

GFI Partner Meeting

29 – 31 May 2012 | Washington, DC

Summary

The third annual GFI Partner Meeting was held in Washington, DC from 29 – 31 May. Participants included representatives from GFI partner organizations in Brazil, Indonesia and Cameroon. The workshop served as an opportunity for GFI partners to share updates on their respective work, have in-depth discussions on governance topics of mutual interest, and brainstorm about the past, present, and future of the GFI partnership.

1. Partner Updates

During the first session, GFI partners from each country shared updates and lessons learned from their respective work over the past year. Ensuing discussions revealed several cross-cutting challenges and needs, most notably:

- Difficulties and capacity constraints in conducting research for a large number of indicators. Partners expressed a need to streamline the indicators for future assessments and provide guidance on how to prioritize indicators based on the assessor's specific objectives.
- Difficulties in communicating detailed and comprehensive indicator results in a concise and compelling manner for policy-makers and other influence targets. The GFI Brazil partners have experimented with some innovative approaches for communicating indicator data.
- The importance of multi-stakeholder engagement throughout the assessment process. Each country has taken unique approaches to this and has useful lessons and strategies to share.
- The desire to move from research to action in the coming year in order to achieve measurable governance improvements at local levels.
- The continued strategic importance of REDD+ discussions at national and sub-national levels, which create a significant opportunity for governance reform.

Cameroon

The GFI Cameroon partners presented the final results of their governance assessment, which involved 56 indicators from the Forest Management, Forest Revenue, and Land Use Planning sections of the GFI Framework of Indicators. The assessment included a literature review, legal analysis and field research in several case study areas in the Littoral, East and Southwest Regions of Cameroon's forest zone. Researchers concluded that four key areas need to be strengthened in order to protect forests and recognize the rights of forest communities: 1) Transparency of forest land allocation, rules, and procedures, 2) Participation of local communities in forest land allocation decisions, management, and

revenues, 3) Capacity building for MINFOF services, local communities, and government officials, 4) Monitoring, enforcement and oversight of forest use.

Assessment Topic	Key Findings
Land Allocation Rules and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laws and policies are not subject to public participation and take the form of presidential decrees Several ministries have authority and interests in the forests Land use planning processes conducted in 1990s are out of date and do not reflect the current threats of hydropower, large scale agribusiness, and mining
Participation and Access to Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communities, local government, mayors and parliamentarians are excluded from land use decision making that impacts forests Information on land use changes is only made available after the decision has already been made Participation has not been institutionalized Local consultation requirement for classifying forests that exist are not well implemented
Capacity of Forest Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MINFOF local services, local governments, and communities lack capacity to implement laws and policies that govern forest management and forest revenues, giving way to poor governance practices and corruption
Monitoring and Oversight Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest officers intended to monitor timber extraction must cover large territories Lack of community rights to seek redress if they do not receive their 10% of revenues from forest area logging fees

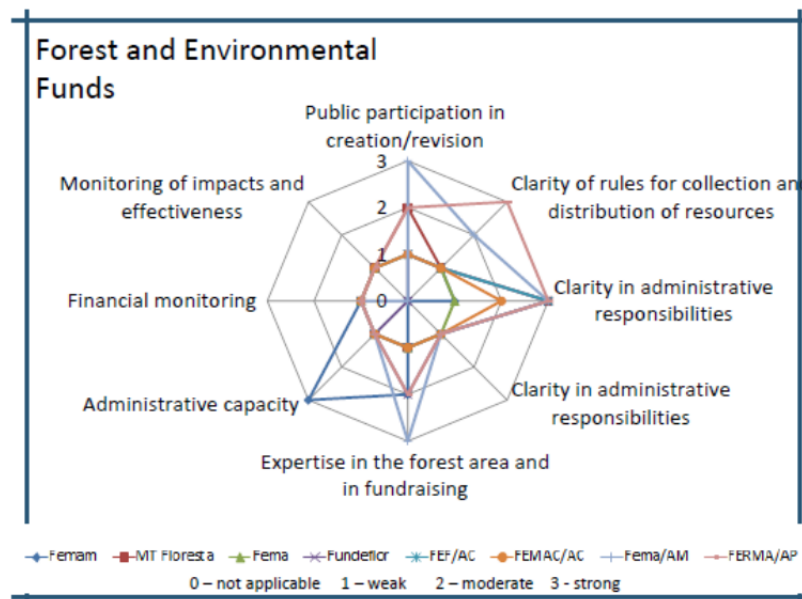
The GFI Cameroon partners are now transitioning from research to advocacy. Following a well-attended civil society workshop in April, the partners are currently planning a series of multi-stakeholder dialogues to build consensus around priority governance challenges and develop actionable solutions. The dialogues will engage members of key government agencies such as MINFOF, parliamentarians, local government officials, other CSOs, and communities. The GFI Cameroon partners noted major challenges of effectively engaging multiple stakeholders in Cameroon and expressed desire to learn from the related experiences of GFI partners in Brazil and Indonesia. The GFI Cameroon partners are also planning to continue their engagement in domestic REDD+ processes, including the REDD+-Climate Change Civil Society Platform and ongoing efforts to develop Cameroon’s Readiness Preparation Proposal to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. The partners continue to view REDD+ as an important opportunity for forest governance reform in Cameroon.

Brazil

GFI Brazil partners presented new research that they have produced to influence REDD+ and related forest policy discussions at the state and federal levels. Although the federal process to develop a national REDD+ strategy has progressed in a largely ad hoc fashion, Imazon and ICV stayed engaged by preparing short policy documents and convening workshops. For example, at the request of the Ministry of Environment (MMA), they produced a short document recommending next steps for developing a REDD+ safeguard system in Brazil. They also produced new research on Brazilian laws on payments for

ecosystem services (PES), benefit sharing, and tenure in order to draw insights that could inform the development of a national REDD+ law.

In Mato Grosso, ICV provided leadership and technical support to develop the state’s REDD+ bill, resulting in a much more transparent and participatory process. The draft bill is currently being debated by the state legislature and has buy-in from a wide range of local stakeholders. ICV also worked closely with the state environmental agency (SEMA-MT) to assess the first five years of implementation of Mato Grosso’s zero deforestation plan (PPCDQ-MT). This research and collaboration has established ICV as an important voice in the upcoming process to review and revise the policy. In Pará, Imazon pressed the governor to consider a more holistic approach to REDD+ readiness that emphasizes incentives for governance improvements at the municipal level. Their efforts have resulted in the revival of the state’s multi-stakeholder climate forum.



Finally, Imazon and ICV expanded their governance assessment of state-managed forest funds to include a broader range of funds from additional Amazonian states. Their research highlights challenges for the Brazilian government’s plan to implement a decentralized model for managing REDD+ funds in Brazil. Imazon and ICV met on several occasions with managers of the Amazon Fund to share these lessons and provide recommendations on how to effectively distribute finance to local governments and communities. Their research has also provided additional evidence for the state prosecutor’s ongoing investigation of the lack of transparency in management of these state funds.

Indonesia

The GFI Indonesia partners presented the final results of the second GFI assessment in Indonesia, which utilized the revised Indonesia version of the GFI Framework of Indicators. One exciting aspect of this assessment was the involvement of three new organizations at the provincial level, which expands the GFI Indonesia partnership to a total of eight organizations. The partners also tested a new method for promoting multi-stakeholder engagement in the assessment process: focus group discussions (FGDs).

The partners held FGDs with local stakeholders in Central Kalimantan and West Nusa Tenggara provinces to critically discuss the assessment findings. Although the research is now complete, the partners reflected on significant challenges in completing a large number of indicators in two provinces and expressed interest to streamline the indicators for future assessments.

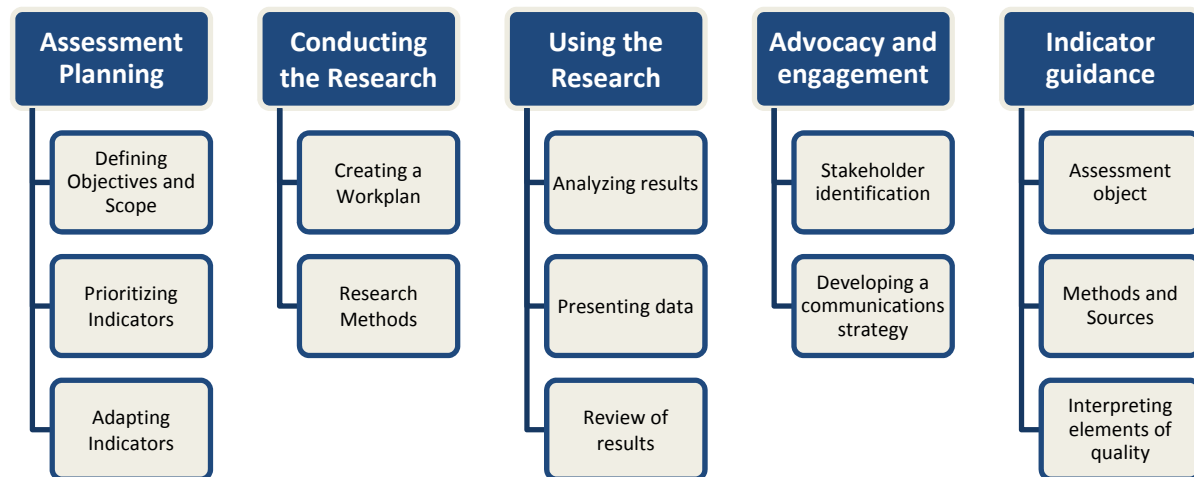
Key Findings from the Indonesia Assessment			
	Rule	Actor	Practice
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laws were less sensitive to the needs of marginalized people Laws were not comprehensive or detailed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low capacity of the government, people, and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of transparency in some specific cases, but not systematized
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common rules don't have technical backing or good enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low capacity of people to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pseudo participation due to lack of systematic education
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralized regulation on vertical authority but so much horizontal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low capacity of all actors to coordinate – DKN is the only solid example of good coordination Sectorial mindset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actors do not coordinate efforts, and working alone they are weak and easily muted
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADR (alternative dispute resolution) leaves a lot of room for corruption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADR excludes judicial branch and prevents state accountability for illegal permits Low capacity in law enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADR leaves a lot of room for corruption

In the coming year, the GFI Indonesia partners will focus on moving from research to action. They are currently developing a final policy brief – “The Road Map for Forest Governance Enhancement” – which will form the basis for their advocacy. At the national level, they will engage government to promote the GFI Indonesia indicators as a practical tool for implementing and monitoring the REDD+ safeguards. At the provincial level in Central Kalimantan and West Nusa Tenggara, they will seek to build the capacity of local government, communities, and CSOs to access and effectively utilize information about REDD+ and forest governance.

WRI Update

GFI Guidance Manual: WRI presented its ongoing work to develop a Guidance Manual to accompany the GFI Framework of Indicators. The Guidance Manual will support any potential user of the GFI Indicators, including but not limited to current GFI partners. The Guidance Manual will cover four key topics: assessment planning, conducting research, using research, and advocacy. It will also include detailed indicator-by-indicator research guidance.

Proposed Topics for the GFI Guidance Manual



GFI Global Report: WRI announced plans to begin a Global Report, which will synthesize the research findings and experiences of the GFI partners over the past several years. The objective of the Global Report is to share GFI lessons learned with a global audience. WRI will be reaching out to GFI partners to contribute to the Global Report, which is scheduled for publication in mid-2013.

International collaboration on forest governance indicators: WRI has maintained an ongoing partnership with FAO and the World Bank (Profor) with the goal of creating a common global framework and guidance for using forest governance indicators. The framework was created and published and now WRI will be collaborating with these organizations to devise a guidance manual for indicator selections and data collection.

International REDD+ Advocacy: WRI continues to advocate for consideration of governance issues for REDD+ in key international fora:

- UNFCCC: WRI has provided analysis and inputs to discussions about REDD+ safeguard systems and safeguard information systems. WRI prepared a SBSTA submission on this topic in advance of COP-17 and will be publishing a new conceptual framework for developing national safeguard systems in September 2013.
- UN-REDD: WRI provided comments on the UN-REDD social and environmental principles and criteria, FPIC guidelines, and grievance procedures.
- FPCF: WRI has been leading civil society inputs to design the Readiness Package assessment framework for the FCPF.

2. Topic Forum

The Topic Forum was designed to enable GFI partners to discuss cross-cutting governance challenges of common concern, and potentially to identify opportunity for collaborative work on these issues. Two

topics were identified in advance by the GFI partners as being of mutual interest: (1) addressing the agricultural drivers of deforestation and (2) designing and implementing REDD+ safeguards. The partners discussed each issue in their individual country contexts, and then sought to identify cross-cutting challenges (see tables below). Overall, the partners found it challenges to overcome significant differences in country context to identify common challenges or opportunities for collaborative work. Nonetheless, the partners found the session to be interesting and expressed interest in continuing to explore potential linkages and collaborations in future meetings.

Addressing Agricultural Drivers of Deforestation

Cameroon	Brazil	Indonesia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real costs and benefits of large-scale agriculture; need better information • Power imbalances • Questions of food security • Tenure conflicts • Incentive structures • Corruption • Closed land allocation processes • Contribution of different actors to driving deforestation • REDD+ process • New Law on zoning (6 May 2011) – implementing text • New land reform law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context: cattle ranching; grains (soy); infrastructures for agriculture; different across sectors (incentives, policies, dynamics) • More sustainable markets • Participation does not lead to results (lack of feedback about how participation is being used) • Over-representation of agribusiness interests in politics – lack of enforcement of environmental laws • Lack of tenure definition affects enforcement of environmental obligations • Challenge: lack of coordination between economic incentives and environmental licenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency and participation of the permitting system – FPIC • Poor coordination between agriculture system and forestry • Many permits have been issued in forest areas (?) • Lack of law enforcement for illegal activities • Tenure rights for communities are weak • Corruption – lack of transparency in the law enforcement process • Having the public information disclosure act – promote it to be effective • The President’s commitment to reduce emissions • National action plan for reducing emissions

Key Insights:

- ✓ How to shift power dynamics away from large-scale agribusiness and in support of traditional small scale agricultural practices?
- ✓ Illegality in agricultural permitting processes is a cross-cutting issue, but the cause of illegality is variable across countries. Could there be common solutions?
- ✓ Country-specific general solutions emerged. For Indonesia, promoting law enforcement. For Brazil, targeting cattle ranching, creating incentives for conservation and investigate new roles for actors within new forest code. For Cameroon, attempt to work more closely with government by joining mutual multi stakeholder forums.

Developing and Implementing REDD+ Safeguards

Cameroon	Brazil	Indonesia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPIC reforms • Gender-specific safeguards to protect women’s traditional livelihoods • Access to justice through a redress mechanism and capacity training • Multi-stakeholder redress mechanism • Multi-stakeholder trust fund committee • Breach usage and tenure rights (indigenous people, women, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum requirement of indigenous peoples • Indigenous peoples capacity building • FUNAI: lack of capacity to follow initiatives • Create effective mechanism for financial flows • Learning from past experiences (health & education) • Political will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give guarantee for transparency process (corruption) • The community will potentially lose their rights to benefit from the forest • Greater capacity for forest management • FPIC • To provide a guarantee that communities will be able to manage REDD projects themselves

- vulnerable groups)
- Capture/hijacking by powerful elites
- REDD+ financial flows
- Assessing implementation of different policies on forest resources
- Existence of policies that go against forest conservation
- Coordination between policies
- Lack of mechanisms for financial flows
- FPIC
- Greater capacity for participating in negotiations (rights & benefit-sharing)
- Rules about community tenure rights for REDD+ projects
- Developing a complaint system and grievance mechanism that is “people-friendly”
- Special unit for assisting the people with dealing with REDD+ projects

Key Insights:

- ✓ There is a common interest to institutionalize and strengthen FPIC across the countries. In Indonesia so that permits aren't authorized without permission from the affected communities, in Cameroon to protect tenure rights of indigenous peoples and women, and in Brazil to build capacity for indigenous peoples and FUNAI.

3. Future of GFI

In its first three years, GFI focused on building partnerships, developing and piloting innovative approaches to forest governance assessment, and linking these approaches to emerging REDD+ activities at global and local scales. As this first phase comes to an end, the GFI partners have an important opportunity to reflect on past experiences and determine future priorities for the GFI network. The “Future of GFI” session aimed to provide space for these discussions. The GFI partners also felt that it would be useful to discuss and agree on a common “identity” for the GFI network, which will provide a foundation for our future work. The partners agreed on the following core components of our global identity:

- **WHO:** GFI is a global partnership of civil society organizations committed to improving forest governance. The partnership currently consists of ten organizations from four countries: Brazil, Indonesia, Cameroon, and the United States. The partners are open to accepting new partners into the GFI network, assuming they demonstrate long-term commitment to GFI goals and values.
- **WHAT:** GFI partners are united by a common objective of strengthening forest governance. More specifically, we are committed to enhancing the governance principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and coordination. The partners recognize that the specific governance challenges and priorities in each country are different, requiring GFI partners in each country to focus their work in different ways. Nonetheless, the partners believe that having commonalities and linkages can enhance opportunities for collaboration and learning. Our focus on the four principles of good governance provides an ongoing source of commonality in our work, but we may also consider selecting common themes for joint research and analysis on a case-by-case basis.
- **HOW:** GFI partners are committed to an approach to governance reform based on evidence-based advocacy. The GFI Framework of Indicators provides a common basis for designing and implementing rigorous research on forest governance. It also provides a common communications tool for engaging multi-stakeholders and building consensus on governance principles. GFI advocacy is generally carried out by partners at the country level; however, we

may consider opportunities for collective advocacy at the international or regional level on a case-by-case basis.

Moving forward, the GFI partners will continue to implement country level strategies that are consistent with the identity outlined above. In addition, WRI will take the lead to identify themes for joint research and advocacy across multiple levels over the next 1-2 years, and present these in a draft concept note to share with the partners. The discussion session revealed several potential themes of mutual interest to the partners, including: safeguard systems, accountability mechanisms, drivers of deforestation (particularly agriculture), and forest management decentralization.