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“Biophysical and Socio-economic Frame Conditions
for the Sustainable Management
of Natural Resources”

Practical Work in Forest Development Cooperation - Bridging Practice with Theory

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Abstract

Forests play an indispensable role in efforts to combat poverty, conserve biological diversity, and the significant contribution of forests to mitigation of and adaptation to Climate change is broadly recognised. However, forests are in the centre of societal conflict of interests. The need for arable land for large and small scale production as well as infrastructure projects, urbanisation and demand for timber and timber products puts pressure on the resource and leads to an alarming rate of annual deforestation.

The major causes of continuing forest loss can be attributed to the realm of governance, including unfavourable macro-economic framework conditions, institutional deficiencies, a lack of political will, inadequate legislation and law enforcement, insecure land tenure and centralised decision-making with insufficient participation from civil society. Development cooperation commissioned by the Federal German government (BMZ) and implemented by GTZ concentrates on concepts to moderate a societal dialogue to find solutions for conflicting interests and build capacity of all actors. Our work takes a multi-level approach:

- At the local level we assist our partners in implementing land use planning and land titling, protected area management, certification and natural resources management.
- We enhance national sector reforms through supporting national forest programmes and strengthening Forest Law Enforcement and Forest Governance (FLEG).
- We are actively engaged in regional initiatives in the Congo Basin, South East Asia, the Amazon region and Central America.
- We contribute to the development of the international forest regime in the relevant international and UN fora and help our partners formulate and represent their interests in these fora, most currently in the UNFCCC-negotiations for REDD.

Together with our partners we combine institutional assistance with the development of practical solutions based on sound scientific knowledge to enhance sustainable forest management, provide for stable framework conditions and increase benefits from sustainable resource management. The orientation and priorities of our future work will be strongly influenced by major challenges: climate change, rising global demand for energy and other raw materials and rising global demand for timber and timber products as well as for forest ecosystem services and biological diversity.

Keywords: Development cooperation, combatting deforestation, forest governance, participation, multi-level approach, capacity building