestry, the private sector and government. The informal nature of the FGLG allows members to meet and share information within the fields of forest governance. Key staff members from within National Forest Authority, concerned with the rising levels of political interference used the FGLG to channel politically sensitive information out to other members. Because of its unique membership, this information was quickly and efficiently carried out beyond the group and communicated to the general public. For example, MPs were able to use information from the FGLG to inform the Sessional Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, while journalists were able to gather accurate but politically sensitive information on forestry for publication in the press. The informality of FGLG is arguably one of its greatest strengths, as it allows members to attend on a personal (not institutional) basis.

Some of the key forest sector governance challenges identified by the FGLG include the following:

- Strong pressure from the highest levels of government to support international investors, particularly those requiring large areas of land for planting agro-industrial crops (such as sugar and palm oil). Forest reserves, being one of the few areas of un-occupied land has been offered by the government as an incentive, fuelling pressure to de-gazette.
- An increasing tendency towards totalitarianism, including a disrespect for normal political processes and a disregard for the views of mandated government agencies. In the forest sector this has manifested itself in terms of cabinet or presidential statements with regard to forest law and policy. Examples include:

- Allowing illegal forest encroachers to remain inside forest reserves, despite concerns that this will increase forest degradation
 - Banning the issue of licenses to timber growers wishing to establish trees in government-owned plantation reserves
- Politicians, seeking political capital by offering forest land to voters prior to elections

Activities, outputs and impact of FGLG in Uganda

The FGLG in Uganda has five stated objectives:

- To facilitate dialogue and spread learning amongst actors in the forestry sector about workable approaches to good forest governance
- To enhance justice and equitable distribution of forestry benefits and enhance local ownership and access to those resources
- To develop initiatives for combating illegalities in the forestry sector, and to enhance the integrity of the forestry resource base.
- To advocate for just and equitable forestry related policies, legislation and mechanisms of implementation of those policies and legislation.
- To link Uganda with other participating countries in FGLG, so as to share lessons and experiences

Since its inception, the FGLG facilitates a wide range of processes, but largely it provides an efficient mechanism for information to be exchanged between members. This information then assists individual members in their own endeavours to further forest governance either by presenting issues to parliament (for MPs); providing raw materials for writing journals in newspapers (for journalists), for dissemination to other networks (for NGO members) and so on. However, when concrete action is required and some form of statement is required, ACODE are then tasked with the responsibility of undertaking a range of tasks such as focused research, preparing policy briefs, issuing press releases, writing to the Sessional Committee on Environment & Natural Resources on behalf of the FGLG members.

One of the most significant results of the FGLG was critical support to a public campaign against the President's approval of de-gazetting a third of the Mabira Forest Reserve in 2006 and transferring this to the Sugar Corporation of Uganda, despite its value for tourism and local livelihoods. This followed an earlier decision to target 4000 hectares of forest reserve on Bugala Islands in Lake Victoria for palm oil production which triggered a wave of resignations in Uganda's National Forestry Authority. FGLG members were able to then support a range of advocacy processes designed to stir up popular opposition to these proposals. This included a national campaign of action through the Uganda Forest Working Group, a series of accurate but controversial articles in the national media, radio programmes, petitions to the parliamentary Sessional Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and legal actions against the government. The result of this broad based movement was a large public demonstration in Kampala, massive outcry against the government and finally a decision to reverse the planned de-gazettment.

It has been extremely difficult to assess and attribute the direct impact of the IIED contribution to the FGLG for a range of reasons. These are as follows:

- FGLG is an informal, unregistered grouping which is largely invisible. Given that the public face of FGLG is expressed either directly through ACODE, or through partnerships with UFWG, both of which operate independently of FGLG, few people know of the existence of the learning and can provide objective views

- ACODE, as the host institution supports the activities of the FGLG through a range of funding sources, of which IIED constitutes a relatively small total amount. Furthermore, ACODE has wholly internalized the activities of the FGLG within its organization mandate and strategy – and as a result it is almost impossible to separate FGLG activities with those of ACODE’s own.
- FGLG has influenced a range of processes and initiatives that are themselves supported by other institutions and programmes
- The activities of the FGLG trigger other related actions, either by members or by the actions of members – all of which are not directly supported by IIED, but which may not have happened, had it not been for the FGLG in the first place.

As a group (and supported by IIED) FGLG/ACODE in Uganda has been involved in the four main thematic areas. Progress made by the team in achieving the goals and outputs specified in agreed work plans is presented below:

Objective / Focal Area	Progress made	Assessment / impact
1. Macro policy framework that enables improved forest governance	Policy brief on contribution of ENR sector to national development; contributions made to ENR Sector Investment Plan and National Development Plan; “Breakfast briefings” with press and parliamentarians on ENR budgetary allocations; briefings to ENR Sector Working Group and meetings with ENR Sessional Committee for ENR.	Comprehensive range of mutually supportive tactics deployed between 2006 and 2009. Environment and Climate Change now features as one chapter in National Development Plan. Ministry of Finance raised the budget ceiling for ENR in the national budget from USH 26 billion in 2007/08 to 45 billion in 2008/09.
2. Reduced illegal practices that degrade forest dependent livelihoods	Regular articles, press briefings or announcements in the national press; regional workshops raising awareness on Mabira and Bugala; High Court challenge to BIDCO on Bugala issue; Constitutional petition on “give-aways”; engaging with parliamentarians; informing UFWG members; Letter to Minister for Water and Environment on forest “give-aways”	The combined actions and tactics of the FGLG together with other players resulted in government reversing their earlier decision to degazette Bagala and Mabira FRs.
3. Ownership, access rights, policy and management frameworks that support local control and benefit from forestry	Worked together with Uganda Land Alliance to influence the draft National Land Policy – particularly with regard to the high degree of control over natural resources that was vested in central government. Following a series of regional meetings and national dialogues, the draft policy was altered to reflect the “public trust doctrine” – the vesting of natural resources with the people.	The group have been pro-active in identifying weaknesses and potential threats in the draft National Land Policy and have been able to influence the final version positively.
4. Promotion of forestry enterprises and community management arrangements	Studies undertaken on forest based associations as drivers for sustainable development; budget disbursements to the district forest services, small and medium forest enterprises; promoting collaborative forest management. Two advocacy clinics organised for community forest management groups	A number of well researched studies have been produced. However, they have yet to be translated into tangible impacts in terms of changed policy or improved governance decisions

The above analysis shows that significant and widespread impact has been realised under the first two focal areas, with governance decisions being positively influenced with national implications. The learning group has benefitted particularly from the strong legal background of ACODE who have been able to mobilise their significant skills in influencing and challenging legal processes. With regard to the fourth area, FGLG working together with the Uganda Land Alliance, and the CSO National Land Policy Working Group have been able to reinforce the principle of “Public Trust Doctrine” by ensuring that land and natural resources

are vested in the people (rather than the state). The fourth area, which aims to promote small and medium forestry enterprises and collaborative forest management has had less success in terms of influencing policy decisions, but has generated a significant amount of useful policy research and studies that could be built upon in the next phase of support.

Perhaps of equal importance to the policy wins generated through FGLG has been the establishment and continuing actions of the FGLG itself, which continues to provide a highly informal forum allowing for the efficient, effective and safe exchange of sensitive information around the theme of forest governance. During the Mabira Forest campaign, the unique constellation of players within the FGLG was a key to its effectiveness. First and foremost, the FGLG included members from within NFA who felt increasingly frustrated and compromised by developments within government, and were actively pursuing an outlet to channel sensitive information.

Linkages of FGLG to other emerging civil society institutions and networks

The forest sector has witnessed a strong growth in civil society networks and forums in recent years that are involved in advocacy processes. The Uganda Forest Working Group (UFWG), hosted by Environmental Alert (another local NGO) and formed in 2001 seeks to provide a platform where stakeholders in the forest sector can meet, deliberate on and influence developments in the sector, as well as independently monitor the implementation of the forest law, policy and plan. The UFWG is an open forum where membership is voluntary (rather than invited) and largely represented on an institutional (rather than individual) basis. It is constituted as an umbrella organisation and has members from over 60 organisations at all levels of society. One area they are actively involved in advocating for is the delivery of forestry services at district level through National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). Hard political lobbying is not a core area for the UFWG, rather it tends to be involved in soft-advocacy, such as disseminating laws and policies and raising awareness on forestry in general. However, during the Mabira Forest campaign, the UFWG played an important role in raising awareness and co-ordinating citizen action through its wide membership base. Much of the initial impetus and drive that re-ignited UFWG during the run-up the Mabira campaign has been attributed to inputs from the FGLG. Following discussions between FGLG and UFWG, it has now been agreed that the FGLG should be seen as an informal subcommittee of UFWG – and currently representatives from each sit on the other committee.

One key difference with the UFWG is that it has a strong vertical constituency – which means that they can gather and raise important issues from the ground levels as well as carrying out local actions. Efforts have been made to ensure complementarity between the two networks, but inevitably some areas of overlap occur. Some of the differences between the two networks are illustrated below in Table 8:

Uganda Forest Working Group	Uganda Forest Governance Learning Group
Visible, with strong public profile, particularly after the Mabira campaign	Invisible and largely unknown to the public
Membership and representation on an institutional basis	Membership and participation on an individual basis
Membership from national, regional and community level organisations	Members largely Kampala based
Membership open	Membership by invitation
Wide membership means making decision on collective action takes time	Small membership means it can rapidly take decisions
Goals include information exchange,	Goals limited to research, learning

awareness creation, soft-advocacy, monitoring sector	lobbying and advocacy
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Table 8: Differences between UFWG and UFGLG

A more recent, but increasingly visible organisation which has been involved in forest sector lobbying is the Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA). Created following the rapid growth in private sector tree growers for timber production under the EC-financed Sawlog Production Grant Scheme (SPGS), UTGA now represents a wide base of Ugandan entrepreneurs, many of whom have strong links to high-level political and business decision-makers. Many of the members of the association have obtained licenses from NFA to lease plots within areas of Central Forest Reserves that have remained unplanted by government, due to lack of funds. Interestingly, many of the issues that have been of concern to the FGLG are not dissimilar to those being advocated by UTGA – namely concerns over de-gazettment of Central Forest Reserves, a reluctance by government to address the issue of forest encroachers and weak governance within the NFA. Given the current rhetoric within state house concerning the importance of supporting “investors”, a strong message from private sector investors to government around these issues may carry significantly greater weight than those coming from conservation interests. A report produced through support from FGLG, called “Forest-based associations as drivers for sustainable development” (2006) also provides a series of concrete recommendations on how locally based, forestry groups can play an important role in wider debates of governance and development.

Other emerging networks and organisations that are becoming increasingly active include:

- **Uganda Network of Community Forestry Associations (UNETCOFA)** - a recently formed institution that represents community forest user groups who are either planning for or engaged in Collaborative Forest Management (CFM)
- **Uganda Tree Growers Association (UTGA)** – an organisation that represents the interests of small and medium scale commercial tree growers
- **Uganda Foresters Association** – a national association of foresters which has been active in trying to instil ethics into the forestry profession.

Which way for FGLG in the future?

Looking to the future, there are a range of challenges and opportunities in coming months and years for the Uganda FGLG.

Potentially, FGLG could become even stronger, by forging closer links to some of the emerging civil society networks and platforms described above. This could include inviting representation from the UTGA, to strategise jointly with the private sector on how forest governance could be advanced. Engaging with the powerful constituency represented through UTGA might provide further weight to joint campaigns and offer an interesting alternative message and channel. Furthermore, the vertical links from national to local levels in the UFWG could be used more effectively to ensure that messages are originating from and reaching constituencies at the community level.

Following the departure of the NFA Board and senior management of NFA following the proposed Bugala palm oil case, the extremely close links between NFA and FGLG has been weakened significantly. Furthermore, there are increasing concerns that one of the most significant governance challenges in the forest sector originates from within the NFA, supported by the board and minister. In NFA’s “honeymoon period”, the targets of FGLG’s advocacy campaigns were largely above and beyond NFA and Board, but this is now beginning to change. Without careful planning, there is therefore a risk that a confrontational

advocacy campaign directed at NFA could result in the near-collapse of an already weakened institution. This would play directly into the hands of those wishing to see NFA fail and forest governance weakened. Consequently, there is a need for FGLG to re-open contacts to NFA and identify allies from within, willing to feed sensitive information out of the organisation on a confidential basis.

A number of persons met during this review expressed the wish that FGLG became more visible and recognised by adding their names publicly to the public advocacy campaign being waged by ACODE. While it is without doubt that FGLG members are exclusively respected for their proven commitment to forestry governance reforms, members of FGLG universally stated that its strength lay in its ability to provide a secure (and invisible) forum for the exchange of sensitive information which served the public interest. The benefits to be had from increasing the public visibility and profile would be far outweighed by the loss of confidentiality that is so critical for government whistle-blowers.

Annex 3: Mozambique Report

Background and introduction

The findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in this short report were formulated during a visit to Mozambique by the lead consultant between Tuesday 7th and Friday 10th April. Meetings were held with NGOs, FGLG members and government representatives in Maputo – and where necessary followed up with phone calls to resource persons based in the provinces. A full list of all persons consulted can be found in Annex 4. A local consultant, Salamao Maxaia, supported the visit.

IIED have been involved in the forestry sector in Mozambique since 2001, when they were invited to support the development of a forest sector support programme (called PROAGRI), and to provide advice and guidance on measures designed to improve overall levels of forest governance. With DFID support, IIED was instrumental in establishing the Forest Forum, which was designed to allow interaction and dialogue between government, the private sector and civil society, as well as developing recognition that forest governance is a broad term that does not just refer to government – but includes the interplay of interests and stakeholders from all sectors of society. With one year's seed funding from DFID, IIED facilitated the establishment of the FGLG, based within the then Direccao Nacional de Floresta e Fauna Bravia (DNFFB) but administratively hosted by the at the University of Eduardo Mondlane – Faculty of Agriculture and Forest Engineering. Building upon well developed contacts within the DNFFB, (the government forest department within the Ministry of Agriculture), private sector and civil society, FGLG was able to bring together a circle of well-placed individuals with close connections to policy and governance processes. During the period 2004 – 2006, the FGLG undertook a range of studies which were designed to stimulate discussion and debate around forest governance and point the way towards a number of key governance challenges confronting the sector as a whole. Among these studies included:

- a tool to assess whether failures in the implementation of forest legislation were due to poor drafting of the legislation or inadequate resourcing of its implementation
- the production of a guide for good practise in negotiations between companies and communities
- a number of studies and policy recommendations on timber trade, including measures designed to improve accountability and transparency (including proposals for a log-tracking system) – undertaken by Savcor-Indufor
- support to the report on illegal logging and trade (“The Chinese Takeaway” – for more details see below)
- A study on forestry legislation and compliance and its impact on forest-based livelihoods

Despite the general high quality and relevance of these individual pieces of research and practical guidance, their impact, when presented to government through the FGLG process, remained limited. Over the course of these two years, it became increasingly obvious that one of the greatest stumbling blocks forest governance reform came from within government itself – and the corrupt linkages they enjoyed with private sector. As a result, an approach to governance learning and reform that was anchored to highly placed government and private sector representatives was seen to be having predictably little impact.

Amigos da Floresta – and its links to FGLG

Amigos da Floresta, a popular movement with the goal of seeking social and environmental justice in the trade and exploitation of Mozambique's timber resources, was launched in

2007, including several key NGO members of the FGLG, and helped to author and publicise a series of reports and articles in the local press that highlighted the growing problem of illegal timber trade, over-harvesting and complicity by senior government representatives. One report in particular, called “The Chinese Takeaway”, provided a detailed, factual and independent assessment of the impact of illegal logging in Zambezia province. A number of national NGOs and environmentalists developed plans for a demonstration in Maputo, the development of a manifesto for the movement and the launching of a series of songs by local artists. Through these actions, the movement was started. One of the members of the movement, Carlos Serra, working through a local NGO – Justica Ambiental (JA), agreed to take on the role of leading the movement. JA, which is largely composed of staff contributing their time in a voluntary capacity (although now becoming increasingly made up of paid staff) is an organisation that works on environmental justice and advocacy from a strong legal and rights perspective.

It was during this early stage of forming Amigos da Floresta that the internal tensions within the existing FGLG made a further continuation of that structure untenable, and the FGLG initiative was presented to, and accepted by JA, following a co-ordination visit by IIED to Mozambique in late 2007. FGLG support is channelled through JA to strengthen the Amigos da Floresta movement which emerged independently of IIED’s initial support through FGLG. This contrasts somewhat to neighbouring countries, such as Malawi, South Africa and Uganda where FGLG funds were used to kick-start the establishment of a new network.

Amigos da Floresta – identity, membership and operations

Amigos da Floresta is a loose, voluntary interest group composed entirely of civil society organisations (largely local NGOs) as well as interested and committed individuals. It does not, currently, have membership from government, the press or from the private sector. Membership is open (rather than invited). The vision that was developed for Amigos da Floresta when it was launched was as an organic, citizen-centred, broad-based, popular movement that was based on principles of civic responsibility and voluntary engagement. However, at present, membership tends to be dominated, not surprisingly, by representatives from national NGOs based in Maputo, who attend in their professional capacity as NGO representatives. Greater success has been achieved at the provincial level, where a wide range of activists are increasingly becoming involved – including grassroot NGOs and CBOs as well as journalists and students.

Amigos da Floresta sees itself as a forum for undertaking lobbying and advocacy – in ways that will improve the status of the forest sector and its ability to contribute to sustainable national development. Despite not having representation from government, Amigos da Floresta has sought to engage with government at national and provincial level from the outset. Since the establishment of Amigos da Floresta, relations with national government have gradually changed and gone through a number of distinct phases:

- **Flat denial and open hostility** – questioning Amigos da Floresta’s legitimacy, the quality of their data while accusing members of being influenced by European agendas and being anti-government (or pro-opposition)
- **Private acceptance / public denial** – while publicly refuting all claims made by Amigos da Floresta, an increasing recognition (in private at least) by members of government of the validity of the underlying issues
- **Recognition and acceptance** – Following staff changes within the forestry administration (particularly the director), a formal recognition of the legitimacy and

validity of Amigos da Floresta – and invitations to participate in national consultative forums³.

Some concerns exist however from a number of members of the movement that the increasing tendency towards acceptance from government may amount to little more than tokenism and a risk exists that their presence at government sponsored forums allows government to legitimise and validate its actions with claims of openness and consultation, while in reality, opportunities for real engagement remain limited. Furthermore some members are concerned over risks of being co-opted by government and absorbed into the system – a common tactic by governments wishing to silence external or critical voices. It would appear that this tendency has taken place in the land rights sector where previously critical and independent NGO voices are becoming progressively dampened and silenced through increasing co-option. The situation is not assisted by the fact that increasingly donor funds are being channelled to government, and NGOs must now go to government in search of funding. In some cases this results in NGOs being reduced to little more than passive providers of service to government.

Other members of Amigos da Floresta, however, are urging for a greater involvement with government – including proposals to include government within its membership. Clearly, however, the role of the movement as one that engages in confrontational advocacy may need to change – given the slow, somewhat reluctant shift in government engagement. In any case, there is a clear need for Amigos da Floresta to now reappraise the external situation, to consider whether they should change their approach to working with government and to develop a pro-active strategy that allows the movement to set its own rules of engagement. Experiences from the civil society alliance formed around land issues may help in this regard.

One of the greatest strengths of Amigos da Floresta is its growing links to locally based civil society organisations, working at community levels in the provinces. A strong and mutually beneficial relationship exists between these local organisations, and national advocacy organisations such as Justica Ambiental. Local organisations can feed grounded and accurate reports of forest crime to national organisations who can in turn publicise this information – thereby providing protection and anonymity to local organisations who may be subject to threats and intimidation. Discussions with locally based organisations working at provincial levels all commented on how difficult it was to raise a critical voice at this level. The strong power exercised by Provincial Directors coupled with the weakness of civil society meant that individual, or even collective voices of provincially based organisations were insufficient to gain traction on influencing government policy or action. The development of linkages to Amigos da Floresta has helped significantly in this regard.

At the same time, Amigos da Floresta, made up largely of NGOs based in Maputo, has a mechanism for both outreach to the local level – and obtaining accurate information from across the country. The degree to which these linkages have been fostered, however has been rather limited, due to availability of resources. Currently Amigos da Floresta does not have any resources to support the regular participation of organisations based in the provinces – and as such any demands for financial support from this end must be met by the organisations themselves. In discussions with organisations based at the local level, it would appear that there is a huge and largely unmet demand for vertical linkages to national coalitions such as Amigos da Floresta.

Organisation and support

³ Note that the reported changes of approach of government at national level, seem not to be mirrored by changes at Provincial level, where the entrenched power base appears reluctant to give any real ground or concessions

With support from IIED, JA has been able to engage one person on a full time basis to provide technical and secretariat support to the movement. The driving force behind the formation and maintenance of the movement (Carlos Serra) however, works in a voluntary capacity, in-between his commitments as a lecturer at the law school. He has recently been promoted to deputy director and as a result will no longer have the time to provide the inspiration and leadership to the movement (although is happy to continue support – but in a much less focused capacity). Significant questions, therefore remain, regarding the future existence and direction of Amigos da Floresta. The problem is further compounded by the very limited availability of additional, external funds outside those provided for by IIED/FGLG. Small pockets of funding have been offered to Amigos da Floresta, through JA – but these have tended to be one-off payments for defined tasks. This has included, for example, a small grant from Action Aid / Oxfam / Novib to undertake research on forest and livelihood issues in Cabo Delgado province and a grant from Christian Aid to update an earlier report on the impact of Chinese trade on deforestation and forest governance in Zambezi Province (“The Chinese Takeaway” by Catherine McKenzie). These single payments are not sufficient to provide long term support to the emerging movement. The continuation of FGLG funding support to Amigos da Floresta in the new phase provides an opportunity to partially address this concern, which has now been taken through the transfer of convenorship and hosting to the Centro de Integridade Publica]

Impact and achievements

Since support from IIED / FGLG started in 2008, Amigos da Floresta have been able to achieve the following outputs:

Undertaking targeted, field based research for use in advocacy campaigns:

- Update of the Catherine Mackenzie report (The Chinese Takeaway) in Zambezia Province (undertaken by ORUM)
- A preliminary survey of forestry situation in Tete Province – particularly with regard to illegal logging and trade
- Undertaking an assessment of implementation of forestry and natural resources legislation requiring 20% of natural resource revenues to be shared with local population
- Scoping study to assess how small and medium forest enterprises can contribute to livelihoods and sustainable management of natural resources (with support from another IIED programme – Forest Connect)
- Value chain analysis to identify financial and marketing constraints for SMFEs (with support from another IIED programme – Forest Connect)

Communication and information

- 34 monthly newsletters that were produced and disseminated – highlighting issues of forest governance, illegalities and news - many of which were picked up by local newsletters.
- Press briefings to newspapers, magazines and radio stations
- Working with the Direção Nacional de Terras e Florestas (DNTEF), to support the revitalisation of the National Forest Forum in 2008
- Undertaking regular co-ordination meetings with members to plan and oversee activities of the movement and of individual members

Environmental awareness / education

- Drama and popular theatre productions showcased to students, schools and participants in national days on environment and forests – designed to raise awareness on environmental rights, rational use of forests and the problems of illegal logging
- The drama has been converted into a strip cartoon and posters – which are being disseminated across the country
- Supporting a number of public debates around issues of forest governance
- Working with local popular musicians and poets to generate rap, songs and poems (funded through Green Grant Funds)

The total amount of funds received by Justica Ambiental, on behalf of Amigos da Floresta from the FGLG initiative from its inception (December 2007) to present is US\$ 42,400 (equivalent to 1.034 million Meticaís).

Lessons learned

One of the most important lessons learned by the Amigos da Floresta was the importance of evidence-based advocacy campaigns. Initially at least, when some of the first reports highlighting the widespread corruption and abuse of office in the forest sector came out into the public domain back in 2006 and 2007, Amigos da Floresta was able to capitalise on this growing public groundswell of concern – which culminated in a large public demonstration in Maputo. Government responded swiftly to deny many of the allegations, and their main line of defence was to attack the accuracy of the information presented and to question the sources being provided by Amigos da Floresta. Amigos da Floresta were quick to realise this and have increasingly emphasised the importance of accurate, field-based research to support national or provincial advocacy campaigns. A further spin-off from conducting field based research was the identification of competent and committed locally based organisations with similar interests. An initial collaboration through research provided a working relationship – and in many cases resulted in a more lasting and mutual partnership between the local organisation and the national movement (see next point)

Although the Amigos da Floresta has only been effective since 2007, some important lessons have been learned regarding linkages and partnerships between local organisations working at the district and provincial level – and the national coalition with a strong presence in Maputo. Locally based organisations are afforded protection and increased voice through their linkages with Amigos da Floresta, and in return are able to offer accurate, grounded information on forestry governance issues from the community level.

Another lesson learned regards the difficulties of working in an environment with a strong, and on occasion, hostile government, that appears to support powerful and vested interests in the logging sector. Although there are signs that the response and engagement of government has shifted since the start of the campaign, it is often hard to read the signs – and to establish whether signs of openness are in fact more sinister measures designed to co-opt critical voices within civil society. At the moment, opportunities for engaging with government are largely “invited”, but Amigos da Floresta has yet to “claim” its own political space in which it defines the rules of engagement and manages more closely the process and outcomes. That said, there is an interest on the part of members to engage more genuinely with government, but views appear to differ on which path should be taken to realise this goal.

One of the factors behind the success of Amigos da Floresta is the presence of strong and committed leadership – from both the organisational and individual levels. Carlos Serra and Justica Ambiental have played a crucial role in conceiving, launching and nurturing the

movement in its early years. Much of this vision and leadership has been provided on a voluntary basis, and as the movement grows and new demands and needs arise, the limits to this voluntarism are beginning to show. It is now becoming increasingly apparent that if the movement is to move forward and grow, it will become necessary to offer this leadership role through a staff member who undertakes this in a paid capacity.

Which way for FGLG in the future?

Given the analysis above, and following the limited consultations that were possible during the short time available in Mozambique, the following tentative recommendations are made for the Amigos da Floresta movement, and future FGLG support in the years to come.

- **Strengthening links between locally based and nationally based organisations.** As discussed in the analysis above, this represents a win-win scenario for the national movement and locally based organisations in need of support and protection
- **Expansion of governance work at provincial levels.** In addition to forging linkages between local and nationally based civil society processes – it is equally important to strengthen advocacy processes operating at the provincial level. Given the role and power and relative autonomy of regional government – and its linkages to corrupt forestry operators, it is not sufficient to engage with government at the national level only. There is an equally important role for the development of provincial level platforms and advocacy processes – to challenge the status quo that appears to operate at this level
- **Linking to international processes and voices.** The movement has been characterised largely by national voices – and there has been little support offered by campaigners, movements, journalists or activists operating outside the country. Language is one important constraint to this limited engagement. However, IIED's strong international linkages could be more effectively mobilised over the coming period.
- **Consolidating the vision, membership, operations and hosting of the movement.** There is an urgent need to develop a shared vision with members on how the movement is co-ordinated and hosted – and who will provide the leadership required to do this. Furthermore, the identification and engagement of a movement co-ordinator is essential. He/she will work through one of the members (the institutional host) on a salaried basis, but remain accountable to the movement members and not the host NGO.
- **Defining rules of engagement with government.** As discussed before, the movement is fully aware of the potential risks of a close engagement with government, but also wishes to engage if genuine and mutually beneficial opportunities occur. An agreed strategy is needed to explore this in more detail and define how and under which conditions engagement can take place. Given that the membership of Amigos da Floresta is entirely made up of NGOs (many of whom retain an “activist” profile) it is important to begin to develop strategies on engagement – if and when such a suitable time comes – and be prepared to shift strategies from one of confrontational advocacy to one that is ready to provide genuine support and engagement.
- **Concentrating on core areas.** There is a risk that a coalition such as Amigos da Floresta can quickly lose focus, take on a wide range of admittedly important issues and run the risk of spreading resources too thinly on the ground. Unless members see visible gains from the movement – their commitment and participation will decrease with time. Consequently, it is vital that the Amigos da Floresta define their core message – and ensure that this is consolidated rather than diluted.
- **Identifying and securing core funding from sources beyond IIED.** FGLG funding is designed to be additional, rather than core – working best when other sources of funding are available. Apart from small grants for one-off, defined pieces of work, funding has

been somewhat limited. It will be important to use the FGLG funding to leverage additional funds made available in Mozambique.

Annex 4: Vietnam Report

Background and introduction

The findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in this short report were formulated during a visit to Vietnam between Sunday May 10th and Thursday May 14th, 2009. Given that much of the activities of FGLG Vietnam have focused at the Provincial and Commune / village level, a two day visit was undertaken to Hue province in Central Vietnam. Meetings were held with members of the FGLG, community and local government representatives, as well as resource persons from the donor community and international NGOs at provincial and national levels. A full list of all persons consulted during this visit can be found in Annex 5. A local consultant, Mr Ngo Sy Hoai, supported the lead consultant during the preparation and duration of the visit.

FGLG Vietnam – its identify, formation and structure

FGLG activities in Vietnam started later than in many of the countries in Africa. Following a scoping visit by IIED in February, 2006, an agreement in principle was made to work through a local consultant, Nguyen Quang Tan, who had a strong track record in the forest sector in Vietnam and had institutional linkages with the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre (RECOFTC) in Bangkok (with whom the overall FGLG programme had already established linkages). A draft project work plan was then developed and agreed with IIED, following the identification of members at both national and provincial levels. This was then initiated in September 2006. Currently Tan both convenes and hosts FGLG Vietnam. Negotiations are currently on-going between the convenor, RECOFTC and IIED that would allow Tan to continue in his role as FGLG Convenor into the second phase of FGLG activities – but with the hosting role shifting to RECOFTC-Vietnam – by channelling operational funds to a RECOFTC-administered account in Hanoi. At the same time, Tan will work on a full-time basis for RECOFTC, with a fixed share of his time allocated to supporting FGLG activities. This would provide a stronger institutional home to FGLG activities, through clear association with a well-known and respected regional institution.

The membership of FGLG Vietnam differs somewhat from other countries, where there tends to be a strong (and in some cases dominant) membership of NGOs. Vietnam's political process is in transition – but retains a one-party system which has only recently recognised the legality of national civil society organisations. While the economy has been liberalised, the political system is still characterised by a somewhat monolithic and inflexible government-centred administration. Opportunities for influencing governance processes are limited, require patience, good tactics and above all, good links to government.

In the early stages of the formation of FGLG Vietnam, a decision was taken to focus on community forest management (CFM) and some of the challenges that are being faced in its implementation. Given this, it was important to develop and maintain strong linkages with field based activities – and the decisions that drive such processes. Accordingly, FGLG Vietnam has a multi-level structure – and learning takes place at the community, provincial and national levels. Currently, FGLG Vietnam has an established presence at the national level – and within the three provinces of Thua Thien Hue, Dak Lac and Bac Kan. The composition of the one national and three provincial learning groups can be seen below in Table 9:

FGLG Hanoi	
Consultant (convenor)	1
Legal officer at MARD	1

Thua Thien Hue Province	
Lecturers / Professors at Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry	3
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – Provincial level	1
Dak Lac Province	
Association of Forestry Science and Technology (local NGO)	5
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – Provincial level	1
FGLG Bac Kan	
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – Provincial level	1
Total FGLG Members	
	13

Table 9: The composition of FGLG Vietnam at National & Provincial levels

The membership of the FGLG is largely drawn from the research community – in Hue province three of the members are from the University of Agriculture and Forestry – and in Dak Lac province five of the members come from a local NGO with research interests. At least one senior government officer is attached to FGLG groups at national and provincial levels.

Activities, outputs and impact to date

As mentioned above, the core focus of FGLG Vietnam has been addressing some of the legal, institutional and social constraints facing Community Forest Management (CFM) in Vietnam. The choice of CFM as the focal area was undertaken for a number of reasons:

- The Forest Protection and Development Law passed by the National Assembly in November 2004 provides the legal basis for communities, to secure legal tenure (for up to fifty years) to forest land and manage these areas for their own benefits
- the Government of Vietnam (GoV) has prioritised CFM as a key strategy in the development of its forest sector
- GoV recognises that there are a number of constraints to the effective implementation (and scaling up) of CFM. A pilot CFM initiative has recently been launched within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) to assess implementation opportunities and constraints
- Over the last decade, Vietnam has made impressive progress in reducing overall poverty levels. The contribution of the forestry sector to this goal is however, less clear. CFM represents one way in which forest reforms may be supporting this higher level goals – but presently the link is still rather unclear.
- Opportunities exist for channelling experiences of lower levels of government – and externally funded initiatives to the policy formulation process

Within the broad arena of CFM, FGLG has chosen to focus on three distinct sub-themes which are described below:

- **Security and strength of tenure rights – formal and informal processes.** Under the new Forest Protection and Development Law, villages obtain formal rights to manage forest land through the issuing, by government of community forest “Red Book Certificate” (RBC). Alternative channels exist for accessing forest land – at individual and group levels, which appear to offer strong levels of tenure rights and security. In many parts of the country, traditional forest management continues – with no formal recognition from the state. Clearly there are a number of legal and policy-related questions that relate to the benefits from and value of different forest tenure pathways.

- **Viability of CFM under different forest and social conditions.** There is considerable debate in Vietnam on the question of where and how CFM appears to be meeting its objectives (improved forests and reduced poverty) as performance appears to vary from place to place. FGLG has undertaken comparative studies on a number of different CFM sites with a view to deepen this discussion focusing on different forest types (natural or plantation forest; production or protection forest; timber or bamboo forest; rich, medium or poor forest) and different social variables (traditional, homogeneous, transition)
- **Equity and benefit sharing at community levels:** This sub theme looks at how governance structures at the community level (for example in the composition of the village forest protection board) affect the sharing of benefits at the household level; the degree to which poor people within a community benefit (or are negatively impacted) by CFM, and sustainable management options that allow for sustainable harvesting of a range of timber and non-timber forest products

FGLG activities in Vietnam have been developed in three distinct phases. Phase I, from September 2006 – August 2007 was essentially a scoping period, where the group sought to get an understanding of some of the key issues within CFM within the selected provinces. Phase 2, from September 2007 – August 2008, revolved around fostering learning – principally between participating communities in the different provinces – but also by extension the regional and national learning groups. Phase 3, centred on documentation of what had been learned, and presenting these learnings to a wider community of stakeholders – including policy makers - at the national level.

An overview of the activities and achievements of the FGLG Vietnam process are presented below under each of these three stages:

Activities	Outputs
Phase 1: September 2006 – August 2007 (Scoping)	
1. Set up the FGLG Vietnam team at national and provincial levels	Terms of references for team members discussed and agreed upon
2. CFM survey in two provinces	Provincial CFM survey reports in Vietnamese (draft report in English) National synthesis report on CFM survey findings in English and Vietnamese
3. Consultation workshops at provincial and national levels	Workshops in Hue (May 2007), Dak Lak (June 2007) and Hanoi (August 2007)
4. Development of detail work plan for the rest of the project	Revised project workplan Activities plan for 2008
Phase 2: September 2007 – August 2008 (Learning)	
5. Preparation and publication of policy brief based on CFM survey findings	Policy brief
6. Visits to CFM communities in Thua Thien Hue, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Dak Nong and Bac Kan	Sixteen visits to 25 villages with over 250 participants Two provincial reports on field visits prepared by Dak Lak and Thua Thien Hue teams (in phase 3)
7. Support to one community in Thua Thien Hue on forest management and livelihood development	Report on supports provide (prepared in phase 3)
8. Study on possibility for community timber certification in a CFM village	Report on possibility for community timber certification in T'Ly village of Dak Lak province

in Dak Lak	(prepared in phase 3)
9. Development of legal forestry handbook for community members	Handbook available in Vietnamese

Phase 3: September 2008 – March 2009 (Documentation)

10. Provincial and national workshops	National workshop in Bac Kan in November 2008 Provincial workshops in Hue and Dak Lak in January 2009
11. Documentation of findings	Reports on field visits (by Dak Lak and Thua Thien Hue teams), support to community (Thua Thien Hue) and community timber certification (Dak Lak)
12. Synthesis of findings and preparation of policy recommendations	Synthesis report on major findings from the project Policy brief

Table 10: Main activities and outputs of FGLG Vietnam

The written outputs produced over the period that FGLG has been operational in Vietnam have been reviewed and found to be well written and argued and of a consistently high quality. The policy brief “Community Forest Management for Whom: Learning from Field Experience in Vietnam” – available in English and Vietnamese provides a useful and accessible summary of much of the research conducted at field level. The findings of the research have been widely discussed and presented at regional and national levels and staff working on CFM within DARD appear to be well informed regarding the work and outputs of FGLG so far. Members of FGLG who were interviewed in Hue (from the University of Agriculture and Forestry) were enthusiastic regarding the progress and outputs of the initiative to date and were able to clearly demonstrate that links provided to the national level provided new opportunities for engaging with policy processes at the national level and ensuring that the findings of their research work obtained national exposure.

In the short time that FGLG has been operating in Vietnam, the impact of the initiative on governance processes has been understandably limited. CFM is a new policy for the government and is now in the process of being piloted in ten provinces across the country, through the Community Forestry Pilot Project. Following this pilot process, experiences will be reviewed and a decision taken by the government on how and whether to scale up CFM to a national programme. This will be effected through a government “decision” which will provide the legal basis for CFM across the whole country. One of the key persons in MARD who will be involved in this decision-making process (within the legal department) is a member of the FGLG platform. Consequently, the opportunities for the findings of FGLG to influence and shape the direction of CFM nationally appear to be good.

CFM is undoubtedly an important focal area that the government is currently attempting to develop workable models for and represents a strong entry point for FGLG. However during the course of the review and following discussions with both government and non-governmental players, it became increasingly apparent that there are deeper governance issues that impact the viability and success of CFM – as well as the future of the forest sector as a whole in Vietnam. Central among these issues is the question of how decisions are taken on the allocation and use of forest land. In the current legal framework, there are a range of possible tenurial arrangements that determine how and who manages forest land. Basically there are two types of forest land – plantation or natural forest. Following GoV’s Decision 661, plantation forest land may be allocated to individual households for the purpose of tree production. Large areas of former government plantations are now in the hands of villagers who typically obtain 50 year leases to plant and harvest trees on 2-3 hectare plots. Private sector forest businesses manage large areas too under leases or

concession arrangements – much of it for the purpose of producing chips for export. Natural forests are either allocated for productive uses (and harvested) or for protection purposes (such as water catchment) and harvesting is not permitted. Much of the natural forest areas has been earmarked as productive forests and falls under the remit of around 300 state enterprises (now known – somewhat confusingly - as Protection Forest Management Boards, or PFMBs) who manage in excess of 3 million hectares. However, within the total area that has been allocated as forest suitable for harvesting (productive forest) communities have been allocated their own CFM areas. For example, in the village visited as part of this review (Thon 4 village, in Thuong Quan commune), villagers had been allocated the relatively small area of 60.3 hectares of forestland for their own purposes. Despite having obtained their Red Book Certificate – logging by the local PFMB continued within the community forest. This was apparently due to the fact that logging plans had been agreed between the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development at provincial level and the PFMB prior to the allocation of land to the villagers. This small example typifies the diverging interests of the state enterprises (to retain land that can be harvested profitably) and the communities (to maximise allocation of land for profitable timber production).

In plantations, where forest land has been allocated to individual households, groups of households, as well as the private sector – similar conflicts are beginning to emerge. As households begin to reap the dividends of forest production, villagers who were not allocated forest land are becoming increasingly resentful that they appear to have missed out. In some communities, this has been resolved by merging individual or group plots of a given village, into a single plot for the benefit of the whole community. Private forest enterprises are a relatively recent, but increasingly vibrant sector, who are becoming increasingly organised, and interested in emerging opportunities such as FLEGT and responsible trade. However, they have expressed concern that forest land is being allocated to individual farmers – effectively reducing opportunities for larger scale private sector investment (who require larger, continuous areas leased from a single entity and are worried about developing potentially hundreds of lease agreements within individual farmers for an economically viable area).

The viability of CFM in the long term (and its degree to contribute to stated national goals of improved forest management and reduced rural poverty) depends in large part on how these conflicting objectives regarding the use and management of forest land plays out.

Lessons learned

During the two year process, some of the key lessons learned by FGLG members are presented below:

- ***The importance of ensuring active government participation in FGLG.*** The political environment in Vietnam means that confrontation advocacy or aggressive lobbying is neither prudent nor possible. Within this operating environment, governance processes operating within government can only be influenced by engaging with key government decision makers, building trust and confidence and seeking to inform and influence government-driven policy processes. This has been well recognised by FGLG Vietnam and while the membership of the learning group is strongly biased towards research and academic representatives, key individuals at provincial and national level have been included. Furthermore, at national (and international) learning events, the convenor has been able to ensure that key persons within the government system are in attendance and exposed to the discussions and recommendations that emerge.
- ***The importance of linking local level experience to provincial and national discussions.*** While in most other countries participating in FGLG, Vietnam has developed a multi-tiered learning process – that recognises the importance of linking policy to practice – as well as the different decision-making roles that are carried out

within the different levels of national and provincial government. By bringing government decision-makers face to face with community members facing governance constraints, many of which originate from higher level laws and policies), a productive exchange takes place. Evidence suggests that this strategy is already beginning to bear fruit. At an international learning event organised by FGLG, The DARD Director of Bac Kan heard about the proposal for CFM in Van Minh commune – and following this instructed the district leadership to look favourably on the application. He has recently moved to Hanoi where he has assumed a senior position within the forestry administration and retains strong links to FGLG at national levels.

- ***The value of comparative studies in the formulation of clear policy recommendations.*** Many of the recommendations presented in the policy brief – and synthesis reports originate from comparative assessments of CFM performance under different environmental, social and cultural conditions. Supporting the members of different community sites to undertake cross visits enhanced learning at the household level – as well as enriching the findings of the research itself

Which way for FGLG Vietnam in the future?

In this final section, a few proposals, or suggestions are included for consideration by the FGLG Vietnam team. Given the relatively short time available to the consultant to undertake the review and the limited knowledge of the lead consultant on the forest sector in Vietnam, these recommendations should be taken as input to future discussions at national and provincial levels.

- ***Thematic focus of FGLG Vietnam:*** FGLG Vietnam has to date chosen to focus on CFM and a strong justification has been provided for this decision. However, as discussed earlier in this report, it would appear that the future identity and impact of CFM will be largely dependent upon deeper decisions on the allocation of forest land for different purposes and different stakeholder groups. Given the relatively limited knowledge on CFM demands from community members for CFM are still very low. Demands from state enterprises and PFRBs for large areas of natural forest will generally tend to dominate decision making processes. Given FGLG's established interest in CFM, it may be prudent to expand the scope of inquiry to analyse the different (and often) conflicting interests over forest land – from the state, from private sector and from community forest users – and to begin to develop learning processes around this. A second emerging possibility for influencing forest governance in Vietnam is the growing interest in FLEGT. The European Union delegation in Hanoi is actively seeking to engage the government, NGOs and the private sector in upcoming discussions in this regard. IUCN is supporting the facilitation of the FLEGT process through their “Strengthening Voices for Better Choices” Project and WWF have a three country programme that is looking into supporting responsible timber trade in China, India and Vietnam. Given FGLG Experience elsewhere in VPA processes (Ghana and Cameroon) this could potentially represent an area that FGLG may wish to engage in over the coming months and years.
- ***Membership and Hosting:*** The impressive results achieved by FGLG Vietnam in the relatively short period since its inception are largely due to the commitment and enthusiasm of the convenor. However, the strong dependency on a single, dynamic driver is not without its risks, despite the new possibilities of bringing RECOFTC in as an institutional host of the Vietnam process in future. Furthermore, membership of the FGLG core groups at national and provincial levels are heavily biased towards researchers and some limited government representatives. Given the increasingly active role being played by international NGOs in the forest sector in Vietnam (which includes IUCN, WWF, Care, SNV, Helvitas, Tropenbos International, Green Corridors and others), and the emergence of more organised representation of private sector forest enterprise interests, it would appear that the time may be ripe to consider expanding the

core membership of FGLG to these wider networks and stakeholder interests. Engaging other organisations outside government may also provide new opportunities for rotation of the convenor function, as other countries are now proposing.

- **Linking informal and formal policy processes.** Within government there exist a range of more formalised processes for engaging with government around forest sector issues. This includes the Forest Sector Support Partnership (FSSP), which represents an institutionalised opportunity for external actors (donors, NGOs) to engage with government. Furthermore, under the co-ordination of the NGO Resource Centre, a number of technical committees have been established, with a view to co-ordinating the actions of NGOs and developing a common message to government, This includes the Community Forestry Working Group and Payments for Environmental Services Working Group. Given that RECOFTC is a member of the FSSP, and it is hoped, will soon be the host of the FGLG in Vietnam, interesting opportunities may present themselves for ensuring a linkage between the learning processes within FGLG – and these more formalised policy platforms.

Annex 5: List of persons met

Uganda

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
Gershom Onyango	Director for Environment, Ministry of Water and Environment	Occasional participant in FGLG
Onesmus Mugenyi	ACODE	Core team member of FGLG
Barshir Twesigye	ACODE	Convenor of FGLG
Kelvin Nsangi	Journalist	Occasional participant of FGLG
John Kaboggoza	Makerere University, Faculty of Forestry	Core team member of FGLG
Cornelius Kazoora	Sustainable Development Centre	Core team member of FGLG
Steve Nsita	Consultant (Havilah Ltd)	No direct link to FGLG, but informed resource person
Dickens Kamugisha	Journalist	Occasional participant in FGLG
Irene Ssekana	Greenwatch	Core team member of FGLG
Kamese Geoffrey	NAPE	Core team member of FGLG
Gaster Kiyingi	Nile Basin Initiative	Core team member of FGLG
Naugo Mercy	Journalist, The Daily Monitor	Occasional participant of FGLG
Stephen Khaukha	Consultant (Havilah Ltd)	Core team member of FGLG
Gerald Tenywa	Journalist, The New Vision	Core team member of FGLG
Christine Nantongo	Environmental Alert	Core team member of FGLG
Achilles Byaruhanga	Nature Uganda	Core team member of FGLG
Jones Kamugisha	Consultant (Former NFA Director)	Resource person
Olav Bjella	Green Resources Ltd (Former NFA Executive Director)	Resource person
Robert Nabanyumya	CARE Uganda	Resource person
Edith Kabasime	CARE Uganda	Resource person
Anders Aalbeck	CARE Uganda	Resource person
Beatrice Anywar	Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for Water and Environment	Occasional participant of FGLG
Alex Muhweezi	Head of Office, IUCN Uganda	Resource person
John Diisi	National Forest Authority	Resource person
Godfrey Acaye	National Forest Authority	Resource person
Moses Ninda	National Forest Authority	Resource person
Veronique Lorenzo	First Secretary, European Delegation, Kampala	Resource person
Jalia Kobusinge	Operations Officer, European Union	Resource person
Solveig Verheyleweghen	Second Secretary, Norwegian Embassy, Kampala	Resource person
Paul Jacovelli	Sawlog Production Grant Scheme	Resource person
Mike Nsereko	Executive Secretary, Uganda Timber Growers Association	Resource person

Mozambique

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
Carlos Serra (Jnr)	Justiça Ambiental, Escola Judiciaria Matola, and Amigos	Convenor of FGLG

	da Floresta	
Anabela Lemos	Justiça Ambiental	Core team member of FGLG
Daniel Rubero	Justiça Ambiental	Core team member of FGLG
Nilza Matazel	Justiça Ambiental	Occasional participant in FGLG
Nazira Dista	Centro Terra Viva	Core team member of FGLG
Alda Salamao	Centro Terra Viva	Occasional participant in FGLG
Artimisa Cossa	Faculty of Law, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo	Core team member of FGLG
Job Fazenda	Faculty of Law, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo	Occasional participant in FGLG
Luis Felix Cuna	Livoningo	Core team member of FGLG
Benil de Mannana	Justiça Ambiental	Occasional participant in FGLG
Maximino Costumado	Centre for Public Integrity (CIP)	Core team member of FGLG
Carlos Serra (Snr)	Institute for African Studies, University of Eduard Mondlane	Resource person
Christopher Turner	Food and Agriculture Organisation, Escola Judiciaria Matola	Resource person
Sérgio Baleira	Escola Judiciaria, Matola.	Core team member of FGLG
Lourenco Duvane	ORAM – Zambezia Province	Member of provincial FGLG team
Jan de Moor	Journalist and environmental campaigner, Zambezia Province	Member of provincial FGLG team
Camilo Nhancale	Juventude, Desenvolvimento e Ambiente (Kuwuka JDA)	Member of provincial FGLG team

Vietnam

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
Nguyen Quang Tan	Independent Consultant (but recently contact person for RECOFTC in Vietnam)	Convenor of FGLG
Ngo Sy Hoai	Vietnam Timber and Forest Products Association	Resource person
Fiona Percy	CARE International in Vietnam	Resource person
Vu Thai Truong	CARE International in Vietnam	Resource person
Tran Manh Hung	IUCN Vietnam	Resource person
Nguyen Ba Ngai	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Bac Kan Province	Core team member of FGLG (at national level)
Nguyen Ngoc Thanh	Community Forestry Pilot Project	Resource person
Vu Van Me	Community Forestry Pilot Project	Resource person
Pham Xuan Thanh	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Hanoi	Resource person
Hoang Huy Tuan	Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry	Member of FGLG Hue
Ho Van Rai	Chairperson, Thuong Quang Commune, (Hue Province)	Resource person
Tran Huu Nghi	Tropenbos International, Hue	Resource person
Duong Viet Tinh	University of Agriculture and Forestry, Hue	Member of FGLG Hue
Nguyen Thi Hong Mai	University of Agriculture and Forestry, Hue	Member of FGLG Hue
Nguyen Minh Hieu	University of Agriculture and Forestry, Hue	Member of FGLG Hue

Hoang Thanh	European Union, EC Delegation, Hanoi	Resource person
Jens Rydder	Independent Forestry Consultant, Hanoi	Resource person

International Institute for Environment and Development (London and Edinburgh)

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
James Mayers	Head, Natural Resources & Programme Director, Forestry	Overall co-ordinator of FGLG and contact person for Ghana, Cameroon and Uganda
Steve Bass	Senior Fellow, Natural Resources Group	Aware of, but not participant in FGLG
Alastair Bradstock	Business Development Director	FGLG Evaluation contact person
Camilla Toulmin	IIED Director	Aware of, but not participant in FGLG
Nicole Armitage	Coordinator, Natural Resources Group	Core IIED team member for IIED (administration and editing)
Elaine Morrison	Researcher, Forestry	Core IIED team member, with responsibility for India and Vietnam. Also works on contracts and reporting
Brian Barban	Accounts Officer	Compiles financial reports to EC and arranges audit
Tom Bigg	Senior Researcher, Governance and Head of Partnerships	Aware of, but not participant in FGLG
Mike Shanahan	Press Officer	Involved in supporting media linkages for a number of country teams
Sonja Vermeulen	Programme Director, Business and Sustainable Development	Core IIED team member and contact person for South Africa and Indonesia
Duncan Macqueen	Senior Researcher, Forestry	Core IIED team member and contact person for Malawi and Mozambique teams
Dilys Roe	Senior Researcher, Biodiversity	Aware of, but not participant in FGLG
Ced Hesse	Principal Researcher, Climate Change Group	Core IIED team member and contact person for Niger

Resource Persons, facilitators and consultants

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
Scott Geller	LTS (Nairobi)	Supported early stages of support to Uganda
Paddy Abbot	LTS Edinburgh	Supported FGLG process in South Africa, and Malawi
Yurdi Yasmi	RECOFTC - Thailand	Contact person for RECOFTC support to Vietnam, India and Indonesia
Mike Harrison	DFID – Nairobi	Involved in forest sector reform in Uganda
John Hudson	DFID – London	Resource person
Peter O'Hara	Independent Consultant and Facilitator to FGLG	Supported design and facilitation of international

		learning events in Uganda, India and Malawi
David Hoyle	WWF – UK	Resource person
Julie Thomas	WWF – UK	Resource person
David Young	Global Witness – UK	Resource person
Simon Norfolk	Independent Consultant, Mozambique / London	Involved in supporting early stages of FGLG work in Mozambique
Stewart Maginnis	IUCN - Switzerland	Resource person
Phil Franks	CARE International	Resource person

Representatives from other learning groups

Name	Institution / Sector	Relationship to FGLG
Prudence Galega	NESDA-Central Africa, Cameroon	Host of FGLG Cameroon
Chimere Diaw	African Model Forests Initiative, Cameroon	Convenor FGLG Cameroon
Steven Ngubane	Forestry South Africa	Convenor (and host), FGLG South Africa
Pumeza Tunzi	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, South Africa	Co-convenor FGLG South Africa
Bright Sibale	Centre for Development Management, Malawi	Host of FGLG Malawi
Robert Kafakoma	Training Support for Partners, Malawi	Core member of FGLG Malawi
Kyeretwie Opoku	Civic Response, Ghana	Convenor and host of FGLG Ghana
Elijah Danso	Embassy of Netherlands, Ghana	Core member of FGLG, Ghana
Eddie Prah	Independent Forestry Consultant, Ghana	Occasional participant, FGLG Ghana
Suryakumari Dasigi	Centre for People's Forestry, India	FGLG Convenor and host, India
Sanjoy Patnaik	RCDC, India	Core member, FGLG-India
Agus Justiano	Forest Governance and Multistakeholder Forestry Programme, Indonesia	FGLG Member, Indonesia
Linda Yuliani	CIFOR, Indonesia	FGLG Convenor, Indonesia

Annex 6: Publications produced by FGLG to date

FGLG core project documents and annual reports

FGLG Project Document February 2005 to January 2009
FGLG Project Document February 2005 to January 2009 – logical framework
Project contract with the EC – Budget summary 2009
FGLG – EC contract on no cost extension to September 2009
Progress Report to the European Commission for the Third Year to January 2008 and Work Plan for the Fourth Year to January 2009
Progress Report to the European Commission for the Second Year to February 2007 and Work Plan for the Third Year to February 2008
Progress Report to the European Commission for the First Year to February 2006 and Work Plan for the Second Year to February 2007
FGLG EC Proposal June 2008 - Budget
FGLG EC Proposal June 2008
Forest Governance Learning Group - Project Document June 2003

FGLG learning events reports

Social justice in forestry Reviewing progress and looking ahead: Report of a Learning Event held at the Ku Chawe Inn, Zomba, Malawi 2nd to 5th December 2008 International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
Making small enterprises work better for social justice in forestry: Report of a Learning Event held at the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal, India 4th to 7th December 2007
Social justice in forestry: Report of a Learning Event held at the Ankrah Foundation, Mukono, Uganda, 28-30 November 2006
Feedback on the Forest Governance Learning Event at Akosombo, Ghana, 28-30 July 2004

FGLG updates

June 2008 Update
September 2007 Update
April 2007 Update
January 2006 Update
December 2004 Update
June 2004 Update

General reports and papers linked to FGLG

FGLG - ppt presentation new project Dec 2008 JM
FGLG poster from August/September 2008
FGLG fliers (2007)
Concessions to Poverty, Rainforest Foundation, Feb 2007. Please see:

- Political sustainability: governance and transparency - James Mayers
- The ineffectiveness of reforms and failures of the concession system in Cameroon - Samuel Nguiffo
- Social conflicts arising from industrial logging practices in Cameroon - Samuel Nguiffo
- Ecological stability of the concessions system reflected through national forest programmes - James Mayers

FGLG - ppt presentation July 2006 by James Mayers

Poverty reduction through commercial forestry: What evidence? What prospects? (2006)
National forest programmes and similar beasts: Current state of evolution, and future prospects for life (2003)
Forest governance and social justice: practical tactics from a learning group approach in Africa Prepared for the 17th Commonwealth Forestry Conference 29 February to 5 March 2005, Colombo Sri Lanka. (This article was also published in 2006 in International Forestry Review Vol.8 (2) 201-210)

Power Tools

The following tools, produced through IIED's 'Power Tools' initiative, all involved FGLG teams and drew on their work (2005):

- Power Tools Presentation
- Avante consulta! effective consultations
- Good, average & bad: law in action
- Improving forest justice
- Independent forest monitoring: a tool for social justice
- Local Government Accountability
- Organising Pitsawyers to Engage
- People's Law
- Targeting Livelihoods Evidence

BY COUNTRY

Cameroon

- Forest Governance Learning Group - Cameroon work plan 2008
- REPORT- Meeting SG Minfof July 2008
- GREG-FGLG Minutes of the meeting, 09 May 2008
- NESDA CA-IIED Progress Report-1st Quarter 2008
- Cameroon Report 2006
- FGLG-Cameroon work plan August 2006

Ghana

- Forest Governance Learning Group - Ghana work plan 2008
- VPA Ghana impact assessment Full Report draft March 2008
- VPA Ghana impact assessment Annexes to Full Report March 2008
- Governance Gossip: Ghana FGLG team 2007
- FGLG - Ghana work plan March 2006
- FGLG Ghana summary May 2006
- Practical tactics for governance - Ghana FGLG Feb 2005
- Draft: November 2005 FOREST GOVERNANCE LEARNING GROUP – GHANA PHASE II WORK PLAN
- FGLG West Africa Learning Event, GHANA: forests, livelihoods, governance – 2005
- FGLG West Africa Learning Event - Forestry Permits, Local Forest Institutions & Livelihoods in Ghana 2005
- Arthur-Brogan Draft May 2005
- Forest Governance Learning Group: Ghana Draft Work Plan MARCH 2004
- Forest Governance Learning Group: Legality and Impacts of Forest Utilisation October 2004
- Danso-Opoku report October 2004

India

Forest Governance Learning Group - India work plan (second phase) 2008
Forest Governance Learning Group – India work plan (first phase) 2006
Progress Report to September 08
Report up to July 2008
Progress report to June 07
Progress report April-June2007
Progress report, March 2007
Progress report to December 06
Non timber forest products and forest governance 2008
NTFP enterprise and forest governance: Bamboo. June 2008
NTFP enterprise and forest governance: Mahua .June 2008
NTFP enterprise and forest governance: Tamarind, June 2008
NTFP enterprise and forest governance: Tendu leaves June 2008
NTFP enterprise and forest governance: Sal seeds June 2008

Indonesia

Forest Governance Learning Group - Indonesia work plan 2008
FGLG Indonesia Policy Brief august 2008
FGLG Indonesia Summary Progress Report March 2007 - February 2008
Progress Report Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG) Indonesia November 2006 - April 2007
Forest Governance Learning Group - Indonesia work plan 2006

Malawi

Forest Governance Learning Group - Malawi work plan 2008
Malawi's green gold: Challenges and opportunities for small and medium forest enterprises in reducing poverty 2008
Making community based forest management work 2008
Charcoal - the reality: A study of charcoal consumption, trade and production in Malawi 2007
Malawi Quarterly Report Date: January-March 2006
Forest Governance Learning Group – Malawi - Workplan (April 2006 – March 2007) – Year 2 of EC funding
Forest Governance Learning Group Malawi Third coordination mission report 25 February – 3 March 2006
Malawi Quarterly Report Date: April-June 2006
Malawi FGLG August 2005 – March 2006
Forest Governance Learning Group-Malawi Quarterly Report October-December 2005
Forest Governance Learning Group Malawi First coordination mission report 3-6 December 2003
Forest Governance Learning Group – Malawi Workplan for Jan 2004 – August 2004
MALAWI - Country Brief 2004
A study on livelihoods, governance and illegality: Law enforcement, illegality and the forest dependent poor in Malawi, Thursday, 13 May 2004

Mozambique

Forest Governance Learning Group - Mozambique work plan 2008
MOZAMBIQUE WORK PLAN 2004-2009 DRAFT

Possible Workplan for April 2006-March 2007

Workplan for Forest Governance Learning Group Activities for Savcor Indufor in Mozambique 2006

Forestry legislation in Mozambique: compliance and the impact on forest communities, May 2004

Gleanings on governance - Learning from a two year process of forest policy support to ProAgri, 2005

Niger

Groupe d'Apprentissage sur la Gouvernance des Ressources Forestières (GAGRF) – Niger - Results and Activities (February 2007- March 2008)

La Stratégie Energie Domestique du Niger: Concept et Opérationnalisation. January 2005

Groupe d'Apprentissage sur la Gouvernance des Ressources Forestières NIGER. Plan de Travail - Janvier - Août 2004

Forest Governance Learning Group: Niger First Draft Work Plan DECEMBER 2003

Niger, Exposé des Réflexions du Groupe sur la Gouvernance Forestière: Rédigé pour l'atelier d'apprentissage sur la gouvernance forestière à Akosombo, Ghana, du 28 au 30 juillet 2004

Le Niger, Profil du Pays

South Africa

Forest Governance Learning Group - South Africa work plan 2008

FGLG in South Africa: Appendix 1 Phase 2 Workplan July 2007

FGLG – South Africa Workplan 2006 - 2008 Summary

FGLG in South Africa: Enabling practical, just and sustainable forest use Appendix 1. Workplan October 2005.

FGLG – South Africa's Progress Report by Forestry South Africa – May 2007

FGLG – South Africa's Progress Report by Forestry South Africa – January 2007

FGLG – South Africa's Progress Report by Forestry South Africa – July 2006

FGLG – South Africa's Progress Report by Forestry South Africa – April 2006

FGLG - South Africa: Comments to the draft forestry sector transformation charter 2006

South Africa - Country Brief of the Forestry Sector 2004

Uganda

Forest Governance Learning Group - Uganda work plan 2008

Lessons learned from citizen activism in Uganda: saving Mabira forest July 2008

Forest Governance Learning Group – Uganda Work Plan: March 2006 – March 2008

Forest Governance Learning Group: Uganda Draft Work Plan - June 2004

Uganda Forest Governance Learning Group - Work Plan March 2005 – March 2008 (draft 17th Jan 2006)

FGLG International Event 2007

Forest-based associations as drivers for sustainable development in Uganda 2006

FGLG Uganda's agenda - a leaflet outlining its work 2008

Key governance issues affecting forestry and how Uganda intends to make progress on them July 2004

Lessons and tactics 2005

Forestry Justice: combating illegality for forest-linked livelihoods December 2004

FGLG Annual Report, Narrative 2007

FGLG Narrative Report-2006

Uganda-FGLG study - Kazoora-Carvalho - Final 25thJan 2005

Small and medium forestry enterprise in Uganda 2004

Vietnam

- Forest Governance Learning Group - Vietnam work plan 2008
- Forest Governance Learning Group in Vietnam: Supporting Poverty Alleviation through Community Forestry Revised Work Plan 23 February 2007
- Community Forest Management for Whom? Learning from field experience in Vietnam, April 2008 briefing
- Quarterly Progress Report: January to March 2008
- Quarterly Progress Report: October to December 2007
- Quarterly Progress Report: July to September 2007
- Quarterly Progress Report: April to June 2007
- Quarterly Progress Report: January to March 2007
- Quarterly Progress Report: October to December 2006

Press and media

Recent press releases and articles on the activities and progress of the FGLG are listed below.

- 4 Dec 2008 Forests can reduce poverty says govt
<http://www.dailytimes.bppmw.com/article.asp?ArticleID=11422>
- 29 Nov 2008 Malawi to host international indaba on sustainable forest management
<http://www.nyasatimes.com/national/2030.html>
- 24 Nov 2008 Malawi meeting shows how to make forestry fair and sustainable
<http://www.iied.org/natural-resources/media/malawi-meeting-shows-how-make-forestry-fair-and-sustainable>
- 9 Oct 2008 Gov't clamps down on charcoal producers, leaves no alternative
<http://en.afrik.com/article14658.html>
- 8 Oct 2008 MALAWI: Charcoal is a burning issue
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80816>
- 4 Dec 2007 African and Asian experts in India to promote social justice in forestry
<http://www.iied.org/general/media/archive-media/african-and-asian-experts-india-promote-social-justice-forestry>
- 17 Sept 2007 Progress on forest governance in 10 African and Asian nations
<http://www.iied.org/natural-resources/media/progress-forest-governance-10-african-and-asian-nations>
- 13 April 2007 Forest protest ends in teargas and death - but a green governance movement starts to emerge in Uganda
<http://www.iied.org/natural-resources/media/forest-protest-ends-teargas-and-death-a-green-governance-movement-starts-emerge-uganda>