



Making knowledge work for forests and people

Annual report 2019



About Tropenbos International

■ Mission

To improve the governance and management of tropical forests for the benefit of people, biodiversity and sustainable development

■ Objective

To ensure that knowledge is used effectively in the formulation of appropriate policies and managing forests for conservation and sustainable development

■ Our vision

A future in which forests and trees are used sustainably for the benefit of local people and the global community

■ Our guiding values

The core values of sustainability, inclusiveness and equity guide us. We work together with our partners and other stakeholders based on respect, co-ownership and a focus on impact. We encourage and empower local stakeholders to participate in shaping decisions concerning the governance of forested landscapes and value chains.

■ The TBI network

TBI operates as a network of legally autonomous member organizations, two in each of the main tropical forest regions: Southeast Asia, West and Central Africa, and South America.

All TBI network members share the same mission and commit themselves to collaboration in pursuit of common goals. Through this structure, TBI is well-positioned to inform international policy debates based on national experiences.



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Message from the Chair and Director

This annual report is written in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic. At first sight, COVID-19 seems to have little to do with the way people manage their agricultural lands and forest resources. But the opposite may be true. Research shows that deforestation is an underlying cause of zoonotic diseases — like COVID-19. Experiences from the communities where we work also illustrate the importance of diversity in the landscape, to ensure food security in times of crisis. At the same time, we fear the crisis will act as a trigger for increased extraction of natural resources and accelerated deforestation. The pandemic thus underlines the need for sustainable management of forested landscapes for the benefit of local people and the global community.

The links between people's well-being and the way we manage the planet's natural resources are receiving increased attention in the media. This trend was already apparent in 2019 — a year in which forests featured high on many agendas. The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Environmental Services (IPBES) put out a clear message that deforestation is causing biodiversity to decline at an alarming rate. In addition, forest fires in South America and Indonesia sparked widespread international concerns.

At Tropenbos International, we see that our mission is as relevant as ever. We aim to help to achieve a transformational change toward a smarter way of managing forested landscapes — a way that protects

and enhances the role that forests and trees play in support of people's health, water availability, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Looking back on 2019, we can say it was an eventful year. We started two new five-year programmes: Working Landscapes, and Mobilizing More 4 Climate (together with WNF and IUCN NL). Both programmes are financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While starting up the new programmes, we continued our work in the Green Livelihoods Alliance (with IUCN NL and Friends of the Earth NL), with the CGIAR's Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry and an EU-financed project on non-state actors in West Africa. We also collaborated with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.

This annual report presents highlights from the wide variety of our achievements over the past year. Agroforestry practices in Viet Nam and Suriname were improved, which resulted in higher yields. In DR Congo, the government allocated community forestry concessions, providing communities with better access to forest resources and enabling them to stop further encroachment. Through multi-stakeholder dialogues in the Philippines and Colombia, actors who had never worked together before shared their knowledge on sustainable management practices. In Ghana, a real-time community-based monitoring system was put in place to track developments in the landscape. And in Liberia, a radio programme called the Forest Hour gave local CSOs and forest communities a voice to flag forest-related issues.

As part of our multi-country programme, we explored experiences with community forest rights through a series of interviews, a literature review, and reviews of community forest tenure models in 12 countries. The results are being used by civil society organizations in these countries to improve their strategies in support of the successful devolution of forest rights. We also began a new initiative to analyze barriers to inclusive finance and bring stakeholders together to come to workable solutions. Last but not least, we supported a coalition of European NGOs in a campaign for legally binding measures to curb deforestation linked to the production, consumption and import of agro-commodities. This has resulted in the adoption by the European Parliament of a motion calling for robust regulatory measures.

We hope you enjoy reading about these achievements and many others in this annual report. Clearly, these accomplishments would not have been possible without the commitment and professionalism of our many partners. We hope that our joint dedication continues long into the future.

Tini Hooymans
Chair

Rene Boot
Director



More than carbon stocks — René Boot reflects on the role of forests at the turn of the decade

A new decade is starting, and international attention to forests seems to be at an all-time high. The 2010s were a decade of ambitious international commitments. The Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the New York Declaration on Forests, and the Warsaw REDD+ Agreement — all stress the need to conserve and restore millions of hectares of forests. Still, throughout the 2010s, deforestation rates have remained high. The 2020s will reveal whether these commitments will actually have an effect. To mark the start of a new decade, Koen Kusters talked with Tropenbos International Director René Boot about the longer-term trends, and what lies ahead.

How has the public debate on forests changed over the last decade?

“To understand how things have changed, we have to go back a bit further. In the 20th century, forests were seen as either sources of timber and non-timber forest products, or as protected areas for biodiversity conservation. In the 2000s — and particularly after the [Millennium Ecosystem Assessment](#) — the notion of multiple forest services gained ground. It became widely accepted that forests are also crucial for food, water and the climate. But in the 2010s, the view started to narrow

again. Forests were increasingly seen as a sink for carbon. They were put forward as the solution to climate change. That’s not that surprising from a political standpoint, as it is much easier to promote tree planting than it is to convince people to fly less, or to ban fossil fuels.”

Too much of a good thing?

The widespread acknowledgment of the role of forests and trees in mitigating climate change has put forests high on the international agenda, and provides a stimulus for restoration and tree-planting activities. This is good news for forests. But there may be downsides as well. Boot worries that, in the years to come, the emphasis will be entirely on the role of forests and trees in climate change mitigation. The result could be that forests are merely seen as reservoirs of carbon, while their importance to food, water and biodiversity is increasingly overlooked.

What is the risk?

“When forests are primarily seen as a carbon reservoir, it does not matter how they perform on the delivery of other services. Indeed, targets for carbon sequestration may be met most efficiently by developing plantations of fast-growing trees, with very little diversity.”

What is wrong with developing tree plantations for carbon sequestration?

“There is nothing wrong with developing tree plantations per se, but there is a risk that natural forests will be seen as an obstacle. All those different species of plants and trees — why would we need them? When all the attention and investments are directed to plantations for carbon storage, this could act as an incentive to convert natural forests into plantations. In the long term, natural forests may be limited to relatively small areas — mostly protected areas and Indigenous territories — that are no longer connected to each other. If that happens, we will lose a lot of biodiversity. Moreover, there will be negative consequences for the people living in those areas, who depend on a variety of products and services provided by diverse forested landscapes.”

National governments take the wheel

Deforestation, unsustainable land use and climate change are global challenges, and have therefore been major themes in international cooperation for many years. Boot describes how, in the 20th century, international cooperation in the field of natural resource management often took the form of project interventions. These projects were designed and implemented by donors, without meaningful input from the recipient countries, and many projects were discontinued when donor support fell away. In response to the problems with this form of aid, attention shifted to performance-based approaches in the 2000s, such as REDD+. Through REDD+ schemes, donors pay money if a country can provide evidence that it has reduced rates of deforestation and forest degradation. During the last decade, however, enthusiasm for REDD+ has waned, not least because it became clear that developing international performance-based systems is extremely complicated. Much of the attention shifted from developing adequate measures and policies to measuring results, says Boot.

Is this the end of performance-based approaches?

“I think the international community will continue with performance-based approaches, with a key role for REDD+. The problem I have with this approach is that the rules are entirely determined by external actors. It is imposed from the outside, and that may not be viable in the long term.”

What are the alternatives?

“Parallel to REDD+, I see the emergence of another way for the international community to promote sustainable forest management in the context of climate objectives — a way where national governments are more firmly in the driving seat. NDCs [Nationally Determined Contributions] are an important vehicle for this. In NDCs, national governments set their own mitigation and adaptation goals, and describe how they aim to achieve them. The role of the international community is not to tell countries what to do. Instead, they should support countries with developing and implementing plans to achieve the goals they have set for themselves.”

What is the role of Tropenbos International in this?

“In our [Working Landscapes programme](#), we explicitly focus on helping countries develop and implement their NDCs. We do so by assisting governments to carefully consider the views and needs of local people when developing their NDCs, and making sure that plans are based on evidence from the field. In addition, as an international network, we ensure that countries learn from each other regarding best practices, and we use our experiences to inform international policy processes, including those in the EU and the UNFCCC.”

The landscape approach

Tropenbos International assists countries to achieve the goals they set themselves. But what if a national government sees its forests purely as a carbon reservoir, with no attention to other forest services? According to Boot, it is up to organizations like Tropenbos International to provide alternative policy options and scenarios, helping national governments make well-informed decisions. In doing so, Tropenbos International promotes [climate-smart landscapes and the landscape approach](#), to help minimize trade-offs and maximize synergies between climate, conservation and development objectives.

Are government officials interested in the landscape approach?

“One of the foundations of the landscape approach is the realization that sustainable natural resource management requires collaboration and coordination between different government agencies — particularly those that deal with

forestry, agriculture, food security, water, climate change and nature conservation. This is something most people will easily agree on. Still, conveying what the landscape approach means in practice is sometimes challenging. When I try to explain it, I often present it as a people-centred approach. Start by thinking about what people need. They need staple foods, vegetables, fruits, water and wood. They need agricultural systems that are resilient, and they need to diversify their risks to be able to cope with shocks and stresses. And then there are higher-level needs as well, such as biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. After identifying these needs, it becomes evident that we require approaches that promote diverse landscapes that provide a range of products and services. Approaching it from this angle, it is easy to see that landscapes need to be managed in a way that provides a suite of different functions simultaneously.”

The landscape approach has been gaining momentum in recent years. Does it offer an adequate counterbalance to the view of forests as just carbon stocks?

“Tropenbos International has been promoting the landscape approach as part of a wider international movement. However, the movement may still be small compared to powerful political and business actors for whom viewing forests as just carbon stocks has its advantages. We therefore continue to advocate for the landscape approach, both as part of the NDCs and elsewhere. In addition, we will continue to work with partners to implement the approach, and share best practices with the rest of the world. This, I believe, will be key to meeting the international goals set out in the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.”



Contributing to transformative change

TBI contributes to sustainable development and climate objectives by promoting the sustainable use of tropical forests and trees in climate-smart landscapes. The ultimate aim is to achieve transformative change in the way natural resources are governed, which implies fundamental shifts in policies, institutional arrangements, perceptions and approaches.

The starting point of TBI's efforts is the recognition that, to improve the governance of forest and tree resources, public, private and civic actors will need to make their decisions based on reliable knowledge from various sources.

TBI's work focusses on three strategic priorities: sustainable land use, inclusive governance, and responsible business and finance. TBI considers these as the building blocks of climate-smart landscapes.



Sustainable land use

The adoption of more sustainable land-use practices by smallholders, communities and large-scale producers of agricultural and forestry products, in a way that supports local livelihoods, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation.



Inclusive landscape governance

An increase in the participation of local people—particularly women and marginalized groups—in decision-making processes related to the landscape, ensuring that decisions adequately reflect their knowledge, experiences and interests.



Responsible business and finance

Private actors effectively implement environmental, social and governance standards and commitments, and promote the inclusion of smallholders in value chains of agricultural and forestry products.

The remainder of the annual report presents examples of TBI's work in 2019 on all three of these strategic priorities.



Strategic priority
Sustainable land use



Better agricultural practices in Suriname lead to sustainable livelihoods

In a Saamaka Maroon village on the Upper Suriname River, the owners of a new agricultural cooperative learn that higher agricultural yields are possible with forest-saving agricultural methods. The idea is to scale up this good agricultural practice to more villages in the interior of Suriname.

Pikin Slee is a remote village on the Upper Suriname River, accessible only by boat and about two and a half hours from the closest settlement. The approximately 3,000 inhabitants are Maroons, descendants of slaves who successfully gained their freedom. They farm according to the slash-and-burn method, in which sections of forest are cut down and cleared by burning.

In February 2019, a number of locals set up the agricultural cooperative Hatti Wai in this village, with the support of Tropenbos Suriname, a number of ministries, students at Anton de Kom University, Cooperative Godo Bank, a marketing consultant and Wil Uma Fu Sranan, an organization that encourages entrepreneurship among women, mainly in rural areas. Last year, the cooperative consisted of around 21 members: 10 men and 11 women. Because of this gender inclusive approach, both men and women have equal access to the supplies necessary to work in the fields.

The main goal of the cooperative is to improve the agricultural system. To this end, it has set up a one-hectare agroforestry demonstration plot, on which fruit-bearing trees have been planted as well as trees suitable for felling (for timber) or for organic material, which is used for mulching the soil. Agricultural crops are planted between and at the foot of the trees. Thanks to this new farming method, productivity has increased significantly.

The resultant surplus, in particular root crops and ginger, is sold at villages along the river and in

Paramaribo. In the near future there should be a steady stream of products to sell in the capital. The income generated by the cooperative will be used to finance the sustainable development of the village.

Inland Suriname has about 160 Maroon villages and about 60 Amerindian villages. If good agricultural practices catch on in Pikin Slee, these new farming methods will be ready to find their way to those villages.

A problem that looms for many villages is that the inhabitants still do not have formal land-use rights. As a result, there is a risk that third parties will encroach on the land. For the villages on the Upper Suriname River this risk is palpable, because logging companies have established themselves right next to the territories of the villages. There is a draft law in the Surinamese parliament to give villagers formal land-use rights.



Coffee farmers in Viet Nam switch to intercropping

Coffee farmers in Viet Nam's Central Highlands are increasingly applying intercropping to their coffee plantations. This results in more income and a better resilience against climate change.

The Tam Giang cooperative in Dak Lak Province, located in Viet Nam's Central Highlands, is a local enterprise. The cooperative produces coffee products such as cherries, beans and powder, including UTZ-certified coffee. The cooperative also provides agricultural production services to its farmer members, such as information on improved techniques for crop cultivation, crop varieties, chemical use, and markets.

In Dak Lak Province, local farmers were in the habit of using all their land for coffee production, because that was their main source of income. The risk of this strategy is high: coffee needs a lot of water, especially if the coffee bushes are planted in a monoculture and have no shade trees. Dak Lak has experienced serious water shortages in the last five to seven years, especially because a lot of forest has been illegally cut down, which results in a less reliable water supply for agricultural lands. Some farmers had to dig deeper for groundwater; this has negative impacts on the soil and can worsen the water supply problem. Farmers who could not dig deeper for water often suffered lower yields or even loss of crops. Local farmers realized that these negative impacts were occurring and assumed they should do something, but did not know what to do. They had, for instance, no knowledge of tree species that are resistant to drought, provide shade for crops and give them income.

With the support of Tropenbos Viet Nam, the cooperative promotes intercropping among its members and non-members. Tropenbos Viet Nam also organized multi-stakeholder workshops for cooperatives and local farmers to be updated about

agroforestry policies, to reflect on themselves and to learn from other participants. Through training workshops and field study visits, Tropenbos Viet Nam provided farmers with knowledge of the benefits of intercropping timber trees (or fruit trees) with their coffee crops.

As a result of their improved knowledge of agroforestry coffee, local farmers have intercropped multi-purpose trees (or fruit trees). They did this based on their calculation of the income from fruit trees and the micro-climate benefits created by these trees for their coffee. Of the commune's 1,900 ha of land, intercropping has now been applied to 50 ha.

Planting forests is a time-consuming task that requires a lot of resources. Coffee, on the other hand, yields money quickly. Tropenbos Viet Nam has therefore opted first to improve the understanding of farmers about agroforestry with timber trees, while showing them successful field models. The long-term aim is to stimulate the planting of native trees in coffee plantations by creating the right enabling conditions. This means lobbying the government to improve the existing Payment for Environmental Services mechanism that will pay coffee farmers for (forest) trees planted in their coffee plantations and provide low-interest bank loans for forest planting/restoration initiatives.



Field trip opens doors to improvements in oil palm plantations in Uganda

At the beginning of this century the Government of Uganda established oil palm plantations on the island of Kalangala, in Lake Victoria. This caused many problems to local communities. In the case of new oil palm plantations to be set up in Buvuma, the question is whether these negative impacts can be avoided.

The oil palm project in Kalangala came with problems of irregular land acquisition, forest replacement, encroachment, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, disregard of the 200-metre free lake buffer zone, food insecurity, migration and immigration, disruption in social services and gender-based violence. It is crucial to acknowledge and better understand these impacts, mitigate them, and prevent them from recurring in other oil palm expansion hubs.

Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA), the Ugandan partner of TBI, undertook research into these problems which resulted in six policy briefs and supporting [full research papers](#) spanning land cover, womens' empowerment through economic initiatives, and land deals, among other issues. The Green Livelihoods Alliance (GLA) partner, the National Association for Professional Environmentalists, used these studies for advocacy to prevent irresponsible expansion of plantations to other islands.

A fact-finding and learning field trip was organized by the GLA to Kalangala in 2019. It brought together northern partners, the Dutch Embassy and the International Fund for Agricultural Development's Vegetable Oil Development Project (VODP), as well as Uganda's Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). The participation of the Dutch embassy attracted high-level officials and offered the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of oil palm development, and to consult the local communities who were directly involved.

The field trip resulted in several outcomes. An immediate VODP mission was sent off to Kalangala and Buvuma to discuss measures to better protect forest reserves, wetlands and coastal buffers. Delayed payments for land compensation to communities that sold land to oil palm developers in Buvuma were fast-tracked. The Kalangala Oil Palm Growers Trust (the lead implementing agency) was accepted as part of studies on intercropping as an alternative to oil palm mono-cropping. And some of the ETA/TBI policy briefs' recommendations were adopted in National Oil Palm Project implementation.

The research work by the GLA programme on oil palm impacts also resulted in the approval of a work plan and budget submitted by Kalangala District Natural Resources Department to MAAIF. The work plan focuses on monitoring the impacts of oil palm in Kalangala by the district on behalf of MAAIF. As a result of the research and advocacy by GLA, the district technical leadership of Buvuma and the new hub districts of Mayuge and Buikwe on Uganda's mainland have requested exchange visits to Kalangala to learn about oil palm and its impacts before making major contractual decisions with MAAIF.



Strategic priority

Inclusive landscape governance



Community forest rights — Shaping the conditions for success

Yohanes Terang¹ smiles and points at the lush forest on the rolling hills behind his small house in the village of Laman Satong in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. “In 2011, the government acknowledged our right to manage this forest,” he explains. “Without this right, the forest would probably have been cut down by now. Having a legal basis helps us to protect it.”

Laman Satong was among the first communities in Indonesia to receive a village forest permit from the government. This gave community members the legal right to use and manage 1,070 hectares of forest located on state lands, under the condition that they would not cut the trees. Yohanes Terang has been an active proponent of this arrangement. But not everyone is happy.

From Terang’s house it is a five-minute walk to get to Blasius Kanoi. He is a customary elder, just like Yohanes Terang, but his opinion of the village forest permit is very different. “The government is in no position to tell us what we can and cannot do with the land,” he says. “I have planted rubber trees on those hills, and I want to be able to cut them whenever I want.” For Blasius Kanoi, the arrangement limits his livelihood options. Moreover, he feels he was not properly consulted in the process.

Expectations and outcomes

On the surface the idea is simple: When local people are granted formal rights to use and manage forests, they will be better able to prevent over-exploitation

and reap the benefits of sustainable management. Based on this idea, numerous governments have started formalizing the forest rights of local communities and Indigenous Peoples. This is known as the global forest tenure transition. Many CSOs — including Tropenbos International and its partners in the Green Livelihoods Alliance — subscribe to the idea in principle, but the devil is in the details.

In 2019 Tropenbos International set out to get a better sense of the assumptions underlying the push for community rights by exploring questions such as these: What are the expected outcomes of formalized community forest rights? What evidence is there to substantiate the expectations? What are the main challenges and conditions for success? And how can CSOs help to create these conditions? To answer these questions, we dove into the literature, and interviewed international experts as well as people from communities with first-hand experience, like Yohanes Terang and Blasius Kanoi.

Building and sharing knowledge

One thing became clear: The formalization of community forest rights is no silver bullet. It often takes place in a complex web of different interests, and may involve trade-offs between the objectives of self-determination, forest conservation and livelihood improvement. Indeed, what is considered “success” will often differ among stakeholders in the landscape, and even among villagers themselves.

¹ † Yohanes Terang passed away on May 6, 2020

Tropenbos International elaborated on these and other findings in a book on [community forest rights](#), and in various articles and videos. These were shared through our social media channels, a newly launched [thematic page](#) on the Tropenbos International website, and [Landscape News](#) (a Google News-accredited outlet with more than 20,000 monthly readers). In June, we partnered with the CGIAR Research Program on Forestry, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) to organize a side event at the 2019 Global Landscapes Forum in Bonn, where we presented our publications and further explored the conditions of successful community forest rights. In July we collaborated with [ClientEarth](#) to organize a special session on community forest rights at the LANDac conference in Utrecht.

Improving strategies and policies

Many partner CSOs in the Green Livelihoods Alliance are directly or indirectly involved in the global tenure transition; for example, through lobbying and advocacy for greater and more widespread recognition of community forest rights, or by directly assisting communities to acquire permits and land titles.

In addition to building and sharing knowledge, Tropenbos International wanted to help these CSOs reflect on their approaches to ensure that

community forest rights deliver positive livelihood and environmental outcomes. We set up reviews of community forest tenure models in 12 countries. Each review starts with a study of expectations, outcomes and conditions, and is followed by a national workshop where CSOs, researchers and policymakers come together to discuss and define ways to align and adjust their strategies.

The reviews give CSOs and other stakeholders an opportunity to discuss objectives and the conditions to achieve them, and to then translate this understanding to practical interventions and policies that are appropriate to local and national contexts. The aim is to develop an open dialogue that explicitly acknowledges different views and interests. After all, as the example of Laman Satong shows, ideas about the benefits of community forest rights tend to diverge.

By the end of 2019, reviews in Indonesia and Colombia were completed and ten others were in process. In 2020, we will synthesize the findings of the reviews and share these with a wider audience, specifically aiming to inform and influence international NGOs and donors that fund efforts to promote community forest rights.





Concession titles for local communities in DR Congo: a long and complicated process

In February 2020, three communities in the Tshopo province of DR Congo received forest concession titles. The national government and NGOs believe that this will help decrease deforestation and poverty. It is a crucial step in a long and complicated process.

NGOs and the national government started rolling out a national strategy for community forestry in 2018. The ambition was to turn large parts of the country's forests into forest concessions. These would enable communities to profit from the sustainable management of the forest. Within a community forest concession, a community is allowed to exploit the forest for subsistence and commercial purposes forever, as long as this use follows a management plan that has been approved by the authorities. Each concession is governed by a committee, which consists of several community members.

Community forests give communities secure tenure, allowing them to develop economic activities that lead to better livelihoods.

In 2018, Equateur Province approved the first community forests. Since then, the number of community concessions has grown rapidly to about 65 in early 2020, with a total area of about 1.2 million ha.


In the province of Tshopo, where Tropenbos DRC has been active since 2017, the transfer of forest tenure to the local communities was delayed due to opposition from the local political elite. The main obstacles came from the administration. First of all, the practical preparations, including the development of the official paperwork, were painfully slow. Second, the process was obstructed by powerful people in the province who didn't want the communities to get title. They were afraid it would reduce their influence on the communities and their own access to the forest resources. Initially, on one of the decrees, the governor's name was misspelled, so that he could

not sign it. Moreover, the legally prescribed copies of the decrees were missing. Months later, after a new governor was appointed, the official transfer could be arranged quickly.

The three communities that received their concession titles are located in an area with extensive forests. Most people are farmers. They grow rice and peanuts, to sell at the market, and also cultivate maize, cassava and bananas, mainly for their own consumption. The forest is under increasing pressure from logging, mining and agriculture. The main change is that communities can now prevent the destruction of their forests.

The extent to which communities can generate income from their forest concessions depends on, among other things, their access to credit and markets and their ability to develop entrepreneurial skills. Tropenbos DRC cooperates with the Association for the Promotion of Local Initiatives in Forest Africa/ *Association Pour la Promotion des Initiatives Locales en Afrique Forestière* in this respect.

Tropenbos DRC provided multi-dimensional support (legal, technical, financial and educational). It built capacities; trained communities in lobbying and advocacy, entrepreneurship, income-generating activities, and forest/land management; lobbied authorities to issue title; hired a lawyer to coach communities and ensure that applications had the required information; and provided technical support for mapping concessions, among other things.



Participatory mapping: a prerequisite for spatial planning in Indonesia

Tropenbos Indonesia facilitated participatory mapping in several villages in Ketapang District. The results are scaling up and will be adopted in district spatial planning.

Missing or poorly defined village boundaries are still a problem for many Indonesian villages. In the Ketapang District, for example, only 17 of the 253 villages have official maps determined by the district government. As a result, a necessary instrument for spatial planning is lacking. Decree No. 45/2016 of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Guideline to plan and define participatory village boundary) makes villages responsible for spatial planning. Contributions from the Village Fund should enable them to do this. However, the district government has limited personnel and funding. Therefore, collaboration is set up with NGOs and companies through the government agency Community Empowerment for Village Development.

Participatory mapping (PM) is carried out, not only for the village to determine boundary mapping as a support to the district program, but also to identify natural resource potential and to use the results of the mapping to develop village spatial planning.

Participatory mapping is a bottom-up process in which the community members participate and contribute their knowledge. The result is a map that determines where the municipality boundaries are and where economic and non-economic activities take place within the municipality. Once the map is complete and agreed upon, the municipality can develop policy, and issue and enforce permits.

Women and young people play an important role in PM. Women usually have a better understanding than men of their village and are able to provide

more accurate information about their village's natural resource potential.

Ketapang is an average district, but has a national park within its boundaries with forests of outstanding quality. The park is surrounded by an oil palm company and villages, so the chance of encroachment is high. This underlines the importance of mapping.

Tropenbos Indonesia facilitated Ketapang to be able to do participatory mapping by providing training (on PM and the use of GPS) and by providing assistance during the mapping process. In 2017–18 the funding for PM was provided by TI, but in 2019, TI encouraged villages to use their own village fund for this purpose. However, TI still provides the training for village members to do the PM, and still provides technical assistance during the process.

Since 2017 maps have been made in seven villages. A number of them were made with the support of TI; other villages paid for the mapping with their own village fund. One village received PM training, delivered by TI, but has not yet conducted the mapping. The village governments of three villages have used the results of the mapping to develop land-use planning and green mid-term development plans.

In the follow-up process, lobbying and advocacy will be directed to the District Development Agency (Bappeda) to use the results of the mapping as a reference in the development or review of the district's spatial planning.

Towards better forest management and governance in Bolivia

A couple of years ago, the restructuring of forest management began in the Bolivian Indigenous Territory of Lomerío. This should lead to better logging plans, higher timber prices and a better distribution of income from logging. Villagers will benefit from this.

In the Indigenous Territory of Lomerío forest management did not function well. Timber companies determined to a large degree what was happening in the forests and neither the community or the indigenous representative organization — Central de Comunidades Originarias de Lomerío (CICOL) — had any input.

In 2018 and 2019, CICOL carried out a restructuring of the governance of its territory under forest management. Instituto Boliviano de Investigación Forestal (IBIF), Tropenbos International's partner in Bolivia, supported this process with technical assistance and a proposal to restructure the Asociación Forestal Indígena de Lomerío (AFIL). This organization was responsible for the coordination of the Forest Management plans of Lomerío and was supposed to provide technical and organizational support to the villages for the development of forest management plans. In practice AFIL did not provide this service. AFIL was reformed into a new implementing organization, Territorial Technical Unit of Lomerío, and became part of the organizational structure of CICOL.

In 2019, various communities, with support from IBIF, analyzed the costs and benefits of forest management and timber extraction and drew up a business plan. In July, at a general assembly of CICOL, including representatives of the 29 communities of

Lomerío, a resolution was adopted to improve forest governance. This would include greater participation by villagers, better distribution of benefits, leaders who are accountable for their actions, transparent timber sale contracts, mechanisms to combat low prices (communities have all agreed to not accept prices lower than 20 US\$ per m³, and together they are stronger to face the timber buyers in the region), logging plans consented to by CICOL, regulations that are better enforced, more control by CICOL in general, and an agreement with the Forestry Authority on the control of transport documents.





Real-time monitoring of forests in Ghana

In Ghana, an innovative system has been set up for community-based real-time monitoring of forestry activities and governance. By means of smartphones, about 200 trained monitors collect evidence about compliance with social responsibility agreements (SRAs), logging in forests, compensation and other aspects. The information is shared on the web-based platform ForestLink and then verified and processed by the Forestry Commission, with whom the platform works well in a strong alliance.

The monitoring system exists in approximately one hundred and fifty communities in five regions, mainly in forest reserves in the High Forest Zone and in some parts of the transitional areas where much timber is felled. These places were chosen because they are where most of Ghana's timber is produced and exploited. They are all natural forests that are important for local livelihoods, local biodiversity and climate regulation.

By the end February 2020, this form of real-time monitoring had yielded more than 450 alerts. Nearly 60 percent of these have been verified. As a result, 32 communities are now receiving SRA benefits, either for the first time or more continuously. Monitoring revealed 75 cases of illegal mining, 81 cases of compensation (for damage to crops), 148 cases of non-fulfilment of SRA obligations, 85 cases of illegal timber harvesting and 125 cases of illegal agriculture. Apart from illegal agriculture and mining, for which it is relatively difficult to find a solution, the issues have been resolved gradually.

Verification of community alerts is done by local CSOs. Tropenbos Ghana supports these organizations with small donations to enable them to do their work; for example, to purchase laptops, mobile phones and bicycles.

Tropenbos Ghana is one of the founders of Civil Society Led Independent Forest Monitoring (CSIFM),

which comprises seven civil society organizations and forms the basis of the monitoring. In addition to Tropenbos Ghana, these are Nature & Development Foundation (NDF), Civic Response, EcoCare, Friends of the Earth, Rural Development Youth Association and Rainforest Alliance. Originally the Ghana Real-Time Monitoring ([ForestLink](#)) was set up by Rainforest Foundation UK with Civic Response and Friends of the Earth. Tropenbos Ghana, with NDF, successfully enlarged this CSIFM group and strengthened its relationship with the Forestry Commission.

The role of the platform is to harmonize efforts on forest monitoring, spearhead discussions on independent monitoring of Ghana's forest, and take the lead in forest sector reforms, advocacy and capacity building. To this end, discussions are ongoing with the Forestry Commission of Ghana to build a strong alliance for safe and sustainable forest management. Meanwhile, a concept has been submitted to the Forestry Commission on the usefulness of civil society-led independent forest monitoring for the country. The Forestry Commission accepted the plan and has since collaborated with the CSIFM platform in capacity building for the Forest Service Division's District and Regional Managers and in joint control verification missions.



Radio programme puts forest communities on Liberia's national agenda

The Liberian government is weak, which affects forest governance, among other things. The weekly radio programme *Forest Hour* ensures that forest issues are addressed and put on the agenda of the national Forest Development Authority.

Forest Hour is an advocacy programme with great impact. A major achievement of the programme is that forest communities now count as contributing parties.

Since the weekly radio call-in programme was launched in April 2019, it has drawn attention to several critical forest issues flagged by both the guests and callers from various forest communities across the country and media institutions. Due to revelations by *Forest Hour*, the board of a corrupt Community Forest Management Body (CFMB), representing the business interest of the communities in logging contracts and other deals, had to resign. *Forest Hour* also revealed that some higher ups within the Forest Development Authority (FDA) were trying to undermine the board elections of a CFMB.

The influence of the radio programme extends to the meetings of the FDA, where issues from the show are placed on the weekly agenda. Because of *Forest Hour*, officials of FDA, local officials and members of parliament now handle forest-related matters carefully. The show has also increased community members' understanding that they can empower themselves and take responsibility for forest issues. Additionally, it has enhanced transparency and accountability and increased education and information dissemination. For example, the new CFMB board members (who replaced the removed leadership) presented an official quarterly report for the first time, which included the information that a local logging company had made payments to the CFMB account.

This influence was intended from the outset. The aim of *Forest Hour* is to voice in real time in the public arena

the interests of the communities in order to influence stakeholders at the national level. It provides an alternative national platform to draw stakeholders' attention to infractions in forest communities. Topics discussed include illegal logging, compliance or non-compliance with legislation, bad labour practices, forest management contracts, Community Forest Management Agreements, environmental pollution, and reviews of forest laws and regulations, as well as forest-related issues such as corruption in CFMBs, performance of CFMBs, and interference by government officials in community forests. The radio platform is also used to discuss research and briefing papers produced by Independent Forest Monitors, including Global Witness and independent researchers.

Forest Hour runs every Thursday at 4 p.m. on OK FM. It is produced by 18 dedicated independent and trained journalists, all members of Liberia Forest Media Watch, who collect cases across the country for the programme. It can be heard live and on Facebook, and is simultaneously relayed on four rural radio stations — Radio Sinoe, Radio Dukpa, Radio Cape Mount and Radio Live — in forested counties.

The radio programme is part of the EU-financed project "Strengthening the capacity of non-state actors to improve FLEGT-VPA and REDD+ processes in Western Africa," implemented by Volunteers to Support International Efforts in Developing Africa (VOSIEDA) in Liberia and by Tropenbos International.



From sworn enemies to partners in dialogue, Colombia

Cattle ranchers and indigenous people are often not good neighbours. The municipality of Solano, in the southern Colombian province of Caquetá, was no exception. After the guerrilla movement FARC was disarmed in 2016, a power vacuum developed in the region. Ranchers and indigenous people came to oppose each other. But by establishing a dialogue between the two groups, mutual respect and trust has grown and room has been created to work on joint solutions.

FARC's solid power base in Caquetá ensured order and a clear balance of power in the region for a long time. The guerrilla group imposed environmental rules that controlled deforestation and promoted the protection of water sources. Small farmers were allowed to grow coca, because it provided income for the FARC through taxation, but large-scale deforestation was out of the question.

This changed after November 2016, when the peace treaty between the Colombian government and FARC was ratified. The FARC fighters left the region for designated transition zones, where they gave up their weapons as part of the agreement. In Solano this caused a power vacuum. Wealthy large-scale ranchers took advantage of the situation by moving unhindered into the region, converting large areas of forest into pastures for their livestock. They hired poor landless people to do the work. Encroachment of the already fragmented reserves (*resguardos*) of the indigenous people was commonplace. As a result, tensions grew between ranchers and the indigenous population.

Tropenbos Colombia, together with The Nature Conservancy, has been active in the area since 2018. The organizations are working to bring cattle ranchers

and indigenous peoples together so that a dialogue can be established to discuss conflicts. Initial talks took place in a tense atmosphere, but since then a great deal of trust and respect has been built up between the two groups.

The two former sworn enemies are now working together on three issues. The first is respecting the boundaries of the reserves of the indigenous people by the farmers. Farmers have never done this before; until now they used indigenous land for cattle ranching and growing coca and cocoa. The second is making agreements about hunting and fishing. The farmers, who acknowledge that the indigenous people manage the area well, take care of wildlife management in the area together with the indigenous people. The third issue is water management. Until now, the farmers did not take good care of the small watercourses in their own areas; in cases of water shortages, they brought their cattle to the reserves. The farmers are now in the process of improving water management in their areas.



Participatory dialogues for bottom-up policy in the Philippines

Participatory multi-stakeholder dialogues in the Philippines lead to inclusive and well-informed decision-making on land conversion and water provisioning.

In 2019 Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP), Tropenbos International's partner in the Philippines, organized a second set of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder dialogues in three focal landscapes: Sierra Madre, Palawan and Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental. (The first dialogues took place in 2018.) Participating parties were the Departments of Environment and Agriculture, CSOs, people's organizations and academic institutions.

Thanks to these dialogues, cooperation has been established between the academic world, CSOs and local authorities that did not exist before. Studies have started in the landscapes, in most cases baseline assessments for sustainable and inclusive landscape governance.

The dialogues focus on land conversion (especially from forest to commodities such as rice, corn, oil palm and pineapple) and water provisioning, especially related to pending dam construction and water shortages during the dry season.

To date, the dialogues have brought about several outcomes in the three landscapes. In Sierra Madre, five local government units (LGUs), together with an academic institution, applied landscape approaches and inclusive strategies to manage Mount Balasig watershed. The same approach is also being established in Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental, where LGUs and an academic institution are leading an inclusive watershed management initiative for Mount Malindawag. In Palawan, stakeholders from various sectors have decided to come together by formalizing

a landscape governance core group. The group will help promote inclusivity and the use of landscape approaches in various governance bodies in Palawan.

The dialogues are part of the Sustainable and Inclusive Landscape Governance programme, which aims to build on landscape experiences and promote best practices. It also aims to develop methodologies and tools that can help landscape stakeholders co-create and co-implement landscape governance activities.

Governance in the Philippines has traditionally been top-down and not very participatory. This certainly was the case in natural resources management. The dialogues, on the other hand, are inclusive, which means that stakeholders from different sectors and different levels of governance are involved. This gives them a voice in the decision-making process. It is hoped that through these dialogues the government and the national agencies will engage in more inclusive policy-making. Local government is open to this, but the higher the level of governance, the greater the challenge.

FFP is a reputable organization that has built landscape governance into its own programmes, prompted by its collaboration with Tropenbos International.



Strategic priority

Responsible business and finance



Inclusive landscape finance — Waking the sleeping giant

Of a total of around 570 million farms in the world, more than 80% are smaller than two hectares. Hundreds of millions of these smallholders depend on agriculture and forestry for their livelihoods, and produce more than half of the world's food. They have the potential to play a key role in achieving inclusive and climate-smart development. Currently, however, many of these smallholders live below the poverty line and are highly vulnerable to climate change. They are a sleeping giant, whose potential can be unleashed by helping them to improve their production and economic viability. But for this they need funding to invest in sustainable production practices, organization, access to information and markets, and the development of small and medium enterprises.

On a global scale, lack of money is not the problem — the problem is where it is invested. Every year, hundreds of billions of dollars are directed to industrial forms of agriculture and forestry, which are dominated by large-scale companies. Smallholders are sidelined. The bulk of the money thus does not reach the majority of agricultural and forestry producers.

But things are starting to change. NGOs, financial institutions, companies and governments are increasingly showing interest in new models that can reorient investments toward land-use practices that benefit the environment and the rural poor, including women and youth. Tropenbos International calls this inclusive landscape finance. New ways are being developed to direct funds to investments that contribute to sustainability and inclusiveness, such as blended finance and green bonds. However, concrete examples of their successful implementation remain few and far between.

Listen and learn

How can we make sure that investments in agriculture and forestry actually contribute to social and environmental objectives, and make landscapes more sustainable and inclusive of the rural poor? Professionals working in agriculture, forestry and finance all hold pieces of the puzzle, but they tend to operate in their own areas. There is an urgent need for these different parties to listen to and learn from each other. Tropenbos International therefore teamed up with the CGIAR Research Program on Forestry, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) on a new initiative to analyze barriers to inclusive finance and bring stakeholders together to come to workable solutions. The initiative encourages innovative thinking and joint learning, facilitates and strengthens networks, and builds bridges between actors across the usual sectoral boundaries.

At the beginning of 2019, Tropenbos International started conducting interviews with a wide range of experts about the barriers to and solutions for inclusive landscape finance; the [interviews](#) have been published online on the Tropenbos International and [FTA](#) websites. The information from these interviews fed into a [webinar](#) in July, with participants from an Ugandan NGO ([Ecotrust](#)), an investment manager (Althelia Funds), and the FAO. This was followed by an e-dialogue, through which hundreds of people from all over the world could join the discussion and provide input to a draft paper. In November we organized a [panel discussion](#) at the Global Landscapes Forum in Luxemburg, where the webinar participants entered into a discussion with other contributors, including

representatives of Rabobank, Total SA, the Green Climate Fund, and a multi-village association from Guatemala. Finally, in December, we organized a [digital summit](#). The results of the various discussions that took place throughout the year have been published online (including a [white paper](#)), and will be synthesized in a publication that is planned for 2020. The discussions also resulted in new plans to establish collaborative projects with Althelia, Ecotrust, the Rabobank and FAO; for example, on case studies of the impacts of innovative funds and financing approaches, to learn how they can be improved.

Helping landscape initiatives to set priorities

In 2019 Tropenbos worked with EcoAgriculture Partners to develop the Landscape Assessment of Financial Flows methodology. It can be used by landscape-level initiatives and multi-stakeholder platforms to identify financial flows within a particular landscape with both positive and negative impacts on people and the environment. It is a practical tool that helps stakeholders identify local sources of finance for new investment ideas, find the current financial flows that are most in need of transformation, and better understand the elements of a landscape's financial context that require support.

In July the tool was piloted with a multi-stakeholder platform in the Juabeso-Bia and Sefwi Wiawso Landscape in Ghana. A major outcome of the pilot was that stakeholders started seeing their landscape from a different perspective. The assessment highlighted that companies are increasingly willing to invest in climate-smart cocoa production, which creates new possibilities for smallholders. But this also comes with new risks; it promotes smallholder specialization, which over time may decrease their resilience to climate change and market fluctuations. The assessment concluded that investments in climate-smart cocoa should enhance, rather than compromise, diversification. Besides cocoa companies, local and national banks could have an important role in achieving this, by including sustainability criteria in their assessment processes for loan applications.

The pilot's outcomes have been used to develop local implementation priorities for the [Mobilizing More for Climate](#) programme, in which Tropenbos collaborates with [IUCN NL](#) and [WWF NL](#) in Ghana, Cameroon, Mozambique, Uganda and Indonesia. Through this programme Tropenbos will continue to work with the multi-stakeholder platform in Ghana to implement the recommendations that came out of the assessment. The methodology will also be used in new programmes developed by Tropenbos and its partners, such as [Working Landscapes](#).

The future of landscape finance

Activities in 2019 resulted in new insights, connections and tools, providing a steady basis for future work. We learned that inclusive landscape finance first and foremost requires collaboration among local groups, national and international CSOs, and financial entities. Together they can develop funds to channel finance from various sources to local actors. Bridging the gap between investors and smallholder investees requires local organizations (forest and farmer producer organizations, unions, associations, etc.) that allow for funds to be aggregated. In this, NGOs can act as catalysts.

In the coming years, Tropenbos will continue to work with partners to organize producers, improve their financial literacy, develop risk reduction strategies, and create connections with financial institutions. This should help to attract new financial flows for smallholders and small and medium enterprises in agriculture and forestry. In addition, these cases will serve as a proof of concept. They should show what is possible, and therefore are expected to increase investors' appetite to invest in similar initiatives. The ultimate goal is to wake up the sleeping giant, harnessing the full potential of hundreds of millions of smallholders in the forested tropics to achieve truly inclusive and climate-smart landscapes.



Cocoa sector takes deforestation seriously

Together with partner organizations, TBI achieved a number of successes in the cocoa sector last year. In Ghana, civil society organizations have been taking part in the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI). Major chocolate companies called on the EU to regulate the European market for cocoa and cocoa products. And TBI participated in talks about deforestation as a result of cocoa production, as part of the Dutch Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa.

Cocoa and deforestation are almost synonymous. At the end of the 20-year production cycle, when the soil is exhausted and production ends, small cocoa farmers cut down forests to establish new cocoa plantations. This problem also occurs in forest reserves; as a study implemented by Tropenbos Ghana found, deforestation for cocoa production has grown explosively since 2010. In Ghana, a substantial investment in the cocoa sector to stop deforestation and restore some of the degraded forest land is needed. The will and the potential are there. For example, the 35 member companies of the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI), an enterprise supported by the Sustainable Trade Initiative and the World Cocoa Foundation, have committed to ending deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa supply chain.

For a forest strategy to succeed, non-state actors also need to be involved in the national discussion. This is one of the lessons of the FLEGT-VPA (Voluntary Partnership Agreement) process in Ghana: any legal reforms must come from a deliberative process that allows government, industry actors, national civil society, and cocoa farmers to make decisions together. This is outlined in the 2018 policy brief [*Transferring lessons from FLEGT-VPA to promote governance reform in Ghana's cocoa sector*](#), carried out by TBI, Tropenbos Ghana, Fern, EcoCare Ghana and Forest Watch Ghana. Over the course of several years, all

actors in the FLEGT-VPA process have learned to listen to, and respect each other, and make policy together.

The policy brief was well received in Brussels and Ghana, partly thanks to TBI lobbying. CFI has now invited civil society to take a place on the steering committee. This is significant; for the first time the CFI initiative recognizes the role that civil society organizations may play in future reforms of the cocoa sector to ensure social and environmental inclusion.

There was also a lot of movement at the EU level in 2019. The European Commission is considering developing a VPA for cocoa in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, with Fern taking the lead and TBI in a supporting role. Fern, together with some Members of the European Parliament, organized several conferences on the cocoa sector in Brussels, in which the private sector also participated. This resulted in a statement from three of the largest chocolate companies that urged the European Parliament to impose a due diligence obligation on all companies that sell cocoa or cocoa products on the EU market, in order to secure the long-term sustainability of the cocoa supply chain.

In 2019, a [*study*](#) by Tropenbos Ghana showed conclusively that encroachment on Ghana's forest reserves had increased tenfold since 2010. Some

experts estimate that 20 to 30 percent of cocoa comes from these reserves. The study received a lot of publicity, but the Forestry Commission disputed the facts.

TBI started participating in the Dutch Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (DISCO) in 2019. Similar initiatives exist in other European chocolate-producing countries. DISCO includes chocolate companies, retailers,

traders, the government, banks and NGOs. The topics discussed at DISCO include child labour, a living wage and deforestation. The role of TBI is to maintain the focus on deforestation, landscape restoration and agroforestry.



European Parliament wants binding measures against deforestation

In 2019, a broad coalition of European NGOs campaigned for legally binding measures by the EU to curb deforestation linked to the production, consumption and import of agro-commodities (so-called “imported deforestation”). As a result, in January 2020 the European Parliament adopted a motion calling for robust regulatory measures.

The motion of the European Parliament (EP) was adopted thanks to the support of the four major parties in parliament, following the EP’s debate on the EU Green Deal. It calls on the European Commission (EC) to present, “without delay, a proposal for a European legal framework based on due diligence to ensure sustainable and deforestation-free supply chains for products placed on the EU market, with a particular focus on tackling the main drivers of imported deforestation.” This motion is seen as a milestone; for the first time there is a parliamentary majority in favour of regulation.

The European demand for agro-commodities such as soy, palm oil, beef, coffee and cocoa indirectly leads to large-scale deforestation. With a mix of intervention measures, unsustainable practices can be tackled and conditions can be created for the fair and sustainable production, trade and consumption of commodities.

The EC is working on an Action Plan to combat deforestation. The Commission’s Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World’s Forests (July 2019) sets the foundation for further action. For the first time there was a mention of exploring binding measures in addition to voluntary measures, although this was not a strong commitment.

TBI, in close collaboration with IUCN NL, facilitated a coalition of Dutch NGOs to halt deforestation, and worked together to develop joint statements on binding measures. The Dutch coalition was successful. By mid-September 2019, the Government of the Netherlands, in its response to the EC communication, supported the inclusion of binding measures.

Also working in close coalition with Fern in Brussels, TBI lobbied for binding measures to stop deforestation. Among other things, TBI published policy briefs, underlining the importance of a smart mix of voluntary and binding measures. TBI provided provided input into EU consultations, such as the policy brief (published jointly with IUCN NL), [Key pointers for an ambitious EU action plan against deforestation](#).

TBI is particularly active in the policy debate on sustainable cocoa supply chains, both in producing countries (Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire), and in the Netherlands and at the EU level. In 2019, TBI and Tropenbos Ghana joined forces with Fern and EcoCare to publish a review on the lessons learned in the VPA FLEGT process for similar initiatives in the cocoa sector. These lessons are being taken seriously by officials in the EC and by Ghana officials: the EC is taking steps to launch a VPA Cocoa process for Ghana. (See also: Cocoa sector takes deforestation seriously.)



Publication highlight

Exploring inclusive palm oil production – ETFRN News 59



Global demand for commodities, including soy, cocoa, coffee, beef, timber, pulp and palm oil has increased rapidly over the last few decades, and is expected to continue to grow in the years to come. Among these commodities palm oil has attracted significant attention. An efficient and versatile crop, oil palm has been satisfying a considerable part of the increased global demand for vegetable oils. This is not without consequences. Land that is suitable for the production of oil palm in the humid tropics is also valuable in terms of biodiversity, ecosystem services, and for ensuring the food and fuel security of local communities. Although smallholders produce a major proportion of global production, they often do not receive an equitable share of the economic benefits of palm oil, and their needs and interests aren't adequately addressed in decision making.

In 2019 TBI published ETFRN News 59: Exploring inclusive palm oil production.

This issue brought together 24 articles and interviews that provide a collection of approaches, dialogues and innovative tools and methods that are clearly and concretely enhancing smallholder inclusiveness in sustainable palm oil production. Articles in this issue also show that the topic is not as polarized as is often perceived, and that there are many middle ways. Certification has made a significant contribution to including smallholders in the global supply chain. So have cooperatives and associations. Expanding these approaches can offer more potential for smallholders into the future, as can new practices such as intercropping and agroforestry.

Although this issue does not provide crystal clear answers and firm conclusions, it does add understanding to the debate, and offers opinions and a range of possibly pathways from a wide variety of perspectives. These voices show that there is a way to enhance smallholder inclusiveness — which is an essential component in working toward more sustainable supply chains.

Strengthening the business case for sustainable forest management



This report presents the results of a study on opportunities for and challenges to sustainable forest management and on the financial viability of certification in five timber producing countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia, Myanmar and Suriname. The study was part of the action plan in the framework of the Dutch International Corporate Social Responsibility Covenant "Promoting sustainable forest management."

The focus of the study is tropical forests and timber. Globally, forest management certification has the lowest uptake in the tropics, and corporate social responsibility risks for the timber sector are considered highest for tropical hardwoods. The main issues addressed by the study were the key motivations of forest managers to adopt forest management certification; the costs and benefits of certification; and the main barriers and solutions to scaling up sustainable forest management at the community, private-sector and government level.

Results indicated that market demand and market access are the two most important reasons for forest managers to engage in forest management certification. In practice, this means that export-oriented forestry businesses with markets in Europe are most likely to engage in certification. Other motivations include the availability of well-designed donor support programmes, company image and brand reputation, expected financial benefits (i.e., a price premium), investor requirements for certification, and pressure from NGOs and other companies. Two other important factors are the size of the forestry operation and the current level of sustainability, since those managers who see a smaller gap between current practice and certification requirements are more likely to engage in sustainable management.



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Village forest and oil palm: friend or foe?

Managing a village forest – a matter of commitment

Women's business — selling water from the forest

The village forest permit: Challenges and conditions for social forestry in Indonesia



Outreach and engagement

Tropenbos International engaged in a wide range of outreach initiatives during the year:



more than **45** events organized with more than **1,100** participants (*Stakeholder meetings, seminars, conferences and exhibitions*)



32 workshops with more than **1,300** participants



training for **1184** people in **25** courses

Tropenbos also had a strong presence on social media:



1,194 likes (↑11%) on Facebook, **3,830** people (↑219%) reached through posts



1,016 (↑35%) followers on Twitter, over **1,900** (↑67%) engagements



4,314 (↑44%) followers on LinkedIn



4,736 videos viewed on YouTube



Safeguarding and Integrity

TBI strives to deliver high-quality work in line with its values and legal standards. This includes a fair and proper treatment of all our staff, partners, target audiences and beneficiaries.

Integrity, quality and control

In December 2018 the TBI Board approved an overarching integrity policy for the Tropenbos Network members and staff. It consists of a code of conduct and a complaints procedure. The policy establishes that the TBI culture is based on trust, mutual respect, open communication and high standards of professional conduct, which are essential to achieve our mission. All TBI staff have been and will be informed about the expectations, rules and regulations following from the integrity policy. The integrity policy can be found on our website. In 2019, steps were made to further put the policy into practice by developing a whistleblower procedure and appointing an independent external whistleblower agency.

In 2019, management investigated one case of alleged breach of the code of conduct by one of TBI's contracted partners. An independent audit was undertaken, which revealed no significant wrongdoing, but which led to a tightening of controls with this partner.

General data protection regulation

Regarding the protection of personal data, TBI follows the AVG programme of the *Stichting AVG voor Verenigingen*, from which TBI receives a compliance statement every year. In 2019 there were no cases of data leaks or other infractions of the general data protection regulation (GDPR).

The Privacy statement on the TBI website provides clear and transparent information about how we handle personal data.

Diversity, inclusion and equality

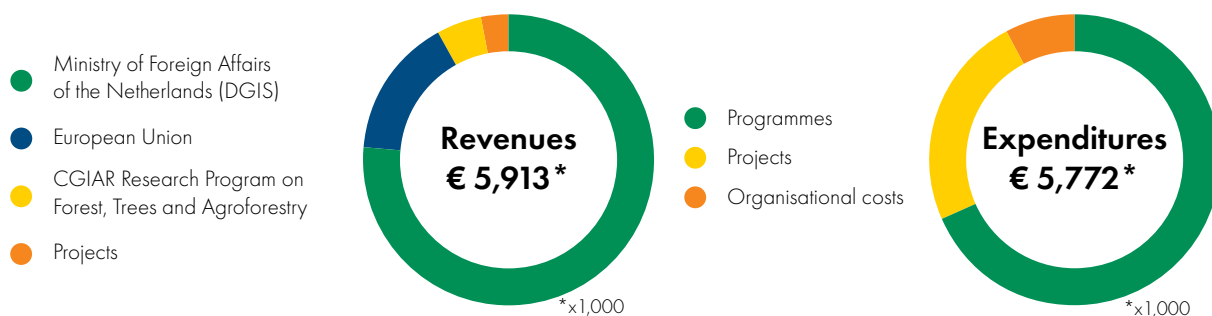
TBI has a gender and youth coordinator in place. In 2019 TBI staff participated in the gender training initiative, Gender Responsive Campaigning and Advocacy, provided by The Royal Tropical Institute - KIT. In addition, TBI initiated a consultancy to enhance staff and organizational awareness and commitment, and to develop a supportive gender and youth inclusion policy (guiding principles) and strategy (to mainstream gender in project interventions and management).

In 2019 TBI established a Gender and Youth network team with representatives (gender focal points) of partners from all countries where we work to support our gender and youth activities throughout the network. In all the proposals developed, TBI ensures that they are based on a detailed gender and youth context and stakeholder analysis, and on the identification of key gender and youth issues that need to be addressed.



Financial summary

In 2019, TBI received major programme funding from the Directorate General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) of the Netherlands, and from the European Union. A range of other donors also supported TBI's work. TBI's partners in the network provide substantial contributions in kind, such as office space and/or equipment. They also make researchers and relevant expertise available.



Revenues*

	€000	% of total
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (DGIS)	4,529	76.6
European Union	914	15.4
CGIAR Research Program on Forest, Trees and Agroforestry	301	5
Projects	169	3
Total	5,913	100

Expenditures*

	€000	% of total
Programmes	3,953	68.5
Projects	1,380	23.9
Organizational costs	439	7.6
Total	5,772	100

*Provisional figures June 2020

Donors to TBI - the Netherlands

Directorate General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) of the Netherlands
European Union (EU)

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands (LNV)

CGIAR Global Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA)



General Board

TBI is governed by an international General Board composed of respected Dutch and international experts drawn from the research, policy, business and development communities.

Prof. E.H. Bulte*

Professor, Development Economics Group, Wageningen UR, the Netherlands

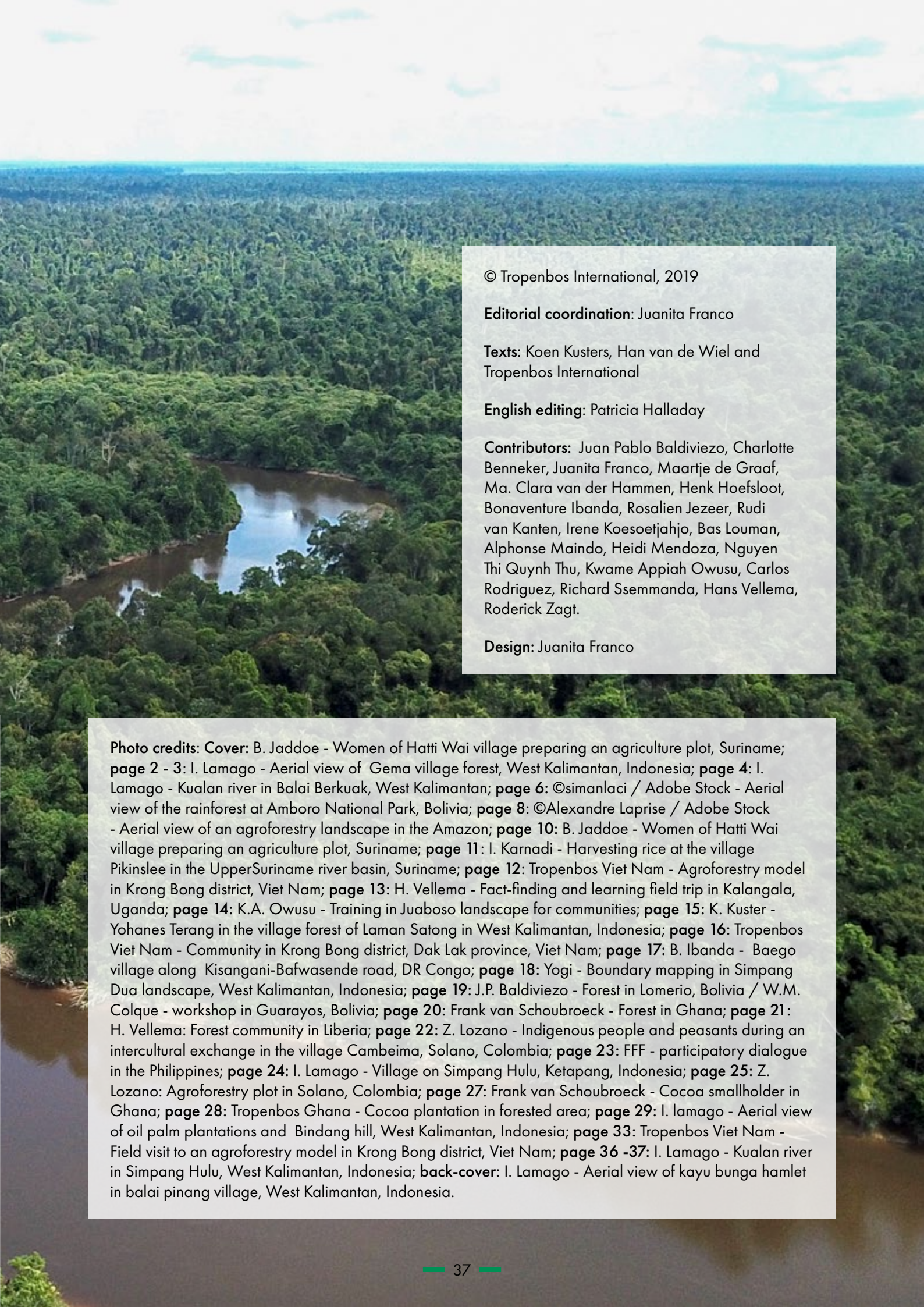
Dr. C.M. Hooymans* (Chair)

Former Governing Board, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO)

Dr. M.M. Goote*

CEO, Dobecology, the Netherlands

** Member of the Executive Board*



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By making knowledge work for forests and people, Tropenbos International contributes to well-informed decision making for improved management and governance of forests and trees in climate-smart landscapes. Our longstanding local presence and ability to bring together local, national and international partners make us a trusted partner in sustainable development.



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