

Establishment of a forestry research network for ACP countries (FORENET)

Project background

FORENET will facilitate links between forest research organisations of selected ACP countries by supporting selected local research organisations and enabling them to collaborate effectively on common forest research domain and programmes. This strengthened networking process will facilitate transfer of results between applied research initiatives, and will contribute to building effective tools to monitor sustainable development and to test criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management under different socio economic and ecological conditions.

The ACP states concerned are:

In Central Africa: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon;

In the Caribbean: the Republic of Guyana and Suriname;

In the Pacific region: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Regional focal points organisations for the project

- Iwokrama International Center (IIC, Guyana) for the Caribbean,
- Institute for Research on Tropical Ecology (IRET/CENAREST, Gabon) for Central Africa
- Forest Research Institute (PNGFRI, Papua New Guinea) for the Pacific region.

These research facilities will act as bases and observatories for a joint ACP-Europe tropical research programme on the science of sustainable forest management. This network of research stations and tropical research teams will contribute to the extension of training for EU and ACP graduate/postgraduate students.

Overall objective of FORENET

To strengthen capacities in ACP countries to undertake collaborative applied forest-related research that will produce results directly applicable for the sustainable management of humid tropical forests.

Specific objective

To facilitate interregional collaboration between ACP forest research organisations by strengthening capacities of selected local research structures to effectively promote and implement common forest-related research themes.

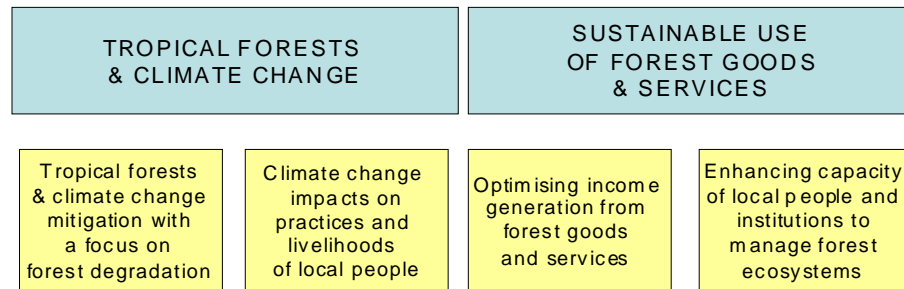
Expected results

- Strengthened capacities of selected ACP forestry research structures to document forestry biodiversity and to conduct research in support of sustainable use of forest goods and services;
- The creation of appropriate training opportunities;
- Improved capacities for interregional and international collaboration with ACP and European forestry research institutions, networking and information dissemination.

Through engagement with existing networks and local and regional stakeholders across the spectrum of government bodies, research, industry, civil society organisations and local communities, the project should contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests in ACP countries to meet economic, social and environmental demands.

Research domains and programmes

During FORENET start-up workshop it was decided that two major research domains should be considered: “Tropical forests and climate change” and “Sustainable use of forest goods and services” (see chart below). The forests and climate change domain is new by reference to the original list of potential research issues developed after the feasibility study of the project but it was deemed of utmost importance by all participants in the current international context.



Two research programmes are proposed for each domain. The two programmes of the tropical forests and climate change address two of the main current issues (mitigation and the reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation; adaptation and the livelihoods of local people) and are of direct relevance for all the project countries. The two programmes of the sustainable use domain were originally identified by the project feasibility study and are also of direct relevance to all project countries.

To define the contents of these research programmes it was decided to use a bottom up process where research proposals would come from scientists of the regions.