Evaluation of the First Six Months of the Program, “Sustainable Forestry: National and Global Perspectives”

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Acknowledgements

Monitoring and evaluating the first six months of this program was an enjoyable experience for me; all was made possible by the active collaboration of both organizers and participants.

Therefore, I want to thank the team organizing the “Sustainable Forestry Program,” Mr. Carlos Bertao, Mr. Nalin Kishor, Mr. Manuel Clar and Ms. Adriana Costa, for their cooperation with the monitoring and evaluation of their program. They significantly contributed to the success of this evaluation by collaborating to create instruments, answering program-related questions, providing me with access to the required information—including on-site observation of both activities in Indonesia and Venezuela, and making the required logistical arrangements.

Also, I am very grateful to the participants in both activities, particularly the core participants, for their willingness to answer numerous questions, and their openness in doing so.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary program description:

The program “Sustainable Forestry: National and Global Perspectives” consists of a three year series of initiatives organized by the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the World Bank Institute (WBIEN). This report evaluates the first six months of the program from the start of its first activity.

The program has two components: “international” and “Congo Basin.” This paper will only report on the “international” component, since “Congo Basin” will join the program after its first six months.

The ultimate goal of the program is to promote sustainable forestry by influencing policy and institutional reforms. To reach it, the international component of the program creates opportunities to exchange forest related information, ideas and experiences. These opportunities occur through activities and a network.

- Activities are events, like field trips or workshops, gathering participants who work on the three main tropical moist forests and who bring together a variety of sectoral expertise (e.g., government, private sector, Non-Governmental Organization or “NGO,” academia, media and aid agencies).
- The network is an ongoing forum of exchange through electronic mail or the web site specially created for the program among a constant subgroup of the activity participants—the core group.

During the first six months of the program, two international activities, each comprising a field trip followed by a workshop, were delivered. The first one, “Fire Hazards, Transboundary Haze and Sustainable Forestry in East Asia and the Pacific” took place in Indonesia from December 6 to 12, 1998. The second one discussed “Conserving Forest through Carbon Sequestration” in Venezuela from February 28 to March 6, 1999.

Purpose of the report:

This report highlights the program’s strengths and weaknesses during its first six months, by looking first at the program issues and then at the results of the first two activities.

I. Evaluation of the Program:

A. Are the underlying assumptions of the program sound?

This question considers the following three underlying assumptions of the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy and institutional reforms can foster forest conservation or sustainable forestry.</td>
<td>Directly or indirectly, human activities are causing unsustainable levels of deforestation. Policy or institutional measures are key factors that can affect sustainable forest management by creating contexts in which humans can interact with their environment in a more sustainable way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a need for information regarding sustainable forestry.</td>
<td>Information is plentiful, yet misinformation or contradictory pieces of information are circulating rapidly. There is a need for credible information, especially raw data, to inform policymakers and the public at large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better information could promote better policy.</td>
<td>Three fifths of the full core group rated highly the potential usefulness of a network exchanging information to facilitate the process of policy reform in their countries. Some have policy experience confirming it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on information provided by the core group and observation of the workshop debates, the preliminary data so far tend to indicate that the three assumptions are verified.
B. Has the core group selection been appropriate? Will it enable the program to meet its objectives?

Based on the interview and questionnaires answered by the 16 core participants as they joined the program, the preliminary findings show some strengths for the program and some issues to solve.

1. Main initial strengths of the program:

   ▪ All participants meet the expertise requirements. They have complementary expertise and experience that can enable cross-fertilization in sustainable forestry and network operation. They are open to learn from the others and willing to contribute to the network by sharing their experience, knowledge and information regarding the issue. They are motivated to promote sustainable forestry.
   
   ▪ Out of the 16 participants, nine have already influenced environmental policies in the past, and five others are in a position where they could potentially do so.

2. Main participant-related issue to be solved:

   ▪ There is an urgent need to replenish the ranks of the core group; none of the programs organizational and regional composition targets for the core group have yet been achieved. In achieving these targets, it would be especially important to reach out to influential government officials and to strengthen the representation of the Congo basin in terms of number of participants as well as country diversity.

Overall, despite a limited number of core participants (16 instead of the targeted 30), the program has the potential to influence some areas of policymaking towards a more sustainable forest management.

C. What major issues should the program address at this stage?

1. At this stage, the major issue faced by the program is the discrepancy between the participants’ expectations and the network’s operations. When asked in an open form to state their expectations about the network, 81 percent of the participants answered that they hoped to promote changes in developing ideas and advancing some issues; influencing policies; and disseminating information to educate people. All participants indicated their unwillingness to communicate through the network, and mostly via the web site. However, three months after the network’s web site was open to the core group, its level of use to exchange of information was very low.

   This limited use might be explained by the fact that in the last three days of the Venezuelan activity 94 percent of the participants expressed a need for the network’s goals and/or plans to be clarified and/or focused. Agreement on general topics for discussion—without a specified direction, project or issue—does not seem to have been enough to trigger the network’s communication.
2. The next major issue to be addressed by the program is how to sustain the participants’ motivation. Signs of dissatisfaction are already appearing:

- Thirty-eight percent of the participants said that the program should cover their related expenses.
- Another 38 percent asked for more flexible travel arrangements.
- Twenty-five percent expressed their impatience with the slow pace exhibited in operationalizing the network.

Each concern represents a—still relatively small, but growing—risk of fading motivation in the core group. Defections in a small core group could affect the motivation of the remaining members. Therefore, responses to these concerns should be given soon.

II. Evaluation of the program’s activities:

This section will first report the findings of Indonesia and then Venezuela. In each case, the lessons of the immediate evaluation of the activity will first be outlined, followed by a description of the early outcomes.

A. Indonesia:

1. Lessons from the immediate evaluation of the field trip and workshop in Indonesia:

Based on the participants’ responses to closed-ended and open-ended questions answered at the end of the Indonesia workshop, here are the major lessons to draw from for the preparation of future activities.

Features which participants most appreciated, to be repeated in future activities:
- Opportunities to discuss with other participants
- Multi-regional and multi-sectoral representation
- Novelty and usefulness of the information provided

Participants’ suggestions for improvement based on their identification of weaknesses:
- Adjust the workshop’s design to better prepare the final recommendations of the workshop, by setting clearer goals and starting to discuss the recommendations earlier
- Shorten the workshop’s length
- Cover less material
- Better prepare the field trip, by, for example, involving regional core participants in its organization
- Abandon lunch presentations to leave more time for networking

2. Early outcomes of the Indonesian activity:

While in Venezuela, the 10 core participants who were also present in Indonesia were asked to describe what they had done so far with the materials and information that they had acquired in Indonesia.

Seventy percent of them disseminated some information coming from the Indonesian activity. They used two distinct communication strategies: 40 percent opted for a narrowly focused audience, and another 30 percent chose to disseminate the information widely in articles, radio broadcast or public report. The dissemination occurred in five countries, located in all three regions of the program.
B. Venezuela:

1. Lessons from the immediate evaluation of the field trip and workshop in Venezuela:

Here are the major findings drawn from the participants’ responses at the end of the activity.

Features which participants most appreciated, to be repeated in future activities:
- Opportunities to learn a lot about a topic that was new to many participants
- Opportunities to network with other participants
- Multi-regional and multi-sectoral representation

Participants’ suggestions for improvement based on their identification of weaknesses:
- Prepare a more relevant field trip
- Present the viewpoints of an even more diverse list of stakeholders, notably the private sector
- Better prepare the final recommendations to the Ministers, by not leaving the discussions about recommendations to the last minute, for example

When asked what they intended to do differently as a result of their participation in the activity, 60 percent of the respondents offered an answer. Moreover, the precision and enthusiasm of some responses indicate a real and high intention of use.

2. Early outcomes of the Venezuela activity:

Although no systematic effort was undertaken to document the outcomes of the Venezuela workshop, several noticeable outcomes have been identified.

- A meeting gathering Ministers of the Amazonian countries was initiated to discuss their positions on major global environmental issues. The meeting took place in Bolivia on June 14-15, 1999.
- A few participants from Venezuela started a multi-sectoral group actively working towards helping their governments to form a clear position on Clean Development Mechanisms and forest issues.
- A participant from Indonesia has obtained the Forest Ministry’s support to form a multi-sectoral group to discuss forestry issues and make policy suggestions.
- A participant representative of the Brazilian Axial Bank followed-up on the workshop by setting up a core group on Forestry to explore the feasibility and implementation of insurance related financial products for CO₂ derivatives.

So soon after the workshop, this is an impressive list of significant outcomes. They underscore the potential of this program to successfully foster sustainable forest management.

III. Overall Summary:

During its first six months, the Sustainable Forestry program has planted the seeds required for successful outcomes. The South-South Network—although still small—is ready to operate. Overall, the participants have found the first two international activities useful—the workshops always being more appreciated than the field trips. The workshop on “Conserving Forest through Carbon Sequestration” has already led to noticeable policy initiatives in the Amazonian countries and East Asia—two of the three regions covered by the program.

To capitalize on the early success and to increase the chances of having a positive impact, the program should now focus on clarifying its goals and work plans and then strengthen its links with organizations and networks already dealing with sustainable forestry issues.
INTRODUCTION

Background information about the program: The program “Sustainable Forestry: National and Global Perspectives” consists of a three year long series of initiatives organized by the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the World Bank Institute (WBIEN). The current report evaluates the first six months of this program from the start of its first activity. The period covered is December 6, 1998 to June 5, 1999.

The program has two components: “international” and “Congo Basin.” This paper will only report on the “international” component, since “Congo Basin” joined the program after the period covered here.

The program’s ultimate aim is to promote sustainable forestry by influencing policy and institutional reforms. To reach its goal, the international component of the program creates opportunities to exchange forest related information, ideas and experiences. These opportunities occur through activities and through a network (defined below).

- Activities are events, such as field trips or workshops, gathering participants who work on the three main tropical moist forests and who bring together a variety of sectoral expertise (e.g., government, private sector, Non-Governmental Organization or “NGO,” academia, media and aid agencies).
- The network is an ongoing forum of exchange through electronic mail or the web site specially created for the program among a constant subgroup of the activity participants—the core group.

In the first six months of the program, two international activities, each comprising a field trip followed by a workshop, were delivered. The first one on “Fire Hazards, Transboundary Haze and Sustainable Forestry in East Asia and the Pacific” took place in Indonesia from December 6 to 12, 1998. The second one discussed “Conserving Forest through Carbon Sequestration” in Venezuela from February 28 to March 6, 1999.

Purpose of the report: This report highlights the program’s strengths and weaknesses during its first six months. It analyzes the program-related issues first and then the results of the two activities. Conclusions follow each section.

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy: The program was monitored and its activities evaluated from the start. The same evaluator collected data on-site during the first two activities and after the second workshop.

The instruments used were questionnaires, interviews, spontaneous oral feedback, document review, and observation. Some instruments were anonymous; others were not. Yet, all data are reported in the aggregate. Individual respondents are not identified. Different sets of instruments were submitted to different groups of participants for different purposes.

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2 For more information on the program, see the Program Brief Document on Annex 1.
4 See Activity Initiation Report on Annex 3.
5 The program includes two groups: the “core participants” belonging to the “core group” (CG) and the “non-core participants” or “non-core group” (Non-CG). The core participants agreed to participate in this program for three years. They are expected to attend its relevant activities and communicate with the network. Not all core participants attended both activities. Therefore different questions were asked of: the “old core group” (Old CG) which attended both activities in Indonesia and Venezuela; and of the “new core group” (New CG) which attended only the Venezuela activity. Non-core participants are participants only invited to attend one activity with no further commitment.
6 See the list of instruments, their target, submission time, and response rate in Annex 4.
Figure 1 schematically illustrates the monitoring and evaluation strategy used. It distinguishes the ongoing part of the program (the network) from the activities. The thick arrows indicate when the data were collected. The thin lines show from whom, through which type of instruments and for what purpose.

**Figure 1: Schematic Representation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy**

Legend: CG: Core Group; D: Document review; F: oral Feedback; I: Interview; O: Observation; Q: Questionnaire
I. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

A. Verification of the underlying assumptions of the program:

The official goals of the program are: “a) to develop dissemination and training activities on forestry issues; b) to create professional networks to foster institutional and policy reforms in the forestry sector; and c) to foster a regional approach to forest conservation where the boundaries of the forest ecosystem go beyond geographical boundaries.” (See Annex 1.1, Program Brief Document)

To understand the evaluation approach, it is useful to analyze the above, official goals. Embedded within these goals is the following logic: The ultimate goal is “forest conservation.” The most important idea behind this concept is expressed in the title of the program through the word: “sustainable.” The phrase, “to foster institutional and policy reforms in the forestry sector” explains the means by which the program aims to reach its goal. The intended direction of these reforms is, “to foster a regional approach (...) where the boundaries of the forest ecosystem go beyond geographical boundaries.” “Professional networks” created by the program are the means through which the program will foster reform. Finally, the development of “dissemination and training activities on forestry issues” represents an operational means of the program.

To make sure that the program logic could work, it was necessary to understand its underlying assumptions. They are decomposed below and analyzed systematically to verify if they were sound; and if the core group selection would enable the program to meet its objectives.

1. Are the overall assumptions of the program sound?

a) Can forest conservation or sustainable forestry be fostered by policy and institutional reforms?

The table below shows a sample of topics discussed during the first two workshops and during the interviews with the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of factors that have so far negatively affected sustainable forest management</th>
<th>Examples of institutional or policy measures that could positively or negatively affect sustainable forest management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated land clearing through slash and burn.</td>
<td>Promotion of more sustainable land clearing practices in a land tenure system where locals have some ownership over the land on which they live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major uncontrollable forest fires.</td>
<td>Education of local populations on how and when to use fire in and around forests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global climate change towards an increase in frequency and intensity of El Niño years, leading to severe drought in some tropical moist forest areas.</td>
<td>Among other non-forest related measures, promotion of carbon sinks through the development of carbon offset market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth in and around forest areas.</td>
<td>Development of incentives for transmigration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic system rewarding deforestation in a context of large income discrepancy where cleared land is more highly priced than forested land.</td>
<td>Promotion of economic systems that reward all forest services and that include local people in income generating activities related to sustainable forest management, e.g., ecotourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High proportion of side damages (e.g., roads) caused by logging companies, in comparison with number of trees extracted.</td>
<td>Promotion of marketability of new tree species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overexploitation of forest concessions disregarding laws and quotas in a context of a buyers’ market pushing for low timber prices.</td>
<td>Reliable, credible and affordable certification system along with public sensitization especially in buyer’s countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption occurring at any stage from legislation to local law enforcement.</td>
<td>Transparency laws and public sensitization specially in forest countries; and allocation of adequate means to law enforcement officials along with training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The examples listed in the previous table are neither exhaustive not systematically found or applicable in the three regions covered by the program. This table does not aim to advocate the adoption of any of the measures listed. It only aims to illustrate two facts:
The factors inducing unsustainable levels of deforestation are caused by human activities. Policy or institutional measures are key factors that can positively (or negatively) affect sustainable forest management by creating contexts in which humans can interact with their environment in a more (or less) sustainable way.

b) Is there a need for information regarding sustainable forestry?

Nine out of the seventeen core participants interviewed stressed the importance of credible information, notably raw data to foster sustainable forestry. They eagerly gave concrete examples where the mere absence of information, mistrust in the information available, or lack of public access to information has contributed to unsustainable levels of deforestation. The examples relate to the three regions covered by the program. Beyond information for policymakers, public access to credible raw data is, according to the participants, key to enabling sustainable forestry. This need varies according to country. Brazil was mentioned as a country highly equipped to provide good public information; while other—even neighboring—countries feel needful in this regard. Participants also mentioned the importance of having direct access to other countries’ information.

c) Could better information promote better policy?

In the program-entry questionnaire, participants rated the “potential usefulness of the network as a tool to facilitate the process of policy reform in your country.” On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the minimum and 5 the maximum, the average rating of the 18 core participants present in Indonesia and/or Venezuela was 4.00. Over three fifths of them rated 4 or 5. (Annex 15.2) In addition, three core participants have personally fostered policy changes by providing their governments with better information. Another one in the policymaking role experienced difficulties in promoting policies that could be implemented, because of insufficient information on local realities.

Conclusion: The objectives of the program assume that policy and institutional issues are playing a major role in sustainable forest management, that there is a need for information on sustainable forestry, and that providing this information could promote sustainable forestry. These three assumptions were tested against the contents of the workshops and the participants’ statements and experiences about the issues. Based on this, one can conclude that the three underlying assumptions of the program are sound.

2) Has the selection of participants been appropriate? Will this enable the program to meet its objectives?

The success of the program relies heavily on its core participants, who will be at the center of the network aiming to foster policy and institutional reforms for the next three years. Therefore, it is essential to verify to what extent the selection of the core group members has been appropriate.

a) Is the number of core group participants adequate?

Officially, the program aimed to gather 30 core participants, ten from each region. However, only 12 of them showed up in Indonesia: five from East Asia, four from the Amazon basin, and three from the Congo basin. In Venezuela, six new core participants showed up. This could have raised the number of core members to 18. Unfortunately, two participants present in Indonesia did not come to Venezuela—one was from the East Asia and the other one from the Congo basin. Therefore, only 16 core participants were present in Venezuela, six from East Asia, six from the Amazon basin and four from the Congo basin. Since these 16 participants are the ones likely to remain in the program, they will be considered the core group.

The failure to mobilize more core participants is one of the weakest points of the program so far. To offset this disappointment, all participants are encouraged to suggest names of potential members. In addition, seven participants suggested linking the network to other organizations, networks or web sites.

b) Is the organizational and geographical distribution of the core group adequate?
The initial plan was to invite four government officials, two representatives from the private sector, two NGO representatives, one representative from the academic sector, and one representative from the media per region.

i) Analysis of the organizational distribution of the core group:

Chart 1 shows the difference between the targeted and actual organizational composition of the core group.

**Chart 1: Actual versus Targeted Representation by Organization Type**

The chart reveals that no organization types reached the targeted number of participants. It also displays a weak representation of government. This is accentuated by the fact that the two participants who were in Indonesia but did not show up in Venezuela were government representatives. However, if in absolute numbers the government representation remains weak, the positions occupied by the newcomers are more senior and more closely connected to decision centers than the previous group of government representatives. Therefore, they are more likely to influence policy in their countries.

There is also weak representation of academia. However, it is not detrimental to the program yet for two main reasons. First, the main role of participants from academia was to disseminate information or communicate research findings early to decision-makers. Second, the categories shown in the chart are not exclusive to academia. Some core participants wear several hats. Conducting research, designing projects, publishing, and disseminating are part of the functions carried out by non-academic core members, and some core members wear several hats. Therefore, even if academia is under-represented in numbers, its typical functions are not.

According to the initial objectives of the program, the media is well represented in two of the three regions. The media people selected are an asset for the program because of their potential for wide coverage. Not only can they reach a wide audience in their own countries, but they also belong to regional networks that can further broaden their reach. The weakness of the media sector is the absence of representative for East Asia.

Compared to other categories, the private sector is well represented. Each region has at least a representative. Further, the two private sector representatives from East Asia work in different countries. More importantly, these participants can represent or influence several hundred private sector companies through various business associations in their countries.

Finally, the NGOs have the strongest representation in absolute numbers and in proportion to their intended audience. These people are a very strong asset for the network, because there is among them a very high level of expertise, commitment and experience, particularly regarding practices influential to policymaking. They have the potential to conduct research, design projects, find the necessary points of leverage and build solid arguments to influence policy and institutional reforms. This does not mean that some people in other categories lack such capacity, but as a category, NGO members are a strong asset to the program.

ii) Analysis of the geographical distribution of the core group:

Chart 2 below shows the difference between the targeted and actual regional composition of the core group.

**Chart 2: Actual versus Targeted Representation by Region**

Compared to other categories, the private sector is well represented. Each region has at least a representative. Further, the two private sector representatives from East Asia work in different countries. More importantly, these participants can represent or influence several hundred private sector companies through various business associations in their countries.

Finally, the NGOs have the strongest representation in absolute numbers and in proportion to their intended audience. These people are a very strong asset for the network, because there is among them a very high level of expertise, commitment and experience, particularly regarding practices influential to policymaking. They have the potential to conduct research, design projects, find the necessary points of leverage and build solid arguments to influence policy and institutional reforms. This does not mean that some people in other categories lack such capacity, but as a category, NGO members are a strong asset to the program.
Because the network is starting with fewer participants than expected, geographical distribution becomes a critical issue. Many participants were attracted by the multi-regional nature of this program, that enables valuable cross-fertilization. For this, a wide country representation is an asset. In this respect, the Congo Basin representation is a matter of concern. Not only is the actual representation of 40 percent significantly below the program target, but all four representatives come from the same country, Cameroon. (See network map on annex 16.) The Amazon basin has representatives from three countries, and East Asia has representatives from four countries.

c) Do the selected core participants have the required expertise to contribute to the network effectively?

Clearly, all participants interviewed met the expertise requirement. As expected, their expertise is found in diverse areas. All had at least one area of strong knowledge—be it government policies on forestry, private sector practices, forest related sciences, social implications of forestry policy on communities, ways to communicate messages to various audiences on issues related to sustainable forestry, or another area. In addition, the participants have experience participating in networks, and several of them have assumed the responsibilities of coordinating similar organizations.
d) Are participants willing to learn from the rest of the group and share their relevant experience, knowledge and information through the network?

The large majority of the core group members started with a high level of motivation as indicated in the following participants’ responses.

- When interviewed, all participants said that they felt they had something to learn from other disciplines and other regions. They were genuinely open to the idea of learning from other regions, hoping to avoid repeating unnecessary mistakes. On the program-entry questionnaire the average rating to “your interest in receiving information from the network” reached 4.78 on a 5-point scale where 1 means “minimum” and 5 “maximum”. (See annex 15 page 2.)
- In the interviews and on the open-ended questions about their expectations, all core participants indicated their eagerness to contribute to the network by sharing their experiences, knowledge and information. This was confirmed on the program-entry questionnaire, where they rated an average of 4.83 for their “interest in communicating their experience through the network.” (See annex 15 page 2.)
- Going even further, in Venezuela the program organizers asked the core group members to answer by name the following question: “What can you and your organization give to the Network? What other resources (financial, staff time, etc.) may be available?” All 16 participants reiterated their commitment to provide personal time. Nine of them also offered some staff time if needed, two could help with facilities and one could provide some financial help for activities held in his country.

e) Are participants motivated to promote sustainable forestry?

All participants interviewed indicated that they are interested in promoting a sustainable use of the forest. Before joining the program, some participants had strongly demonstrated their motivation by taking risks, physical or intellectual, such as expressing themselves boldly on the issue and presenting points of view that are not necessarily common or safe.

The participants from the private sector were generally more eager than the others to explain their motivation. They stressed the fact that wood-related industries require long term investments, and therefore it was in their professional interest to promote sustainable forestry to get their return on investment, and have sustainable, profitable businesses.

f) Are participants equipped to communicate with one another?

Two basic assumptions need to be met to enable the participants to communicate via the network. They should speak English and have access to the Internet.

Despite the fact that none of the core participants had English as their native language, all of them have mastered it enough to communicate with one another. Nevertheless, if this preliminary language obstacle has been successfully overcome, future network communications may be hindered by the large number of languages spoken in the nations involved. Most of the documents stemming from local or national sources (e.g., forestry laws, newspaper articles, official statistics, etc.) are likely to be available in a language other than English.

The other issue is the participants’ access to a medium of communication. All remaining core participants have access to Electronic Mail (EM). However, two reported intermittent connection problems that have already affected the communication among core members. By the end of the Venezuela activity, three participants from the Congo basin were not yet connected to the Internet. However, all were expecting to access it soon. The last participant from Congo basin, although officially connected, was experiencing technical problems.
g) Are participants influential enough to induce or promote policy or institutional reforms?

The more influential core participants are, the greater the potential influence of the network. The responses to the interviews of the 16 core participants and the review of materials they provided have been translated into the following scale:

- “Very high” means that the participant has directly contributed to policy or institutional change.
- “Potentially high” means that the participant is in an influential position, but has not clearly directly influenced policy or institutional changes so far.
- “Moderate” means that the participant felt that he might only have an indirect influence.
- “Low” means the participant did not feel that his action could influence policy or institutional reform.

Chart 3 shows the distribution of influence on policy/institutional decisions based on the above scale.


data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence Level</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentially high</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion: The program would have better chances to meet its objectives if the core group could soon reach its targeted size of 30 members, instead of the 16 current members likely to remain involved.

Replenishing the ranks of these categories reached the highest proportion of influential people, as none of these regions, as an important part of the representation of the Congo basin in terms of number of participants as well as countries.

Even if participation is lower than expected, the participants who showed up do have the potential to enable the program to meet its objectives. They have the required expertise. They are willing to learn from the rest of the group and share their relevant experience, knowledge and information through the network. They are motivated to promote sustainable forestry. They are able to communicate in English. All of them expected to have access to the Internet by the end of the first six months of the program. Last but not least, the high proportion of very and potentially influential people among them makes the network also potentially influential.

B. Where does the program stand so far? Analysis of the participants’ expectations, issues raised and suggestions:

At this stage, participants’ expectations about the network should be analyzed, their concerns and suggestions reviewed and their pattern of communication observed.

1. Analysis of the participants’ expectations:

a) What are the participants’ expectations about the program?

Before the start of the network operations, all core participants were asked what they expected from it. The major trends in their responses follow.

Fourteen participants listed among their expectations the promotion of changes regarding forests. The questions being open-ended, participants were not led in this particular direction. Therefore, this represents a very large theme among the core group regarding expectations. Three sub-themes dominate the expectations outlined in participants’ responses. They are that the network would help develop ideas and
advance some issues (9); would influence policies through advocacy or lobbying campaigns (9); and would disseminate information to educate people (5). An additional less specific theme was to produce results (3).

Beyond promoting change, **five participants also said that they expect the network to “carry out projects;”** through linkage “to some projects on the ground,” or by creating “the conditions for intercontinental projects.”

Another expectation mentioned by **five participants** regarding the network is the **opportunity to find human resources.**

**Four participants** said that they expect the network to “**encourage training and capacity building**” of “developing countries with regard to sustainable forest management.”

Finally, **one participant** expects to develop **trade.**

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**Chart 4: Summary of the participants’ expectations for the network**

(Percentage of participants out of all 18 core respondents having listed each expectation)
b) Are there any contradictions among the participants’ expectations?

The network starts with a broad consensus about promoting changes. The four participants who did not express this idea did not express an opposition to it, either. The three major expectations within this broad consensus—to develop ideas and advance some issues; to influence policies; and to disseminate information to educate people—reveal different levels of ambition, but there does not necessarily exist opposition among them. Figure 2 below illustrates a 62 percent overlap in the participants who chose two or three of the expectations noted therein.

Figure 2: Overlap between the three major expectations expressed by the core participants

The three expectations are not necessarily contradictory; they could even be complementary. In order to influence policies, the network could start to develop new ideas and disseminate them. Influencing policies can be fostered through certain means, such as advancing ideas and disseminating them. Therefore, these responses do not reveal major contradictions among participants with regard to promoting changes.

“Carrying out field projects” was only suggested by five participants. On March 6, 1999, in a core group plenary discussion, the idea was quickly dismissed by the organizers without eliciting participant reaction.

On the topics to discuss, analysis of participant answers to the questionnaires and observation of the last core group meeting quickly revealed a consensus to focus on issues related to carbon sequestration and to private sector forest management.
c) How do the participants foresee their relationship with the WBI? What do they expect from the WBI?

Consolidated, open-ended responses from various questionnaires show that 10 out of the 11 participants who expressed an opinion on the issue of balance between the role of the WBI and the core participants desire increasing the participants’ role. If the desire to be more involved has been expressed by a majority of core members, none of the suggested ways to implement the involvement was dominant. Concrete suggestions covered a wide range of potential increased involvement: setting the organization/agenda of the workshops and field trip; carrying out a regional/national work plan; maintaining sections of the web site, advertising it, assuming the leadership of the network after Cameroon, and hosting the network’s secretariat.

In addition, four participants mentioned the issue of sustainability of the program and the exit strategy of the WBI. Two of them already expressed the need to discuss the exit strategy of the WBI in a way that would still enable the network to continue its operations. Two others related the sustainability of the program to funding.

Even though five participants said that they see funding the network as part of the WBI’s contribution, two participants said that the network should be sure to secure funding. One of them suggested starting to look for funding sources from the three regions.

### Conclusion

The participants’ major expectation from the network is to promote changes in the field of forestry by developing ideas and advancing issues; influencing policies; and disseminating information to educate people. These expectations do not contradict, but rather complement, one another.

A smaller proportion also expects the network to carry out projects, to be a pool for human resources, and to encourage training and capacity building. The last two ideas are embedded in the program. However, the idea of carrying out field projects suggested by a few was rejected by the group without resistance.

Regarding topics to discuss, a consensus was easily reached to focus on the theme of the Venezuela workshop and the next workshop in Africa.

On the balancing of the roles of the WBI and the core group, ten out of the eleven participants who expressed an opinion expected and suggested increasing the participants’ role in various ways. A few participants suggested starting to look for funds to ensure the network’s sustainability after the WBI’s exit.

2. Issues, participants’ suggestions and initial steps of the network:

Six months after starting, the program is two thirds into its international phase. Though it is still early in the full length of the program, participants have had sufficient opportunities to express their concerns and suggestions, and early patterns of communication among network members can be observed.

a) What are the issues to be dealt with at this stage? What are the participants’ suggestions?

Participants’ suggestions reveal that, a) strategic issues and b) sustainability of motivation are the two main areas under which issues to be dealt with at this stage of the program have fallen:

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8 Participants also gave many suggestions about communications. Yet, none of them had a significant weight or differed from the stated objectives of the program. Despite the number of suggestions at the end of the Venezuela activity, communication was not perceived by the participants to be an issue.
i) Strategic issues:

In the questionnaire filled out at the last core group meeting, participants were asked to rate the clarity of their understanding of the future development of the network. The average rating on 5-point scale was only 3.19. This was the lowest rating of any question on the questionnaire. (Annex 17) This problem was further emphasized in the responses to the open-ended questions.

Fifteen out of the 16 core group participants present in Venezuela wrote in their questionnaires that the network’s goals and/or plans need to be clarified and/or focused. Considering that the questions were open ended, therefore not suggesting any specific responses, it is very significant that such a large proportion of participants mentioned this issue. It is also important to notice that these 15 participants mentioned this issue on the questionnaires that they filled out between March 4 and 6, 1999—i.e., not only on the program-entry questionnaire where such concern would be expected.

Even though the program organizers concluded their last core group meeting with the resolution to focus their discussions on two topics—thereby answering some of the concern that had just been expressed by the participants—it is important to follow-up on the participants’ feeling with regard to the directions of the network. If the directions remain unclear, this could soon affect the participants’ motivation and the effectiveness of the network.

Here is the more specific count of the participants’ responses on this issue: Although the ideas are intertwined, 12 participants mentioned the need for the network to clarify its directions, goals, aims, purposes, focus and/or objectives, and 11 participants expressed the need for a clearer organization, work plan, agenda, structure and/or framework that would enable the network to work more effectively toward its goals.

Beyond this, eight participants suggested that the network work on specific projects/issues.

ii) Sustainability of motivation:

The ex-ante review of the program identified sustaining the participants’ motivation for three years as one of the challenges associated with the program.

After only two workshops, there are clear signs that the motivation of some participants is beginning to be affected by two factors:

- An administrative system that forces air travel routes on participants and fails to cover their actual program-related expenses
- The pace of network operationalization, which raises the impatience of some members

Eight participants criticized the administrative system on two accounts: the lack of flexibility of the travel arrangements (6) and the failure to reimburse the expenses participants actually incurred because of their participation in the program’s activities (6).

The South-South nature of the program makes participant travels very long. In addition, to save costs participants are sometimes asked to follow indirect routes with several stops. These add to the time away from work and families and to their expenses. Moreover, the WBI travel arrangement system does not consider the actual place of departure and return of the participants. It assumes that they all go and come back home. Yet, participants may travel from conference to conference, making parts of their tickets useless.

Participants have also argued that the airfares eventually paid by the WBI was not necessarily cheaper than what they could have booked, and was sometimes more inconvenient. Participants have asked that they be permitted to book their own fares and to be reimbursed by the WBI. If their own fares happened to be over what the WBI would have paid, they offered to pay the difference.
Participants also criticized the financial compensation systems for not covering their actual expenses. One participant wrote that the core group “members need subsistent per diem in addition to food and lodging to cover communication and other incidental expenditures during their participation in the workshops. Two-hundred dollars is way below the need.” Some clearly stated that, while they volunteered their time, they did not volunteer their own money to pay for expenses that they incurred for participating in the program.

These complaints, already heard in Indonesia, became louder in Venezuela. Organizers should find creative responses soon for the long-term benefit of the program. These frustrations could lead core members to drop out, thereby impeding the program more than the increase in budget required addressing the participants’ concerns.

Six participants expressed the need for the network to start operating soon. Four of them related it to possible core member’s de-motivation. Illustrating this risk, one participant wrote: “The information hub/clearinghouse should be operationalized. Unless the core group members see some clear purposes/objectives aside or in addition to having the network per se, they may lose interest in the program. The network members and their institutions are investing an increasing amount of time and resources for the program. What are the returns for us or our countries?”

The program successfully gathered motivated, experienced and influential participants. Some of them induced policy and institutional changes in their countries. They achieved this not simply by being in position of power, but by using whatever power they had to the fullest, making bold statements, not accepting the status quo and risking sometimes their own lives to make things change. The qualities that make these participants a real asset for the program are precisely the ones that could lead them to lose their motivation in the network, if they do not see it moving soon enough toward some concrete accomplishments. Further, most participants are senior people with other opportunities to contribute to sustainable forest management. To keep motivation high, participants and their organizations should feel that their time is better used in the network than in other responsibilities.

Considering the small number of participants in the core group, the defection of some members could lead others to lose hope in the network. Therefore, participants’ concerns should be taken seriously.

Chart 5: Summary of the main participant recommendations for program development
Percentage of participants out of the 16 core participants present in Venezuela recommending each of the following:

- Clarify/focus network’s goals/objectives: 75%
- Develop work plan for the network: 69%
- Make travel arrangements more flexible: 38%
- Reimbursed actual expenses: 38%
- Start network operations soon: 25%
b) Is the network evolving toward its expectations? What is the early pattern of communication? What actions planned might remedy some issues?

All core participants indicated their willingness to participate in the network by exchanging information, knowledge and/or experiences. The Internet is the means of communication that they suggested most often. Most participants have access to a web site specially created as a forum of exchange for the core group. The site has been open to them since the week prior to the Venezuela workshop.

All pre-conditions for network communication seem to have been met. Yet, by the end of the first six months of the program, exchanges over the web site have been very limited. Two reasons could explain this scant use of the site. Participants left Venezuela with an unclear picture of what the network would do in the future, and some participants are not yet used to communicating through the Internet. The Internet seminar scheduled to start soon after the first six months of the program offers the organizers an opportunity to overcome these hindrances and to boost network communication.

Some participants communicated with core members on specific program-related issues, but via EM. Despite the widespread expressed intentions to communicate through the web site, most exchanges of information have so far occurred through EM and have had a regional focus.

**Conclusion:** At this point in the program, the major issue is the participants’ widely expressed need to clarify and/or focus the network’s goals and/or plans.

A second concern is growing dissatisfaction expressed by some core members with issues that can threaten the sustainability of the participants’ motivation. To address this risk, the program organizers should soon initiate some concrete activities and look into possibilities to make travel arrangements more flexible and to compensate the core-group members for their actual program-related expenses.

Three months after opening a web site specially devoted to the core group exchanges the site’s use had been very limited. Participants more often communicated through EM. The lack of clarity—felt by most participants—about what the network should do might partially explain the scant use of the site. The Internet seminar scheduled to start mid-June, 1999 could provide the structure needed to boost the discussions among members.
II. EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM’S ACTIVITIES

Activities, such as a field trip followed by a workshop, are major events within the program. Within the first six months of the program, two activities took place; one in Indonesia followed by one in Venezuela. Both activities were evaluated on-site during delivery (immediate evaluation). Data were also collected as part of a follow-up effort to document the outcomes of these activities. However, the follow-up on Indonesia was more systematic than that on Venezuela, since the evaluator did not have a chance to meet all participants after the Venezuela workshop last March.

A. Evaluation of the Indonesia activity:

1. Immediate evaluation the Indonesia activity:

The Indonesia activity comprised a field trip to East Kalimantan followed by a workshop in Surabaya. To evaluate it, at the end of the activity each participant filled out a questionnaire which included closed-ended and open-ended questions.

Two different questionnaires were used. One was filled out by the non-core participants (20 out of 33 responded; 61 percent) and the other one by the core participants (9 out of 12 responded; 75 percent). (For detailed results, see annex 18.) Although the questionnaires were different (to adjust to the different level of involvement of each group in the program and in the activity), most questions were comparable. The analysis of the participants’ responses below will aggregate the results of both groups. Due to a lower than expected attendance, results of sub-groups are often meaningless. They will only be mentioned when required by the analysis of specific questions.

This section will report the major trends among the participants’ responses around three parts: 1) the activity’s strengths, 2) its weaknesses and the participants’ suggestions for improvement, and 3) the participants’ intended follow-up actions.

a) Major strengths of the Indonesia activity:

All participants were asked at the end of the workshop to write what they found most useful in the workshop (including the field trip for the core group).

Questions relating to the opportunities for discussions among participants were the most or almost the most highly rated items. The effectiveness of the activity “in enabling you to learn from participants from other regions” was rated an average of 4.56. The ratings for usefulness of the discussions in breakout groups and in plenary averaged 4.25 and 4.21 respectively. Less highly rated, but still quite positive was the extent to which participants “developed useful contacts with people from other regions,” with an average rating of 3.90 for the whole group, but a very high average rating for the core group alone: 4.22.

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9 Spontaneous oral feedback was also received by the evaluator on-site from the participants. It was anonymously reported to the organizers during the activity.
10 Asked to the core group only.
11 All ratings in this section are on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “minimum” and 5 “maximum.”
Confirming these ratings, exchanges among participants was ranked as the most useful feature of the activity by 17 participants in the open-ended questions. Among them, 12 praised the activity for its mixed composition, which included people from different regions and different disciplines. Two participants also indicated that the field trip was valuable in enabling participants to get to know one another.

The second most praised item was the information received, notably in terms of lessons (what not to do) for other regions/countries. Nine participants found this information most useful. This was confirmed by an average rating of 4.11 for the “usefulness for you of the information that you acquired.”

b) Major weaknesses in the Indonesia activity and participants’ suggestions for improvement:

One objective of the Indonesia activity was to identify regional training needs so that the program could follow with regional workshops in its second phase. To meet this objective, it was important to satisfy the participants working on the East Asian tropical moist forest region. However, the ratings from participants working mostly for this region are lower on every item than those working on other regions. Particularly worrisome to enable the success of the next regional phase are their low ratings on the following items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop’s contribution in identifying the main regional training needs</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of the wrap-up recommendations for you</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in your appreciation of poverty as a component of the issue</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in your familiarity with policies that have worked well in some cases</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability to your situation of the policies discussed</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five participants suggested ways to improve the preparation of the workshop’s final recommendations. They wrote that the objectives of the workshop should be clearer, that the process of preparing recommendations should start earlier, and that the breakout discussions should be longer.

Sixty-two percent of the respondents found the length of the workshop somewhat excessive or excessive. In their open comments, four participants suggested shortening it.

On the content side, 54 percent of the respondents found that the amount of information covered in the workshop was somewhat excessive or excessive. Three participants elaborated on this by writing that the presentations were too long and that each of them should have been limited to two or three major points.

Forty-four percent of the respondents who took part in the field trip (four out of nine) wrote that they found the field trip least useful. Least appreciated of all was the trip to the Kutai National Park, notably “because it was very long and exhausting and there was not much to see.” This disappointment was also reflected in the ratings. With an average of 3.00 out of 5.00, this trip was the lowest rated item of the questionnaire. However, the large standard deviation of 1.63 indicates that not all participants were disappointed with it. Some felt that it was useful to see the extent of the devastation and/or that it was a good opportunity for the core group to bond together.

Finally, 28 percent of all respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the lunch presentations. Reasons given were that they denied participants opportunities for rest needed to sustain attention for the afternoon; they occupied time that could have been used for interaction among participants; and they were not relevant to Indonesia. One lunch presenter added that the presenters did not know clearly what was expected of them. The most common suggestion was to eliminate lunch presentations.

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12 Arithmetic average rating of all respondents to the question on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = “minimum” and 5 = “maximum.”

13 Number of respondents to the question among the participants who mainly work on East Asia.
c) Participants’ intended actions as a result of the Indonesia activity:

At the end of the workshop, the participants were asked what new approaches they intended to apply in their jobs as a result of their participation in the activity. The most often expressed intentions were the following.

Ten of them said that they wanted to maintain the contacts that they developed at the workshop and continue to exchange experiences. Among them, two participants mentioned specifically the contacts with the donors and one of them mentioned contacts with the World Bank.

Seven participants mentioned ways that they may implement some of what they learned from the workshop at work. Five of them—government officials working for East Asia—answered that they intended to “solve the problems which may be related to the topics discussed in this workshop;” to “consider further application of my work to forest fire;” to “disseminate the information to staff related;” to “institute awareness through formal and informal meetings on issues that have global concerns;” and to improve performance through knowledge provided. A participant working for an academic institution in East Asia mentioned a “possible project related to no-burn and clearing methods.” Finally, an NGO representative said that he would “include forest fires as a component of an integrated forest management approach.”

Finally, three participants said that the multi-disciplinary approach and multi-regional scope of the workshop will help them broaden their perspectives regarding related issues at work.

| Conclusion: The major strength of the Indonesia activity was to bring together people from different organizational backgrounds and regions, and to provide them with opportunities to discuss forest related issues. Maintaining the contacts that they established is the intention that participants most often expressed as a result of the workshop. Participants also appreciated the information provided. On the other hand, the most important weakness of the activity is the low ratings awarded by participants working mostly for East Asia to items related to identifying regional training needs. This could make the preparation of regional workshops in the next phase of the program more difficult. Participants suggested ways to prepare final recommendations better, since they were meant to clarify the training needs. Other suggestions included shortening the workshop length, covering less material, preparing the field trip better and eliminating the lunch presentations. |

2. Early outcomes of the Indonesia activity:

If the Indonesia activity is to achieve its longer-term objectives, the information it provided should reach key decision-makers and opinion leaders. For this, dissemination by the participants, notably the core group, is essential. Therefore, while in Venezuela, the ten core participants who had attended the Indonesia activity were asked how and to whom they disseminated the information received in Indonesia. (Annex II)

Out of the ten old core participants present in Venezuela, seven reported that they disseminated some of the information/materials that they obtained at the Indonesia activity. They used two distinct communication strategies:

a) Four participants targeted a few people and provided them with information they might find relevant.

b) The other three opted for a much wider dissemination strategy.
a) As a result of the focused communication strategy used by four participants, the following groups received information from the Indonesia activity:

- All forestry-related companies of Cameroon
- A specially targeted network of Indonesian government officials who have personal expertise in the issue and hold related responsibilities that could become more important in the future
- Some NGO representatives in the Philippines
- Malaysian experts dealing with programs related to forest fires

According to the disseminators, the expected value of the information for the recipients varied. For some recipients, it was a useful warning about what could happen if the forest was further degraded. Other recipients were thought to appreciate the factual precision of the information. Finally, one disseminator felt that the information had almost no value because the recipients already knew better how to prevent such forest fires.

b) The three participants who chose a wider communication strategy used the following means.

- Two participants wrote an article published in their countries, Brazil and Cameroon (Annex 19). One of them also disseminated the lessons from Indonesia for Cameroon through a five-minute radio broadcast.
- The last participant included information from the Surabaya workshop as an annex to a report on Malaysian forest management. This report is for sale to the general public.

Conclusion: Seven of the ten old core participants disseminated some information coming from the Indonesian activity. They used two communication strategies. Four opted for a focused audience. Three others chose to disseminate the information widely in articles, radio broadcast or public report. The dissemination occurred in five countries, located in all three regions of the program.

B. Evaluation of the Venezuela activity:

1. Immediate evaluation of the Venezuela activity:

During its delivery, the Venezuela activity was evaluated in much the same way as the Indonesia activity. (See questionnaires on Annexes 12 to 14.) The questionnaires included mostly comparable items. The major difference was that two questionnaires were prepared for the core group, one for the “old core group” (already present in Indonesia) and one for the “new core group” (not present in Indonesia). All 16 core members answered their participant feedback questionnaire on the activity, and 24 out of the 32 non-core participants answered theirs. (See detailed results on annex 20.)

a. Major strengths of the Venezuela activity:

At the end of the workshop, the participants were asked what they found most useful in the activity. Thirty-six answered the open-ended question. The major trends in their responses follow.

Sixteen participants felt that they had gained new knowledge and listed it as most useful.

More specifically, fifteen participants listed the topics covered by the workshop as its most useful feature. By decreasing order of interest, the topics were: the political position of various stakeholders; the financial information; the identification of constraints to the development of a carbon offset market, and the possible ways to develop Clean Development Mechanisms.

Aside from the list of topics above, twelve participants wrote that the case studies, actual experiences and examples presented in the workshop were the most useful.

Twelve participants expressed in various ways the idea that the workshop empowered them.
Six participants valued the **novelty of the workshop topic**. One of them liked the exposure given to this new topic because it raised interest in the subject.

All of these comments indicate that **the content of this workshop was its major strength**. The ratings of the closed-ended questions confirm this. *(Annex 20)* The highest average rating was for a question asked of all participants, “effectiveness of the workshop in maintaining your interest during its full duration.” The 40 respondents to the question gave an average rating of 4.08\(^{14}\). The participants’ high interest in the topic was partially due to its novelty. The average rating for the “extent to which you acquired information that was new to you” was 4.05 with 82 percent answering 4 or 5. Further, the overall usefulness of the activity was significantly correlated with the “extent to which you acquired information that was new to you.”\(^{15}\) Reflecting the topics listed in their open-ended comments, the participants awarded an average 3.98 to the “usefulness for you of the information that you acquired.” On the more specific topics discussed during the workshop, the constraints to the development of a carbon market and the issues related to a global carbon market, the average ratings were 4.00 and 3.98 respectively.

The next most valuable feature of the workshop, according to participants, was the **opportunity to network**. In their open-ended responses, **twelve participants mentioned networking as the most useful feature.**

Confirming this, the second set of most highly rated closed-ended questions is about networking. *(Annex 20)* The “extent to which you developed useful contacts with people from other regions” was rated 4.05 on average by the 40 respondents. This question was significantly correlated with effectiveness of the workshop in maintaining the participant’s attention and the overall usefulness of the activity.\(^{16}\) The question (asked to the core group only) about “the effectiveness of the field trip and workshop in enabling you to learn from participants from other regions” was rated an average of 4.06. Finally, the new core group (composed of only six people) was asked to rate the “increase in your understanding of the need for exchange of information among the three tropical moist forest regions.” Their average rating was 4.67, with all six answering either 4 or 5.

**b. Main weaknesses of the Venezuela activity and participants’ suggestions for improvement:**

Out of the 40 respondents to the participants’ feedback questionnaire on the activity, nine did not offer any negative comments or suggestions to improve the activity. The suggestions of the 31 remaining participants are presented below under four categories: i) field trip, ii) workshop contents, iii) workshop design, and iv) participation/representation.

**i) Field trip:**

**Thirteen out of the 15 core participants and one out of the four non-core participants who took part in the field trip listed it as the least useful feature of the activity, and/or offered suggestions for improvement.** This high level of dissatisfaction found in the open comments is also found in the very low ratings obtained for the related closed-ended questions. The usefulness of the field trip to the pine plantation was rated 2.57 with 43 percent of the participants rating 1 or 2. The second day of the field trip was even less appreciated, with 64 percent of the participants rating 1 or 2 for the usefulness of the field trip to the hydroelectric site, for an average of 2.14. *(Annex 20)*

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\(^{14}\) All ratings mentioned in this section are based on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = minimum and 5 = maximum.

\(^{15}\) Pearson-moment correlation coefficient \(r = .683\) at a two-tailed significance level of \(p = .000\) out of 38 respondents (\(N\)). This is the second strongest coefficient correlation with the overall usefulness of the activity after the “effectiveness of the workshop in maintaining your interest during its full duration where \(r = .792\); two-tailed \(p = .000\) and \(N = 39\).

\(^{16}\) In both cases, \(r = .550\) and two-tailed \(p = .000.\) \(N = 40\) and 39 respectively.
The major reason for such a high level of dissatisfaction was the lack of relevance (mentioned by 11 participants) between the sites visited and the workshop. Annex 21 shows the program organizers’ explanations for the lack of relevance of the field trip. In addition, four participants expressed their disappointment in not seeing the forest as they expected.

In addition to organizing a relevant field trip for the next workshop, four participants offered suggestions to prepare it better by involving the participants more and not organizing it at a distance.

Because the organizers had to cancel the field trip to Brazil, they expected some disappointment among the participants. Nonetheless, they decided to proceed with a different field trip because it had the potential to achieve at least one of the two objectives. The first objective—to expose participants to relevant activities on the ground—was not achieved. However, the second objective—to provide the participants with an opportunity to bond as a group—could be achieved. The organizers aimed to strengthen interpersonal relationships in the core group to make the network stronger in the future.

To verify whether the second objective was met, the interaction among core participants was observed during the duration of the activity. The sub-groups spontaneously formed by the participants showed that they interacted within regions as well as across regions. In addition, on the last day of the activity, 88 percent of the core participants rated 4 or 5 the “quality of the interaction among core group members.” All this indicates that the second objective of the field trip was achieved. (Annex 17)

ii) Workshop content:

Seven participants mentioned that whole or part of the workshop contents should have been more relevant to the announced objectives. Yet, no topic was found irrelevant by more than two people.

Four participants would have liked the workshop to discuss additional topics, such as the status of scientific knowledge on the issue; the “country positions of the Kyoto Protocol on Clean Development Mechanisms”; the training needs for a comprehensive approach; and some more specific land conversion issues.

iii) Workshop design:

Despite the large number of design-related suggestions, none constituted a major trend. The only important set of comments, from five to eight, participants were about the way the workshop was designed to achieve its objectives, particularly how the recommendations to the Ministers were prepared. Though the negative comments about this were not generalized, they represented a rather small but strong group of dissatisfied people. Given the importance of the topic, their suggestions are worth reviewing.

• Echoing a complaint already heard in Indonesia, three participants felt that the expected outputs of the workshop were not clear. One said, “How the workshop was conducted (what to achieve) seems to be uncertain hence being left to the last minute to plan and conclude.” One suggested that organizers should “define the expected outputs at the outset,” with time allocated during the workshop to proceed toward this aim, and to “learn how to manage group process at EDI and workshop participants to yield concrete and useful results.”

• As a result, three participants provided negative feedback or suggested improvements about the plenary session designed to come out with the recommendations. One felt that the “discussion over inclusion or not of natural forest as sink” was the least useful feature of the workshop. Another one said, “More time needed to discuss and reach consensus in whole group on small group findings.” The last one suggested that “The groups could have been divided so that each group would discuss the

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17 It is impossible to tell if the three non-core participants referred to in the first bullet, who spontaneously came to the evaluator to express their dissatisfaction with the way the session which synthesized the breakout recommendations was conducted, were among the five participants who mentioned it in their questionnaires. Therefore, one can only say that the number of participants reacting to this issue was between 5 and 8.

18 At the time of the workshop, the WBI was named the Economic Development Institute (EDI), as reflected in this comment.
various aspects of a particular issue. This would have avoided a repeated discussion of the same issues at the plenary level.”

- In addition, three participants spontaneously came to the evaluator to make strong related comments. The only oral comments spontaneously received by the evaluator about the workshop were about the poor organization of the workshop as far as producing recommendations for the Ministers.

The participants’ ratings on the recommendations to the Ministers reveal a widespread range of opinions about them. The “usefulness of the final recommendations of the workshop” was rated by the core group an average of 3.69\(^{19}\) with a standard deviation of 1.01 (Annex 20), and by the non-core group 3.82\(^{20}\). (Annex 17) Further, the “likelihood of implementation of the final recommendations of the workshop” was rated only 3.42, with less than half the core group giving it a 4 or 5. (Annex 17)

The core participants who awarded a rating lower than 4 to these questions were asked to justify their responses; six did. Four explanations were contextual and beyond the potential power of the network, but three participants blamed the quality of recommendations or urged the network to follow-up on them. They said: “the recommendations of the workshop were so global that it will not be easy to implement them;” and “the Ministers seem to know a lot more than what was specified in the recommendations.” The last participant wrote that “unless the network is known or linked with national/regional policymakers and we actively advocate for our recommendations, they may remain unattended to or conveniently forgotten by governments and policymakers.”

iv) Participation/representation:

Ten participants wished they had heard more on the points of view of some groups on the issue, notably the private sector (6).

c. Participants’ intended actions as a result of the activity:

At the end of the workshop, the participants were asked to state what they would do differently as a result of their participation in the activity. Out of the 40 participants who returned their questionnaires, 14 did not answer and two wrote “nothing.” The remaining 24 participants answered in the following way.

Thirteen participants said that they intend to use what they learned to influence stakeholders.

- Nine of them planed to influence their government on the issue. Four of them would do it through the creation of a work group (initiated at the workshop by the Venezuelan participants) that would study further how to conserve forest through carbon sequestration. The other five would individually push the issue. Among them, two worked for their governments, two for NGOs, one for the private sector. Three would specifically work on the issue of carbon sequestration and two would make proposal to their government on green business opportunities or on the creation of artificial plantations to release the pressure on the forest.
- Five participants intended to exert influence on the business community by using what they learned as additional arguments to support sustainable forestry management and green businesses.
- The last two participants from the East Asia region intended to promote the development of a regional position on the issue of carbon sequestration and Clean Development Mechanisms.

\(^{19}\) All ratings mentioned in this section are on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the minimum and 5 the maximum.\(^{20}\) To avoid conducting the evaluation session in front of the Ministers, who only attended the end of the workshop, this session was scheduled just before the arrival of the Ministers. Unfortunately, this timing prevented the participants from reflecting on the Ministers’ reactions to their recommendations after having heard them. Therefore, it was decided to include the related questions on different questionnaires for different groups. Since the core group was staying one day after the workshop, the question was asked on their March 6 questionnaire. The non-core group was scheduled to leave immediately after the workshop, so the question was asked on the March 5 questionnaires. The different conditions in which the two groups answered the question (one being able to reflect on the Ministers reactions, the other not) explain why the results of this question are not aggregated.
Beyond influencing others, seven participants said that they intended to use some of what they learned at the workshop in their own work. Three of them work for their government, two for an NGO, one for the private sector and one for a research institute.

- **Four** participants said that they would seek to implement some of the lessons of the workshop in projects, notably by setting up “a trust fund/capital instrument to support the formation of carbon sink certification” (1) or by incorporating “a new dimension of carbon tracking in reforestation activities” (1) in his country.

- **Three** participants intended to conduct further research on “the difficulties of implementing carbon sequestration projects” (1); how to “include the economic and social feasibility components into research projects.” (1); and how “to include ‘non-sink’ of agroforest, forest management and conservation in carbon measurement” (1).

**Six** participants said that they intended to disseminate the information acquired, notably by writing articles to be published in the mass media (3) or organizing a regional workshop to raise awareness on the CDM process.”

**Five** participants said that they intend to develop further the contacts they made at the workshop. Three mentioned that they would like to intensify their interaction with contacts from other regions, while one mentioned he would like to develop his contact with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

### Chart 6: Summary of intended use of the Venezuela activity
(Number of respondents listing each intended use)
Conclusion: According to the participants’ responses, the major strength of the Venezuelan activity was its content, notably the novelty of the topic. They valued the information provided. As a close second, opportunities to network, notably on a cross-national/regional basis, were much appreciated.

On the weakness side, the main dissatisfaction related to the lack of relevance of the field trip with the program objectives. Criticisms on the content of the workshop were also mainly about the relevance of some of its aspects. However, none stood out as a dominant non-relevant topic. The strongest design-related suggestions aimed to help the organizers achieve their objectives and produce recommendations for the Ministers. On representation, a quarter of the respondents would have liked to hear the views of an even more diverse group (notably more private sector).

The level of intended use of the activity was high. Twenty-four participants gave a description of what they intended to do differently as a result of their participation in the activity. Thirteen would try to influence their governments, the business community, or other regional stakeholders to develop ways to promote sustainable forest management through carbon sequestration. Seven would use workshop information in their work, notably by setting up funds for carbon sink certification and starting to track carbon sinks in reforestation activities. Six participants plan to disseminate the information. Five intend to develop further contact made at the workshop.

2. Early outcomes of the Venezuela activity:

No systematic evaluation was conducted to follow-up on the Venezuela activity. However, by keeping contact with some participants and the organizers, the evaluator in charge of the immediate evaluation of the Venezuela activity could document some of its outcomes. They are important enough to be reported here with the caveat that this list may not be exhaustive.

The workshop held in Venezuela was significant in many ways. At the end of the meeting, a core participant called it “a revolution.” Asked to justify his opinion, he wrote four paragraphs explaining: “what changed in La Guaira.” (Annex 22) His very enthusiastic view about the workshop’s significance and potential consequences was partly confirmed by at least two follow-up events documented here.

This section will summarize the workshop’s political and financial/economical outcomes.

a) Political outcomes of the Venezuela workshop:

The workshop gave birth to three political/policy initiatives: i) a regional meeting of Amazonian countries; ii) a work group in Venezuela; and iii) a work group in Indonesia.

i) Regional meeting of Amazonian countries:

The enthusiastic participant explained the political significance of the workshop in the following way:

“The situation at the political level prior to the meeting in La Guaira was the following. The tropical countries were outside the stage of discussion and negotiations on climate conventions. In Kyoto, Brazil and India took the leadership of the Third World block, pushing for commitments from the developed countries and rejecting deadlines for developing nations. But Brazil and India were more focused on industrial aspects of the climate conventions. In Brazil, climate change and carbon trade were under the Ministry of Science and Technology. The use of Clean Development Mechanisms (CDMs) for conservation and recovery of forests was out of the discussion forum. Countries that were more interested in the subject had no political strength to articulate any position at the international level. In La Guaira, the Brazilian Minister of the Environment took the leadership of the negotiations of CDMs for forestry. During the meeting, the Ministers of Latin American countries arranged a governmental meeting in Bolivia to explore the possibilities of CDMs. It is the first step toward the creation of a block composed of tropical countries. They are going to negotiate over the current stock of carbon fixed in their forests.” Following up on the proposition made in La Guaira, the Ministers of Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia requested the support of the World Bank to organize the meeting. The Environment and Natural Resources Division of the World Bank Institute (WBIEN) contacted the Environmentally and Socially Sustainable
Development sector unit of the Latin America and Caribbean Region of the World Bank (LCSES) to follow-up on the Ministers’ request. The meeting took place in Cochabamba, Bolivia on June 14 and 15, 1999.

ii) Work group in Venezuela:

At the workshop, seven Venezuelan participants representing different sectors (private, public, academia and NGO) decided to form a work group. It aimed to help their government formulate a national position on Carbon Sequestration to be used in the international negotiations around the Convention of Climatic Change. (Annex 23) They have been meeting since the workshop as a multi-sectoral group, notably adding the petroleum industry representation. They have been exploring ways to raise government awareness by distributing information (notably the workshop’s recommendations) to officials and requesting to meet with them. Meanwhile they started to research the issue by documenting existing projects and studying the feasibility of implementing pilot projects of their own. (Annex 24) According to one of its members, the work group is collaborating with organizations sharing their interest and progressively gaining influence. However, the current political events in Venezuela are making the achievement of the group’s objectives more difficult than anticipated.

The multi-sectoral representation of the Venezuela workshop that gave birth to this work group also transmitted it its multi-sectoral character, which is one of its strengths.

iii) Work group in Indonesia:

A workshop participant from the Association of Forest Concessionaires of Indonesia (APHI) met with the Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia. He received the Minister’s support to establish a multi-sectoral group in Indonesia. This group should discuss issues related to forests and plantations in the country and make suggestions for the improvement of the country’s forestry policy.

b) Financial/economic outcome of the Venezuela workshop:

Soon after the workshop, a non-core participant representative of the Brazilian Axial Bank informed the program organizer of an outcome of the workshop that he qualified as “constructive” in terms of “generating new ideas to be explored.” He wrote that, “following the event we have decided at AXIAL to set up a core group on Forestry to explore the feasibility and implementation of insurance related Financial products for CO2 derivatives.” (Annex 25)

Conclusion: An impressive number of initiatives has been generated or influenced by the Venezuela workshop. Among those documented so far, the most important one are listed below.

On the policy/political side, three important outcomes must be noticed. A meeting gathering Ministers of the Amazonian countries was initiated to discuss their positions on major global environmental issues. A few participants from Venezuela started a multi-sectoral group actively working towards helping their governments to form a clear position on CDMs and climate change issues. A participant from Indonesia has obtained the Forest Ministry’s support to form a multi-sectoral group to discuss forestry issues and make policy suggestions.

On the financial side, a participant representative of the Brazilian Axial Bank followed-up on the workshop by setting up “a core group on Forestry to explore the feasibility and implementation on insurance related Financial products for CO2 derivatives.”

III. OVERALL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
On the program/network:

During its first six months, the Sustainable Forestry program has planted the seeds required for successful outcomes. The South-South network—although still small—is ready to operate. The participants are qualified and motivated and the web site is open to receive their discussions. The special efforts made by the program organizers to enable bonding among core group members have been successful. However, the level of communication among members has been low. To boost the exchange of information, ideas and experiences on the network, the program should:

- Add more members to the core group, in all the categories planned by the program, but particularly government representatives, and strengthen the representation of the Congo Basin.
- Clarify the goals of the network and establish some work plans.

Despite the fact that the network is still in its early stage and despite the recent adjunction of new members to the core group, signs of impatience that could weaken participants’ motivation have already emerged. To address this issue, the program should:

- Deal with administrative and logistical issues; specifically, enable more flexible travel arrangements and more thoroughly cover participants’ program-related expenses.
- Start the network’s operations soon.

Once the network starts to host exchanges aiming to promote changes in sustainable forestry issues—as participants expect, the program should:

- Strengthen its links with organizations and networks already dealing with similar and related issues.

On the activities:

Overall, both activities—each comprising a field trip followed by a workshop—demonstrated similar strengths and weaknesses. The novelty and usefulness of the information provided along with the opportunities to network with forestry professionals from various sectors and regions were the most appreciated features. However, to improve the quality and potential impact of future activities, participants in both activities recommended that organizers:

- Design the workshops in a way that would enable more discussions aiming to prepare the final recommendations.
- Better prepare the field trip, by involving local participants and by selecting more relevant sites.

A follow-up on the Indonesian activity did not yield promising outcomes. However, the workshop on “Conserving Forest through Carbon Sequestration” has already led to noticeable policy initiatives in the Amazonian countries and East Asia—two of the three regions covered by the program. These early promising outcomes should be followed-up as they have a chance to yield important impacts.