



STEPS TOWARDS A FIELD-BASED EVALUATION OF FOREST CERTIFICATION

More information:

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“..to maintain the credibility of forest certification and justify the levels of effort and financial support by businesses..**it is necessary to know to what extent these systems are achieving sustainability objectives and to improve their performance**” (Cashore and Vanderbergh 2010)



Why?

Lack of knowledge-----poor accountability, equivocal/unfair allocation of costs and benefits, poor decision-making-- Improve forest management

For Whom?

Donors; Governments; certifying bodies; NGOs, FMUs, society at large

Our approach towards impact evaluation

- **Clarify the values** that underpin the evaluation – what are desirable and undesirable processes, impacts, and distributions of costs and benefits?
- **Set boundaries** (~systems approach; scope of analyses)
- **Develop a theory of change**
- **Measure impacts (Test hypotheses)**
- **Elucidate** whether the intervention caused the observed impacts
- **Synthesize** evidence
- **Report** findings and **support** their use

Overall impacts

- Did certification work? Did it produce the intended impacts in the short, medium, and long terms?
- For whom, in what ways, and under what conditions did certification work?
- What were the unintended impacts (positive and negative) of certification? On whom?

Nature of impacts and their distribution

- How have FSC certification impacts changed through time?
- Did these impacts reach all intended beneficiaries?

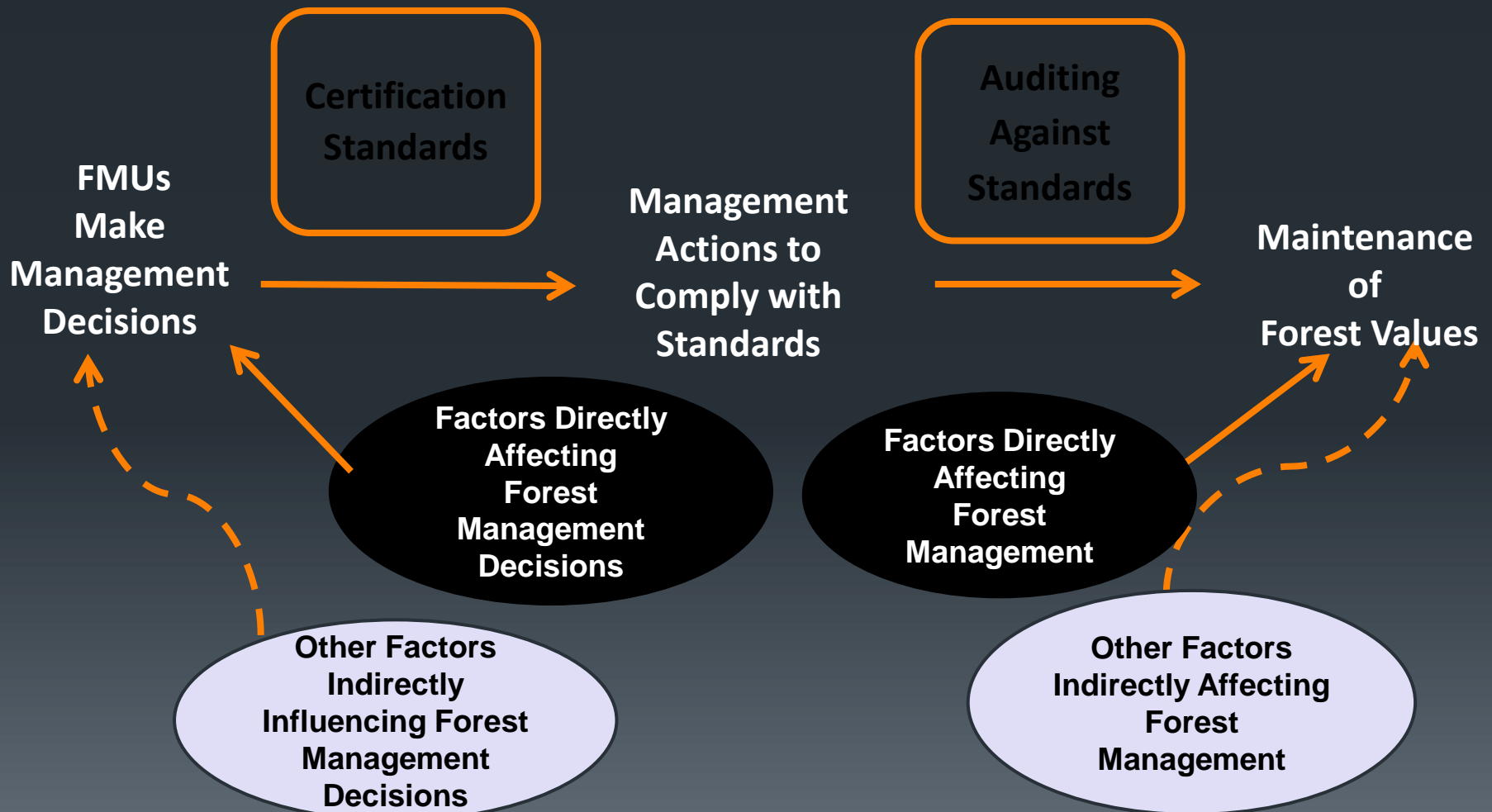
Influence of other factors on certification's impacts

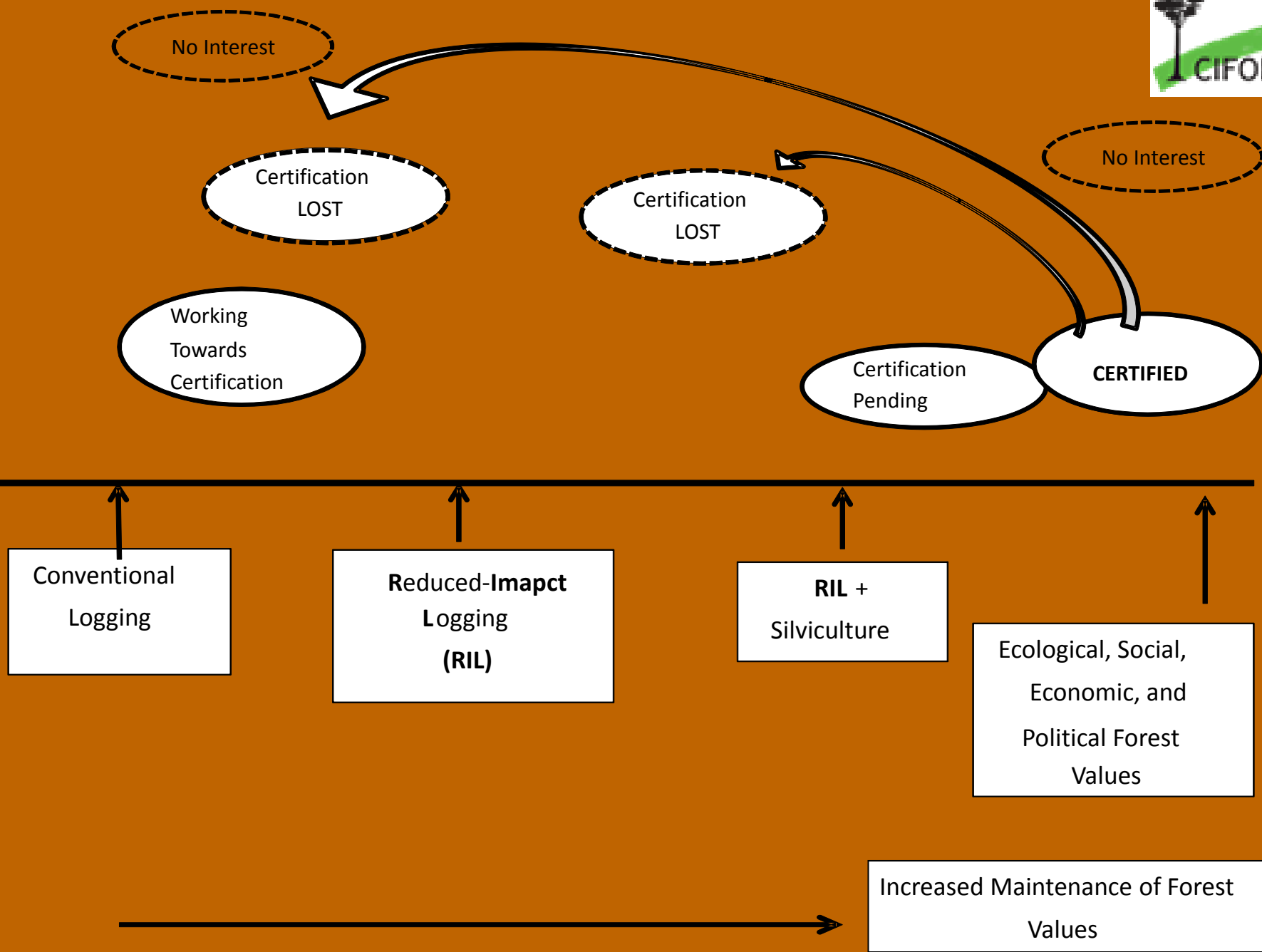
- How did certification work with other initiatives?
- What helped or hindered certification?
- How did certification contribute to achieving impacts?
- What was the relevant variation in implementation?
- To what extent are differences in impacts explained by variation in implementation?

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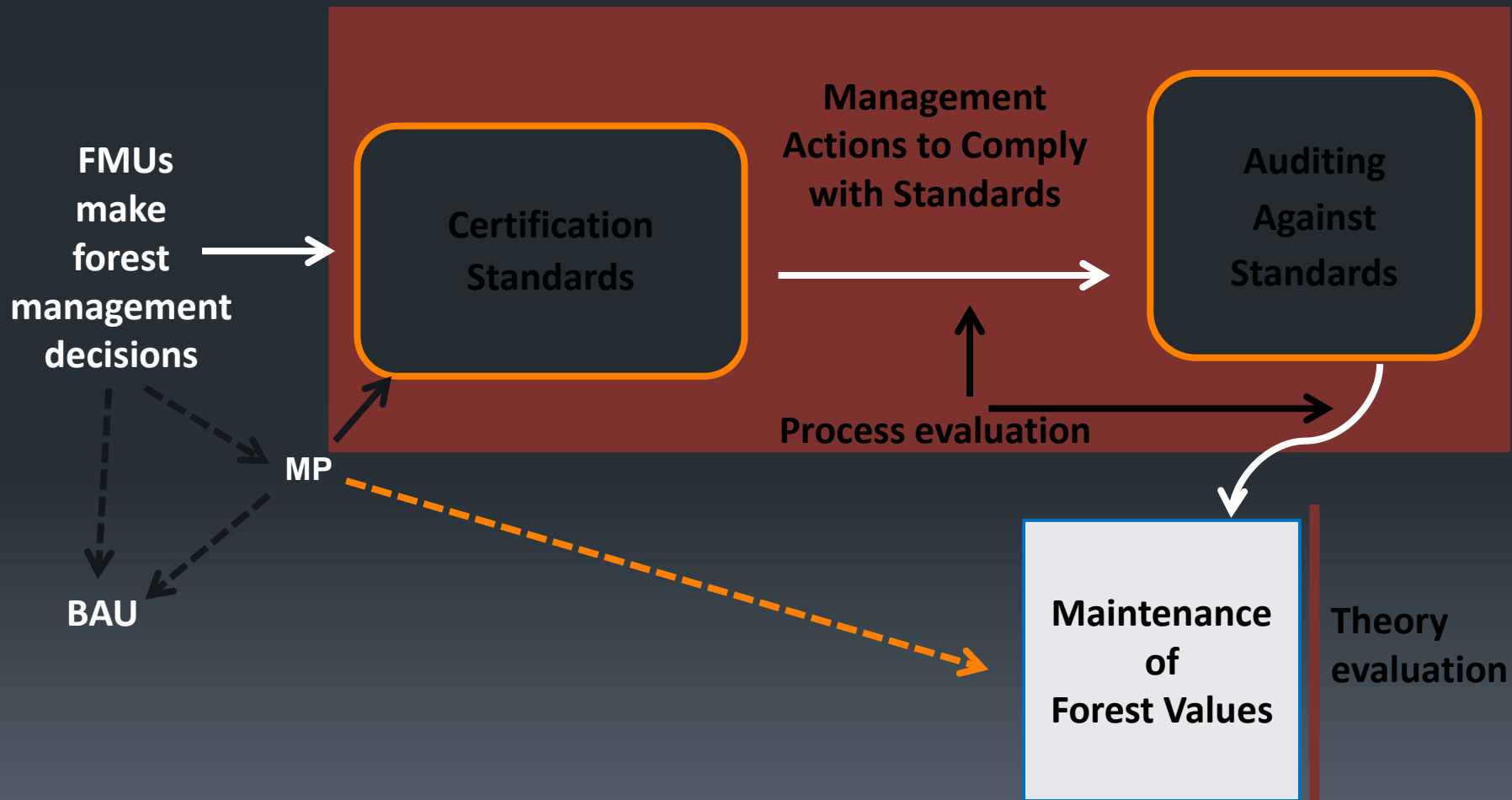


A model of change for certification





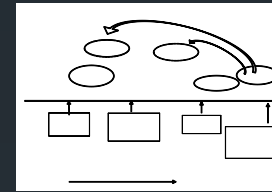
A model of change for certification



Activities Year 1 (2013)



1. Forest **typologies**, dynamics, and self-selection into certification

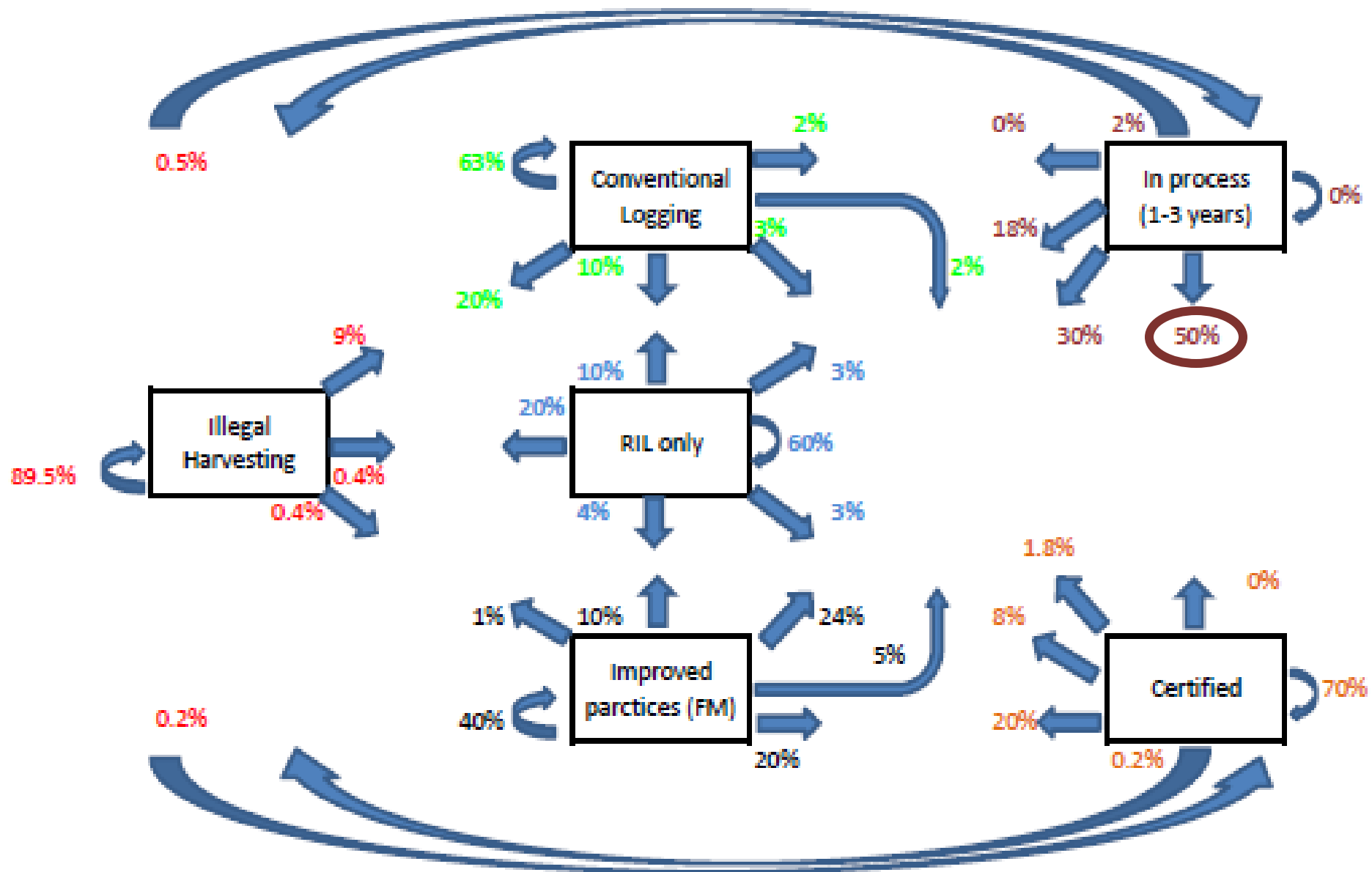


2. Describe context and evolution
3. Process evaluation: **implementation** assessment
4. Remote-sensing assessments
5. Formulation of general theory of change ...adapt to local realities
6. Design impact evaluation

Variables for typology

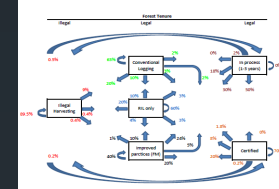


BIOPHYSICAL	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	POLICY/GOVERNANCE
Area (ha)	Tenure type (public, private)	Human population density in the surrounding area ($\#/km^2$)	Under similar institutional regime (community, private, public..)
Previously logged (YES, NO)	Type of firm (community, concession, state, or private owner)	Workers: locals ($\#/\%$), nationals ($\#/\%$), expatriates ($\#/\%$), women ($\#/\%$)	Under similar administrative regime (district..)
Area logged/yr (ha/yr)	Type and duration of permit	Dominant ethnic group(s) in the area	Subject to similar legal frameworks
Volume harvested/yr (m^3/yr)	Origin of firm (country)	Recognized resource use and tenure rights of local communities (YES, NO)	
# species marketed	Origin of capital (country)	Existing and potential conflicts between firm and local communities or other stakeholders (YES, NO)	





Self-selection assessment

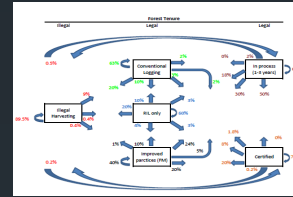
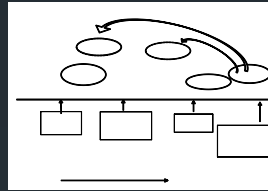


- Identify influential factors on FMU decisions and potential confounders
- Assess potential threats to validity from unobservable factors
- Characterize effect of time on these

Activities Year 1



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2. Describe context and evolution

- Evolution of contextual conditions that affect decisions regarding forest management
- Existence of incentives for sound forest management
- Existence of national legal frameworks regarding SFM
- Extent of enforcement of existing regulations
- Role of international /domestic demand for wood

3. Assess the auditing process

- **Typology of auditors**
 - Formal training?
 - Forestry training and experience?
 - Audit for what schemes (FSC, VCS) and what CB (SmartWood, Control Union..)?
 - Audit in what countries? # Audits/year?
 - Responsibility on audit teams?
 - Nationality and age?

- **Characterize the ASI process**

4. Remote-sensing assessments

- Assess the end result of certification on deforestation and degradation
- Using some variables that affect outcomes of certification (e.g. harvest techniques, size of FMU, accessibility)

5. Theory of change

- Planning framework to guide evaluation activities and identify hypotheses
- Facilitates participation of stakeholders
- Clarify/operationalize sustainability goals of certification standards
- Help strengthen case for attribution based on sound research (---- credibility)

	Outputs to short-term outcomes	Short-term to medium-term outcomes	Mid-term outcomes to Impacts
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unclear market signals to drive demand for certified products. -Lack of financial support to implement certification demanded practices. -Workers cannot get used to wear safety gear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is insufficient communication with local communities/institutions and conflicts abound. -Implementation of certification is too complicated (e.g. proper planning, timber extraction). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Certification does not lead to the sustainability of forest management. -There is impossibility of sorting out tradeoffs between competing components of sustainability of forest management. -Lack of continuous financial support undermines the intervention.
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Subsidizing certification (training, financial support) will translate into full adoption of the scheme. -Training is translated into better implementation of forest management practices. -Full information on available resources will enhance forest management decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -FMU controls access to protected areas, HCVF, and set-asides. - FMU internalizes good forest management practices. -Appropriate social contracts are defined between FMUs and local institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial benefits (direct and indirect) of certification exist. -Forest management certification integrates with other policy instruments aiming at the sustainability of forest management. -Green markets are created and FMUs obtain incentives that match the effort committed.



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