

1. Defining IFM

Various IFMs have taken place in different countries with different attributes;

- IFM monitoring is maybe confusing term: often what NGO's do is 'IFObserver'
- And in context of VPA, maybe what we are really talking about is audits -annual checks
- In Cameroon, there was IFM (three independent monitors) before the VPA negotiations. Now in the VPA context there is also demand for IFM – confusion with government;
- Indonesia has its own monitoring system in place with several watchdogs.
- Cambodia – independent monitor; its reports first discussed with government, than with CS to raise suggestions/put pressure/advocacy, etc. In Cambodia two mandates (SGS, GW)
- Honduras: ombudsman has by law the right to monitor forest dept – but no specific ToRs related to illegal logging
- Diversity of scale plus type: full national concession system, community forest, private land or one company or forest management level: compliance with legal standards, CoC
- Future complication: monitoring of forest cover for REDD – this is monitoring indeed

So, it depends.....

On the **purpose** – **who** wants IFM and **why**? And this determines **what** will be monitored, i.e. the ToRs.

Next questions:

- Who designs ToRs
- And monitoring against what standards:
 - The clients' standards
 - (international) Standards picked by evaluator that the client may not agree to

But accountability is key (fourth question)

- To the client/donor, e.g. SGS, FSC auditors
But FSC auditors are also accountable to the accreditation body, and they have no interest in the outcomes of the audit, which helps guarantee independence
- Can be within democratically elected government, or:
- Outside government, legitimacy needs to come from outside; but then e.g. INGO's are accountable to whom?

Parallel with financial audits: they can be:

- internal – based on internal standards

- external - paid for by the company but the audit is based on external standards

Clarity of terminology required:

Monitoring: Continuous, 'daily'

Audit: Punctual

Evaluation: Looks at outcomes not outputs

2. Independence

- again relates to purpose; which institution does IFM need to be independent of and why
- Of vested interests, e.g. the treasury monitoring vested forest interest
- independence is conferred by some institution and cannot be assumed; conferred by contract, agreement or law that provides and describes independence: i.e. There is always negotiation about what independence means

E.g. Auditor general (USA): independent monitor of government, reports to legislator;

- ability to subpoena information, i.e. the right and capability to collect data independently
- right to report to public without editorial interference by government;
- Checks and balances; it's not only one thing that brings independence, credibility and accountability
- Three elements of independence:
 - Independence – autonomy indecision making
 - Partiality – consistency in judgement, no status criteria
 - Neutrality – abstention - is most problematic
- There is a marketplace out there (companies, NGOs and individuals) and when they do a bad job, they are out of work; Integrity of independence – may give you a commercial edge
- Risk: lack of objectivity creeps in if monitor is dependent on one donor – needs to continue to have good showing on these three aspects plus professionalism. Maybe useful to have a finite term;

3. Professionalisation

Auditing under VPA, is against a standard and defined level formulated in the EU (guidelines to be elaborated on a country by country basis).

Professional bodies are growing around the various processes (MSD's, certification, IFM, LAS, etc)

Profesionalization of IFM is good at this stage to increase credibility.

Therefore, one needs to define:

- Professional performance standards (including skills, experience & capacity)
- Plus a process/mechanism to agree on generic standards for IFM (like auditing standards)
(Certification is closest thing that is in place already)

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