

Fifth Session of the Assembly
25-27 October 2021, Hybrid

Agenda Item 14

Program Approach

Background

1. The need for the enhancement of the current project development approaches for AFoCO projects stemmed from the recommendations of the External Institutional Review of AFoCO in 2019. The importance of creating synergy among and between AFoCO projects under each Priority Area was emphasized while projects may also be developed considering multi-donor pooled funds.
2. From CY2018 there are already sixteen (16) country specific projects from the Parties and two (2) regional projects proposed by the Secretariat, from which the following analysis were generated, to wit:
 - a. **Average scale of project** of in-country projects is within USD 777,000 compared to the regional projects which range from USD 40,000 to USD 1,400,000 budget allocation per country corresponding to Forest Fire Management Project in CLMV Countries under ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) project with about USD 8,502,562 and USD 4,000,000 funds, respectively.
 - b. **Distribution of projects between the four (4) Priority Areas** shows that 44% of the total projects belong to Priority Area 4 compared to 21% falling under Priority Area 1 & 3 while 14% for the Priority Area 2.
 - c. **Projects that have been developed so far may not seem to have relevance on specific Priority Area** as most of them have components and outputs that are relevant across the four (4) Priority Areas.
 - d. **Unequal distribution of the number of projects among the Parties** means that project funding was allotted more in some countries compared to the counties having less or have yet to implement its in-country projects.

Suggestions for project development from 2022 and onwards

3. Parallel to the review of the Strategic Plan (2019-2023), a programmatic or thematic approach is being suggested to support current and future programs of AFoCO (Landscape

Partnership Asia, AFoCO Green Partnership, etc.), from which country/regional projects will be developed and implemented. Such approach is envisioned to:

- a. encourage synergies and complementation among projects for increased efficiency, sustainability and impact, among others
 - b. provide support to the achievement of program outputs and outcomes
 - c. facilitate effective and efficient promotion of project/program milestones, achievements, best practices and contribution to national, regional and international forest-related goals and targets
 - d. support comprehensive and logical project evaluation i.e. mid-term, final/end-of-project and ex-post, including thematic evaluation
 - e. facilitate development and packaging of relatively bigger scale project in terms of budget scope, benefits, impacts, among others, including enhancement of project management capacities of the Secretariat and Implementing Agencies, and
 - f. support post-COVID-19 resiliency approach to consider relevant themes, i.e. forestry/wildlife crime under biodiversity conservation which can be initially implemented through capacity building
4. The Secretariat will implement resource mobilization by approaching current and potential donors and strategic partners through the introduction of AFoCO programs to generate diverse funding resources (e.g., bilateral, multilateral, philanthropic) through call for proposals, donor-driven projects, matching funds, etc.
5. Specific strategies and work/action plans will be further developed in consideration of the Plan of updating the AFoCO Strategic Plan as well as the outcome of related technical assistance.

Points for consideration

6. The Assembly may wish to:
- acknowledge and/or provide further guidance on the matter;
 - task the Secretariat to develop action plans for the project development from 2022 and onwards; and
 - Task the Secretariat to inform National Focal Points and project proponents to submit project Concept Notes and Proposals in consideration of program approach in project development.
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