

ASB-Partnership for the Tropical Forest Margins

Medium-Term Plan 2008 – 2010

June 15, 2007

ICRAF Global Project 11: ASB Partnership for the Tropical Forest Margins

Rationale

Goal

Raise productivity and income of rural households living in the tropical forest margins without increasing deforestation or undermining essential environmental services.

Objectives

1. To improve understanding of the tradeoffs between agricultural productivity, human well-being, deforestation and environmental services associated with different land uses at the tropical forest margins and the potential for technologies, policies, institutions and negotiation approaches to optimize those tradeoffs.
2. To synthesize results and policy implications from cross-site and cross-regional comparative analyses and make them easily available to international, regional and national policy processes shaping land use at the tropical forest margins.
3. To facilitate information exchange, collaborative projects, and capacity building among local, national and international organizations for more effective research on land use at the tropical forest margins.

Problem Diagnoses

Tropical rainforests are falling fast. Causes of deforestation are complex, including agricultural expansion, road building, and market forces. Deforestation is often blamed on the slash-and-burn practices of poor migrant smallholders, millions of whom do use this method to clear and cultivate small areas of forest. However, other groups often clear much larger areas, including plantation owners, ranchers, loggers, and state-run enterprises and settlement projects. This often leads to conflict between these more powerful groups and smallholders, and between farmers and state agencies.

For poor people making a living in the tropical forest margins, conservation does not (yet) pay. Attempts to impose conservation by regulation either fail altogether or benefit the powerful at the expense of the poor. To this point in time, global markets have not valued the environmental benefits of tropical forests.

Markets for environmental services are beginning to emerge. At the local level, there is most interest on watershed services. Starting in December 2005, there has been increasing international discussion about the urgent need to slow greenhouse gas emissions resulting from tropical deforestation. The Stern Report, published in 2006, gave particular attention to the potential for reduced deforestation as a cost-effective approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Designing an appropriate international mechanism, consistent with nationally-determined programmes for reduced deforestation, is a formidable challenge. Understanding the tradeoffs between conservation, environmental services and local livelihoods is crucial. No single group or organization has the means or expertise to tackle these complex, interlinked problems by itself.

Alignment with CGIAR System Priorities

ASB won the CGIAR partnership award in 2005. The ASB external programme and management review, published in June 2006, concluded that the ASB partnership continues to be highly relevant to the CGIAR's goals and is pursuing work that fits well with CGIAR System

Priorities, notably Priority 4A, (Integrated land, water and forest management at landscape level), with major contributions to specific goals 1, 2, 3 and 5; and 5B (Making international and domestic markets work for the poor).

Alterations in Project Composition and Outputs

One external and one internal event that have unfolded over the past year have prompted some modification of the ASB project. The external event is the very high level of attention now being paid in the international community to the need to slow tropical deforestation and the potential for market-based mechanisms reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation. For example, the UNFCCC meeting held in Bonn in May 2007 had no fewer than 9 side events which discussed these topics. Despite this interest, however, formal negotiations are moving very slowly.

The internal event is the finalization of the EPMP report for ASB. The review found that ASB:

- “... contributed directly to the design of innovative policies, legislation, and institutions across the pantropic domain.”
- “... [is] the world’s leader in integrated, interdisciplinary research on the human and environmental consequences of land use choices in that domain.”
- “... has already begun to influence natural resource management in ways that have led not only to income and environmental benefits but also to avoidance of substantial economic and environmental losses, as well as occurrence of damaging conflict.”
- “...was cited by many as their ‘standard’ for how productive international collaboration on NRM [natural resource management] challenges should be organized.”

The MTP for 2008-2010, therefore, builds upon past success, addresses the recommendations of the EPMP, and gives particular attention on the challenges of avoiding deforestation with sustainable benefits. The first objective spells out the research objective of ASB more clearly (responding to EPMP Recommendation A). The second objective clarifies the need to propel and synthesize ASB results into particular research and policy communities (Responding to EPMP Recommendation B). The third objective combines the networking and capacity building activities and clarifies that the purpose of networking and capacity building is to enhance efficiency of research and knowledge sharing (responding to EPMP Recommendation C).

Description of Impact Pathways

Outputs

- ASB1. Site-specific results and cross-regional syntheses of tradeoffs at the tropical forest margins and options for optimizing those tradeoffs.
- ASB2. Results on tradeoffs and policy options are disseminated to national, regional and international stakeholders and policy fora, with particular emphasis on policy processes identified as having greatest potential for advancing the ASB goal.
- ASB3. An efficient, productive and member-owned research network at the national, regional and international scales.

Intended users (beneficiaries)

Intended users include the growing research, development and policy communities who are concerned with rural development, deforestation and environmental services in the tropical forest margins.

Outcomes:

Researchers working at the tropical forest margins conduct research that is more effective and better linked to important policy processes.

Workable organizational structures and processes identified and implemented that link integrative science with policy and practice in the search for better approaches to poverty reduction, natural resource management, and rainforest conservation.

Policy makers at the national and international scales adopt policies, negotiation processes and institutions that reduce incentives for deforestation.

Impacts:

Appreciable slowing in the rate of tropical deforestation in countries that consider ASB outputs in the design of policies, incentive systems and negotiation approaches.

Smallholder farmers living in the tropical forest margins have more secure land rights and incentives to undertake investments and land uses consistent with essential environmental services.

End users (ultimate beneficiaries):

Current estimates by ASB indicate that more than 1.8 billion people live within the humid tropical and subtropical forest biome; of these 1.2 billion people live in rural areas. Most are poor households directly dependent on forest resources and agriculture for their livelihoods. Other poor households suffer indirectly from waste of these resources and environmental degradation. Because ASB's target ecosystems supply global public goods (globally-significant habitats and carbon storage), beneficiaries also include the earth's entire population.

Target Ecoregion(s)

ASB works at the margins of the world's remaining tropical rainforests, in landscape mosaics comprising both forests and farms. These rainforests are an invaluable natural heritage. They are also home to over one billion rural people, the vast majority of whom are poor and depend directly on forest resources and agriculture for their livelihoods. The present ASB network includes 6 countries in the humid tropics. It is envisaged that the network will expand considerably in the next years.

In sub-Saharan Africa

RAEZ 3 Warm humid tropics (AEZ 3): Cameroon

In Asia and the Pacific

RAEZ 10 Warm humid tropics (AEZ 3): Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand.

In Latin America and the Caribbean

RAEZ 17 Warm humid tropics (AEZ 3): Brazil and Peru

Research Approach to Develop International Public Goods (IPG)

The ASB Systemwide Programme has been designed to produce international public goods. The Global Steering Group identifies issues and policy problems to be addressed, with priority given to problems common across the tropical forest margins. Thematic working groups develop and agree upon the methods to be applied and syntheses to be generated. Site-specific work, using common protocols, is done through teams of national and international scientists. Synthesis teams draw together results by site, theme and across sites and themes. Engagement with international policy processes clarifies the potential for linking site-specific research to global issues.

Elaboration of Partners Roles

ASB is a multi-level, global consortium of more than 80 institutions governed by a Global Steering Group. The global consortium includes:

- 6 Centres (CIAT, TSBF-CIAT, CIFOR, WorldAgroforestry, IITA and IFPRI)
- 6 national systems (Brazil, Peru, Cameroon, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines)
- 7 local and national NGOs in developing countries
- 8 other national agencies in developing countries
- 13 universities in developing countries
- 14 advanced research institutions and international organizations.

The ASB consortium received the CGIAR Science Award for “Outstanding Partnership” in 2005. The ASB partners play complementary roles in providing funding, expertise, governance, coordination, and bridges to impact in pursuing their common goal.

ASB’s Global Coordination Office supports and coordinates the work done by partner organizations. A Global Steering Group made up of 12 representative organizations – balancing institutions and perspectives from the South and the North – serves as ASB’s governing body. The Group determines priorities and approves annual work programmes, budgets and the allocation of funding. The programme is hosted by WorldAgroforestry, which provides a variety of institutional support, including financial controls. The Board of Trustees of WorldAgroforestry have fiduciary responsibility for the ASB programme.

Role of Partners

Name of Partner	What they will do	Output	Geographical scope
CIFOR, IITA, IFPRI, CIAT, TSBF / CIAT	Collaborate in studies of carbon emission abatement costs in ASB sites in Latin America, Asia and Africa.	ASB1, ASB2, ASB3	Humid tropics of Africa, Asia, and Latin America
NARS organizations in Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Cameroon, Brazil and Peru	Collaborate in studies of carbon emission abatement costs in ASB sites in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Indonesia organizations will co-lead events on REDD.	ASB1, ASB3	Humid tropics of Africa, Asia, and Latin America
Advanced research institutes in Europe and North America	Complement ASB studies of carbon emission abatement for greater impact on the UNFCCC processes. Contribute advanced research methods and skills.	ASB1	Humid tropics of Africa, Asia, and Latin America

MTP LogFrame

Output ASB.1: Improved understanding of tradeoffs and response options			
Output Targets	Intended Users	Outcomes	Impacts
<p><i>2008</i> <i>Other Knowledge:</i> (1) Carbon emission abatement functions and conditioning factors estimated for ASB sites in Africa, Asia and Latin America.</p>	<p>National and international researchers.</p> <p>UN agencies, donors, national environment agencies, UNFCCC negotiators</p>	<p>Researchers working at the tropical forest margins conduct research that is more effective and better linked to important policy processes.</p>	<p>Appreciable slowing in the rate of tropical deforestation in countries that consider ASB outputs in the design of policies, incentive systems and negotiation approaches.</p> <p>Smallholder farmers living in the tropical forest margins have more secure land rights and incentives to undertake investments and land uses consistent with essential environmental services.</p>
<p><i>2009</i> <i>Policies/Strategies:</i> (1) New methods for baseline assessment and monitoring of landscape-level carbon stocks tested in ASB sites.</p>		<p>Workable organizational structures and processes identified and implemented that link integrative science with policy and practice in the search for better approaches to poverty reduction, natural resource management, and rainforest conservation.</p>	
<p><i>2010</i> <i>Knowledge:</i> (1) Tradeoff analyses published for a new set of ASB sites, including pilot sites for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation.</p>		<p>Policy makers at the national and international scales adopt policies, negotiation processes and institutions that reduce incentives for deforestation.</p>	

Output ASB.2: Synthesis and projection into policy processes				
Output Targets		Intended Users	Outcomes	Impacts
2008		National and international researchers. UN agencies, donors, national environment agencies, UNFCCC negotiators	Researchers working at the tropical forest margins conduct research that is more effective and better linked to important policy processes.	Appreciable slowing in the rate of tropical deforestation in countries that consider ASB outputs in the design of policies, incentive systems and negotiation approaches. Smallholder farmers living in the tropical forest margins have more secure land rights and incentives to undertake investments and land uses consistent with essential environmental services.
2009			Workable organizational structures and processes identified and implemented that link integrative science with policy and practice in the search for better approaches to poverty reduction, natural resource management, and rainforest conservation.	
2010			Policy makers at the national and international scales adopt policies, negotiation processes and institutions that reduce incentives for deforestation.	
<i>Capacity: (1) analysis of the costs and appropriate policy instruments for carbon emission abatement is made available to the Climate Change negotiation processes (with GP7).</i>				
<i>Other Knowledge: (1) Edited book on the potential for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation on the basis of the experience for ASB sites.</i>				
<i>Capacity: (1) Adoption of best practices in the ASB sites nationally, regionally and globally. (2) Development and diffusion of new organizational learning and change processes that link integrative science with policy and practice in the search for better approaches to Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD)</i>				

Output ASB.3: Networking and capacity building				
Output Targets		Intended Users	Outcomes	Impacts
<p>2008 <i>Capacity:</i> (1) A new governance structure for ASB is developed that provides for a broader membership, with greater inputs from experts in key issues, and a clear understanding of the value added of ASB at the national, regional and international levels.</p>		<p>National and international researchers.</p>	<p>Researchers working at the tropical forest margins conduct research that is more effective and better linked to important policy processes.</p>	<p>Appreciable slowing in the rate of tropical deforestation in countries that consider ASB outputs in the design of policies, incentive systems and negotiation approaches.</p>
<p>2009 <i>Capacity:</i> (1) The new governance structure for ASB is operational and defines a new set of priorities and working relations.</p>		<p>UN agencies, donors, national environment agencies, UNFCCC negotiators</p>	<p>Workable organizational structures and processes identified and implemented that link integrative science with policy and practice in the search for better approaches to poverty reduction, natural resource management, and rainforest conservation.</p>	<p>Smallholder farmers living in the tropical forest margins have more secure land rights and incentives to undertake investments and land uses consistent with essential environmental services.</p>
<p>2010 <i>Capacity:</i> (1) Strengthened capacity of ASB partners to lead and sustain their own programs of integrated assessment, research, development, fundraising, communication, education and action for climate change negotiation processes.</p>			<p>Policy makers at the national and international scales adopt policies, negotiation processes and institutions that reduce incentives for deforestation.</p>	