



Executive summary

Review of forest rehabilitation initiatives - Lessons from the past

Schedule: May 2002-April 2004

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Background: Intensive exploitation and related disturbances have depleted large areas of forests in the tropics in the last decades, and resulted in large and expanding areas of degraded forest ecosystems. In the past two decades national to international to private agencies have invested in numerous forest rehabilitation projects in the tropics. The projects have differed in scale, objectives, implementation strategies, duration, and in how much they considered socio-economic and institutional aspects, which are essential for successful rehabilitation. It is critical to draw strategic lessons from past experiences and use them to plan and guide future efforts, considering many new projects with substantial resource investments are in the offing throughout the region. CIFOR and national partners will synthesize, review, derive, and disseminate lessons from past and ongoing rehabilitation projects and research within selected regions of China, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, Peru and Brazil.

Objectives and scope of the review: The study aims to increase the chances of success of future rehabilitation projects by identifying the approaches that have contributed to longer-term sustainability under different scenarios with minimal negative impacts on different stakeholders. Specific study objectives include obtaining strategic lessons on driving forces, impacts, and underlying constraints from past and ongoing rehabilitation initiatives and research; and identify and disseminate the most promising rehabilitation approaches and incentives under different ecological and socio-economic scenarios. The focus of review would be initiatives that aim to actually establish trees on formerly forested land; and not strictly technical trials of species or planting design. Integrated projects with forest rehabilitation components will also be included in this review.

Methodology: Inventory and characterisation of past and ongoing rehabilitation initiatives and their changing profile in each of the selected regions by conducting series of consultations and workshops with national and local government offices, donors, NGOs, private companies, community groups, and other concerned stakeholders. This will be in conjunction with in depth evaluation and comparative analyses of all factors, within and across projects, and based on the literature reviews of project-related documents or other secondary sources. At a later stage, the study applies rapid assessment of selected rehabilitation case studies in each country using technical, ecological and socio-economic parameters.

Outputs: The main output of the study is Country Syntheses on Lessons Learned from the nature of rehabilitation efforts in each country drawn from subsidiary outputs of Database I of rehabilitation initiatives and their key features, and Database II of detailed assessment of selected rehabilitation case studies. Lessons learned from past projects and advice in designing and implementing future projects will be disseminated to key groups through scientific articles, seminars, workshops, policy briefs, news articles, website postings and networking activities.

Contact Persons: Takeshi Toma (t.toma@cgiar.org), Ani Adiwinata Nawir (a.nawir@cgiar.org) – Indonesia, Cesar Sabogal (c.sabogal@cgiar.org) - Peru and Brazil, Unna Chokkalingam (u.chokkalingam@cgiar.org) - China and Philippines, Wil de Jong (w.de-jong@cgiar.org) - Vietnam, Tini Gumartini (t.gumartini@cgiar.org).

Website <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/rehab>