GTTN WGM1 WG3

Notes of the parallel session of WG3 'Communication and Advocacy' meeting of 20 October, held at WRI, Washington DC

Version 3.0

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Dissemination level

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Version indication

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1   Introduction

On 19-20 December 2017 the GTTN held its first working groups meeting at the World Resources Institute in Washington DC, back-to-back with the Forest Legality Week.

On the first day, the purpose and goals of the three working groups were presented by Nele Schmitz (WG1 standardisation), Tommi Suominen (WG2 database), Gesche Schifferdecker and Jo van Brusselen (WG3 communication & advocacy). Roger Young from Agroisolab UK also presented a proposal for a charter (see below) and Pacyinz Lyfoung of PIIPA presented her work on intellectual property rights.

During the second day, three parallel workshops were held to discuss the upcoming activities of the three GTTN working groups. This document seeks to summarise the discussions that took place as part of WG3 workshop, which focused on future communication and advocacy activities.

GOAL OF WG3: Assemble needs of policy makers, practitioners and researchers to guide and fine-tune method development; and inform researchers and stakeholders along the global timber supply chain network about available services.

2   Communications

2.1   Recognizing needs of different stakeholders

The aim of the GTTN is to establish an open, informal, network of scientists, public authorities and other stakeholders who are working on technologies and policies to reduce illegal logging and associated trade worldwide.

The GTTN promotes the operationalization of innovative tools and technologies for species identification, and for determining the geographic origin of wood to verify trade claims.

The GTTN Secretariat is responsible for actively maintaining and expanding the GTTN network. As a complex network, GTTN requires to develop a targeted communication activities and a strong joint vision, recognizing the needs of different stakeholders. At the same time any communication needs to be developed in a manner that is consistent with GTTN's resources and staffing capabilities.

Different stakeholders and roles require different communication tools and also the identification of suitable key messages, linked to the relevant target groups.

Stakeholders/Target Groups

Providers
Service Providers
Scientific Stakeholders

Users
Public authorities
Law enforcing agencies
Timber Operators
Forest Certifiers

Donors

Media

Civil Society

The diagram above seeks to illustrate the key parties who are likely to have an interest in, or could benefit from the GTTN's work. It should be noted that what is presented as 'Timber Operators' should probably be broadened by adding more detail, as timber legality affects a range of industries along the supply chain, including harvesters, transporters, manufacturers, traders, importers and retailers. Each of these groups may need different communication channels and messaging.

During the WG3 discussions, it was noted that Germany has about 20 thousand operators that are importing timber: in context of the EU Timber Regulation these are first-placers of timber on the EU market. Australia has a similar number of importing companies. It was also recognised that the United States had a significant importing community that needs to carry out 'due care' on their timber importers. Emerging legal frameworks in Asia and other regions are also expected to add to these numbers in the future. These numbers underpin that the GTTN needs a smart communication approach, by further approaching potential partners that already have strong links to stakeholder groups, and who can help amplify GTTN messages to reach a larger audience.It was noted that there could be some confusion over the GTTN's role, with some parties potentially seeing the network as a provider of tracking services.

Action item: GTTN secretariat needs to clearly outline GTTN's role in future communication messages. In doing so, these messages should make it clear that the GTTN does not provide timber tracking services.

2.2   Website development

Discussion about potential GTTN Communication tools resulted into following recommendations for **website development**:

- Easy digestible information about the different methodologies should be made more visible and accessible. **Action item:** GTTN communications revisit and reorganize the information on the following site: https://globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/users/innovative-tools-for-wood-identification
- Related to the previous point, it was advised that additional guidance could be included on method selection, based on existing information such as the UNODC Best Practice Guide for Forensic Timber Identification
- All members should be regularly encouraged to inform the GTTN secretariat with timber tracking success stories, publications, events, so that GTTN can help with outreach. GTTN members who would volunteer
- In the long-term, GTTN might need to translate key website information and/or other communication materials into other selected languages. **Action item:** The GTTN secretariat will raise this issue with the steering committee in February 2018 and will make a cost estimate by the next meeting of the steering committee.

2.3   Information brochures

Outreach would be helped by the development of **tailored flyers** for each stakeholder group, e.g. for timber trade (due diligence/compliance perspective), donors (coordination of effort), law enforcement (evidence up to standard for court proceedings). The working group recommends the development of a variety of flyers accordingly. Flyers could be kept easy to digest, but could also include or either lead to e.g. infographics and statistics (i.e. included in the flyer or leading to website content that would be kept up to date more easily. The flyers can introduce key concepts, but ultimately they need to direct people to more comprehensive sources of information. Some further thinking needs to be done still about: Who will develop them? How they will be circulated? Will they also be prepared as pdfs? Should they be translated to ensure that they can reach a wider range of audiences?

2.4   Communications networking

EFI collaborates with Al Jazeera, The Guardian, Euronews and the Global Editors Network in a project "The Lookout Station" that will be launched in December 2017. This could be an excellent venue to promote timber tracking tools and they can contribute in the fight against illegal logging. For more info, visit: http://thelookoutstation.com

Action item: GTTN communications manager is to explore if and how GTTN could cooperate with "The Lookout Station".

3   Advocacy

3.1   Introduction

The WG3 members recognised that a key role for the GTTN is to advocate for the following outcomes:

1- Science and service provider community

- a wider contribution to, and adoption of, the GTTN's work on methodology standardization and the network's supporting databases; increasing scientific interest in method applications for timber tracking

2- Technology user community

- a broader understanding of, and uptake of, timber tracking technologies
- targeted input into better defined and client focused GTTN services

3- Donor Community

- the coordination of investment efforts and the funding of complementary activities.

The following topics were up for discussion at the WG3 meeting:

- Handling of intellectual property rights and access and benefits sharing
- Update of the phase 1 priority species list
- Advocate for coordinated Sampling campaigns influenced by species list
- Develop research / action agenda
- Assessing market for GTTN services

3.2   Handling of intellectual property rights and access and benefit sharing

The WG3 members recognised that the collection, storage, and exchange of sampling material, production, exchange and application of reference data all require resources, and it involves or results into intellectual property for which certain rights need to be observed. When different stakeholders are involved in the creation and use of reference data, a model for an equitable partnership would seem beneficial. This would address technology and method-related intellectual property rights (IPR) as well as issues relating to access and benefits sharing (ABS), e.g. relating to sampling, capacity building, sharing of

information, etc., with reference to the Nagoya protocol of the convention on biological diversity (CBD).

It was suggested by XX, that the GTTN should consider benefits for local labs and scientific organisations involved in the sampling and reference data development; possibly also consider the development of a 'reference royalty mechanism' both to honour the efforts of reference data development as well as in support of sustainability of reference data development.

Germain Yene Yene informed the working group that Central African countries have laws in place on ABS, which make it forbidden in some countries to work with private companies to take sampling material, so the only way to deal with cooperation is through the government. Pacyinz Lyfoung suggested that the key jurisdictional limitations should be mapped, to identify any potential limitations and find a way forward in that space. The CBD keeps track of ABS in countries. An approach could be that PIIPA could engage with various stakeholders to get their perspectives. This could not be done in the PIIPA-WRI project in phase I. It could be useful to talk directly with country government officers to ask what the problem is and their views on how it could be solved.

Action item: GTTN should consider a task force to develop general IPR policy good practice guidelines, or in practice this could be included in the task force that focuses on the development of a memorandum of understanding (MoU, see next section).

3.3 A GTTN Charter or Memorandum of Understanding to regulate IPR and ABS

Roger Young of Agroisolab presented a draft charter to regulate issues like data sharing and IPR amongst participating organisations. The charter was developed as a result of a project supported by the United States Forest Service (USFS) with the objective to regulate the handling of reference data resulting from projects supported by US public funds. It was suggested that the charter's objective was in line with the idea of a memorandum of understanding that GTTN would develop to regulate standardization, sharing of and access to reference data, and in that context intellectual property rights and access and benefits sharing.

The development of an MoU will also be informed by the work on IPR and ABS that is being finalized by the Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors (see www.PIIPA.org), funded by WRI, as presented by Pacyinz Lyfoung.

Action item: It was agreed that GTTN secretariat should circulate the charter for further comment. It was expected that this would form the basis ofan MoU that could be proposed for adoption by GTTN science and service providers. At the same time however, USFS would continue with the charter development for its own operational purposes. Timeline proposed is to have a first round of comments in 2018Q1. It seems best to request the latest version from AgroIsolab for further commenting then.

3.4   Regional meetings

Illegal logging and its associated trade is a global problem and as a result needs a global approach. We need common standards and create synergies. GTTN is a unique network with shared objectives, but with varying needs regionally.

GTTN will organise three regional meetings during 2018-2019, in Africa, Asia and South America. The regional meetings will need to be prepared according to different regional conditions and the specific issues at hand.

An important objective for all three meetings will be to inform local stakeholders about timber tracking and to link them to the GTTN network.

It was suggested that the meetings should stress the importance of such technologies in addressing legal obligations such as the EU's FLEGT arrangements (including VPAs when applicable), the US Government's Lacey Act and other relevant legal frameworks, as well as and market aspects, capacity building, reference samples and data development, IPR, biodiversity and ABS issues, amongst other.

It was also suggested that it will be very important to clarify how GTTN fits in and contributes to already ongoing initiatives like CITES, VPA, SDGs.

Action item: Task force for Africa: Richard Gyimah volunteered to develop a draft concept note for the Africa Regional meeting, to be shared and further developed with Germain Yene Yene and Jo Van Brusselen, whereupon it will be shared with the wider working group and regional stakholders in 2017Q4.

Action item: Jo Van Brusselen will start development of concept notes for the regional meetings in Asia and Latin America and will seek inputs from regional stakeholders. First draft to be ready and shared in 2017Q4.

3.5   Priority species list –revisited

A list of priority species was developed in GTTN Phase I on the basis of CITES listings, the IUCN red list, species anatomically difficult to distinguish from one

another, market importance etc. The working group discussed the need for updating the priority species list, on the basis of:

- Species for which reference data have been or is being developed since the first version of the list
- The updated CITES annexes
- Interpol infractions or prosecutions data; these data are also recorded in context of VPAs
- Changes in forest products markets and trading patterns
- EU competent authorities (CA) species risk list (e.g. UK CA, other CA may have this as well)

It was suggested that draft lists of regional priority species could be prepared and discussed at the regional meetings. It was pointed out that the species traded on domestic markets may differ from those destined for export, and that reference data would be needed also for application of timber tracking on domestic markets.

Maria Kotsovou suggested that GTTN could prepare an on-line questionnaire for priority species e.g. with a link that could be distributed by Interpol to its relevant member country focal points.

Action item: Jo Van Brusselen to develop a concept note for a task force to update the priority species list, during 2018Q1. Harisoa Ravaomanalina and Germain Yene Yene indicated they would like to contribute to this piece of work.

Action item: GTTN secretariat develop on-line questionnaire to collect priority species info, in time before the relevant regional meetings.

3.6 Coordination of sampling campaigns

The working group discussed the importance of growing the collection of reference data, by continued support for sampling campaigns. The campaigns should result in material that can be used to produce reference data for the different timber tracking methods.

The campaigns would ideally take the latest GTTN priority species list into account. As sampling campaigns are costly, donors would need to be identified and approached. In support of this, it was suggested that the GTTN members would need to keep each other informed of past and on-going activities. It was suggested that an up-to-date reference database could be an effective tool for sharing such information. The GTTN Secretariat could support this, i.e. with regular messages to the network asking for updates, as an integrated part of network communications (see section 2. above).

It was noted that any future sampling campaigns should be responsive to emerging issues and new priorities, such as enforcement cases, new CITES listings and reports by whistle blowers such as Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and Global Witness.

It was also suggested that the reference database should include metadata on sample material. Several of WG3 members also suggested that the development of actual physical infrastructure to securely and durably store sample material, backed with a sample exchange mechanism, would be helpful. This is not something that can be funded through GTTN Secretariat funds, but it seems to be an important issue that deserves further attention, possibly by developing and promoting a concept for a complementary project.

It was noted that sampling protocols may differ for the different methodologies and hence a GTTN sampling protocol should address the needs of different methodologies.

It was stated again that publicly funded sampling campaigns should lead to publicly accessible data.

Germany and Australia representatives pointed out that their countries already funded related projects and take interest in possible funding future sampling campaigns, e.g. to develop reference data for tree species of the ASEAN region significant for trade and illegal logging issues.

Shelley Gardner suggested that it could be investigated if the CITES secretariat would be able to financially support the setup/implementation of a global sampling campaign via the CITES TREE program.

Action item: GTTN Secretariat should consider the development of a concept note on global coordinated sampling and sampling referencing and exchange. Timing not fixed: revisit this issue upon the development of the priority species list or in parallel.

Action item: GTTN WG3 coordinator to share notes on sampling protocols with WG1, via WG1 coordinator.

Action item: The overview in the UNOCD guidelines of the sampling cost could be updated. During 2018Q1, GTTN secretariat is to contact Bernd Degen, Markus Boner & other authors and is there upon to consider if this is indeed necessary.

3.7 Assessing market for timber tracking services and facilitating market access and development

As part of the process of raising awareness of the GTTN, it was recognised that outreach activities targeted at key stakeholders in public services, SFM & CoC certification, industry, retail and trade, needed to be undertaken. It was suggested that as a next step, the GTTN should develop ways to assess these groups' willingness to buy timber tracking services, among the different stakeholder groups. This could be developed in case studies, for which GTTN offers an approach, and scientific network partners implement in their respective region of interest. In turn, this should inform an exploration of (potential/existing) business models for timber tracking services. It was pointed out that lacking a suitable due diligence system in some markets may lead to a loss of reputation and/or economic damages or penalties, that could easily outweigh the cost of using suitable tracking technology.

One of the purposes of GTTN is to increase the uptake of timber tracking methods and the service directory should be an important tool for that. It was mentioned that ring test between the different laboratories would be necessary to reassure the quality and that service providers can deliver the services they claim to provide.

Richard Gyimah suggested that this work could also include a policy review of where timber tracking can support policy implementation ref VPAs, CITES, REDD+ etc.

Action item: GTTN secretariat will develop a concept note and draft a structure for the market assessment during 2018Q1, with the aim to produce a first draft document by the next working group meeting (2018Q4).

3.8 Advocate for funding and coordination at the donor community

A GTTN strategic research agenda composed of urgently important research, infrastructure and capacity development topics could be developed to help with advocacy and attract attention and support for the advancement of timber tracking in a coordinated manner.

This could be informed by the needs of different stakeholders and address the following topics among others:

- Draw attention to priority species

- Development of sampling campaigns

- Methods development and testing

- Capacity building and infrastructure development needs

The strategic research agenda should be informed though continuous compilation of topics of interest, e.g. through the regional meetings, important issues flagged in the working groups etc. It is suggested that upon the second working group meeting, draft topics should be presented and opened for amendment and prioritization by the GTTN membership.

Action item: GTTN secretariat to develop a concept note for the development of a research agenda in 2017Q4.

4   Topics forwarded from WG1 to WG3

Discussions at the Working Group 1 on standardization often touched upon issues of importance for the Working Group 3. Here following is an unfiltered and unaltered list of topics, shared by WG1, many of which coincide with the above described discussion of the WG3. While the list is not integrated in the above meeting minutes, they are presented here so they will be taken into account in the work of the WG3.

4.1   Awareness & Fund raising

- Write a consumer awareness raising paper for the broader public (being aware of the GTTN1 info material)
- Write an awareness raising paper for the end-users of the timber tracking tools (being aware of the existing NEPCon manual and the info provided by the Timber Investigation Centre)
- Develop a strategy on how to portray arboreal DNA to make it attractive for funders (diseases linked to deforestation, link with climate change, link with air pollution, …)
- Depending on the outcome of the WG1 task force on taxonomy (see above): Develop a policy paper informing on the need to use only scientific names along the timber supply chain.

4.2   Species prioritisation

- Do a survey to get on the ground information from timber trackers, companies, INTERPOL liaison offices and law enforcement authorities to assess where the needs are highest (raw wood/wood product, resolution of identification needed, country, species)
- Update the species priority list prepared during GTTN1 (available in the WG1 workspace) to the current/future (foresight needed as method development takes time and timber trade is fugitive) state of the most internationally trafficked species.

4.3   Reference samples

- In relation to IPR (intellectual property rights) and ABS (access and benefit sharing), develop guidelines for the consideration of governments to maximise access to reference data and sample material in an equitable manner.
- Ensure effective sharing mechanisms of samples and reference data, by private as well as by public timber trackers, to enable as widely as possible the capabilities to test trade claims.

4.4   Capacity building

- Facilitate a GTTN developing countries' discussion to identify and elaborate upon common issues and opportunities, learn from each other and to develop strategies to optimise collaborations within GTTN.
- In regional workshops, attempt to bridge the traditional divide between civil society and law enforcement. Have participants prepare answers to the questions posed in § 22 under "national capacity" of the UNODC document.
- Support educational centres in promoting wood anatomy studies (as the start of all wood identification) and in wood identification in general as wood anatomists have a potentially critical role in acting as advisors on what (if any) other forensic identification techniques are available and/or required.
- Develop metrics for wood anatomists doing IDs to improve recognition of their value.

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