

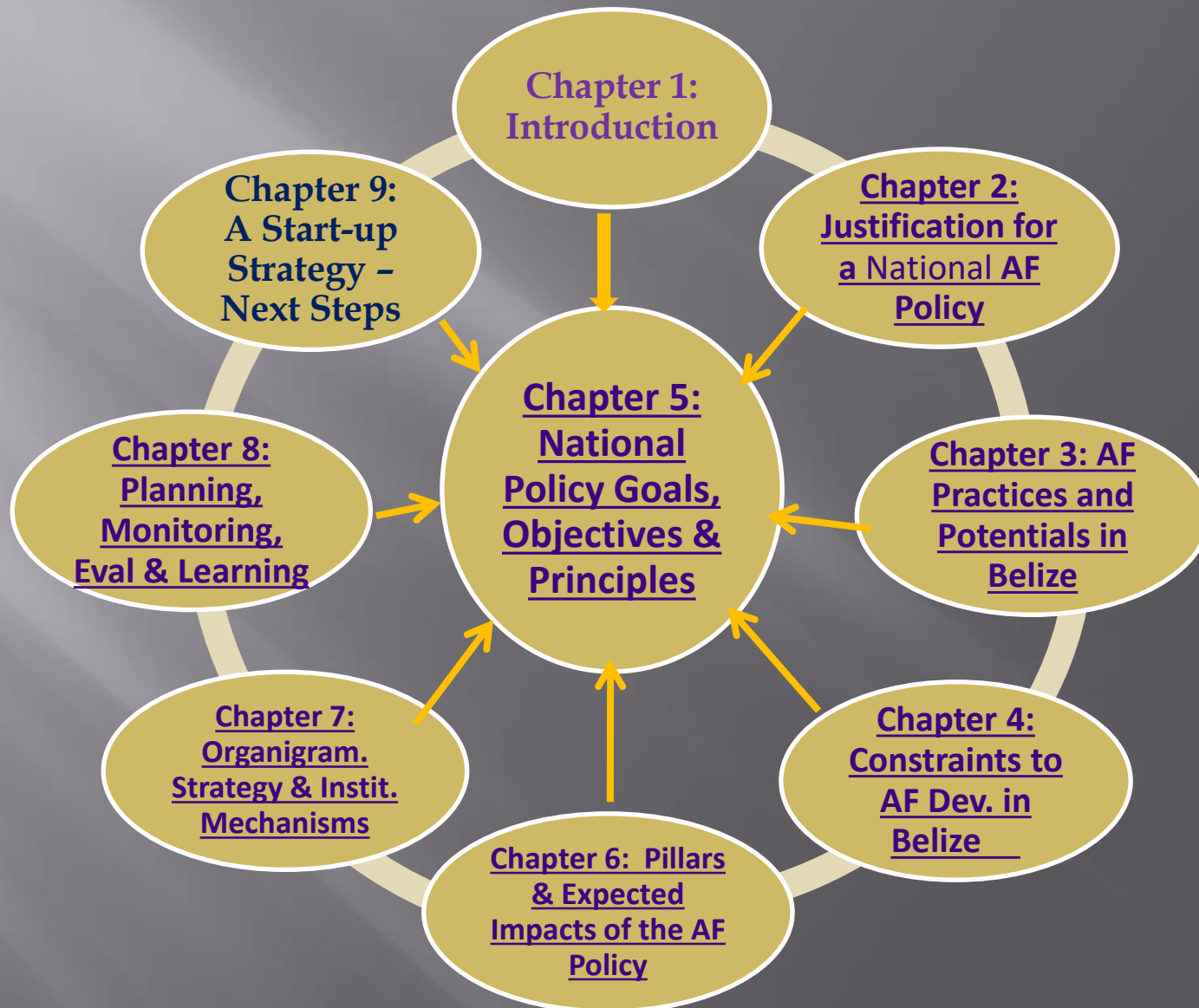
# **THE BELIZE NATIONAL AGROFORESTRY POLICY (NAFP)**

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# The Framework for Belize NAFP



# Part I

## Justifications for and Constraints to Agroforestry in Belize

# Justification for a National AF Policy

## The External Context

- ▣ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 2018 technical report presents evidence of how AF can contribute to 9 SDGs:
  - 1 poverty reduction; 2 hunger alleviation; 13 climate action, & 15 biodiversity cons. & sust. land management,
  - also for improving; 5 gender equality, 3 human health, 6 access to clean water, 7 sustainable energy solutions, & 12 responsible agric prod.
- ▣ Climate change mitigation and adaptation: Today GHG emissions are causing long-lasting changes to our climate.
  - Climate change severely impacts on people's livelihoods due to extreme natural disasters & degradation of natural resources.
  - Just look at recent damage and real costs of hurricanes and flooding on people's lives, the infrastructure, and the economy.
  - If Belize does not take action, climate change will cause irreversible damage.
- ▣ FAO, CATIE and ICRAF assistance: Since 1970s, have been conducting R&D in AF and now are renowned scientific centers of excellence and leadership. NAFP will create effective demand and tangible benefits in Belize from such organizations which otherwise would be lost.

# Justification for a National AF Policy

## Internal Context

### Socioeconomic challenges

Criteria	2000	2010	2019
Population	247,315	322,464	397,628
Persons/km sq.	10.8	14.1	17.4
Per capita income, B\$	5,746	8,650	9,205
Real GDP growth, %	13.0	2.4	0.3
Forest lands, %	65	61	58 (estimated)
Poverty rate, %	23	41	50 (estimated)
International trade deficit, US\$ M	170.1	133.8	595.8
GoB debt/GDP, %	79	81	95

# Justification for A National AF Policy

- In 2010, GoB invested in major effort (Horizon 2030) to articulate a long term strategy and plan for the sustainable development of Belize
- During Covid 19, renewed and revitalized focus on agriculture: urgency to prioritize *income generation and productivity* by introducing new products and foods, value-adding and recycling resources at home and community.
- AF for tourism: Belize is very popular tourist destination because of its rich tropical forest areas and reserves which are home to a magnificent array of wildlife; AF systems can create, protect and expand environmental services, i.e. watershed protection, BD conservation, scenic beauty, etc.
- Deforestation or intensification: agriculture can grow thru intensification to meet increased demand for food, jobs and income, since growth by expansion into natural forests is no longer a desirable option.
- Forest and tree planting traditions: because of our cultural background in rural & urban areas, Belizeans love to plant trees, all kinds of trees. The logging industry accounted for 70% of economy in 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# Justification for NAFP

- ▣ Participation of women and youth: Beyond compelling evidence for gender representation at all levels of agricultural development, arguments are even stronger in AF because women, compared to men, prioritize well being of children & family above short-term productivity and cash income gains.
- ▣ Uncoordinated AF project efforts: Several GoB depts or units (Agriculture, Forestry and Environment), UB and NGOs (e.g. Prog for Belize, & Ya'axché Conservation Trust) are engaged in AF initiatives.
- ▣ Investment stimulation and mobilization: AF cannot grow and be mainstreamed without investment, hence highest priority of any NAFP is precisely to stimulate and secure investments. The argument to be made is about income, profits and better returns on the limited resources of land, labor and capital in Belize.



# **AF Systems with Great Potential in Belize**

**Homegarden or backyard farming**

**Live fencing on borders or divisions**

**Pasture with trees scattered in grazing areas**

**Cocoa managed under shade trees**

**Farm or community forestry**

**Border tree planting with valuable timber trees**

**Taungya**

**Fodder bank**



# Constraints to AF Development in Belize

1. Farmers and producers: Inadequate knowledge and awareness of benefits of trees in their farming systems & insufficient persuasion to encourage farmers to try AF.
2. Knowledge and data on AF: Expertise in AF and their land use management system are very low. There is need for sound empirical data derived from formal R&D programs.
3. Institutional and technical capacities: need to build capacities in education, R&D and extension for AF. Mixing trees, crops and livestock requires a high level of expertise; need “critical mass” with expertise in crops, livestock, forest & socio-economics.
4. Legal & regulatory impediments: laws, regulations & measures that define forest-related access, tenure and user rights of land and trees, taxes and duties, benefit-sharing and decision-making responsibilities. Taxing forest areas more?

# Constraints to AF Development in Belize

- ▣ Land and tree tenure: introducing trees in rural spaces can cause land & tree tenure issues that help or impede AF adoption, hence the need to understand legal & customary practices in Maya lands, unused village areas, and boundaries between properties.
- ▣ Consumer-ready products and market development: farmers complain about low product prices, unstable markets, low levels of processing and much waste at harvest season, particularly for perishable commodities.
- ▣ Financing and financial incentives: there is limited financing and cost of borrowing is prohibitive for agriculture since policy makers have maintained that agriculture must compete with other sectors.

## Part II

# Proposed Goals, Objectives, Structure, and Programs

# National Policy Goals, Objectives and Principles

## Vision:

Mainstreamed AF systems that are productive, competitive, and adoptable by small, medium & large farmers, producers and land users, in order enhance food and nutrition security, conserve natural resources (i.e. lands, forests, water and biodiversity), improve the environment, and strengthen resilience of the agricultural sector to climate change.

## Policy Goals

- ▣ To propose and advocate for enabling legislation, legislative reforms, and complementary policies, and to coordinate and build synergies among relevant sectors, institutions, and programs for widespread adoption and development of AF as a viable and sustainable option for Belize.
- ▣ .  
To improve total productivity, sustainability and resilience of agriculture and forestry through adoption of AF systems in Belize, in order to improve livelihood and well-being of present and future generations, with particular attention to the participation of the youth, women, the poor and indigenous peoples across the country.

# NAF Policy Objectives

1. Resolve legislative & regulatory impediments & enact reforms & mainstream AF in policies of relevant sectors that will enable widespread adoption and management of AF systems
2. Strengthen institutional capacities for research, education and extension in AF to provide science-based data, professionals and practitioners with expertise in AF.
3. Promote tree planting in farming systems to meet the ever-increasing demand of timber, food, fuel, fodder, fertilizer, fibre, and other products.
4. Develop AF alternatives to shifting cultivation (milpa), cropping, livestock and farming systems, as well as improve the resilience/risk management of agriculture and forest ecosystems during extreme climatic events, biological attacks or socio-economic shocks.
5. Develop AF as a way of reducing pressure on existing forests and complementing REDD+ target of increasing forest/tree cover for ecological stability & environment services especially in vulnerable regions & sites.
6. Mobilize investment and resources to complement resources of GoB, local institutions, private sector and farmers/ producers, for AF programs and incentives to land users.
7. Organize a review, planning and learning conference, at least every 2 years, with representatives of the main AF stakeholders.



# Guiding Principles

- ▣ People-centred and inclusive development: focus is on sustainable livelihoods, indigenous people and rural poor but also on benefits for all stakeholders.
- ▣ Gender participation: Empower women through their participation in leadership and implementation of the AF policy, and special measures will be used to ensure that women & girls are safe, productive and secure in mainstreaming AF.
- ▣ Systems and interdisciplinary approach: because of its multiple components in space and time, AF is a complex, dynamic system, and AF development requires team work involving the experts and practitioners in forestry, agronomy, livestock, soil/water management, and socio-economics.
- ▣ Communication and transparency: free flow of reliable information enables all collaborators and stakeholders to access, monitor, understand, and share in a timely manner the results and views on progress of AF programs.
- ▣ Compensation and incentives: motivation for action or provision for a service (environmental) or sacrifice (work or benefit foregone) requires payment or compensation. In the case of AF, there are multiple options to mobilize funds to provide incentives for AF adopters.

# **Organizational Strategy and Institutional Mechanisms for Sustainability**

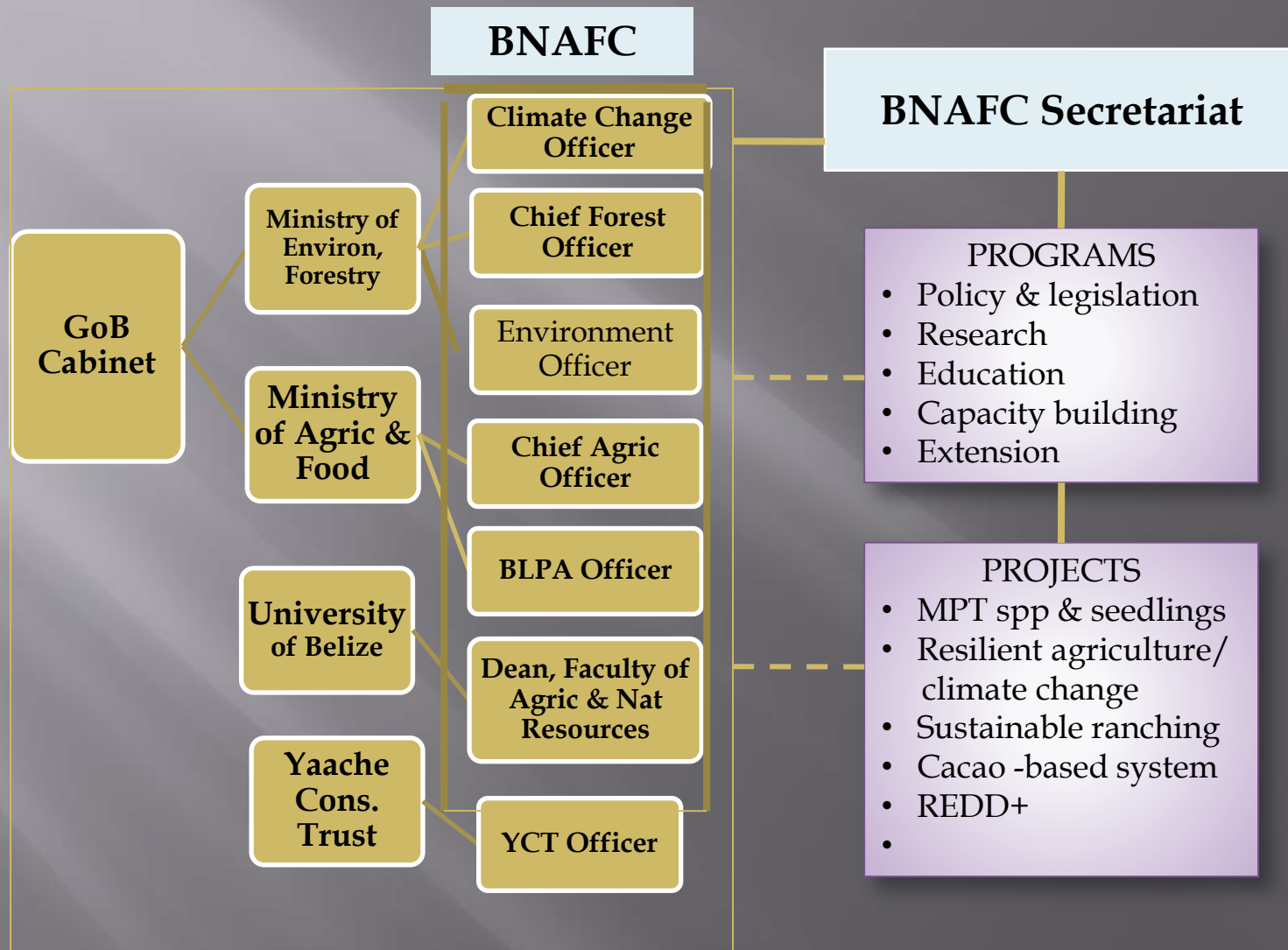
- ▣ The main organizational mechanism for implementing the NAFP is the proposed National AF Council (NAFC) comprising of key institutions working or interested in AF.
- ▣ NAFC will have an executive Secretariat, comprised of a full-time head and 4 part-time members who are actively involved in AF development programs in the public or non-governmental sectors. The members of the Secretariat will represent the disciplines of forestry, agronomy, livestock and social sciences.



# Functions of NAFC Secretariat

- ▣ Gather and prepare background information on various programs, projects and priorities of the stakeholders so that the Council can study the facts and make decisions
- ▣ Implement decisions of the Council, track and facilitate activities and processes
- ▣ Organize periodic national planning and review meetings of the NAFP
- ▣ Keep the key stakeholders and general public informed about the work and achievements
- ▣ Monitor and evaluate organisational performance in terms of results, outcomes and outputs.
- ▣ Assist in preparing scientific and technical publications and communications
- ▣ Develop plans for the financial sustainability of the NAFP and support resource mobilization for AF development

# Organigram for the Belize National AF Council



# Core Programs

Programmatic areas need a medium to long-term strategic plan with clear, logical frameworks including objectives, actions and expected outputs and outcomes.

- ▣ **Policy, legislation and advocacy:** Identify and understand policies and legislation that will enable the success of the NAFFP.
- ▣ **Research and development:** Generate knowledge, conduct evaluations and solve problems identified on components, resources, management, performance, and adoption of AF systems.
- ▣ **Education and training:** Build capacity in AF at all levels, i.e. school system, public sector, private and productive sectors, NGOs . In short term, curriculum development/adaptation should be a high priority.
- ▣ **Technology transfer and promotion:** Transmit AF recommendations and information to all stakeholders, using traditional and innovative technology transfer methods, virtual platforms, empirical database, and audience -specific communications .
- ▣ **Resource mobilization:** Work with stakeholders (i.e. beneficiaries, partners and donors) to develop proposals to access human, technical and financial resources to implement the NAFFP.

# AF Projects

- ▣ Projects are defined as fixed term units with specific objectives, outputs and time-frames, confined mainly to its funding source.
- ▣ Depending on investors and donors, projects entail a logical framework with combined elements of policy initiatives, research, education, extension and/or outreach activities, depending on what project's overall objectives require.
- ▣ To plan and deliver on projects effectively and efficiently, core programs should serve simultaneously as contributors and beneficiaries to projects.

## Part III

# Start-up Strategy and Main actions

# **Determinants of Success in Mainstreaming AF**

- ▣ **Institutionalization of AF** in the public sector, private sector, and NGOs. The latter does not need much convincing.
- ▣ **Networking and knowledge sharing** which can to be achieved through virtual platforms, empirical data base, and specific communication products which are targeted to specific audiences and forums across Belize.
- ▣ **Strategic partnerships and targeted engagement strategies** which are based on addressing felt needs and priorities of each partners and working in mutually beneficial, win-win strategies and tasks.

# AF Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

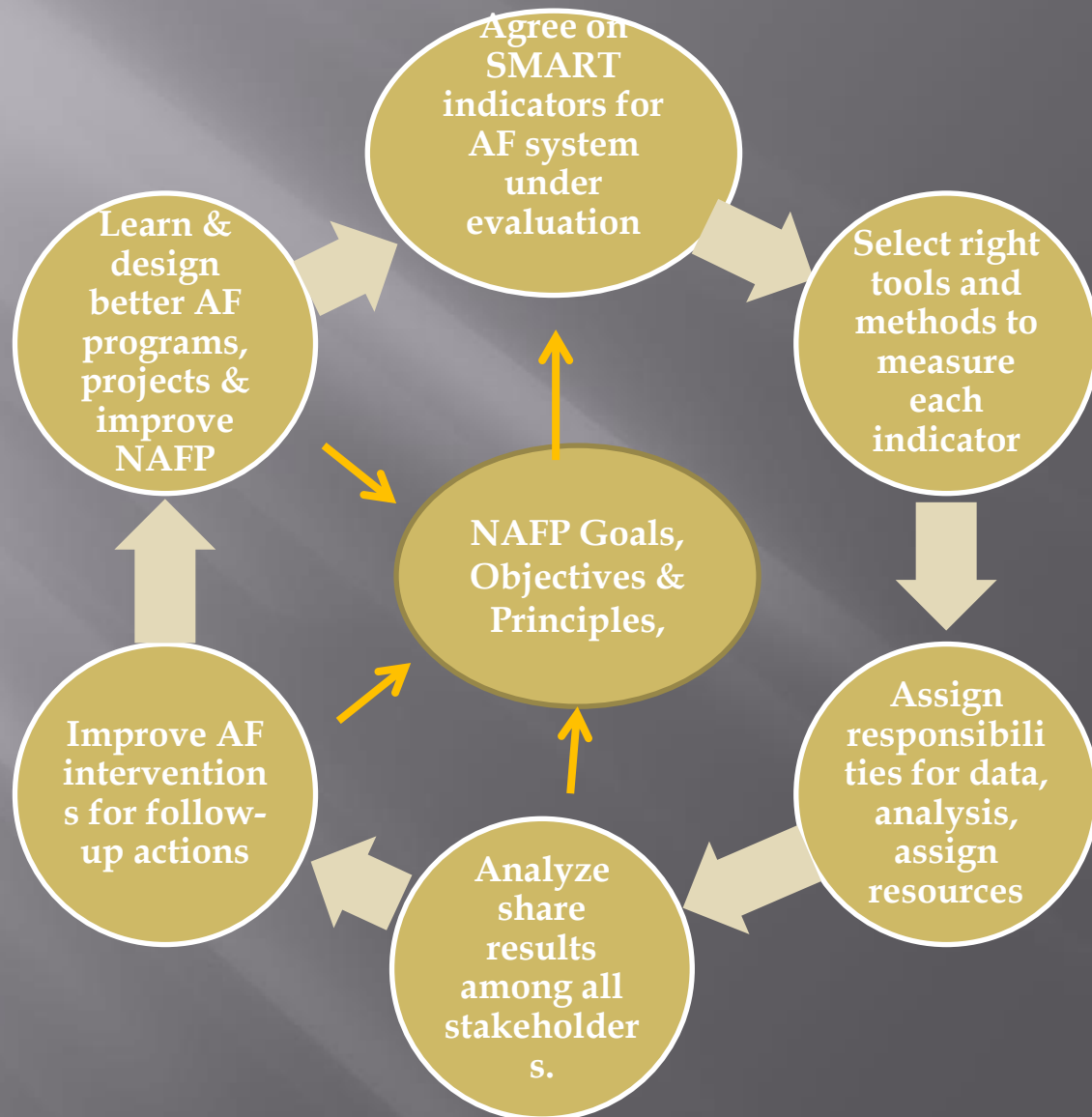
Project cycle management refers to the planning process which entails 4 iterative steps:

- ▣ Characterization and diagnosis of existing land use systems in a particular area or region.
- ▣ Design of AF interventions, components and management regimes that could address such constraints in that particular area or region, including ex-ante economic and financial analyses
- ▣ Testing of AF recommendations either on stations, farms or forests.
- ▣ Up-scaling of successful AF alternatives for wide-scale adoption in the target area and in other areas.



# Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning System

MELS is life blood of the AF mainstreaming process in Belize



# A Start-Up Strategy

## Next Steps:

- ▣ Formation of interim working group (IWG) to move ahead with the AF policy & strategy
- ▣ Priority on resource mobilization: who are beneficiaries, sharing costs, financial management system, and potential external donors.

# Financial Sustainability

- ▣ NAFP requires financial sustainability - ability to mobilize resources to fund AF programs and projects now and into the future.
- ▣ Project cycle management and the MELs provide a sound background for elaborating a strategic business plan
- ▣ Best bankable programs and projects are those in which GoB, beneficiaries, and external donors invest about 20%, 20% & 60%, respectively. Better probability of success!
- ▣ Efficiency and effectiveness criteria of AF programs, a must, to be achieved by applying good practices for allocating, using and reporting on human, logistic and financial resources.
- ▣ Communication and visibility is extremely important for AF programs need to reach their audiences, in terms of tailoring products, delivery methods, and timeliness.

# Proposed Work of the IWG

- ▣ Analysis of convergence, synergies & dovetailing among current and new policies, programs and projects of the new Government taking office in Nov or Dec 2020.
- ▣ Dissemination of and advocacy for enactment of draft NAFP to receive active support from potentially affected parties, including legislators, courts, interest groups, other units of government, etc
- ▣ Capacity building for key institutions and stakeholders on NAFP and AFSs, as practical, short-term means for enabling cooperation, extension & networking, even if legalization of NAFP is delayed due to admin issues.
- ▣ Mobilization of resources by exploring and building alliances with regional and international partners, such as CATIE, CTCN, FAO and others.
- ▣ Development of a 5 year AF development strategy and action plan, based on the NAFP.

# Resource Mobilization

- ▣ IWG, as a matter of priority, must mobilize financial and technical resources to implement the NAFP.
- ▣ The IWG can explore various options for external support to implement the NAFP.
  - CTN and GEF, Star Allocation
  - CAF, a LAC development bank for sustainability
  - “One Tree Planted” in the USA
  - CATIE works with a wide range of donors

Suggested options should provide an ambitious, fruitful start for mobilizing resources towards the full implementation of the NAFP of Belize

THANK YOU !!!