

# TROPENBOS-GHANA PROGRAMME

## RESEARH PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT PROCESS SYNTHESIS REPORT



**GHANA**

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## 1. TGP RESEARCH PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT: THE PROCESS

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In October 1999, as a first mission, Tropenbos International visited Ghana to prepare the grounds and solicit both political and professional support for the intended Tropenbos-Ghana Programme. This was successful and plans were made to initiate the Tropenbos-Ghana Programme.

During the second Tropenbos mission in May 2000 discussions were held to map out strategies for identifying priority forestry related problems, it was then agreed to employ a consultative approach based on active stakeholder participation. The main consideration for employing this approach was to facilitate the identification of the most compelling questions to be answered from forest management, conservation and rural development perspectives and to translate these questions into research projects.

From the beginning a programme development process was developed by a joint Ghanaian and Dutch team to plan for the focus and content of the Tropenbos-Ghana Research Programme. This consisted of the following steps:

1. *Literature review to identify and justify national priorities*
2. *Field surveys to identify priority forestry related problems from forests stakeholders' perspectives*
3. *Define a site location that would allow studies on crosscutting themes relevant to the management of forest and wildlife resources of Ghana.*
4. *Translate the problems identified from the field survey into research questions*
5. *Formulate research projects to address these questions; and*
6. *Project implementation*

Indeed, these steps were followed in defining the final research framework under the programme. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that the process has not been linear and simple as it looks. As the programme development was proceeding, the objectives and activities were elaborated, in the light of new demands dictated by the insights gained and constraints encountered from previous activities. Table 1.1 summarises the chronology of the programme development process.

In this section, the major landmarks or processes in the course of the research programme development are synthesized and discussed with particular reference to the **objectives** of each stage, **rationale** for behind the objectives and a brief **evaluation** of the activities of each stage. The synthesis is focused on the activities between the desk studies and the identification of research questions to be addressed in the programme.

**Table 1.1. A summary of the chronological sequence of the TGP research programme development process.**

PERIOD	MAIN ACTIVITY	CRITICAL OUTPUT
May 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of strategies for the process</li> <li>• Desk Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of national programmes to address sustainable forest management and a justification for research intervention.</li> </ul>
September 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaboration of process for site selection</li> <li>• Start of research site identification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 8 point criteria for TGP site selection formulated</li> <li>• Proposals for three possible sites</li> </ul>
December 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of Stakeholder consultation</li> </ul>	
March 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report and workshop on stakeholder consultation survey</li> <li>• Consultations in Netherlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of major forestry stakeholders about the problems and research issues in forestry captured</li> <li>• Research interest of potential Dutch partners identified</li> </ul>
April 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of baseline study</li> </ul>	
June 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis of stakeholder consultation survey and workshop reports and other relevant documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Programme orientation report defining TGP mission, strategies, societal issues and broad research areas.</li> </ul>
July 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific consultations and discussion of first research framework (including PMU review)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting of first research framework</li> <li>• Expected outputs and impacts of the TGP research suggested</li> <li>• The scope and national context and relevance of research issues clarified</li> <li>• The weakness in the proposed framework highlighted</li> <li>• Additional priority research areas suggested</li> </ul>
August 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBI mission visit to proposed <i>Nkawie</i> site</li> <li>• TGP collaborators and bibliography surveys started</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft framework reviewed for workshop</li> </ul>
September 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final discussion on TGP research sites and socio-economic survey</li> <li>• Research sites survey</li> <li>• BNC visit to TGP research 'site'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TGP research sites selected</li> <li>• BNC approved search 'site'</li> </ul>
October 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final synthesis of programme development consultations and reports</li> <li>• Bi-national committee meeting</li> <li>• Final programme review by PMU</li> <li>• Finalisation of baseline study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline socio-economic and other relevant information about research sites</li> <li>• Draft TGP research framework completed</li> <li>• BNC recommended further sharpening of programme focus</li> <li>• Draft final research programme</li> <li>• BNC approves TGP research programme</li> <li>• Database of potential TGP collaborators</li> <li>• Baseline annotated bibliography on central research themes</li> <li>• TGP research programme documentation and Synthesis report.</li> </ul>

## 1.2 DESK STUDIES

A desk study led by Dr. Kyere Boateng (IRNR) and Mr. Alex Asare (RMSC)<sup>1</sup> was conducted as a starting point for the research programme development. The objective was to review existing documents and to identify problems and stakeholders as well as ongoing processes aimed at addressing these problems. The aim was to identify and justify national priorities and to provide a national context for the programme. The team submitted a report titled ‘needs assessment of sustainable forest management in the forest zone of Ghana: update’.

The study highlighted the main programmes of the Ghana Forestry Development Master Plan (FDMP); major national forestry development programmes and identified key areas for research intervention. Eight areas were suggested for intervention to fulfil the objective of the FDMP. These were

- Economic appraisal of forest management strategies
- Secure adequate regeneration in production forests
- Review existing strategy for checking illicit harvesting
- Initiate active plantation development programme to be implemented in collaboration with Communities in degraded forests
- Improve investor confidence in forest plantations
- Encourage timber production in agricultural lands
- Improve stand productivity of planted forest and optimise wildlife management in forest reserves.

Although the study succeeded in providing the baseline information on the broad policy framework and efforts to achieve national policy objectives, it could not have identified challenging and national priorities for research due to the limited scope of documents used and lack of stakeholder consultation.

## 1.3 FIELD SURVEY TO IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

Further to the programme development process, a stakeholders’ consultation survey was carried out. The objective of this work was to capture the needs of forest stakeholders concerning protection and wise use of Ghana’s forest resources. This was to be achieved by carrying out field consultations to identify problems associated with the translation of forest and wildlife policy into management decisions and implementation programmes.

Against this objective, the scope of this work in a logical outline was as follows:

1. Identify major forest stakeholders including the industry and forest owners, District Assemblies, forest fringe communities, environmental and development oriented non-governmental organizations etc.
2. Undertake a problem analysis commencing with a literature survey.
3. Design and administer a questionnaire to obtain and collate views of stakeholders on issues, which they consider as being impediments to the translation of Ghana’s forest and wildlife policy into management decisions for implementation programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kyere Boateng is a Lecturer at the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources (IRNR) and a scientific coordinator for TGP. Mr Alex Asare is the head of the Collaborative Forest Management Unit of the Resource Management support Center of the Forestry Commission, Kumasi.

4. Identify stakeholder concerns that have not been addressed or are not being adequately addressed in current forestry programmes.
5. Bring together all stakeholder representatives to discuss the output of the field survey towards defining key issues that need to be addressed by research
6. Submit a report.

A Consultant, Mr. William K. Amegatse<sup>2</sup>, carried out the survey, which included both desk and field studies. The survey report indicated that the exercise was successful in identifying major stakeholders and their perceptions about problems confronting forestry in Ghana. An interesting attempt was made to highlight researchable issues under four main themes namely natural forest management, development of forest plantations, processing, marketing and utilization of forest products and forest-based livelihood.

The results of the survey highlighted critical problems especially from the viewpoint of research and academic institutions and local communities. The results were enriched by the review of other documents such as Cecilia Luttrell's<sup>3</sup> review of forestry priority research for Ghana.

The discussion of the survey report was made at a stakeholder consultation workshop<sup>4</sup> which brought together over forty (40) participants representing the academic and research institutions, industry, Forest and Wildlife Services, the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Forestry and local communities. Members of TGP programme management unit as well as representatives from TBI also participated in the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to bring together representatives of all stakeholders to discuss the output of the survey with the view to identifying key issues that need to be addressed by research. The results of the stakeholder survey and consultation workshop revealed that different stakeholders have different priorities. However, some research areas were commonly identified by all stakeholders and also agreed upon from the workshop discussions. In essence, this summarizes the results of both the stakeholder consultation survey and workshop.

1. Natural forest management: The stakeholders expressed the desire for natural forest management in various forms such as
  - The development of strategies to reduce over-exploitation of forest resources
  - Forest fire management
  - Monitoring of logging activities
  - Forest protection from illegal encroachment
  - Natural forest regeneration
  - Sustainable logging intensities
  - Measurement parameters for control of NTFP exploitation
  - Biodiversity conservation
  - Sustainable management of forests and protected areas
  - Maintenance of forests and wildlife systems

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. W. Amegatse is a Consultant at the University of Development Studies in Ghana.

<sup>3</sup> Luttrell, C. (1997). A review of forestry priority for Ghana

<sup>4</sup> This was the first TGP workshop held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2001 at the Wood Industry Training Center, Akyawkrom. The final report is available at the TGP secretariat

2. Development of forest plantations
  - Artificial forest regeneration
  - Rehabilitation of degraded areas
  - Non-timber forest product development
  - Commercial timber production
  - Economics of plantation forestry
3. Processing, marketing and utilization of forest resources
  - Resource assessment and valuation of forest products and services
  - Market-oriented studies for forest products and services
  - Utilization and domestication of wildlife
  - Impact of population on forest resources
  - Development of product harvesting, handling and marketing
  - Promotion of value added processing and competitive marketing
  - Development of flexible schemes for investment in commercial forest plantations, tree farming and propagation of NTFPs and wildlife.
4. Forest based livelihood research
  - Benefit flow to forest fringe communities: this calls for building useful collaboration and networks with community development agencies whose objectives are geared towards poverty alleviation and improvement in the standard of living in forest fringe communities.

A candid evaluation of the workshop reveals that key issues were identified, which could form a basis for formulating concrete research projects. However, it became clear that the reports of the survey and the workshop were not adequate for defining specific research areas because of the following weaknesses in the process:

- It was observed that wildlife management issues did not feature prominently in the survey
- The results were too general and less focused and fine-tuned and that
- There was over representation of technical foresters and forestry researchers against other stakeholders at the workshop. Not surprisingly therefore, the social problems raised during the field survey did not reflect well in the workshop's output.

The field survey report captured mainly social and economic issues, whilst the workshop captured mainly technical issues. It was observed that many of the respondents, mainly professionals, could not complete the survey questionnaire because it was too lengthy and time-consuming. Consequently, most of the responses for the field survey came from local communities, hence the elaboration of social and economic issues in the survey report. The representation skewed towards professionals and scientists at the workshop. This explains why the workshop report captured mainly technical issues.

A critical review of the final reports reveals that although the process achieved a high level of stakeholder participation, it did not offer balanced representation in time and in space. This disparity in stakeholder representation did not allow simultaneous discussion of issues, which could have offered opportunity for prioritising the issues, thus narrowing the focus.

During the TGP mission to the Netherlands, further consultation was made to identify the research interests of potential Dutch counterparts. The report was used as one of the reference documents during further reviews of the programme development process.

#### 1.4 THE BASELINE STUDY AND PROGRAMME ORIENTATION

Following the concerns from the stakeholder survey and the consultation workshop, it was decided by the PMU to fine-tune the outcomes as part of the TGP baseline study<sup>5</sup>.

By a comprehensive review of the consultation reports, TBI publications and some national and international documents, a programme orientation report was produced, which among others, attempted to prepare TGP mission and strategies, research goal and broad research themes. Three major outputs from this study that initiated the focus of the programme development and provided a basis for further action at this stage were:

1. TGP mission: TGP shall contribute to the achievement of sustainable forest management in Ghana through multi-disciplinary research that involves national and international institutions in generating knowledge, developing methodologies and skills and promoting their uptake and application in the management of forest resources.
2. TGP strategies: The four broad strategies were research and training, design and test of methods, promoting uptake and application of research findings and programme stakeholder collaboration and cooperation.
3. TGP research programme areas: The report suggested five broad research themes namely; forest regeneration and restoration, sustainable forest harvesting, forest protection and biodiversity conservation, sustainable wildlife management and related policy, social and economic issues.

The research areas identified under the respective themes can be summarized as follows:

##### Forest regeneration and rehabilitation

- Natural convalescence of degraded forests
- Ecophysiological requirements of key tree species
- Species-site matching
- Tree-crop interactions
- Community-based forest management

##### Sustainable forest harvesting

- Resource assessment and valuation
- Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management
- Measurement parameters of NTFPs
- Improved harvesting and product recovery

##### Forest protection and biodiversity conservation

- Management of illegal exploitation of forest

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<sup>5</sup> The baseline study project, which was executed by Mr. Emmanuel Marfo, was a follow-up initiative to provide the main focus of the TGP and baseline information for the successful take-off of the research programme. The first phase of the study was a programme orientation. The objective was to define the focus and content of the TGP by analysing relevant data from the stakeholder consultation process, national documents and international conventions.

- Forest exploitation impacts on biodiversity
- Evaluation of protection strategies
- Fire management

#### Sustainable wildlife protection and management

- Conservation status of major wildlife species

#### Policy, social and economic issues

- Forest policy, rural livelihoods and development
- Development of collaborative and participatory systems
- Equity issues
- Economic decision-making in forest management

In all, the programme orientation report provided a basis for defining the direction of the programme. The mission statement and strategies were key outputs that guided the pathway to the final programme development destination. Although the study succeeded in focusing the direction and content of the research programme towards that of TBI, it failed to define a specific programme focus. The research programme output was still too broad and dispersed. Further discussions of the report revealed that there was still the need to sharpen the focus and present the content of the report in a logical framework that would make it easier for one to follow and understand its overall focus.

The framework was then to be used for further consultation with relevant scientists and researchers. The aim was to deepen the consultation process and make the issues clearer. This is because it was felt that there was the need to solicit wider opinion to guarantee popular scientific consensus on the research questions to be addressed within the programme.

### 1.5 THE SCIENTIFIC CONSULTATION AND WORKSHOP PREPARATIONS

Consequent to the discussions of the interim TGP programme orientation report, an attempt was made by the core programme team including TBI representatives and the Baseline study Consultant to put the contents of the report into a logical framework. After several internal discussions, a preliminary logical framework (refer to Appendix 1) was designed. This framework was sent to over hundred scientists and researchers<sup>6</sup> for comments on its suitability for addressing forestry research priorities in Ghana. It was originally planned that their comments and inputs would be discussed at a programme development workshop later in July 2001.

However, a feedback from the scientists and further discussion of the framework by the PMU led to a major review of the framework prior to the workshop. The main reason was that it would be difficult to carry out many of the studies on a single site and the scope of the programme was too

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<sup>6</sup> Respondents for the consultation came from Universities in Ghana notable University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast and Kwame Nkrumah of Science and Technology. Also there were respondents from institutions such as Resource Management Support Center and GIPF. Responses also came from prominent institutions such as the World Bank, SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation in Ghana), and Tropenbos Cameroon Programme. Some partners from the Netherlands such as the Tropenbos headquarters and Wageningen University also made useful inputs.

broad and less focused. Upon discussions between the core Ghanaian and TBI counterparts<sup>7</sup>, and the popular concern expressed by stakeholders to approach forest management holistically, it was agreed that the entire Tropenbos-Ghana Programme should focus on integrated forest management looking at all the dimensions including multiple functions and actors (stakeholders). Another important dimension that emerged from the discussion was the need to look at forest policy and institutions particularly the implementing agencies to critically examine the policy formulation process and institutional performance.

As a result, a new logical framework was proposed to capture the essential research priorities/issues for addressing sustainable integrated forest management in Ghana. Based on the comments and inputs from scientists and professional institutions, the team designed a framework for the programme development workshop. The strategy was to identify the expected overall and interim results that would together, help address sustainable integrated forest management in Ghana. The crucial challenge was the identification of relevant issues to be addressed in order to achieve the expected results. It was therefore proposed that the workshop be confronted with the challenge to identify priority issues for research within the limits of the TGP research objectives and expected results.

The workshop<sup>8</sup> was thus held with a new research logical framework as a working document (refer to Appendix 2). Although the workshop was successful in highlighting some critical issues for research, the formulation of specific research questions were not adequately made. Nevertheless, the output was very useful at the formulation stage where specific projects were formulated.

This workshop, for which the participants were mainly scientists and professionals, was successful in further enriching the participation of scientists in the programme development effort. Although specific research questions or projects were not adequately highlighted in the workshop discussions, the output offered a solid ground upon which the formulation of the research questions and prioritisation of research projects were guided. In short, the workshop re-echoed the following as important areas for research under the framework provided:

- Forest regeneration
- Harvesting methods
- Measuring effects and impacts of forest activities on the environment
- Human factor in forest management including gender issues
- Forest-based livelihoods and alternatives
- Conflict management and effective consultation and negotiation mechanisms
- Investigating policy and institutional failures and
- Improving monitoring mechanisms.

## 1.6 FINALISATION OF TGP RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The programme development process entered a finalization stage, according to the original schedule, after the workshop. During this period, all the inputs from the desk study through stakeholders' consultation survey to the programme development workshop were reviewed and synthesized. The objective was to consolidate and focus the outputs in the light of the

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<sup>7</sup> Prof. Frits Mohren (Wageningen University), a TGP Scientific Coordinator and Mr. Hans Vellema (TGP International Programme Coordinator) participated in this meeting.

<sup>8</sup> This was the second TGP programme development workshop held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2001 at the WITC, Akyawkrom. The final workshop report is available at the TGP secretariat.

development and research objectives of the TGP and to define the exact research projects/activities to be carried out during the execution phase. Content analysis of the reports of the various studies carried out in course of the entire programme development process as well as the comments from the scientific consultations was the main analytical technique employed.

During this final synthesis, the major consideration to define the final TGP research framework were

1. The development and research objectives and priorities of Tropenbos International
2. The identified critical societal challenges confronting sustainable forest management in Ghana based on the various issues from literature as well as those raised by stakeholders and the scientific community in Ghana and abroad.
3. The priority challenges confronting sustainable integrated forest management in Ghana that need research intervention.
4. The need for the programme to help formulate and develop critical products such as prescriptions, guidelines and tools for sustainable integrated high forest resources management.

The mission, strategies, development and research objectives, expected results and major research activities formulated at this stage were summarized into a TGP research programme logical framework (refer to Appendix 3). This was submitted to the TGP Bi-national committee (BNC)<sup>9</sup> for review and approval in September 2001.

## 1.7 THE BNC AND FINAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME REVIEW

The BNC at its session in September 2001 received the final draft of the research programme as summarised in the logframe (see Appendix 3). The Board agreed that the proposed programme was still broad for TGP and less focussed on achieving 'tangible' results to exert unique impact on forest resource policy and management in Ghana. It suggested that the Programme Management Unit (PMU)<sup>10</sup> should further work on the document to make the focus sharper and to limit and converge the activities to specific societal challenges facing sustainable forest management.

It was recognised at this stage that, the expectations and approach to the entire programme development process has been too ambitious. In the first place, the capacity of TBI for the TGP was not well calculated or communicated. The impression created was that Tropenbos was coming unto the scene to help bridge the knowledge gap needed for the sustainable management of natural forests. Against this expectation, many scientists including those whose field of expertise are outside technical and social forestry were taken on board and expectations rose during the consultation process. A reference to the list of participants of the various workshops and the TGP collaborators database attest to this. Moreover, efforts were made to bring as many crucial issues as possible into the programme since the limitations were not very well understood. Consequently, the research agenda that was submitted to the BNC was more of a national forestry research agenda.

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<sup>9</sup> The BNC is the governing body of the programme consisting of representatives of Tropenbos International, Ghana Government and other relevant forestry stakeholders in Ghana

<sup>10</sup> The PMU is the management body of the programme consisting of a Programme Team Leader, two Programme Coordinators (local and international) and three Scientific Coordinators.

Moreover, another critical observation is that the Stakeholders were not given any opportunity to prioritise the issues, which could have helped in focussing the programme right from the beginning. This is because further programme development efforts would have been put into shaping and focussing research issues within the selected priority areas. The lack of this significantly affected the focussing of the research programme. This lack of concurrent presence of stakeholder groups (mainly professionals, local communities and industry), resulted in the projection of different interests at different times with the continual addition of further issues.

It became clear at the latter stage that the content and focus of the programme could have been defined from a stakeholder consultation survey and the first workshop if appropriate guidelines had been provided. Such a stakeholder consultation process should have been given a clear scope including areas of TBI's mandate, capacity and expectations which would all appropriately inform the selection of stakeholders and the methodology of ascertaining the baseline information upon which a well focussed research agenda could be formulated. What is generally lacking in the TGP stakeholder consultation is that the position of policy makers regarding crucial issues to be addressed for SFM, until recently, was not very clear. Moreover, the scope of the survey was too broad and resembles one that is being conducted to formulate a national forestry research agenda. This inherent weakness at the start of the programme affected subsequent ones.

A workshop could have followed such a focussed stakeholder consultation process to prioritise and formulate the problems or societal issues into a research plan. The input of TBI would have been significant at such a workshop to bring direction for the desired focus and impact. This would have made the process shorter, less expensive and more focussed.

However, following the BNC review, it was noticed that focussing on integrated forest management was a complicated approach that will still cloud the size and the sharp focus that is needed for the programme. Then the new approach was to identify the crucial prerequisites for realising sustainable forest management in Ghana based on the insight gained from the various consultations and to formulate research interventions. This new development necessitated the reformulation of the research objective and agenda.

The PMU in addition to the Baseline study consultant reviewed all the previous consultation reports of the programme development process and the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Forestry's latest paper on the current issues in forestry. This time, the objective was to identify critical conditions that must be fulfilled in order to ensure sustainable forest management. This was done to ensure that the research agenda formulated would have more policy and management relevance. The PMU established the precepts in Box1 to guide the formulation of the contents of this new research programme, which is presented in the framework in Appendix 4.

Among the various critical conditions identified for sustainable forest management, the PMU selected the following to be addressed by TGP.

- There is the need to improve existing mechanisms for monitoring forest operations
- There is the need for economic pricing of timber
- There is the need to improve resource valuation and accounting to give a scientific basis for reordering national priorities for forest/land use
- The productivity of existing natural forest must be optimised
- The present timber rights allocation system needs to be improved
- There is the need to ensure equitable flow of benefits to all legitimate stakeholders
- There is the need to develop efficient mechanisms for preventing and managing policy, stakeholder and institutional conflicts in forest management.

This proposed final research programme was not popularly accepted among the PMU members. The framework was criticised as not substantially building upon previous efforts of extensive consultation, less coherent and issues too focussed; which could drive away many potential and interested researchers. However, it was also argued that such a framework is flexible in that issues can be added or subtracted at any point in time of the programme depending on resources and priorities without changing the programme outputs. Moreover, the string of coherence of issues is removed here offering a clearer focus for each critical issue.

## 1.8 DEFINING A FINAL FOCUS AND CONTENT

It became somewhat obvious at this point that the needed criteria to finalise a TGP research programme framework were **coherence** of issues, limited **scope** (manageable size for TGP), possibilities for **integration** of studies, **flexibility** of framework and policy **relevance** of issues to be addressed. The dominating challenge for the finalisation of the programme development at this point was to design a framework that will satisfy these concerns. Several efforts were made to address this concern by the PMU.

Finally, it was agreed that the structure of the framework that was submitted to the BNC, except for its activities that were too many, broad and less focussed, was the most appropriate to begin with. The main argument being that it was well thought out based on extensive consultation and present broad issues which can incorporate many scientific interests, thus satisfying the supply side of the programme. However, since this framework did not give the needed programme focus and scope, it was agreed that the framework should first be used to call for interests based on the programme and research objectives. The strategy was to use the inputs from the pre-proposals to give more focus to the final research framework.

Not only was the structure of the BNC framework adopted, the main theme of sustainable integrated forest management was also seen as a better option for the programme. Again, the argument was that it was reached upon extensive stakeholder consultation; it offers coherency of issues and the possibilities for integration of various studies. The only problem was to get well-focussed activities to help achieve the specific programme objectives. The structure and content of the final framework that was used to call for interests is elaborated in section 3. A significant difficulty in the formulation of the final framework of the research programme was the conflicting interests of satisfying conventional academic approach to capture scientific logic, coherence and integration against the need to focus on priority societal issues.

### **Box 1. Guiding principles for formulating new TGP research agenda**

#### **TGP Research objective**

TGP will pursue a research programme that will provide products that can be readily used by stakeholders to fill gaps in the **current situation**. In this context, **current situation means the existing policy and practice of forestry in Ghana**. The entire research programme will therefore be focused on how current and most dominating challenges can be overcome and how the situation can be improved.

#### **Formulating and selecting critical hypotheses**

To set a clarified and well-focused research agenda for the TGP, crucial **enabling conditions** have been formulated in the form of **hypotheses** that could be tested through research. The formulation is based on the identification of issues, which are lacking or hindering sustainable forest management in Ghana. Most of these issues were identified from reports from the various consultations during the programme development process. In this context, **an enabling condition/criteria is a situation that should be in place to enable forestry actors/stakeholders practice sustainable forest management in Ghana**. In other words, they are the crucial prerequisites for achieving sustainable forest management, given the current situation of forest policy implementation in Ghana. The hypotheses will be formulated to connote the desired situation, known or expected, to be conducive for sustainable forest management.

Owing to the limited time (effectively 4 years) and financial resources for the programme, it is important to limit the number of researchable hypotheses among the lot formulated. Three main criteria were used for the selection

1. The priority level based on how crucial the core TGP team will judge the hypotheses as related to sustainable forest management in Ghana. The team's judgments will be based on the outputs of the various consultation processes.
2. The projected time frame within which the research can generate options for improving the situation.
3. The budgetary allocations for research within the programme.

#### **Testing selected hypotheses**

The actual research work will begin by testing, if necessary, selected hypotheses through the appropriate scientific method. The testing will be done according to national standards such as the Ghana forest standard and its associated criteria and indicators or standards that Ghana is a party such as ITTO criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

#### **Identifying the differences between actual and desired situation**

If research hypotheses is tested and found to be true or desirable, the next research step will be to conduct a comparative study to identify the differences between the actual and desired situation and factors accounting for the differences.

#### **Options for improvement**

The results of the comparative studies will be used to provide options for improving the situation. The various options identified will be the critical TGP research products that will be used as a basis to promote or renegotiate forest policy and management decisions for sustainable forest management in Ghana.

## 2. OTHER ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 SELECTION OF RESEARCH SITE

The selection of an appropriate site was discussed from the inception of the programme development process. At the TGP preparatory meeting in May 2000 in Kumasi, some criteria were formulated to underpin and guide the selection of suitable research areas within the high forest zone. The criteria were:

- Good opportunities for studies on cross-cutting themes with the main focus on forest reserves of various quality, especially those that fall within condition scores 1-3 (i.e. high quality forests).
- Active land use and operational activities (i.e. community and market driven)
- Potential support of stakeholders including local population, concessionaires (TUC holders), donors etc
- Representative of larger areas
- Availability of basic data, particularly relevant research data/plots
- Opportunities for sound infrastructure, research facilities and logistics
- Good accessibility, with reasonable distance to institutions
- Variedly representative of social environmental settings.

Prior to the finalisation stage of the research programme development, some sites were suggested and the list was kept under constant review considering the possibility of carrying out research on emerging themes. Prominent sites, which had been considered, were Tinte Bepo, Asenayo River, Bobiri, Tano Offin, Subim, Ayum, Bonsambepo, Goa Shelterbelt, Bonkoni and Opro River Forest Reserves. Finally, six reserves were selected to constitute TGP research 'site'. These are **Bobiri, Bonkoni, Ayum, Subim, Goa Shelterbelt and Bonsambepo**. In September 2001, the BNC approved of these as TGP research 'site'. The Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD) carried out a comprehensive socio-economic survey of the communities at the sites. The report<sup>11</sup> of the survey covers important baseline information such as geographical location, land tenure system, occupational profile, infrastructure facilities, major stakeholders, perception of the people about the forests, preferred contact persons, means of communication, description of the administrative districts and a description of the forest reserves, detailing their functions, management objectives, etc.

The Bobiri Forest Reserve is situated in the Juaso Forest District within the Ejisu-Juabeng Administrative District in the Ashanti Region. The Reserve lies some 2 miles North-West of the main Accra-Kumasi Trunk Road at mile 21 from Kumasi. The others, Bonkoni, Ayum, Subim, Goa Shelterbelt and Bonsambepo Forest Reserves are located in the Goaso Forest District in the Asunafo Administrative District in the Brong Ahafo Regio

Perhaps peculiar to TGP, a somewhat satellite 'site' was selected since Bobiri Forest Reserve is farther away from the others. The selection of Bonkoni, Ayum, Bonsambepo and Subim was based on the fact that they satisfied the established criteria, particularly the continuous structure of the five reserves giving it a relatively large size. In addition, the wildlife composition of these

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<sup>11</sup> The Bureau of Integrated Rural Development of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi was contracted to conduct this socio-economic survey. The final report is available at the TGP Secretariat

forests would allow studies on wildlife management to be carried out. Bobiri Forest Reserve was selected in addition, owing to its fascinating ecotourism potential and the fact that some baseline data on ecotourism may be available since the area has already been targeted and used for ecotourism.

## 2.2 ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Just after the stakeholder consultation survey and workshop, it was agreed at the first TGP mission to the Netherlands, to include a survey of relevant bibliography on the central TGP research themes in the baseline study. The objective was to gather sufficient literature and relevant national reports on the central themes to facilitate the searching and writing of literature review by TGP researchers.

This exercise was delayed till after the programme development workshop due to the uncertainties about the focus and content of the TGP research programme. After the workshop, it became somehow clear that the TGP was going to focus on the sustainable integrated forest management and themes such as biodiversity conservation, regeneration, ecotourism, institutional performance, stakeholder equity, collaborative management, conflict management and valuation seemed very central to the programme. The survey was then carried out immediately. Several libraries of academic, management and research institutions<sup>12</sup> were visited. The survey targeted both published and gray literature including reports and student thesis.

An evaluation of the exercise reveals that although several literature sources were compiled in the one hundred and ninety page report<sup>13</sup>, nevertheless it seems the survey should have been conducted after the finalisation of the research programme development. This is because, the report may be redundant since some new themes were not well-captured while some captured ones are no longer central to the research programme. This notwithstanding, the exercise opened an opportunity for TGP to share scientific information with the Forestry Commission<sup>14</sup> and FORIG under some information network projects.

## 2.3 COLLABORATORS DATABASE

The baseline study also conducted a survey of potential collaborators on the TGP and the relevant data stored as a database at the TGP secretariat. Although over eighty Ghanaian and Dutch collaborators have been identified, the database needs continuous update since new interests may arise. This is especially important since the research focus changed from the time the survey was conducted. This may change the expectations of many registered collaborators and incite the interest of new ones. In order to avoid the dashing of people's expectations, such surveys should be conducted at the finalisation stage where research agenda and focus is almost clearly defined.

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<sup>12</sup> Selected departments in University of Ghana, Legon, University of Cape Coast and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Forestry Research Institute of Ghana, Resource Management Support Center (Forestry Commission), Forest Services Division, Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission and Ministry of Lands, Mines and Forestry.

<sup>13</sup> The annotated bibliography report is available both in hard and electronic (C:/my documents/bibliography) versions at the TGP secretariat. It is intended that the report is updated and improved with new bibliography and literature sources.

<sup>14</sup> The address for further contact is [chrisbeeko@forestrycommission.com](mailto:chrisbeeko@forestrycommission.com)

### **3. TGP RESEARCH PROGRAMME: THE CONTENT**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Ghana has been working towards the achievement of SFM to ensure that future generations are not deprived of forest benefits and also to conform to international conventions to which the nation is a party. However, prescriptions instituted to achieve SFM are not fully adhered to and the country has been drifting steadily away from achieving this noble objective. There is therefore the need for research interventions to identify the conditions that should exist before forest policy can be effectively implemented.

There are advances in efforts to achieve sustainable forest management including the presence of a comprehensive Forest and Wildlife policy, Forestry Sector Development Plan and management prescriptions. The challenge however is the implementation of the prescriptions due to a complex mix of social, political, economic and some technical factors. The focus of the TGP is therefore directed to confronting the most critical societal issues to enable the implementation of sustainable integrated forest management arrangements.

#### **3.2 TGP MISSION STATEMENT**

***TGP shall promote distinctive scientific input into sustainable forest management in Ghana through local and international cooperation***

#### **3.3 STRATEGIES OF THE TGP**

TGP will pursue its mission through four broad strategic programmes:

**1. RESEARCH AND TRAINING:**

TGP will pursue both fundamental and applied research within its research programme and project areas which are demand-driven to generate knowledge and deepen insights to contribute to effective policy and management for the conservation and wise use of rain forest resources in Ghana. In the process, TGP will endeavour to support training that will build and improve research capacity to complement existing research efforts.

**2. DESIGN AND TEST OF METHODS:**

In pursuit of its mission, TGP shall support the design and testing of appropriate methods, particularly within its research programme and project areas, based on sound scientific precepts that will improve the formulation and implementation of policy and sustainable forest management techniques.

**3. PROMOTING UPTAKE AND APPLICATION**

In the pursuit of its mission, TGP will embark on a strategic programme to promote the dissemination, uptake, application and sharing of research results through effective platforms such as conferences, workshops, seminars, training, advocacy and publications. In this venture, the participation of relevant stakeholders would be ensured, particularly to link researchers to policy makers and managers.

#### 4. COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION

In the pursuit of its mission, TGP shall foster collaborative research and cooperation among relevant stakeholders, including forest owners, stewards and forest fringe communities as well as research and academic institutions in Ghana and abroad.

#### 3.4 TGP DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

*TGP aims at contributing to the achievement of sustainable management of Ghana's high forest resources*

It is the goal of TGP to make a **contribution** to the achievement of sustainable forest management in Ghana. In the pursuit of this goal, TGP recognizes the multiple actors in the field trying to help with the achievement of sustainable forest management in Ghana. TGP will therefore make its contribution well focused, 'tangible' and substantial by directing its resources to solving priority problems that are needed to speed up the attainment of sustainable forest management.

#### 3.5 TGP RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

*The Research Programme objective is to develop guidelines for sustainable integrated forest management.*

The main focus of the programme is to significantly contribute to the achievement of sustainable integrated forest management. Here, the concept of integrated forest management is perceived to embody the multiple functions of the forest as well as the multiple actors/stakeholders involved in the use and management of the forest. The policies, legal and institutional framework within which these actors use, benefit and conserve these multiple functions is considered to be part of the concept. Particularly the processes of decision making and planning, implementation and the performance of institutions.

Thus, TGP will concentrate its research programme on three main thematic areas; multi-purpose forest use, effective stakeholder collaboration and effective planning, policy formulation and implementation. A synthesis of the results should assist Ghana in pursuing a comprehensive sector planning and implementation of sustainable integrated forest management. The programme framework is summarised in table 3.1.

## 3.6 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

### **3.6.1 Developing options for multiple uses of forest resources**

Forests in Ghana provide various products and services including economic and environmental benefits. It is increasingly being advocated that the management of forest resources must be holistic considering the various social, economic and environmental uses and functions they play. The central challenge is therefore to design sustainable management systems that incorporate the various uses and functions in a manner that is socially acceptable, economically viable and environmentally healthy. In a bid to pursue this multi-purpose management system, it has been indicated that efforts to ascertain the economic and ecological value of forest resources, uses and functions must be pursued to give scientifically sound bases for the formulation of management objectives. Moreover, efficient mechanisms to combine the various uses and functions and to ensure optimum regeneration and restoration of the forest ecosystem while performing these functions should be designed. These challenges indicate that there is the need for scientific research in areas such as valuation of forest uses and services, optimisation of regeneration and restoration of forests performing multiple functions and services and developing appropriate and compatible management schemes for multiple forest use.

TGP will therefore direct its research resources in this area to innovative basic and applied research that will help Ghana meet these fundamental challenges. At the end, it is expected that a comprehensive synthesis and integration of the various studies should provide options for multiple uses and services of rain forest resources. Tangible outputs such as guidelines should give a basis for renegotiating forest management objectives and for promoting the adoption of integrated forest management.

### **3.6.2 Developing options for effective stakeholder collaboration**

This research area is focussed on the actors or stakeholders in the forestry sector and how their private value for the forest resource can be harnessed to provide 'incentives' for collaboration. Thus, the research under this area will focus on integrating the stakeholders' interests and the process of their interaction in forest management decisions, looking at constraints, incentives and opportunities.

TGP's concept of stakeholder collaboration is thus a framework of the interplay of all 'actions and processes' needed to ensure effective and sustainable cooperation and participation of forest stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring and review of forest policy and management decisions. The underlying philosophical discourses of the concept are social equity and justice, conflict prevention and management, stakeholder empowerment and representative democracy in decision-making and allocation of resources and benefits. Moreover, incentives to increase the 'private' value of stakeholders in the resource to motivate collaboration are an important component of the concept. The concept also involves all actions needed to 'motivate' each stakeholder to play its legitimate role in SFM well. This area is primarily focussed on the social, political and economic dynamics among stakeholders and how each stakeholder can be motivated to be an effective partner for sustainable forest management. Thus, it is expected that research under this area will focus on identifying the most compelling social, political and economic issues needed to effectively elicit stakeholder participation and collaboration in forest policy and management efforts.

Poverty has been identified as a significant force threatening sustainable forest management and effective cooperation of rural communities. Improving rural livelihood is therefore seen as a necessary incentive to motivate rural collaboration in forest management. Owing to this unique significance, it is important to view efforts to improve rural livelihood as indirectly important for

eliciting stakeholder collaboration. TGP will therefore direct some resources to researching issues in this area that can promote the ideals in her concept of stakeholder collaboration, notably social justice and equity.

The policy, legal and institutional framework within which these ideals can be contained and sustained is considerable. It is expected that a comprehensive synthesis and integration of the studies under this concept will help formulate tools for building effective stakeholder collaboration in the management of forest resources and also to improve forest-based rural livelihoods in Ghana.

### **3.6.3 Developing options for effective planning, policy formulation and implementation**

It has strongly been advocated that research is needed to answer why planning is constrained, policies fail and institutions do not perform. The underlying social, economic, political etc factors need to be identified and appropriate mechanisms devised to make planning holistic, policy realistic and implemental and institutions perform efficiently. TGP will thus focus its resources in this research area on fundamental and applied research that will investigate constraints and opportunities for integrated forest use and management, policy and planning, devise innovative mechanisms that improve planning and implementation of integrated management systems and provides viable policy, legal and institutional alternatives for renegotiating such integrated management systems.

It is expected that a synthesis and integration of the studies under this area and other relevant studies will help in the formulation of guidelines for effective planning, policy formulation and implementation of the developed options for sustainable integrated forest management.

### **3.6.4 Developing guidelines through synthesis and integration of options**

To meet the overall stakeholders' expectation of TGP providing critical outputs that will significantly contribute to sustainable forest management in Ghana, the synthesis studies would be aimed at providing products such as prescriptions and guidelines that will benefit policy planning and management decisions. The studies under this area would therefore synthesise the results of the studies under the three main thematic areas and other studies outside the programme and if necessary scale them up to reflect regional and national situations.

Particularly, the guidelines to be provided should seek to address three main issues; the technical inputs or tools needed to address specific problems, the policy, legal and institutional requirements and a set of objective criteria and indicators to measure the implementation of the options provided.

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