



GOOD
GROWTH
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Addressing Commodity Driven Deforestation

Findings from Indonesia, Liberia and Paraguay.

Two Child Projects within the Good Growth
Partnership Integrated Approach Pilot, funded by
GEF.

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Terminal Evaluation for the project “Adaptive Management and Learning for the Commodities IAP (A&L)
Terminal Evaluation for the project “Reducing Deforestation from Commodity Production.

I. Introduction

Land clearing for agriculture production is a major driver of 40 to 60% of tropical deforestation¹ causing negative impacts such as biodiversity loss², high levels of greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction of carbon storage sinks, in addition to soil degradation, uprooting of indigenous communities and compromised fresh water sources. Despite this, agriculture is a vital economic backbone for developing nations and provides livelihoods for 40% of today's global population³. It is the largest source of income and jobs for poor rural households.

Soy, beef, and palm oil and derivatives are consumed by billions of people worldwide through global commodity trade. They are major drivers of the conversion of tropical forests and habitats in Latin America, West Africa, and Southeast Asia. In response to a growing population, economic growth and changing diets, the demand for palm oil estimated at US\$42.8 Billion in 2020 is projected to reach a US\$57.2 Billion by 2026, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5%. Likewise, Beef is expected to increase from US\$ 338.5 Billion to US\$ 434.5 Billion growing at a CAGR of 5.1%. Soy⁴ has increased from 51.5 MMT⁵ in 2016 to 57.9 MMT in 2020 thereby registering a CAGR of 3.5% during the forecast period (2021-2026)⁶. With increasing demand, action is needed to save High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF)⁷ and Ecosystems from expansion of the agriculture frontier to meet the increased global demand for these commodities. The key question is:

Can the global environmental impacts of agricultural commodity production be reduced by meeting the growing demand for palm oil, soy and beef through a supply that is associated with sharply reduced tropical deforestation, lower GHG emissions and reduced impacts on biodiversity?

In 2017, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) launched a global Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) program titled, Taking Deforestation out of Commodity Supply Chains known as the **Good Growth Partnership (GGP)**. The Programme promotes an integrated supply chain approach combining the factors of production, demand, and investment as integrated tracks seeking points of integration within the supply chain to enhance incentives and demand for sustainably produced agricultural commodities. The Programme is led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and in its pilot phase, implemented in collaboration with Conservation International (CI), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), UN Environment (UNEP) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The GGP¹ also worked in partnership with the governments of Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia and Paraguay, civil society and the private sector actors with interests in the palm oil, beef and soy commodities to address commodity related deforestation.

The GGP consisted of five GEF-funded "child" projects working across production, financing and demand in Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia, and Paraguay. Two of them, the subject of this analysis, were led by UNDP's Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean (RH LAC):

1. All the references to the Good Growth Partnership (GGP) in this paper, are referring to its pilot phase (2017-2022), unless otherwise mentioned.

1. The Adaptive Management & Learning (A&L) Project was the coordinating umbrella and learning project for the other child projects. The Project's components were co-executed by UNDP (Components 1 and 3) and by WWF-US and the ISEAL Alliance (Component 2).

2. The Reducing Deforestation from Commodity Production (Production) Project improved the enabling environment for sustainable commodity production through multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms and collaboration, policy reform, land use planning, and farmer training and support in palm oil in Indonesia and Liberia, and beef in Paraguay.

The following projects were part of the GGP and implemented by other implementing agencies working within a collaborative framework.

1. The Demand project, led by WWF-US, raised awareness and strengthened demand for sustainable beef, palm oil and soy among consumers, policy makers, companies, and investors.

2. The Transactions project was led by IFC and the UN Environment's Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI) to increase access to sustainable financing for businesses, farmers and producers who require additional capital to invest in environmentally sound practices.

3. The Brazil project, implemented by UNDP Brazil and executed by CI, combined production, demand, and transaction streams into a single landscape focused project in the MATOPIBA region, a region that comprises the Cerrado portions of the states of Maranhão, Tocantins, Piauí and Bahia, with a focus on soy.

The Adaptive Management & Learning (A&L) and the Reducing Deforestation from Commodity Production (Production) projects were two successful initiatives within the IAP that were evaluated to determine the collective lessons learned with regards to the strategy and approach in addressing commodity related deforestation. The projects, although different in their reach, together demonstrated the potential for a collaborative and integrated approach and illustrated the conditions necessary to respond to the drivers of commodity driven deforestation. The following distills the lessons learned through the lens of the critical elements, or levers, underpinning the project's efforts.

II. The Levers of Change

Historically, production aspects were oriented towards environmentally sound practices that could qualify the producer for access to niche markets or premium pricing as a reward for investing in positive externalities. The GGP recognized that “*support to smallholder farmer production standards is still being achieved only in pockets and not at scale,*”⁸ too limited for large scale change. A commodity approach, when implemented in isolation could also produce a perverse effect: could additional rents from production lead producers to expand their operations and increase deforestation? Accelerating systemic change in sustainable agricultural commodity production would therefore need to happen within a land-use planning framework.

The GGP’s approach stems from evidence that trends in global commodity expansion are unsustainable, inequitable, and the source of global environmental damage. Urgent changes are needed on the production side relating to how, where and with what levels of productivity and environmental impacts, agricultural commodities are produced. The challenge of expanding production efficiently and with minimal further loss of forested areas and associated values depends on: (1) in what manner production is intensified, (2) which new lands are selected for expanding that production, and (3) the extent, importance and location of any biodiversity and other environmental service set asides or placed under a level of protection within productive lands. These factors are affected by a combination of market-driven, legal/regulatory and knowledge-related processes, and by issues related to weak demand, poor lending oversight and limited or dysfunctional incentives. The baseline opportunities, or “levers,” are:

1. Multi-stakeholder Dialogue and Collaboration: Multi-stakeholder commodity platforms are essential spaces for increasing transparency, building trust and consensus, enabling coordinated planning and action, regulatory oversight and encouraging sustainable investment.
2. Public Policies and Enforcement: National and sub-national governments can influence market-driven productive forces to correct market failures, serving broader societal interests and addressing equity issues in international supply chains. Important from a global environmental perspective is the need to make use of spatially resolved data on High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests, important biological corridors and related ecosystem services, which is increasingly accessible through remote sensing etc. and can support land use planning.
3. Farmer support systems: Encouraging best practices and regulating good production practices and sustainability principles that contribute to adjacent forest conservation, in-farm set asides, and protection of water sources are among the ways in which forests and associated natural capital can be conserved.
4. Knowledge and learning: There are ample, largely untapped opportunities to capture and share experience and lessons learned and to apply these to the development of national strategies as well as to the more localized deforestation situations.

Enabling these levers catalyzed the development and transformation of national and sub-national systems that will permit an increase production of agricultural commodities which have a high global demand without imposing externalities on populations at the local, national, and global levels.

III. The Results & Lessons Learned

At the national-level, the Production Project encouraged sustainable practices for palm oil in Indonesia and Liberia and beef production in Paraguay while conserving forests and safeguarding the rights of smallholder farmers and forest-dependent communities. At the global-level, the A&L project integrated the large stakeholder universe, their initiatives, divergent development theories and operational modalities to add value, create synergies and reduce the negative effects of working in silos.

1. Multi-stakeholder Dialogue and Collaboration:

Those working to achieve sustainability in agricultural commodities systems face highly complex and challenging problems and are situated within complicated eco-political context and systems.

Sustainable commodities can only be achieved if producing countries align stakeholders with differing interests, power, and voices within a shared vision for the future development of their respective commodities and through meaningful engagement, commitment, and collaboration of all actors in collaborative action to generate change.

Meaningful dialogue was an important first step in creating the environment for planning and policy development. To facilitate the process, UNDP developed a methodology and guidebook on **Effective Collaborative Action**, building on ten years of experience supporting multi-stakeholder collaboration processes at the country level, and provided training and technical assistance that yielded 3 national, 7 subnational and 1 landscape-level platforms for collaboration on the sustainable development of palm oil sector in Indonesia and Liberia, and for beef in Paraguay. These structures united public, private and civil society actors to discuss and plan a pathway for reducing commodity related impacts on HCV areas and forests. At present, all are formalizing their institutional status and operational identities. UNDP also produced recommendations to guide the sustainable financing of the platforms. Most importantly, commitments were secured for the short term financing that will enable these structures to continue into the next stage of development.

The number of participating organizations surpassed expectations and, COVID-19 considered, so did the number of platforms consolidated. In all countries, regions and landscapes, interested parties were willing to cooperate within a collaborative framework when they saw the space was safe⁹ and productive for dialogue; their economic interests were being taken up; and that the structure was facilitative rather than restrictive. The established platforms are testament



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to the effectiveness of the potential for multi-stakeholder dialogue as these were developed in jurisdictions with a history of social divisions, political differences, and capacity constraints. Regardless, traditional antagonists, such as private sector producers and regulators, have been finding common ground and over 315 organizations of processors, producers, governments and community based organizations are much closer to understanding each other in Indonesia, Liberia and Paraguay. In Indonesia, where the process is the most mature, the platforms and multi-stakeholder Action Plans developed through these spaces, have been instrumental in reviving a producers data base and the smallholder registration process, facilitating the resolution of 53 plantation management dispute cases (2020), and the promotion of the Indonesia Sustainable palm Oil (ISPO) certification and of ISPO certified products, amongst others.

It is also clear that businesses are slowly buying into the model. In Paraguay, for example, cooperatives which are the financial drivers of the beef sector are actively participating in the process, which would indicate that institutions are open to listening about a better way to sustain business. The same is happening in the oil palm sector in Liberia and Indonesia where international processors are in dialogue with communities, producers and government seeking a workable model beneficial to buyers, sellers and the environment.

This experience teaches us is that trust is a limiting factor that must be planned and adequately costed. Strong personal and institutional relationships are a prerequisite for stakeholders to come to dialogue over common interests. The trust-building process was enhanced when Champions regarded for their service to the sector and/or the community emerged into leadership roles. Also, a staged process is needed to bring untrusting groups to the table. Paraguay’s Chaco platform is an example. The Chaco’s, livestock sector is dominated by Mennonites that colonized the area. Once a respected Mennonite leader agreed to lead the Platform, many interests quickly came together. Through facilitation, the Indigenous Communities eventually came to the table because of the shared need to economic development respectful of forests and the ecosystem services, such as hunting, important to them. The tools and technical assistance on multi-stakeholder processes were essential in preparing leadership to manage a dialogue. A **Women’s Leaders Multi-stakeholder Platform** was also established in Paraguay to address women’s empowerment in issues related to climate change and beef production. In Liberia, although early in the process, the national platform was able to purge counterproductive interests without a clear relationship to the sector’s development, facilitating a more amicable space for palm oil processors and exporters. Likewise, the platform sought mechanisms to improve the representation of the local Clans into the platform. The first test of the collaborative processes in the policy direction was the development and approval of Action Plans at the national, subnational and, in Indonesia, at the district level. The Action Plans define the pathway and the way the stakeholders will interact to reduce and avoid deforestation in HCV areas and forests and more generally foster economic,



social and environmental sustainability in focus commodity sectors. The plans also address cross-cutting issues such as stakeholder engagement, gender and women’s empowerment, among others.

The process was very successful. Two national-level plans with high-level endorsement are in-force in Indonesia and Liberia. In addition, a total of 7 subnational plans are approved in Paraguay and Indonesia. The plans are an important and motivating first victory for the participants and will guide the sustainable development of the mentioned sectors.

On the global stage, the A&L Project provided advocacy at the international-level through extensive network relationships with the other platforms with similar interests, such as, the Tropical Forest Alliance, the Consumer Goods Forum, etc. amongst many others. Joining networks of all the GGP Partners, the Programme was able to engage with key private sector stakeholders and coalitions through events and forums, contributing to global advocacy for sustainable commodity supply chains. The A&L project effectively engaged the partner organizations within a Programme-level Steering Committee to project the goals and benefits of the initiative. Many of these satellite platforms are critical to the objectives of the Programme’s other projects focused on sustainable financing and consumer demand, and enabled effective collaboration between GGP partners.

See also the [**GGP Brief on Collaborative Action Mechanisms**](#) for more information.

2. Public Policies and Enforcement

Policies define the “rules” of the system. Changing and enforcing policies will change the way the system works. In the context of reducing the negative environmental impacts from agricultural commodities, policy development is needed in two areas: production and land-use. In the former case, policy challenges needed involved lack of public investment in extension services, inputs, and technical assistance to improve their production, or intensify agriculture, in a way that is benign to forests. The latter relates to the definition of areas appropriate for agriculture and for HCV or HCS areas with corresponding regulations that provide clear land use categories. This aspect required a two stage process: (i) definition of HCV and HCS areas to support decision-making and the commensurate regulations that use those distinctions to facilitate certifications and to enhance enforcement.

The former stimulates efficiency and aims at a neutral environmental impact. The latter aims at directing future agriculture away from HCV areas and forests.

a. Production Related Policies

In the first category, on commodity production, nine policies were developed with four approvals. These support protection of endangered species, farmers support extension services, and importantly regulations to stimulate private sector investment in Corporate and Social Responsibility, partnerships between private sector and small producers, and sustainable development policy. etc. In Indonesia, the most advanced of the participating nations in terms of policy development, the regulations to stimulate private sector support provide an example of how to make the most of public-private partnerships by providing clear rules and facilitating the financial power of the palm oil processors and ultimately buyers in support of municipal development and in formalizing their support for farmer extension services.

Important policies in Liberia adapted the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) principles and criteria to the national context improving the country’s commitment to social and environmental safeguards and standards shared by 94 countries. The contacts and benefits of RSPO participation will help to fortify standards and increase capacities through available trainings and technical assistance opportunities.

b. Land-use Related Policies and enforcement

Within the context of agricultural commodities production, the goal of effective land-use planning is to enable land-use approaches that remove incentives to convert forests, peatlands and wetlands to agricultural production and, ultimately, deforestation.

Land-use planning, and policymaking are very sensitive political undertakings. The GGP ensures that the process includes all landscape-level stakeholders in thorough consultations and dialogue so that social, economic, environmental, and cultural interests can be reconciled. The investments in the platforms provide the framework for those discussions.

To manage the process, the first step is to inform decision-making by building the capacity of the participating governments to map forest conversion in HCV and/or HCS areas and forests. The starting point was building the capacity to define HCV and HCS criteria. The Production project supported the governments when needed to develop a national identification of the internationally recognized criteria. Indonesia was ahead of the curve with the **HCV and HCS framework** already known and applied in the country. The Production project looked at mapping landscapes of focus, so this data could feed into land use plans, legalized in a second stage. To be effective, it is important to combine land use mapping and planning work with monitoring. Building on a considerable amount of science developed in collaboration with Bogor Agricultural University (IPB University) and the Indonesian Institute for Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN), a land-use change monitoring tool titled **Ecosystem** was launched in September 2020. It will feed into **SIMONTANA**, a GIS Land-use Cover Change monitoring by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry accompanied by a mobile application to validate the accuracy of information provided and an Early Warning System. The system was positively tested but has not had sufficient time to move the product downstream to the provincial and district level. These are regardless exciting developments that will have high replication potential.

Paraguay reached the technology goal of mapping land use cover in their local interpretation of HCV and HCS areas and forests. Stakeholders developed a regional criteria to identify HCV and/or HCS areas in the Chaco and mapped them along with corridors providing connectivity essential to maintain biodiversity. The map will be used by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADES) as criteria to issue environmental permits for land use change in the Chaco region. The criteria will support licensing for land use change granted through the MADES Environmental Information System (SIAM). In addition, the GGP supported the National Forestry Institute (INFONA) to digitalize the registry of Chaco's land-use plans and upload information to the Global Forest Watch (GFW) database. Digitalization and submission to the GFW allows for a better monitoring of land use change and identification of illegal changes.

By the end of the Production Project, Liberia was unable to reach the objective of defining a national interpretation for HCV areas and mapping these important conservation areas, after having achieved several important steps in the process. A National Forest Inventory was completed, and investments were made in starting the process for Liberia to reach a national interpretation of HCV criteria. Once the HCV criteria is agreed, the next and final step would be mapping land use cover change over the HCV perimeter, which would require future technical and financial support in installing the technology and completing the cartography. In addition, in Liberia, adjustments to failed concessions may be taking place. The palm oil concessionaire and buyer MPOI/MANCO and the National Concessions Directorate are exploring the possibility of an updated and formal agreement with the Liberian government and Non-Government Organizations to





assist them to work with the Zodia community in a productive public-private partnership. The important aspect is that the capacity to correctly define and map HCV and/or HCS resources will be needed very soon and will be important to inform decision-making in areas that were previously politically charged. These structures will continue to provide benefits to the Liberian process.

Maps are important decision support tools that when combined with policy development and platforms for dialogue, allow countries to move closer to an adequate level of land use planning.

To enable land use planning, regulations, designations, and resolutions defining HCV criteria, land use plans and more generally enabling an improved allocation of land uses, etc. were drafted. Of these, eight regulations are in-force with an additional 11 in the approval pipeline. The results were a suite of legislation in each country that were both normative and regulative, such as the following:

1. In Indonesia, achievements were realized by supporting the district governments of Pelalawan, South Tapanuli and Sintang, and the provincial government of Riau in identifying the environmental, social and cultural value that should be conserved prior to authorizing land use changes, and in developing local regulations to provide a legal framework for the protection of important conservation areas. In addition, policy recommendations were developed on the categorization and protection of Essential Ecosystems Areas within productive areas. This policy has the potential of protecting up to 100+ million hectares.

2. In Liberia, a 2019 Conservation Agreement was signed with three communities of the Zodia clan in the Northwest Province. According to reports from the Frontline Conservationists supported through the Conservation Agreement to monitor protection of the forested area, the full implementation of the Conservation Agreement has led to a reduction in unsustainable practices like pit-sawing, charcoal production, bushmeat hunting, and cultivation in HCV and/or HCS areas. In addition, GGP studies conducted in collaboration with the government and stakeholders, provided policy recommendations for improving the land use planning legal framework, including policies for Conservation Agreements to become legal instruments for land use planning, and ensuring production does not occur in important conservation areas.

3. In Paraguay, The GGP worked with the municipalities of Carmelo Peralta and Puerto Casado to develop municipal land use plans, integrating data on the regional HCV criteria defined with the aim of setting aside at least 430,000 ha of HCVF. The GGP also supported the Ministry of Defense to ensure protection of important conservation areas part of military areas through the creation of three protected areas covering more than 17,000 ha of HCVF. At the national-level, a policy which is modifying the Environmental Impact Assessment Law was adopted to fix the terminology problems in classifying HCVs within SIAM. Finally, a policy recommendation was proposed to give more authority to MADES to address infringements in land use change license agreements while another recommendation was developed on how to improve fire management in the municipality of Filadelfia. An amendment of the law on Payment for Ecosystems Services as an incentive for conserving important biodiversity areas was also facilitated to enhance enforcement of the regulation. This

circles the process back to the benefits of technology in supporting increased enforcement.

As a result of the GGP actions, lands were set-aside ranging from small, protected areas to larger tracks of connected areas totaling 847,000 ha. with a carbon equivalent of 129 Million tons CO2 eq. The spatial policies mentioned earlier will greatly improve this process and enable dialogue on larger tracks and more strategic set asides in concessional land in oil palm concessions and in Paraguay’s dry forest as these develop over time.

c. Key conclusions on policies

Based on the experience on both types of policies shared above, the following sequence emerged as a blueprint for policy development: (i) a policy proposal with a win-win proposition developed through a participative process effectively leveraging or responding to demand for the policy; (ii) strategic communications to consolidate demand for the policy; (iii) effective advocacy and stakeholder engagement strategies targeted to different levels; (iv) strategic communications at the decision-making juncture to support the policies through the political process and maintain momentum through a generally protracted process; (v) a highly visible and trustworthy champion that can broker trust and facilitate decision-making and (vi) targeted capacity building and planning support to enable the process, ensure adequate preparation for policy implementation and establish rules for discourse.

With reference to the mentioned steps, the steps, effort, and timeframes needed to garner the trust and support necessary to achieve a policy outcome is significant and is generally underappreciated, underestimated and underbudgeted.

For more information, download the GGP Impact Briefs on [**Production Policy Reform**](#) and [**Land-use Policy Reform**](#).

3. Farmer Support Systems

Adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) can maintain soil health, optimize inputs, and be climate smart, all important to increasing resilience for local farmers. Supporting sustainable intensification, creating market and financial incentives, strengthening producers’ organizations, and improving the enabling environment for natural ecosystem conservation, is a pathway to reducing agriculture-driven deforestation. Supporting producers directly to access niche markets has not proved scalable to the degree needed to offset the increase in demand for palm oil or beef and to achieve large-scale ecosystem sustainability. The GGP has chosen to coordinate with Agriculture Ministries, producers, and agri-businesses to invest in strengthened Farmers Support Systems that provide both a return for producers and ecosystem resilience in the long run and at the necessary scale. Investments in Farmer Support Systems speak directly to the interests of the producer. Strengthening farmers system includes conducting training needs assessments, targeted pilots, and the development of farmers support strategies that demonstrated the effectiveness of agronomic techniques in intensifying production. These also appealed to farmers interest and built trust. Whereas policy development focused generally on deforestation, it is a delicate theme for the producers and does not appeal as much to their interests as much as agronomic themes.

The GGP deployed a **Producer Support System Toolkit** that facilitates a systemic approach to producer support by identifying and harnessing public and private sector knowledge and resources and provides encouragement and guidance to governments to engage in collaborative processes, to develop new partnerships, enable innovation, and align financing to strengthen producer support systems and to ultimately foment sustainable agricultural commodity production. The toolkit was piloted at the national level in Liberia and at the subnational level in Indonesia, where it led to the development of producer support strategies. Farmer Support Strategies were also woven into Indonesia’s policy instruments to increase farmer extension and private sector support to farmer productivity through Corporate and Social Responsibility programmes. In Liberia, the support strategies are incorporated into the National Oil Palm Strategy and Action Plan (NOPSAP) to support smallholder development, improve livelihoods, overcome challenges and to integrate social and environmental safeguards within oil palm development strategies and investments.

The suite of activities piloted by GGP increased yields for farmers by roughly a 2 to 3x, amounts comparable to increases reported by other projects and in multiple countries. This indicates that the practices could lead to a bankable result that can lead to more investment and ultimately to replicability and upscaling. In addition, other returns to producers noted include an increase in the value of lands following certifications, more and better credit conditions, and increased conformity to certifiers requirements, such as child labor restrictions. In Indonesia, at least 10 companies entered partnerships with smallholders for provision of improved access to inputs, capacity building, and predictable market access for sustainably produced palm oil. In Liberia, a former Sime Darby concession is being restructured by MANCO and an outgrower scheme with smallholders being explored.

The farmer support programmes must also consider upgrades in basic technology, such as pre-processing equipment, genetically improved seedstock, integrated pest management, etc.

Many of these factors are known to partners, companies, agriculture academics and producer groups. These need to be better quantified, analyzed for their different levels of returns and, if warranted, synthesized for financing proposals for cooperatives, micro-businesses, etc. Follow-on initiatives and/or corporate partners could explore these possibilities. Nonetheless, the GGP’s Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) analysis demonstrates that farmers are willing to participate when they see results i.e. increased yields from the practices promoted. Cooperatives (Paraguay) and corporations (Indonesia, Liberia) see promise in the process and are interested in continuing their participation. An additional take-away is the deep distrust of outsiders by farmers and the lengthy time it takes for project technicians to gain their trust. Technicians advised to always, when available, utilize local talent with good local reputations to reduce the time of acceptance and effectively manage the trust variable.

Increased yield is the key to upscaling agricultural intensification techniques and technologies for a greater effect. Farmers actively learn from each other, especially where tangible results are presented and the risk is low. The GGP and partners have piloted profitable techniques demonstrated to be low risk. With inputs, financing and technical assistance from Farmer Support Systems, the attributes discussed define the pathway towards upscaling the results to eventually outweigh the drivers of commodity-related deforestation.

See also the [**GGP Producer Support Impact Brief**](#).

4. Knowledge Management: Access to Information, Results and Lessons



How is it possible to monitor the events in multiple countries, distill the lessons learned while importing information critical to the scaling-up of opportunities? The GGP tackled this aspect through several framework outcomes. Firstly, to inform the system, pertinent information and lessons needed to be generated from the world experience; second, results and lessons learned from the field needed to be collated and analyzed; and finally, a forum was needed to manage and disseminate information to pertinent stakeholders in commodity development. The following describes the collective experience of the A&L and Production Project’s contribution in producing, managing, and disseminating lessons learned.

Before committing resources, governments, donors, international agencies and businesses need to answer important questions, such as, are voluntary standards contributing to the reduction of commodity-related deforestation? These complex questions require a systematic approach to produce reliable, peer-reviewed reports tailored to the diverse needs of multi-lateral agencies, governments and the private sector to answer key questions to justify their support, finance, or commit other resources. In addition, a system for generating and synthesizing information with academic rigor and peer-reviewed confidence is needed.

The A&L Project responded with the establishment of a Global Impact Platform titled “**Evidensia**” to fill in key gaps to the evidence base, synthesize and communicate evidence in decision-relevant terms. Evidensia was implemented by WWF US through the ISEAL Alliance to develop a robust and policy-relevant evidence base on the effectiveness and impacts of voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) and VSS-like mechanisms being used to implement deforestation-free and sustainable production and sourcing initiatives. To that end, Evidensia supported adaptive management by synthesizing information for decision-makers; and engaging stakeholders in knowledge sharing events.

The platform is firmly established and is populated with scholarly articles from which Information syntheses are continually being developed on deforestation, commodities production, amongst others. In fact, by November 2021, Evidensia had over 1000 scholarly articles, videos, training events, amongst others. Of particular interest to the theme are the following systematic reviews:

a. Evidensia / ISEAL Systematic review on the conservation impacts of sustainability standards (2018)

- **Visual summaries depiction (actual results data).**
- **Narrative report, podcast and webinar.**

b. Rachel Garrett et al systematic review on effectiveness of forest-focused supply chain policies (compares performance of voluntary standards, company codes and bans / moratoria on a range of outcomes including deforestation) (2021)

- **Narrative report and webinar.**
- **Short article.**

c. Ingram et al. Synthesis report on effectiveness of 6 different approaches to meet zero deforestation commitments (2020).

To identify, collate, discuss the lessons learned from within the commodities spaces, the existing **Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems (FACS) Community** served as Community of Practice for GGP.

For knowledge management, partnership development and communications campaigns were implemented to maximize learning, foster synergies and promote replication and upscaling of actions to address deforestation in commodity supply chains. This is accomplished through the FACS Community established to exchange and replicate lessons learned from countries and across other IAP programmes; partnerships to support knowledge management and increase synergies; and a programme-level communications strategy to facilitate awareness of IAP impacts and the dissemination of knowledge.

Stakeholders have engaged through the GGP's digital platform, webinars, special events, and through a periodic forum titled the **Good Growth Conference**, involving development country and donor governments, foundations, multilateral development agencies, financial institutions, private sector actors, producers, NGOs and civil society organizations, collaboration forums, and academia. Two Conferences were successfully implemented. A few examples of other GGP networking and facilitation activities are illustrated as follows:

- At the **GGP-New York Climate Week event** (September 2020), officials from the Indonesian Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs and Ghanaian Forestry Commission served as panelists, and representatives of the Liberian Ministry of Agriculture also attended.
- High level government officials have given talks at the Good Growth Conference. These serve as both information exchanges and motivates the officials to champion the Good Growth cause.
- Donor governments and foundations: Engagement and communication with the GEF, donor governments and foundations was strong during project implementation and involved development catalysts such as, the Swiss State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Moore, and Packard Foundations, USAID, among many others.
- Networking with platforms and collaboration forums, such as, the Tropical Forest Alliance, Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) which joined force with the GGP into a “game changer” solution that was presented at the UN Food Systems Summit on “Deforestation-free and conversion-free food supply chains;” the Forest Declaration platform; and others to strengthen the impact of agricultural value chains to produce food efficiently and sustainably.

The UNDP RH LAC managed an extensive monitoring and engagement process to capture and publish Knowledge Management Products based on the hundreds of interactions within the targeted landscapes. These products were both instructive, supporting training and technical assistance, such as for example, **A Multi-Stakeholder Guide for Collaborative Action**, or the **Producer Support Toolkit**. These types of products were developed by qualified experts who worked on-the-ground with practitioners to develop and field-test the content and provided technical assistance during their implementation. A total of 11 pieces of learning on gender were produced, such as, **Gender Mainstreaming in Agricultural Supply Chains Can Accelerate Good Growth: What Works and for Whom?**. Also, a programme-level **knowledge guideline focusing on private sector engagement** was developed building on the first version of the **Value Beyond Value Chains (VBV)** produced under the GGP Production project.

Other analytical products were developed, such as the **Four Year Highlights Reports**, blogs, newsletters articles, fact sheets from the target countries, briefs on policies, reports on land-use planning, and technical guidance on themes such as: **Delivering Systemic Change in Commodity Supply Chains Through an Integrated Approach; Reflections from the Good Growth Partnership on How to Promote Transformation in our Food Systems;** Building Long Term Sustainability in Multi-Stakeholder Platforms, an internal guidance document, available in English, Spanish and Bahasa: Making Your Impact Last, and **Four Dimensional Systemic Change: Alignment and Connectivity in Reducing Deforestation**.

The Knowledge Management Products were also complemented by Analytical Tools utilized to interpret the results such as: the **Causality Assessment for Landscape Interventions (CALI)** tool, a guide to **Effective Collaborative Action** including the **Signals of Change for Effective Collaborative Action**, building on the Ladder of Change tool (a tool aiming at measuring the quality of dialogue facilitated by multi-stakeholder platforms).

IV. Conclusion

Through the actions described in this document, the projects implemented under the Good Growth Partnership’s Integrated Approach Pilot have demonstrated that the collaborative and integrated framework is an effective methodology for facilitating dialogue and collaboration, which in turn is a pre-requisite for the development of effective policies to guide both the production aspects of agricultural development and land-use planning. Although the application of GIS tools to map HCV areas and forests was uneven due to differing national capacities, there are indications that the tools produced are solid decision support tools and necessary to facilitate a discussion on land-use change, and, more importantly, in planning the spatial development of the agricultural frontier. Integral to that process, the Production Project and other related initiatives proved that agricultural intensification can increase yields and present “bankable” opportunities for collaboration between governments, farmers, and the private sector processors within a farmer support system that can promote economic development and avoid the externalities associated with palm oil, beef or soy production.

The lessons learned from this process have been quantified, analyzed and presented in the form of research in the **Evidensia** platform and in knowledge products, webinars, and other digital media through the **Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems (FACS) Community**.



Endnotes

1 Hosonuma, Noriko, Martin Herold, Veronique De Sy, Ruth S. DeFries, Maria Brockhaus, Louis Verchot, Arild Angelsen, and Erika Romijn. 2012. “An Assessment of Deforestation and Forest Degradation Drivers in Developing Countries.” *Environmental Research Letters* 7 (4). doi:10.1088/1748-9326/7/4/044009.

2 Forest Trends Report Series: Consumer Goods and Deforestation: An Analysis of the Extent and Nature of Illegality in Forest Conversion for Agriculture and Timber Plantations. September 2014. http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc_4718.pdf.

3 United Nations, Factsheet_summit.pdf. “2015 Time for Global Action for People and Planet”. URL: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Factsheet_Summit.pdf accessed 15 July 2021.

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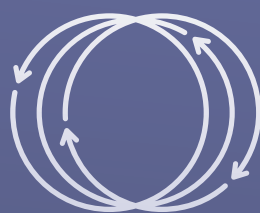
5 Millions Metric Tons. Mordor Intelligence.

6 “SOYBEAN MARKET – GROWTH, TRENDS, COVID-19 IMPACT, AND FORECASTS (2022 – 2027)”.

7 The High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approaches aim to identify and protect areas important for conservation and livelihoods – and to support no deforestation commitments. The HCV Approach is a methodology to identify, manage, and monitor important environmental and social values in production landscapes – across any ecosystem or habitat type (including aquatic ecosystems, grasslands and other non-forest ecosystems). There are six categories of HCVs covering biodiversity, rare ecosystems, ecosystem services, landscapes, and livelihoods and cultural values. The HCS Approach is an integrated conservation land use planning tool to distinguish forest areas in the humid tropics for conservation from degraded lands that may be developed while ensuring the rights and livelihoods of local peoples are respected. There are four main classes of HCS forests which range from high to low density forests and young regenerating forests. Different areas within a landscape can be attributed with one or more HCVs, as applicable; there is also a high degree of overlap between HCS forests and the location of HCVs. HCVF is a type of HCV. More information here.

8 GGP Workshop Report. Accelerating systemic change in sustainable agricultural commodity production

9 Persons interviewed defined “safe” as those present in the dialogue are legitimately involved with the commodity and not seeking protagonist positions or to catapult themselves politically.



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