

Annex 2: Report of conclusion of IPSI Collaborative Activity

The following form is for use in reporting the conclusion of an IPSI Collaborative Activity. Please fill out this form when the Collaborative Activity is finished and submit to the IPSI Secretariat (isi@unu.edu).

Reporting Date:	
Project title:	
Study for the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin [PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F)]	
Actual term (e.g. 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2015):	
April 2013 – May 2014	
Please provide a description of the activities and its outputs and/or outcomes below:	
<p>It is our understanding that Mr. Achille Orphée LOKOSSOU from Benin reported the precursor collaborative Activity as completed at Accra this year.</p> <p>ITTO also reported this collaborative activity as completed at its 50th ITTC session in November 2014, as follows:</p> <p>I. <u>Introduction</u></p> <p>The 8-month pre-project was approved under Autumn-2012 Project Cycle through the electronic approval system put in place, and the financing was made at the same Project Cycle by the Government of Japan, Korea and USA. The Agreement regulating the implementation of the pre-project was signed in March 2013. The pre-project implementation was initiated in April 2013 following the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds. As an acceptable version of the pre-project completion report was received in May 2014, as well as the financial audit report, the duration of the pre-project implementation had lasted 13 months instead of 8 initially designed by the implementing agency (ONG-CESAREN).</p> <p>II. <u>Objective</u></p> <p>The aim of this pre-project was to contribute to the sustainable forest management and conservation of biodiversity in Benin by building the capacity of local communities to improve their living conditions, through the conservation of Sacred Forests (SFs) part of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018. It specifically intended to evaluate the potential of Sacred Forests located in the Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in order to formulate a project aiming to support their rehabilitation and sustainable management.</p> <p>III. <u>Achievements and Outputs</u></p> <p>The main pre-project achievements and outputs are summarized in the two following tables:</p> <p>a) Achievement of outputs</p>	

Outputs	Level of achievement
1. Baseline information on the SFs of the target sites is available	Several technical reports providing updated and documented information and data on the Sacred Forests located in the Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in Benin, were prepared by consultants and validated by key stakeholders through a participatory approach.
2. A project proposal to support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of Sacred Forests within Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin is formulated and submitted to ITTO approval.	A project proposal was formulated with the updated information and data gathered and analyzed through the implementation of this pre-project. It was validated by main stakeholders, and submitted to the ITTO regular project cycle. It was registered as PD754/14 (F) by the ITTO Secretariat with the following title: <i>“Rehabilitation and sustainable management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018”</i> .

b) Achievement of objectives

Objectives	Level of achievement
Development Objective: To contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in Benin by building the capacity of local communities to improve their living conditions	Relevant information and data (forest inventory, socioeconomic, environmental, mapping aspects) required for the formulation of a full project proposal were gathered and analyzed during the pre-project implementation, through studies and surveys carried out in the target zone of the future project, with the collaboration of key stakeholders.
The Specific Objective of the preliminary draft is to evaluate the potential of 1017 and 1018 Ramsar sites sacred forests in order to formulate a project proposal for the rehabilitation and sustainable management of these forests	A project proposal was developed in a participatory process while taking into account the findings of studies carried out by consultants in the Sacred Forests part of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in Benin. It was appraised by the 48 th Expert Panel in August 2014.

IV. Outcomes and Impacts

The main pre-project outcomes and impacts, in relation to the expected outputs and associated activities, can be summarized as follows:

- The pre-project implementation was an opportunity to gather and analyze more information and data (environmental and socio-economic aspects) on the Sacred Forests (SFs) part of Ramsar Sites 1017 et 1018 and also to precisely map and demarcate them;
- Key stakeholders were identified and involved in the assessment of the potential of these SFs and the

sensitization campaigns led some of them to endorse the project objectives and even contributed to get the commitment of some local authorities for the co-financing of the future project; and

- Better sharing of the project's aim and strong involvement of key stakeholders contributed to develop a project proposal based on accurate information and data.

V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

5.1 Lessons learnt

For the project derived from the implementation of this pre-project, it was important to give priority to the establishment of a consultation technical committee aiming to address the issue of cultural beliefs and taboo linked to SFs in Benin, in order to ensure the involvement of key stakeholders operating in the target zone. The implementation of this pre-project was an opportunity for sensitization campaigns aiming to show the importance of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in Benin, which are dotted with pockets of Sacred Forests with a very rich biodiversity, representing a natural heritage of great value for their multiple functions (socio-cultural, ritual, environmental, etc.). These Sacred Forests constitute an endogenous form of biodiversity conservation and play a crucial role in the lives of local communities.

5.2 Sustainability

For the future project derived from the implementation of this pre-project, the sustainability should be based on the involvement of key stakeholders, including local communities, through a participatory process to be considered as a key element of the project implementation strategy. The involvement of key stakeholders, including local communities, in the management of SFs part of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, should contribute to the sustainability if their interests and needs are taken into account. As part of contribution to the sustainability, some local authorities have expressed the commitment for the co-financing of the future project.

Remarks:

Please attach additional pages as necessary.

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