

# The Dutch Government's Policy on Tropical Rainforests

Lessons learned from an evaluation of  
the Dutch ODA-effort to preserve the  
tropical rainforest in the period  
1999-2005

# Overall objective and targets since 1991

- The main objective of the RTR is *“to promote the conservation of the tropical rainforest by realising a balanced and sustainable land and forest use, to end the present, rapid process of deforestation and the encroachment and degradation of the environment.”*
- a number of targets has been set:
- At least 25 % of the world’s forest area will be protected nature reserves (NB. No target date was set.)
- At least 25% of the timber on the Dutch market will be demonstrable sustainably harvested in 2005
- Yearly net growth of forested area of 12 million hectare from 2000 onwards
- In 2010 globally binding agreements on the protection and sustainable use of forests will be drawn up
- NB. None of the targets are specifically aimed at tropical rainforest

# Strategy 1999-2006

- **The Netherlands advocates the integration of forest programme's in poverty reduction strategies;**
- Within the WTO and other frameworks, the Netherlands will commit itself to measures that promote stimulate sustainable forest management and discourage trade in illegally harvested wood;
- **The Netherlands will integrate conservation and sustainable use of forests in its overall development cooperation policy and will promote this integration within multilateral organisations, banks and national governments;**
- The Netherlands stimulates and initiates action on the development of systems for setting the value of and compensating for presently non-marketable functions of the forest;
- **The Netherlands encourages the use of national forest plans in the implementation of forest policy;**
- **The Netherlands will promote rural development in line with the sector-wide approach for agro-forestry;**
- The Netherlands supports certification at home and in other countries as an instrument to promote sustainable forest management and the use of wood and other forest products from sustainable sources;
- The Netherlands will promote the use of sustainably produced wood at home.

# ODA-input

- the minimal yearly Dutch ODA-expenditure for forests is € 68 million, of which at least one third (i.e. € 23 million) is targeted on tropical rainforests
- The expenditure is within the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- This is not a budgetline, but is calculated every year by determining which percentage of each relevant expenditure has contributed to the sustainable management and protection of respectively forests and tropical rainforests

# Where did the expenditure to preserve the tropical rainforest go?

- Roughly one third in regional and worldwide programmes
- Roughly two thirds was spent in bilateral programmes
- At the beginning of the evaluation period 19 countries received Dutch support to preserve the tropical rainforest and by the end of 2005 only 10 countries were left due to policy changes

# Objective of the evaluation

- Determining the relevance, effectiveness and effectivity for the preservation of tropical rainforest, and the contribution to poverty reduction

# Relevance

- What was the relevance of the RTR and the activities which were financed within its framework?
- How did the objectives of the RTR address the problems in the receiving countries?
- Are the RTR and its projects coherent with the policies of the receiving countries, i.c. the national forest programmes (NFP's), and how?

# Effectiveness

- How effective have the RTR-inputs been for the conservation of the tropical rainforest?
- To what extent has the RTR contributed by means of developing and implementing NFP's towards sustainable land and forest use and active protection of tropical rainforests?
- Has the status of tropical rainforests in the receiving countries been monitored in the receiving countries in general and in the project areas in particular and, if so, what can be concluded in respect to the conservation of the tropical rainforest, the preservation of its biodiversity and the contribution the RTR has made to these developments?

# Efficiency

- What can be said about the efficiency of the RTR-inputs for the conservation of the tropical rainforest?
- What role has efficiency played in the decision making process on the inputs?
- What can be said about the efficiency of the projects in relation to costs versus output and the timeliness of the deliverance of the planned output?

# Poverty reduction

- What was the role of poverty reduction in the RTR and its implementation?
- To what extent was poverty reduction integrated in the NFP's supported by RTR-inputs?
- What role did social economic dimensions play in the design and the monitoring of RTR-projects?
- How have NFP's been integrated in poverty reduction strategies, for instance PRSP's?
- Did NFP's have an impact on social economic developments and, if so, in what way?

# Design of the evaluation (1)

- The research was limited to the period 1999-2005, taking into consideration financial contributions approved since 1st of January, 1999.
- Apart from interviewing policy makers, programme officers, environmental groups and experts in the Netherlands the evaluation included field studies in Vietnam, Ghana and Colombia

# Design of the evaluation (2)

- In these three countries, 73 activities or projects which contribute to the tropical rainforest have been executed. Among these projects, 46 meet the criteria of inclusion in the research (at least 50% contribution to the tropical rainforest). It is felt that projects which contribute to the tropical rainforest for less than 50% should be excluded from the research given that it will be difficult to estimate their outcome and impact in tropical rainforest terms.

# Characteristics of the bilateral programmes

- No reliable monitoring of changes in quantity of tropical rainforest
- No monitoring of changes in quality of tropical rainforest at all
- In general no baseline nor monitoring for social economic circumstances for forest dwellers or people living in buffer zones.
- Many stakeholders with different and opposing stakes (conservation vs poverty reduction)

# What could be established?

- Progress made in developing and implementing national forest programmes
- Changes in institutional capacity (research, education and training)
- Progress in lawmaking

# What could not be established?

- Effectiveness in terms of preservation of quantity and quality of tropical rainforest
- Effectiveness for poverty reduction

# Main problems

- No reliable data on changes in quality and quantity of tropical rainforest, either in project area or on national level
- No data on changes in socioeconomic circumstances of local population
- Some data on export of tropical timber, but hardly any on local consumption