Transformative Change in Tropical Forest Landscape Initiatives

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By Jan Joost Kessler

Background

This report was developed through a concerted effort by three organisations involved as Evaluation Manager for the Partnerships for Forests (P4F) programme:

- LTS International Limited, part of the NIRAS Group (NIRAS-LTS),
- Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich
- Aidenvironment, consultancy in Amsterdam

The Evaluation Manager team would like to thank FCDO, BEIS and P4F for the collaborative relationship that has supported the evaluation and the development of this paper.

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Background – P4F and Evaluation Manager

The UK Government-funded Partnerships for Forests (P4F) programme:

- supports partnerships and increases private investment that delivers on commitments for **deforestation-free commodities, reduced pressure on forests, and improved livelihoods by 2020.**

To do so, the programme supported:

- market-ready Forest Partnerships (FPs)
- enabling conditions (EC)
- demand side measures (DSM)

The Evaluation Managers team:

- employed an evaluative learning approach to generate lessons and inform the P4F programme in its adaptive management
- conducted evaluative studies of selected P4F projects to generate insights and draw lessons.

This study resulted from the integration of four evaluative studies:

- Non-timber forest products Latin America
- Integrated landscape programme Indonesia
- Cocoa landscape Ghana
- Palm oil plantation Ghana

Transformative change - WHY

**P4F has transformative ambitions:**

We're delivering significant results across our portfolio, contributing to a growing evidence base for our approach to creating transformational change within the forests and land use sector
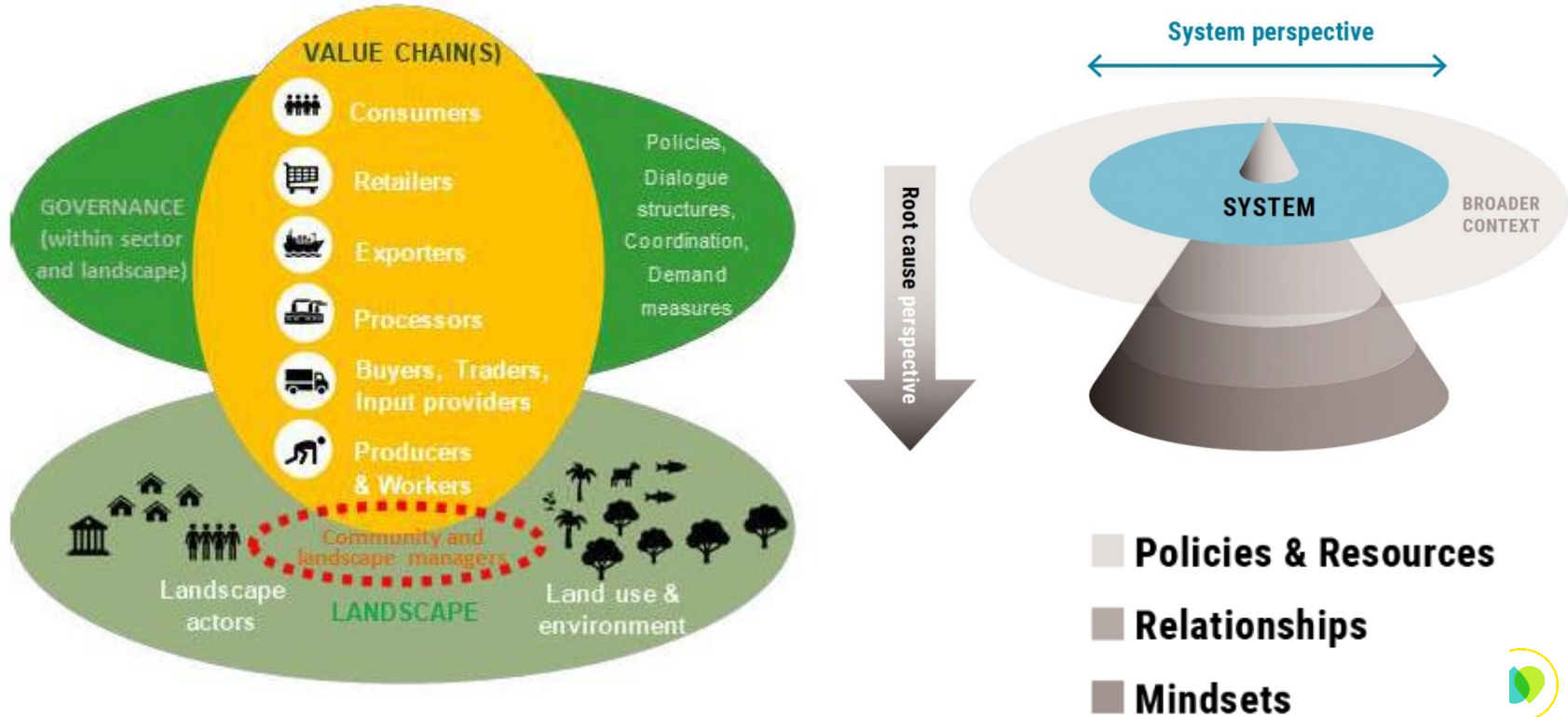
Why transformative change?

- Too often results of development initiatives remain islands of success, that do not reach larger scales (scale)

- Too often results of development initiatives do not sustain in time (time)

- This is because the underlying root causes and weaknesses at system level are not being addressed

- This is particularly true for forest protection and restoration, as here root cause are mainly found in the causes of expansion of agro-commodities causing deforestation
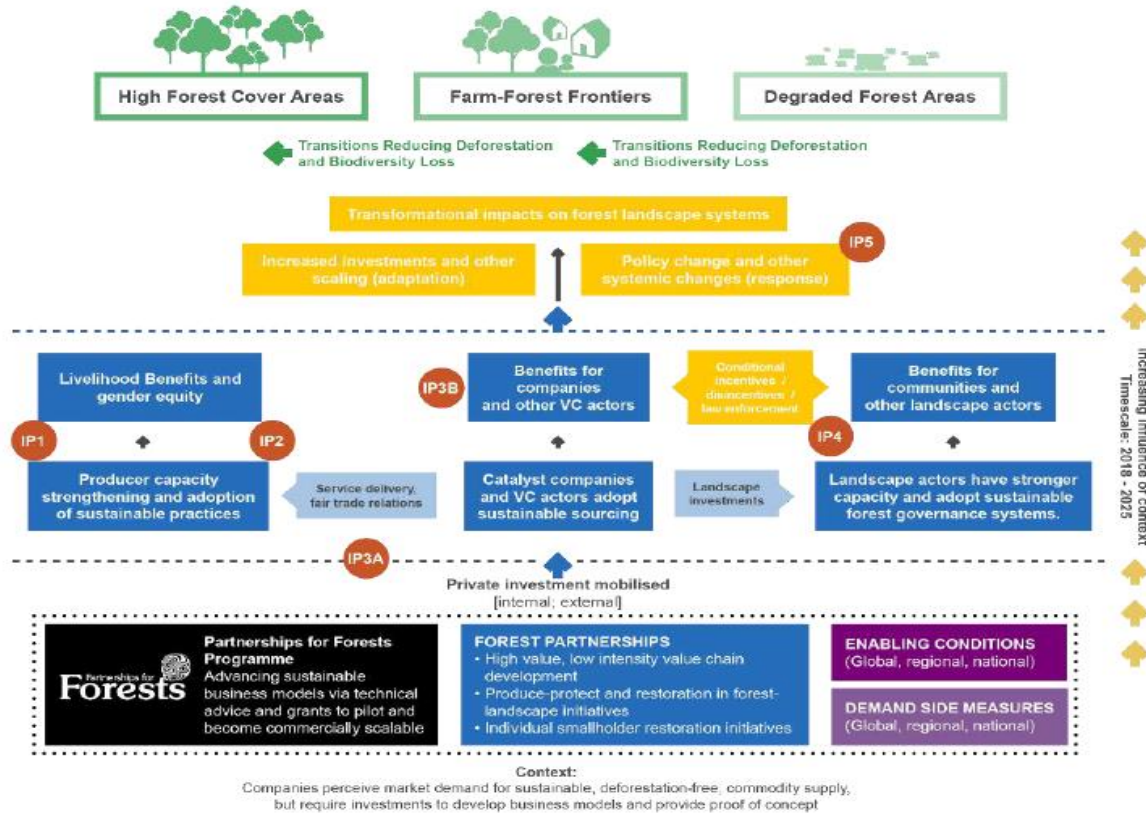
A systems approach - Where to start?
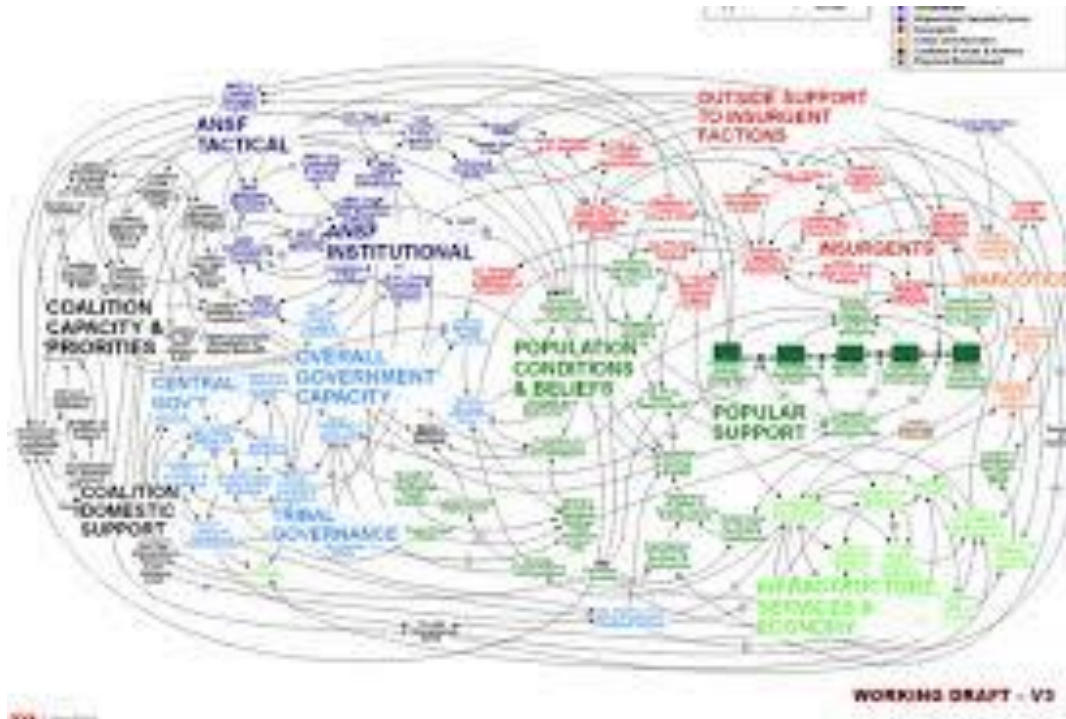
A systems approach – mapping the system

A systems approach applied to P4F programme

Five pathways of change:

1. Producers
2. Producer organisations
3. Value chain companies
4. Landscape actors
5. Enabling conditions

Differentiation between:

- Incremental change
- Transformational change

Transformative change framework

Invisible (Mindsets)

Changing mental models, social norms, narratives

Semi-visible

Power and relationships

- New organisational models
- Relationship building
- Coordination and dialogue
- Accountability and participation
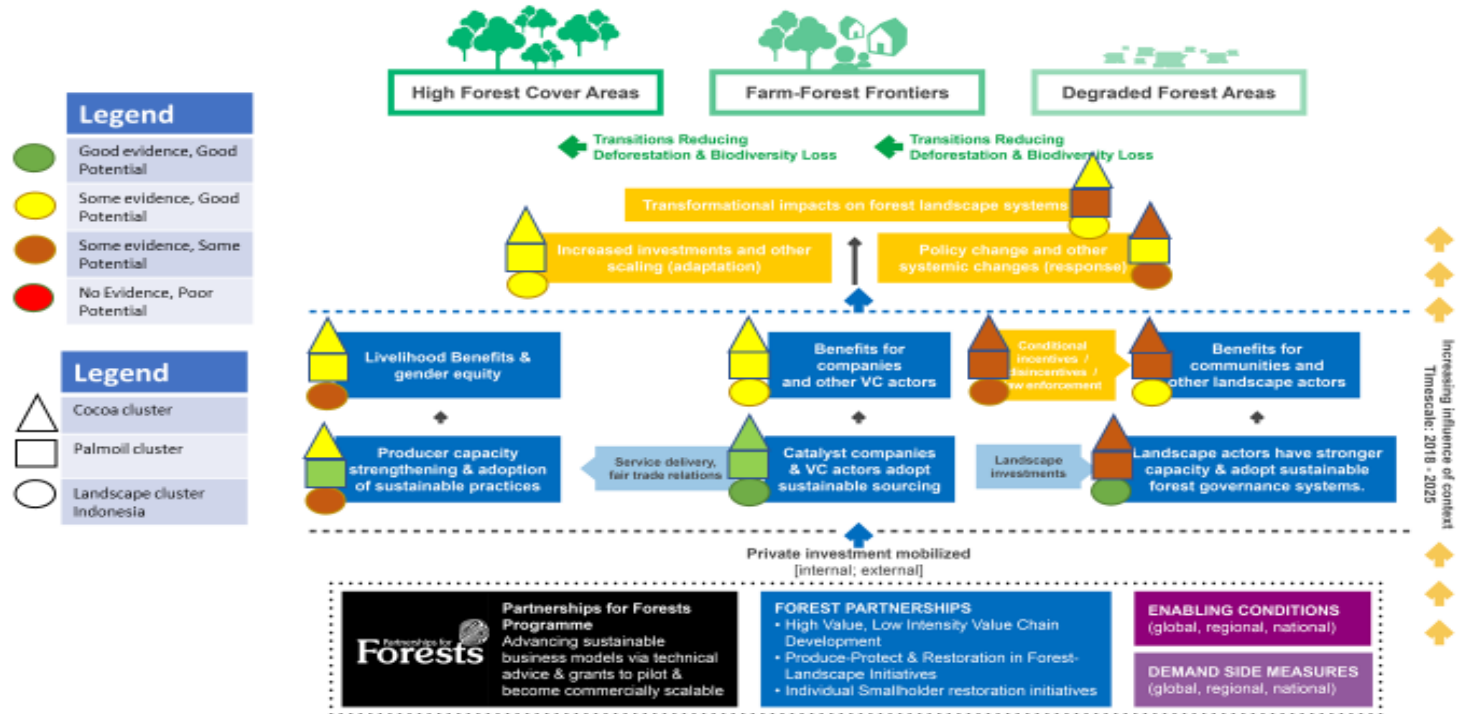- Monitoring and learning

Visible

Policies, resource flows, practices

- Business models
- Investment models
- Enabling policies
- Market demand
- Technological innovations
- Support services and finance
- Economic incentives linked to goals.

Results of evaluative studies – cumulative

Results of evaluative studies

Project example: Cocoa landscape with deforestation threats due to expansion of cocoa (1)

INVISIBLE [Mindsets]
Mindset, commitment, and ownership
(+) There is a mindset shift among cocoa producers regarding the importance of shade trees and the need to protect the remaining forest. This has also been triggered by the tree registration process.   (+) CREMAs have understood that they are responsible for managing their own resources.
SEMI-VISIBLE [Power and Relationships]
Relationships and transactions
(+) A major transformational impact has been the improved relations and dialogue between all landscape actors. There are improved relations between cocoa farmers and Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs), and between Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and Forestry Commission. Many partners mentioned that they now work collaboratively and no longer work on their own.
Coordination and dialogue
(+) Improved dialogue and coordination between public and private actors and other stakeholders have occurred at the landscape-level.
Organisational models and capabilities
(+) At the sub-landscape and landscape -level, the development of the landscape governance structure has been a major achievement of the project, which is applied in other landscapes in Ghana and potentially in other countries.
Governance, accountability, and participation
(+) At the sub- landscape-level, the development of the landscape governance structure with participation by local communities has been a major achievement of the project.

Results of evaluative studies

Project example: Cocoa landscape with deforestation threats due to expansion of cocoa (2)

VISIBLE [Policies, resources flows, practices]
Business Model Innovation
(+) Supporting the development of the model of climate smart cocoa including further roll-out of the agroforestry system, which constitutes a more sustainable and productive farming system.
Policies and Implementation
(+) Constitutions and by-laws of the different landscape governance structures were formulated, and currently await ratification by the District Assembly. (+) The new CSC standard, even if though it had not yet been fully adopted by COCOBOD, is being applied in the landscape and beyond.
Supportive services and finance
(+) The Rural Service Centres (RSCs) and other service delivery models acting as service delivery hubs provide examples of viable service delivery models to generate positive and sustainable impact.

Headlines and further reading

Headlines

- Transformative change is needed to achieve impacts at scale and sustained in time

- Transformative change requires addressing root causes of perceived problems

- Root causes are found at systems level, and include 'soft' issues such as mindsets and power relations

- Transformative change requires understanding of the system and a consistent approach to address root cause

- Transformative change may take time, different from short term incremental change, both are needed alongside each other

Further reading:

Molenaar, J.W. and Kessler, J.J. (2021). Sector transformation: A systems approach to transforming commodity sectors. Aidenvironment, Amsterdam (see link).

https://www.evidensia.eco/resources/1228/sector-transformation-a-systems-approach-to-transforming-commodity-sectors/

aid environment

Contact:

Jan Willem Molenaar, molenaar@aidenvironment.org
Jan Joost Kessler, kessler@aidenvironment.org

Aidenvironment Europe
Barentszplein 7
1013 NJ Amsterdam
The Netherlands
T: +31 (0)20 686 81 11
M: info@aidenvironment.org

Aidenvironment Asia
Noble House, Mega Kuningan,
29th fl. No. 2,
Jl. Dr.Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung Kav.
E 4.2 Jakarta, JK 12950, Indonesia
M: info@aidenvironment.org

Aidenvironment East-Africa
Plot 99 Luthuli Avenue
Kampala
Uganda
T: +256 (0)393 20 88 17
M:eastafrica@aidenvironment.org