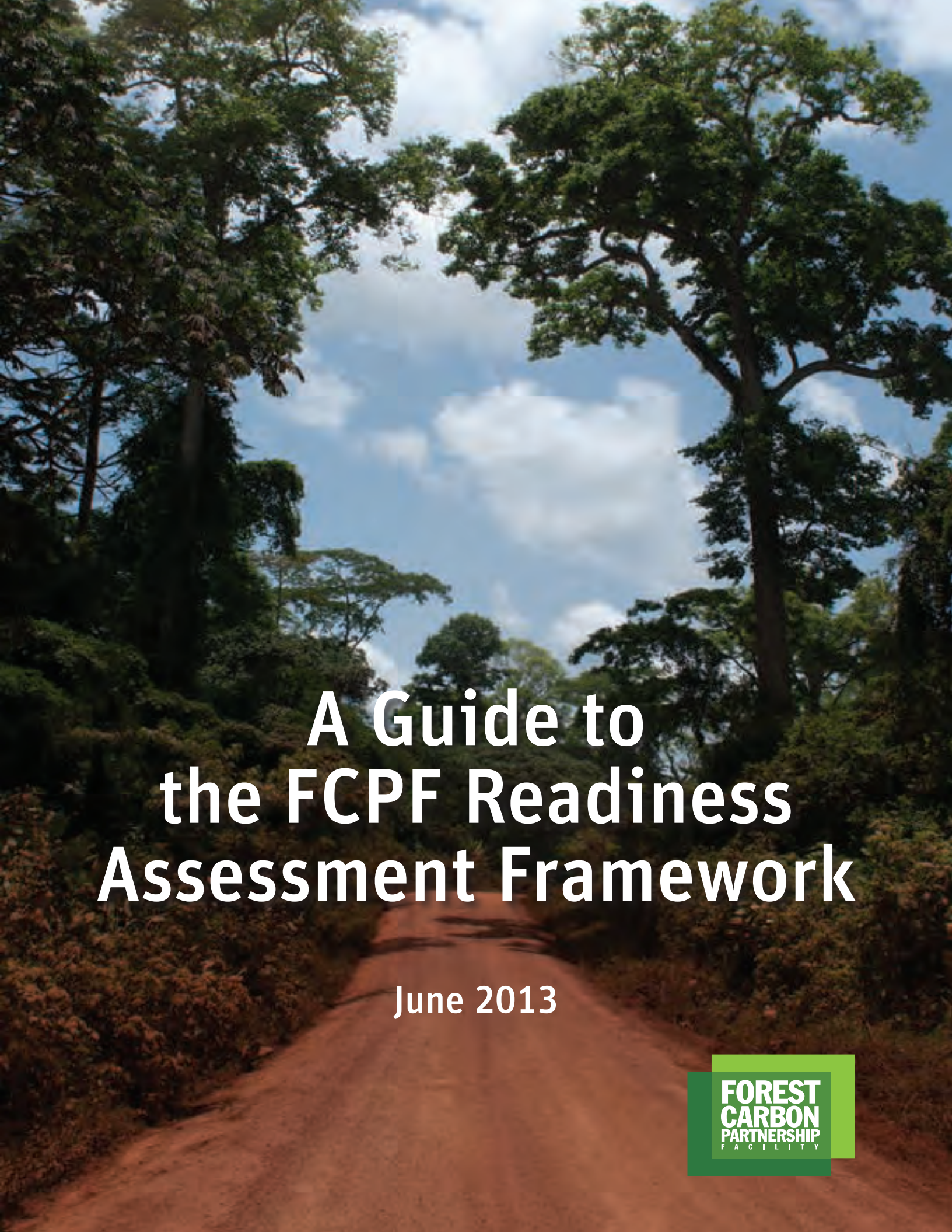

A Guide to the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework

June 2013

FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY

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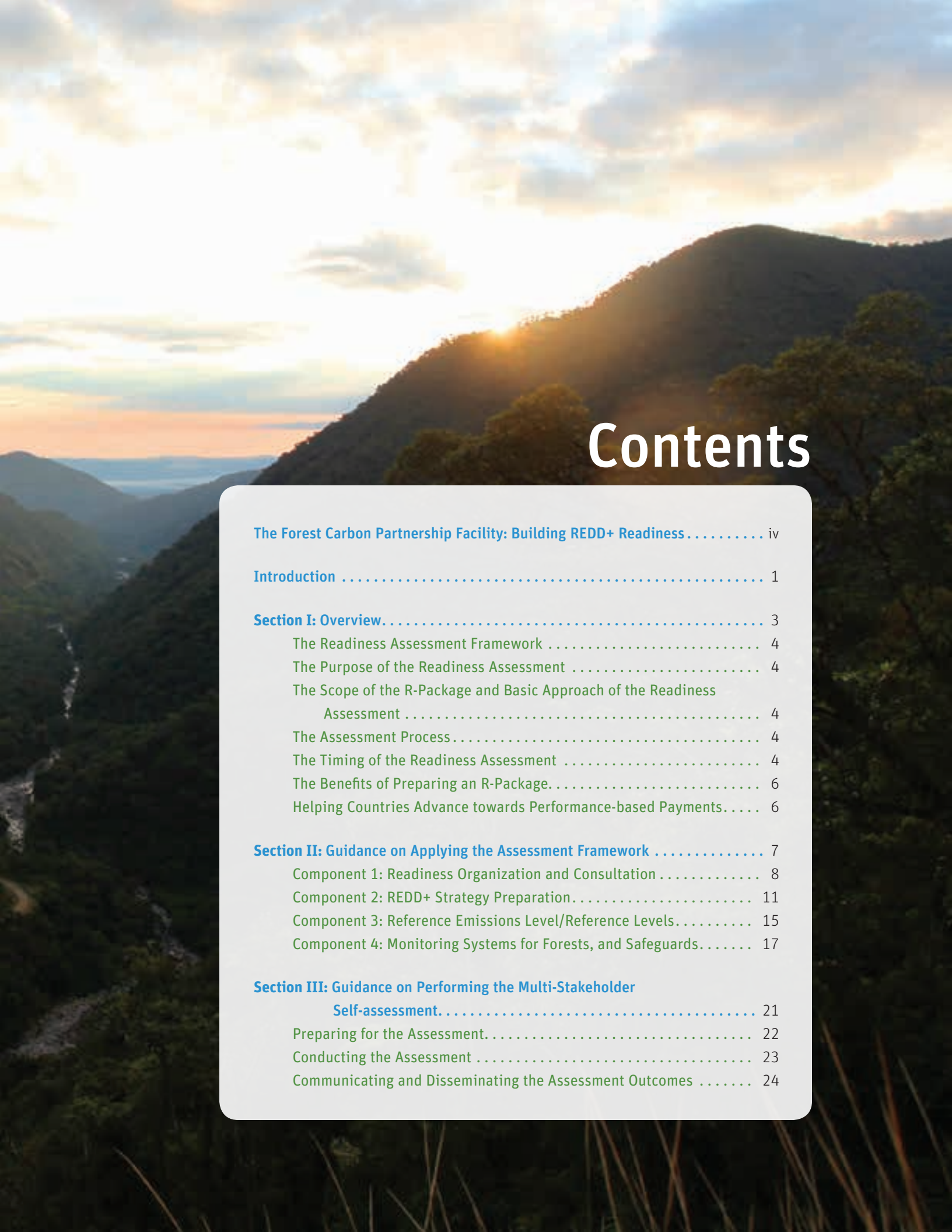

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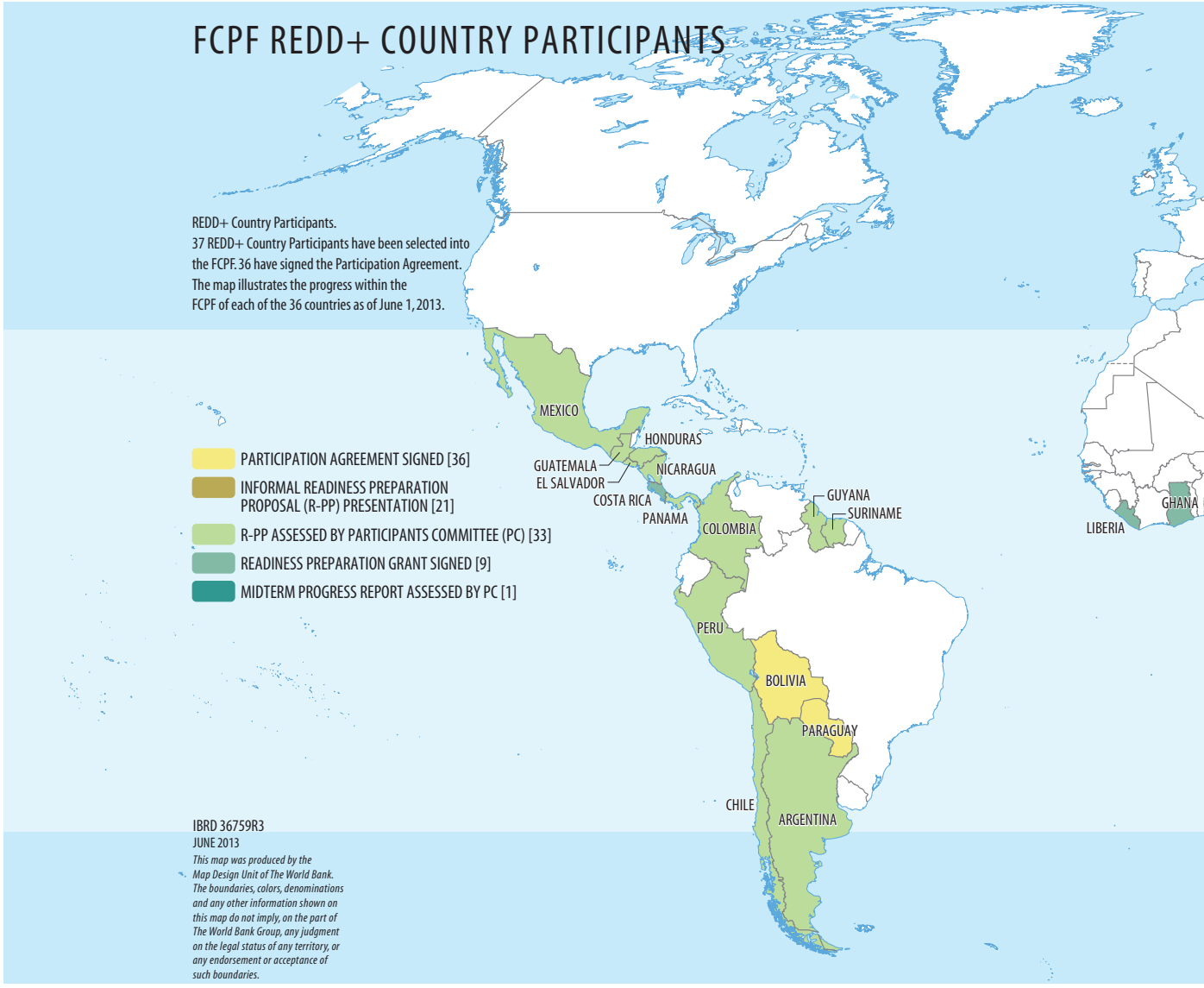
The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility: Building REDD+ Readiness

The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) is a global partnership of governments, businesses, civil society, and Indigenous Peoples focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, forest carbon stock conservation, the sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (activities commonly referred to as REDD+).

The FCPF has two separate but complementary funding mechanisms—the Readiness Fund and the Carbon Fund—to achieve its strategic objectives.

- The FCPF Readiness Fund supports participating countries in the development of REDD+ strategies and policies, reference emission levels; measurement, reporting, and verification systems; and

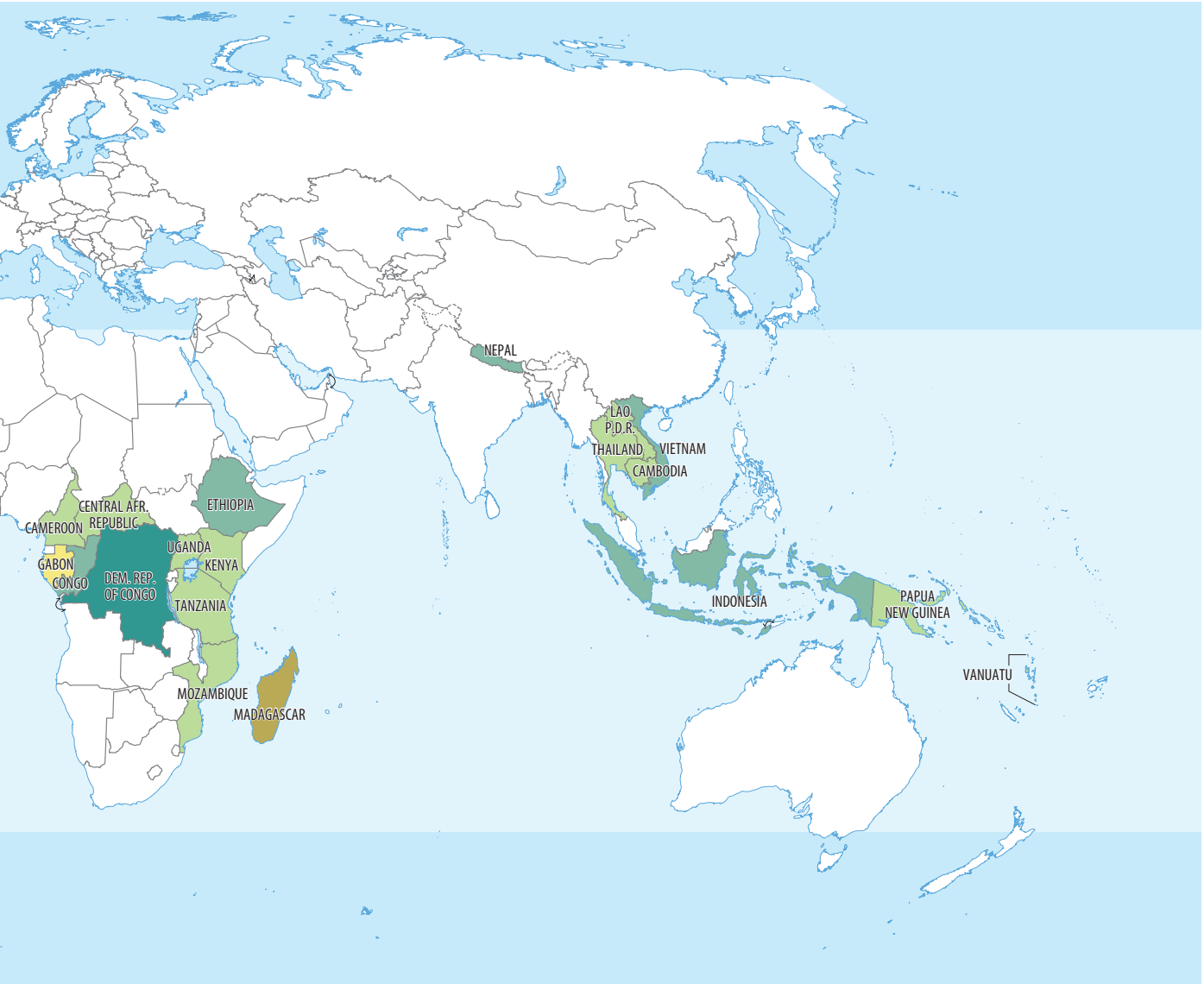


institutional capacity to a manage REDD+, including environmental and social safeguards.

- The FCPF Carbon Fund is designed to pilot performance-based payments for emission reductions from REDD+ programs in FCPF countries.

Since its inception in 2008, the FCPF has developed a framework for REDD+ readiness centered on the robust assessment of country-owned proposals (known as Readiness Preparation Proposals), fostered a domestic policy dialogue on REDD+ (and forests more broadly), and promoted greater cooperation among national and international partners.

36 forest developing countries (13 in Africa, 15 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and eight in the Asia-pacific region) are currently included in the FCPF. 33 have prepared Readiness Preparation Proposals (R-PPs), nine have signed Readiness Preparation Grant Agreements, and one—the Democratic Republic of Congo—has advanced to the mid-point of their readiness preparations (see map below).



Introduction

Introduction

With a growing number of countries progressing with REDD+ readiness preparation, countries are gaining practical experience on the ground and translating requirements into action. Many more REDD countries will advance beyond the mid point in the coming years, transitioning from preparation (under the REDD+ Readiness Fund) to REDD+ implementation (which may include the development of an emission reduction program for the Carbon Fund or other programs). The question that arises is *what does progress towards REDD+ readiness look like?* Furthermore *how can this progress be measured and communicated?*

The Readiness Assessment[1] provides a common framework to measure countries' relative progress on core readiness activities. It was developed over two years of discussions in the Participant's Committee (PC) of the FCPF, and informed by country experiences to date in formulating and implementing their R-PPs and existing good practices.

The following sections provide a guide on the Readiness Assessment Framework:

- Section I provides a brief overview of the Assessment Framework;
- Section II provides the detailed assessment framework, which consists of nine sub-components and corresponding, assessment criteria (34) and diagnostic questions (58);
- Section III provides guidance on the assessment process.

[1] The R-Package Assessment Framework was adopted at the fourteenth session of the Participants Committee. See Resolution PC/14/2013/1 and FMT Note 2013–1 rev

Section 1

Overview

The Readiness Assessment Framework

The Readiness Assessment provides a common framework to measure a country's progress on core readiness activities. At the heart of the Readiness Assessment is a thorough self-examination by REDD country stakeholders to take stock of the activities implemented during the REDD+ readiness preparation phase and assess progress on REDD+ readiness. The results of the Readiness Assessment are compiled in an R-Package, which documents the country's progress, captures lessons learned, assesses remaining gaps, and identifies activities for the way forward to transitioning to the implementation of performance-based activities.

The Purpose of the Readiness Assessment

A comprehensive assessment provides an opportunity for REDD+ countries to demonstrate their commitment to REDD+. The assessment helps countries to identify remaining gaps and further needs and generates feedback and guidance to countries from multiple stakeholders and the FCPF Participants Committee (PC).

The outputs of the assessment are:

- A visual synthesis of overall achievement by subcomponent using progress indicators: Green "significant progress" Yellow "progressing well, further development required", Orange "Further development required", and Red "not yet demonstrating progress"
- Description of significant achievements and areas requiring further development related to the corresponding 34 assessment criteria
- Actions that address identified areas for further work

The R-Package is:

- A summary of the readiness preparation process;
- A report of the multi-stakeholder self-assessment process;
- The assessment results of the national multi-stakeholder assessment;
- References to key outputs of the readiness preparation process (i.e., the REDD+ Strategy, Reference Emission Levels/Reference Levels, etc.).

The Scope of the R-Package and Basic Approach of the Readiness Assessment

The scope of the R-Package and its assessment is national and encompasses all core readiness activities (regardless if financed by the FCPF or other development partners)-including REDD+ organization, consultation and strategy preparation, design of reference levels and monitoring systems, as well as cross-cutting issues such as governance, and environmental and social safeguards. As such, the R-Package captures the important relationships among different Readiness preparation activities and helps to ensure consistency across components.

Because circumstances are different in each country, the readiness assessment accommodates country circumstances by focusing on *relative* progress.

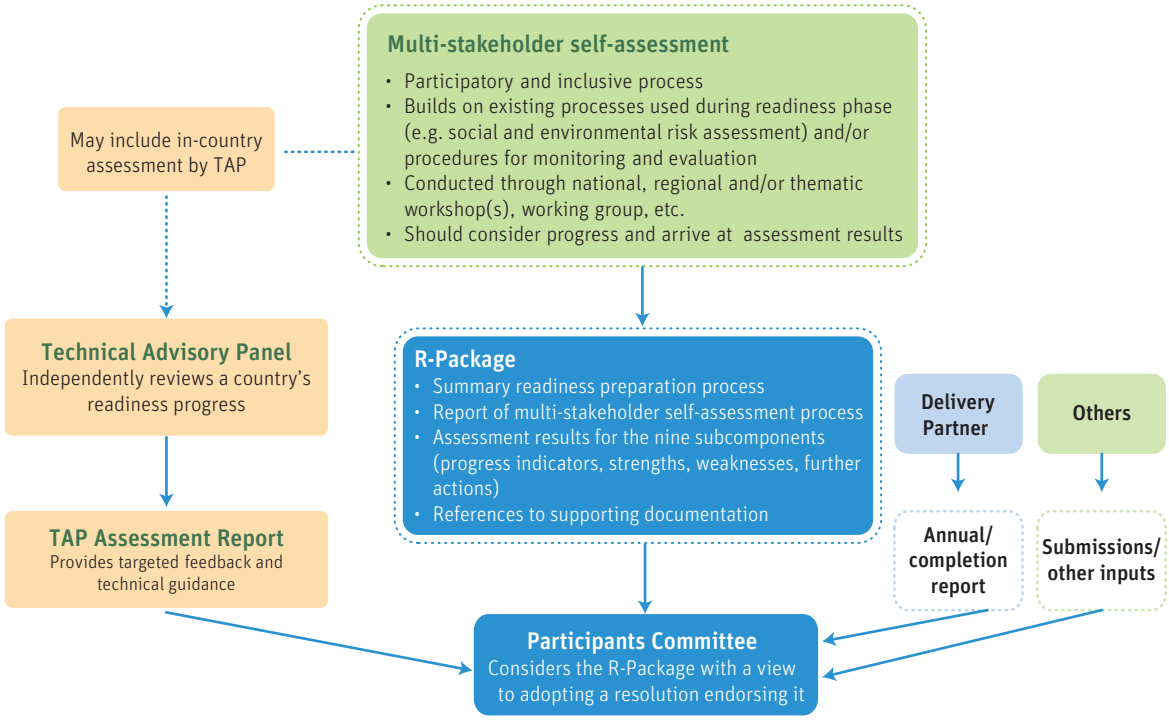
The Assessment Process

The two-stage assessment process consists of: (i) a national multi-stakeholder self-assessment (resulting in the R-Package), and (ii) an assessment of the R-Package by the PC with input from the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), the Delivery Partner (e.g. World Bank, UNDP, IDB), and others. Further guidance on performing the multi-stakeholder self-assessment is contained in Section III of this guide. The following graphic illustrates the two-stage assessment process:

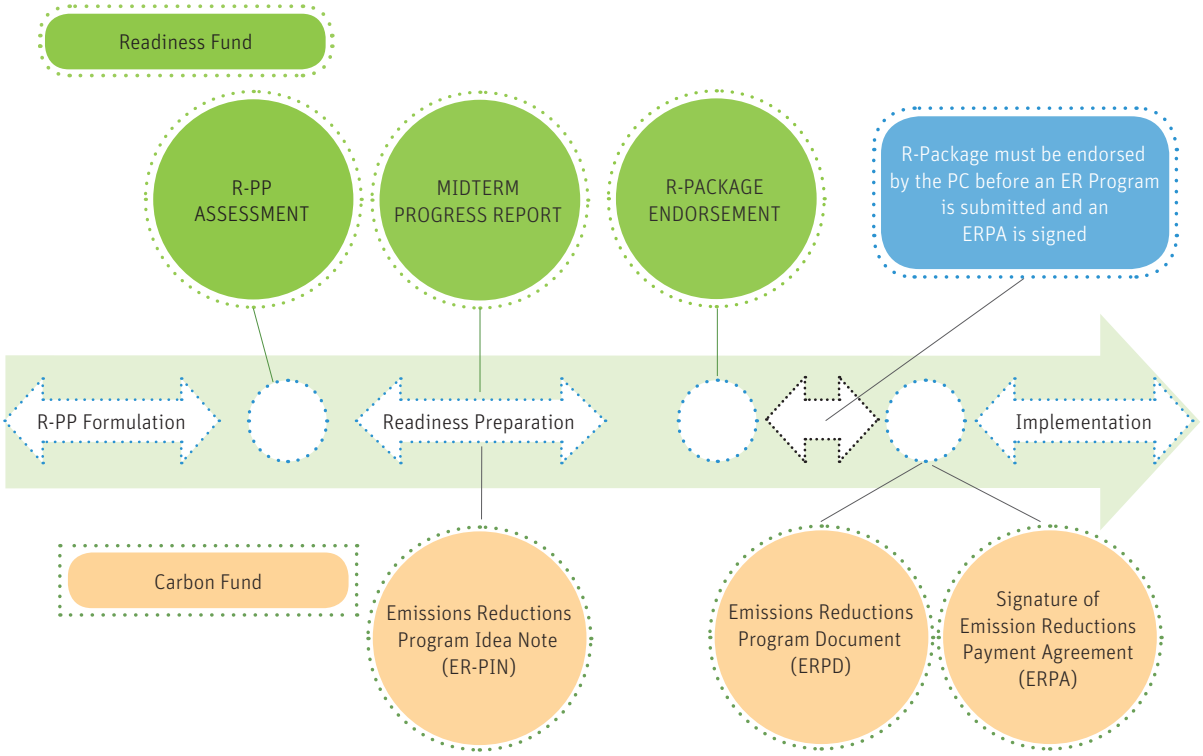
The Timing of the Readiness Assessment

The Readiness Assessment Framework can be useful at different stages of readiness preparation:

The assessment process



The R-Package in the readiness preparation and carbon finance processes



- At or around mid-point of the readiness preparation phase to gauge progress to date and help to focus remaining readiness preparation activities going forward. Countries may wish to voluntarily apply the Framework, for example by considering progress with respect to the nine subcomponents and 34 assessment criteria and/or perform the first stage of the assessment process, i.e., the self-assessment;
- As a country is nearing the end of its readiness preparations. Countries would perform the comprehensive two-stage assessment process, i.e. undertaking the national multi-stakeholder self-assessment to produce the R-Package for assessment by the PC.

A comprehensive readiness assessment should be undertaken when readiness preparation is well advanced, and after a country has prepared all necessary outputs of the readiness preparation process (a national REDD+ strategy; designed a REL/RL and a MRV system; prepared an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF); and established a Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM)), addressed any issues identified at mid-term, and is able to assess progress on all nine subcomponents and 34 corresponding assessment criteria.

The Benefits of Preparing an R-Package

The preparation of the R-Package is a beneficial step for any REDD+ country that has advanced in REDD+ readiness as it serves multiple purposes. It provides a country with the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate national commitment to REDD+,
- Display transparency in readiness preparations,
- Assure national and international stakeholders that potential social and environmental risks are being addressed,
- Receive international recognition for early REDD+ activities,
- Receive valuable feedback and technical guidance through a two-step assessment process (as described above), and
- Potentially attract additional funds from external sources for scaling up activities.

Helping Countries Advance towards Performance-based Payments

The R-package process is voluntary and not a reporting requirement under the FCPF Readiness Fund. It becomes mandatory if a country aims to participate in the Carbon Fund—that is a country's R-Package needs to be endorsed by the PC before an Emission Reductions Program Document (ERPD) can be considered by the Carbon Fund. (Note: the PC's endorsement of the R-Package is a necessary, but not the only requirement for an ER PD to be considered. The Carbon Fund will have its own selection criteria). The R-Package, and the outcomes of its assessment, will provide the Carbon Fund with additional information to ensure consistency of an ER Program with the national REDD+ readiness preparations and of ER Program activities (likely to be of subnational scope) with overarching safeguards requirements.

With its comprehensive overview of the progress made in REDD+ readiness, the R-Package can also be used by REDD+ countries to attract additional funds from external sources for scaling up activities, or by donors or other international initiatives as a tool to gauge progress on REDD+ readiness and to inform decision-making on support for REDD+.

Further refinements to the assessment framework may be required as lessons and experiences from applying the framework become available.

Section 2

Guidance on Applying the Assessment Framework

The following is intended to help guide the application of the assessment framework. For each subcomponent it provides general guidance on what to consider when addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which may be useful to inform the assessment.

REDD+ Countries are encouraged to use the following guidance, however, they may wish to tailor the assessment criteria to include additional criteria and/or modify diagnostic questions so that they are relevant in a given country context.

Component 1: Readiness Organization and Consultation

Subcomponent 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements

Rationale: National REDD+ management has five main functions: (1) manage implementation of REDD+ funding, including the FCPF grant, (2) co-ordinate REDD+ activities, (3) integrate REDD+ into broader national or sector strategies (e.g., national development plan, low-carbon development strategies), (4) manage inquiries, complaints and potentially grievances by stakeholders that may arise during the preparation and implementation of activities, and (5) organize information sharing and stakeholder consultation and participation.

Effective readiness management during the preparation phase is indicative of the country's capacity to manage emission reduction programs under REDD+ implementation in the future. This part of the Assessment Framework focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and their effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

1. Accountability and transparency
   - How are national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements demonstrating they are operating in an open, accountable and transparent manner?

2. *Operating mandate and budget*
   - How is it shown that national REDD+ institutions operate under clear mutually supportive mandates with adequate, predictable and sustainable budgets?

3. *Multi-sector coordination mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration*
   - How are national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements ensuring REDD+ activities are coordinated, integrated into and influencing the broader national or sector policy frameworks (e.g., agriculture, environment, natural resources management, infrastructure development and land-use planning)?

4. *Technical supervision capacity*
   - How effectively and efficiently are national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements leading and supervising multi-sector readiness activities, including the regular supervision of technical preparations?

5. *Funds management capacity*
   - How are institutions and arrangements demonstrating effective, efficient and transparent fiscal management, including coordination with other development partner-funded activities?

6. *Feedback and grievance redress mechanism*
   - What evidence is there to demonstrate the mechanism is operating at the national, subnational and local levels, is transparent, impartial, has a clearly defined mandate, and adequate expertise and resources?
   - What evidence is there that potentially impacted communities are aware of, have access to, and the mechanism is responsive to feedback and grievances?

Guidance Notes:

This component focuses on the overarching arrangements and capacity of REDD+ institutions and management, and differs to subcomponent 2c, which is concerned with the implementation framework of specific REDD+ strategy options (e.g., the resulting institutional, economic, legal and governance arrangements). Countries should draw upon the documentation produced during the formulation and implementation of the R-PP, national law, regulation, policy or REDD+ strategy documents, and provide additional updated information (as required) that:

- describes the national REDD+ management arrangements, including the design and methods of operation, and the roles and responsibilities at various levels of management, and across government agencies and relevant sectors.
- explains how REDD+ activities are being coordinated, and how REDD+ preparations are, and implementation will, be managed.
- explains the types and timing of practical activities conducted as part of management of readiness, as well as those still to be undertaken.
- explains how REDD+ funding and related budgets are managed.
- describes the FGRM, including early experiences/lessons on receiving and facilitating resolution of queries and complaints (as appropriate).

It is good practice for this component to consider countries' progress with respect to previously identified issues or gaps (e.g., in the PC resolution for the FCPF grant allocation). Countries may also consider the issue of government ownership and demonstrate how relevant stakeholders, and national and multi-sectoral expertise was involved in readiness preparations. A comprehensive assessment may reflect a variety of perspectives on national REDD+ institutions' management and coordination (e.g., country, World Bank, Delivery Partner and other stakeholders) or apply established governance principles, resources and tools available (such as World Bank/Food and Agriculture (FAO) Program on Forests (PROFOR) Framework for Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance; Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA)/CARE International REDD+ Social &Environmental Standards; UN-REDD Participatory Governance Assessments; or other, but not limited to, assessment frameworks identified in Annex I of FMT Note 2012–10).

Information on the FGRM should be consistent with applicable World Bank and/or other Delivery Partner policies articulated under the Common Approach, specifically the FCPF Draft Guidance Note on strengthening capacity for dispute resolution and grievance redress in the REDD+ readiness phase (January 2013).

Subcomponent 1b. Consultation, Participation, and Outreach

Rationale: The national body responsible for leading the REDD+ process regularly engages, as appropriate, with key stakeholders and facilitates their participation in the readiness preparation process, including activities related to national REDD+ strategy, reference levels, and monitoring systems. Consultation and participation of key stakeholders builds on early dialogues during the formulation of the R-PP, and the plan for consultation, participation, and outreach that was undertaken as part of the SESA. This process results in a sustainable institutional structure that ensures meaningful participation in decision-making concerning REDD+ strategies and activities beyond the readiness phase.

This part of the Assessment Framework focuses on how consultation, participation, and outreach were conducted during the preparation phase and the platform for consultation with and participation of key stakeholders for future REDD+ programs. The Assessment Framework reviews how consultations with key stakeholders are performed to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

7. *Participation and engagement of key stakeholders*
   - How is the full, effective and on-going participation of key stakeholders demonstrated through institutional mechanisms (including extra efforts to engage marginalized groups such as forest-dependent women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities)?
   - What are the participatory mechanisms being used to ensure that Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities have the

capacity to effectively participate in REDD+ readiness and implementation?

8. *Consultation processes*
   - What evidence demonstrates that consultation processes at the national and local levels are clear, inclusive, transparent, and facilitate timely access to information in a culturally appropriate form?
   - What evidence is there that the country has used a self-selection process to identify rights holders and stakeholders during consultations?
   - What evidence is there that Indigenous Peoples institutions and decision-making processes are utilized to enhance consultations and engagement?
   - What evidence is there that consultation processes are gender sensitive and inclusive?

9. *Information sharing and accessibility of information*
   - How have national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements demonstrated transparent, consistent, comprehensive and timely sharing and disclosure of information (related to all readiness activities, including the development of REDD+ strategy, reference levels, and monitoring systems) in a culturally appropriate form?
   - What evidence is there that information is accessible to stakeholders (e.g., in a format and language understandable to them) and is being received?
   - What channels of communications are being used to ensure that stakeholders are well informed, especially those that have limited or no access to relevant information?

10. Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes
    - How are the outcomes of consultations integrated (fed into, disseminated, publicly disclosed and taken into account) in management arrangements, strategy development and technical activities related to reference level and monitoring and information systems development?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should provide information on how consultation, participation, and outreach have been conducted during the preparation phase and will continue in the future. Countries should draw upon the outcomes of dialogues with key stakeholders and the documentation produced during the readiness preparation phase, including the Consultation and Participation Plan (and various communication tools), SESA, and ESMF. Information should be consistent with applicable World Bank and/or other Delivery Partner safeguard policies as provided for under the Common Approach, including FCPF Guidelines and generic Terms of Reference for SESA and the associated ESMF, FCPF/UN-REDD Joint Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness, and FCPF Guidelines on the Disclosure of Information, as well as relevant United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) guidance on safeguards.[2] Countries should explicitly address identified stakeholders' concerns about potential social economic and environment risks and impacts, and expectations of potential delivery of benefits of proposed REDD+ activities.

Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation

Subcomponent: 2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance

Rationale: The purpose of the assessment of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance was to identify key drivers of deforestation and/or forest degradation, as well as activities concerning conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. The assessment should have also addressed how shortcomings in current land use, and forest law, policy and governance contribute to the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and developed potential solutions. Taking into account the country's past experience in addressing these shortcomings (including the issues that led to underperformance of previous programs), the assessment should have directly informed the country's REDD+ strategy and identified ways to address the key deforestation and degradation drivers in a prioritized fashion.

This part of the Readiness Assessment focuses on the causal relationship between the economic, legal, policy setting of the country and associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation. Building a comprehensive understanding at the preparation phase sets a solid foundation for developing an effective REDD+ strategy (subcomponent 2b).

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

11. *Assessment and analysis*
    - Does the summary of the work conducted during R-PP formulation and preparation present an analysis of recent historical land-use trends (including traditional) and assessment of relevant land tenure and titling, natural resource rights, livelihoods (including traditional/customary), forest law, policy and governance issues?

12. *Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/ barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement*
    - How was the analysis used to prioritize key direct and indirect drivers to be addressed by the programs and policies included in the REDD+ strategy?
    - Did the analysis consider the major barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement activities (if appropriate) to be addressed by the programs and policies included in the REDD+ strategy?

13. *Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities*
    - What evidence demonstrates that systematic links between key drivers, and/or barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement activities (as appropriate), and REDD+ activities were identified?

14. *Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance*
    - Do action plans to make progress in the short-, medium- and long-term towards addressing relevant, land-use, land tenure and titling, natural resource rights, livelihoods, and

[2] Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(d) and Appendix I.

governance issues in priority regions related to specific REDD+ programs, outline further steps and identify required resources?

15. *Implications for forest law and policy*
    - Does the assessment identify implications for forest or other relevant law and policy in the long-term?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon the assessment of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance undertaken as part of the R-PP; the countries' REDD+ strategy options (and any updates); as well as other relevant work, assessments and studies (e.g., the UNFCCC work considering issues relating to the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation,[3] the use of forest or other governance assessment frameworks (such as PROFOR Framework for Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance, CCBA/CARE International REDD+ Social &Environmental Standards, UN-REDD Participatory Governance Assessments, etc.).This supporting evidence should collectively present an overview of the country situation in relation to: the key drivers of deforestation, forest degradation, and forest carbon stock enhancement activities; land-use trends; land tenure; natural resource rights; forest law; policy and governance issues; social and environmental impacts; and consider additional issues of importance to stakeholders in a particular country context (e.g., traditional land-use, land tenure and titling, and livelihoods, including traditional/customary). Countries could document results of diagnostic work on governance for identification of key governance gaps in the context of REDD+ and how the recommendations and action plans to address the gaps will feed into existing on-going relevant governance work in the country. Countries should also strive provide information identifying knowledge gaps and capacity constraints that play a role in deforestation, forest degradation and the other REDD+ activities, as appropriate.

Subcomponent: 2b. REDD+ Strategy Options

Rationale: The REDD+ strategy forms the basis for the development of a set of policies and programs to reduce emissions from deforestation and/or forest degradation and enhancing carbon uptake from other REDD+ activities. The strategy should address the drivers of deforestation and/or forest degradation identified in the assessment in Subcomponent 2a, including drivers linked to other sectors competing for the same land resources, in the context of the national priorities for sustainable development.

This part of the Assessment Framework focuses on the motivation and rationale for countries to have engaged in any or all of the five REDD+ activities,[4] and the strategic options that were identified and analyzed during preparation to ascertain that actions taken on REDD+ are beneficial, feasible and cost-effective. In short, this component should convey how REDD+ fits into the context of a country's national development framework and path.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

16. *Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options*
    - Were REDD+ strategy options (prioritized based on comprehensive assessment of direct and indirect drivers of deforestation, barriers to forest enhancement activities and/or informed by other factors, as appropriate) selected via a transparent and participatory process?
    - Were the expected emissions reduction potentials of interventions estimated, where possible, and how did they inform the design of the REDD+ strategy?

17. *Feasibility assessment*
    - Were REDD+ strategy options assessed and prioritized for their social, environmental and political feasibility, risks and opportunities, and analysis of costs and benefits?

[3] Decision 1/CP.16 requests Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) to identify land use, land-use change and forestry activities in developing countries, in particular those that are linked to the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation (see Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 75 and Appendix II).

[4] Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 70 encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances: (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation; (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation; (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks; (d) Sustainable management of forests; (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

18. *Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies*
    - Have major inconsistencies between the priority REDD+ strategy options and policies or programs in other sectors related to the forest sector (e.g., transport, agriculture) been identified?
    - Is an agreed timeline and process in place to resolve inconsistencies and integrate REDD+ strategy options with relevant development policies?
    - Are they supportive of broader development objectives and have broad community support?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon the REDD+ strategy options presented in the R-PP, the assessment of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance undertaken (see subcomponent 2a), and resulting policies and programs developed to implement the national REDD+ strategy.

The national strategy should support national priorities for sustainable development, be informed by SESA, ESMF and safeguard issues (see subcomponent 2d), and be consistent with relevant UNFCCC guidance.[5] An explicit assessment of risks, feasibility, cross-sector inconsistencies of REDD+ strategy options should have been undertaken and a timeline and process to integrate strategy options with broader development policies been identified.

Subcomponent: 2c. Implementation Framework

Rationale: The implementation framework defines institutional, economic, legal and governance arrangements necessary to implement REDD+ strategy options. The implementation of REDD+ strategy options is specific to a given country's land uses and legal and social circumstances, and countries have flexibility to tailor their REDD+ interventions to their socio-economic conditions, drivers of deforestation, and development objectives. Country-specific solutions need to define the role of government, landowners, and other participants in REDD+ transactions, to share and deliver REDD+ benefits (e.g., to local communities), to respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities, to clarify land tenure to the extent possible and mediate associated conflicts, and to manage carbon transactions through a transparent process.

An effective implementation framework during the preparation phase is indicative of the country's capacity to undertake emission reduction programs in the future.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

19. *Adoption and implementation of legislation/ regulations*
    - Have legislation and/or regulations related to REDD+ programs and activities been adopted?
    - What evidence is there that these relevant REDD+ laws and policies are being implemented?

20. *Guidelines for implementation*
    - What evidence is there that the implementation framework defines carbon rights, benefit sharing mechanisms, REDD+ financing modalities, procedures for official approvals (e.g., for pilots or REDD+ projects), and grievance mechanisms?

21. *Benefit sharing mechanism*
    - What evidence is there to demonstrate benefit sharing mechanisms are transparent?

22. *National REDD+ registry and system monitoring REDD+ activities*
    - Is a national geo-referenced REDD+ information system or registry operational, comprehensive of all relevant information (e.g., information on the location, ownership, carbon accounting and financial flows for sub-national and national REDD+ programs and projects), and does it ensure public access to REDD+ information?

[5] Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 72 national strategies should address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, land tenure issues, forest governance issues, gender considerations and safeguards.

Guidance Notes:

Countries should reference documentation detailing the relevant institutional, economic, legal, regulatory and governance arrangements specific to implement REDD+ strategy options (these will likely differ to subcomponent 1a which is concerned with the overarching REDD+ institutions and management arrangements).

It is good practice for this component to consider and report a country's progress with respect to previously identified issues or gaps (e.g., in the PC resolution for the FCPF grant allocation), and countries may also wish to provide information identifying additional barriers to REDD+ strategy implementation (e.g., such as issues of institutional capacity and coordination, fiscal transparency, law enforcement, corruption) and reforms needed.

It may be helpful to provide supporting information on resources or tools used in the development of particular aspects of their implementation framework, as appropriate (e.g., the use of the PROFOR Options Assessment Framework (OAF) to determine which benefit sharing mechanism may be most appropriate, or the World Bank Grievance Redress Mechanism Manual to identify/evaluate local and national institutions to manage grievances).

Subcomponent: 2d. Social and Environmental Impacts

Rationale: Countries receiving FCPF funding for readiness preparation through the World Bank are required to ensure compliance with the Common Approach. This part of the Assessment Framework focuses on the main findings and results of SESA, including the stand-alone ESMF. (Note: the SESA is reflected in the R-Package components in an integrated way, including the REDD+ strategy and consultation, participation outreach). The SESA process and ESMF should create a sustainable institutional structure that ensures effective management of social and environmental issues beyond the readiness phase.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

23. *Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues*
    - What evidence is there that applicable social and environmental safeguard issues relevant to the country context have been fully identified/analysed via relevant studies or diagnostics and in consultation processes?

24. *REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts*
    - How were SESA results and the identification of social and environmental impacts (both positive and negative) used for prioritizing and designing REDD+ strategy options?

25. *Environmental and Social Management Framework*
    - What evidence is there that the ESMF is in place and managing environmental and social risks/potential impacts related to REDD+ activities?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon the outcomes of dialogues with key stakeholders and the documentation produced during the readiness preparation phase, including SESA and ESMF.[6] In the context of preparation of the R-Package, the ESMF provides the framework to address the key environmental and social issues associated with implementation of the country's preferred REDD+ strategy and draws on the assessment undertaken in other R-PP components. Information should be consistent with applicable World Bank and/or other Delivery Partner safeguard policies as provided for under the Common Approach and relevant UNFCCC guidance on safeguards.[7] There may also be national legislative requirements related to safeguards or the management of social or environmental risks and impacts that should be identified and addressed.

UNFCCC guidance stipulates:

- actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements.

[6] The ESMF sets out the principles, rules, guidelines, and procedures to assess potential environmental and social impacts and risks, and contains measures to reduce, mitigate, and/or offset adverse environmental and social impacts and enhance positive impacts and opportunities of said projects, activities, or policies/regulations.

[7] Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(d)and Appendix I.

- national forest governance structures are transparent and effective, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty.
- the knowledge and rights of Indigenous Peoples and members of local communities are respected, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular Indigenous Peoples and local communities, is promoted and supported.
- actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits.
- actions to address the risks of reversals should be promoted and supported.
- actions to reduce displacement of emissions are promoted and supported.[8]

It is good practice to explicitly address identified stakeholders' concerns about potential social economic and environment risks and impacts, and expectations of potential delivery of benefits of proposed REDD+ activities.[9]

Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/ Reference Levels

Rationale: Estimates of changes in forest area and carbon content over time and the corresponding emissions to and uptake from the atmosphere are used to measure the performance of REDD+ policy interventions relative to a forest REL/RL. Recent UNFCCC decisions request countries to develop a REL/RL as a benchmark for assessing performance in implementing REDD+ activities at a national level, with subnational approaches as interim measures. The REL/RL should be established transparently taking into account historical data, and can be adjusted for national circumstances as appropriate.

Information presented in the R-Package should reflect the general approach used to establish a REL/RL. This includes compilation and analysis of relevant data, capacity building in the application of proven methods and fundamental techniques (e.g., mapping, field sampling), and assessment of different methodologies. Preliminary results of this work should have generated first-order estimates of emissions at the national or subnational level and the construction of REL/RL.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

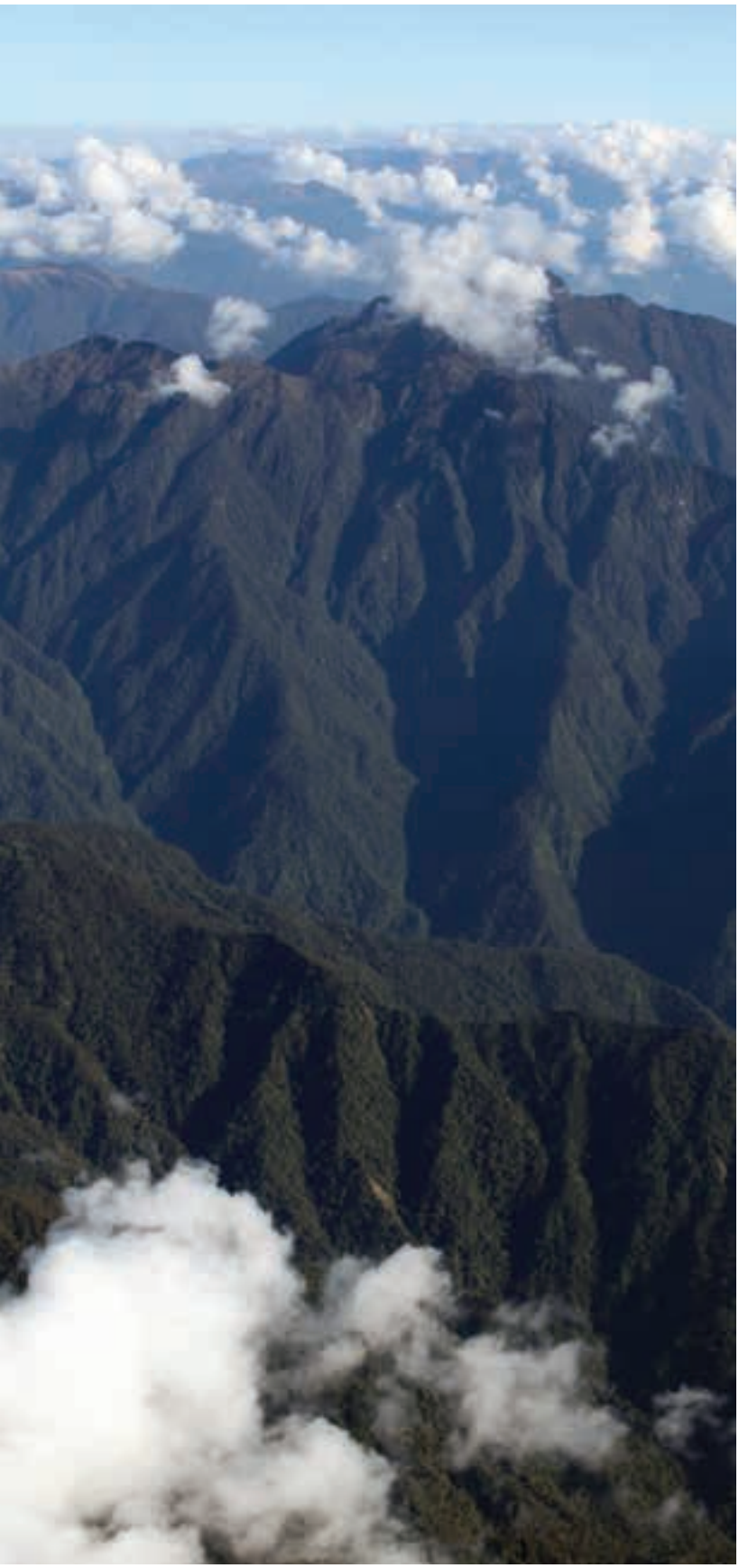
26. *Demonstration of methodology*
    - Is the preliminary sub-national or national forest REL or RL presented (as part of the R-Package) using a clearly documented methodology, based on a step-wise approach, as appropriate?
    - Are plans for additional steps and data needs provided, and is the relationship between the sub-national and the evolving national reference level demonstrated (as appropriate)?

27. *Use of historical data, and adjusted for national circumstances*
    - How does the establishment of the REL/RL take into account historical data, and if adjusted for national circumstance, what is the rationale and supportive data that demonstrate that proposed adjustments are credible and defendable?
    - Is sufficient data and documentation provided in a transparent fashion to allow for the reconstruction or independent cross-checking of the REL/RL?

28. *Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines*

[8] Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix I.

[9] Note: the readiness preparation phase is meant primarily for technical assistance and capacity building activities, with the objective to prepare the country for large-scale intervention yet to come. FCPF grants do not finance any implementation of REDD+ pilots on the ground (investments, pilot projects involving use of land or change in use of land and physical works), that hence could have adverse impacts on communities.



- Is the REL/RL (presented as part of the R-Package) based on transparent, complete and accurate information, consistent with UNFCCC guidance and the most recent IPCC guidance and guidelines, and allowing for technical assessment of the data sets, approaches, methods, models (if applicable) and assumptions used in the construction of the REL/RL?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon supporting documentation produced during the readiness preparation phase. Information should be consistent with UNFCCC guidance[10] and the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) guidance and guidelines.[11] Countries can pursue reference level work in a stepwise and iterative approach, as appropriate, with further refinement as improved data, methodologies, and UNFCCC guidelines become available. Countries may find it useful to draw upon peer reviewed technical guidance (e.g., the Global Observation of Forest and Land Cover Dynamics (GOFC-GOLD) REDD Sourcebook, Winrock International for Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Draft Methodological Framework for Developing Reference Levels for REDD+, etc.).

UNFCCC guidance stipulates:

- The REL/RL should be expressed in tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.[12]
- The rationale for the approach to the REL/RL should be provided.[13]
- The information used in the construction of the REL/RL should be transparent, complete, consistent and accurate,[14] allowing for the reconstruction of the REL/RL.

10 Relevant UNFCCC decisions include Decision 2/CP.13 and Annex; Decision 4/CP.15; Decision 1/CP.16 (paragraphs 69–71, specifically 71(b) and Appendix II paragraphs (a) and (b)); Decision 12/CP.17 (paragraphs 7–15 and Annex).

11 IPCC Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (2003), IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Volume 4 Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (2006).

12 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 7.

13 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 9.

14 Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 7; Annex to Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph (b).

- The REL/RL should be established transparently, taking into account historical data[15] and, if adjusted for national circumstances, should include rationale for making adjustments including details on these national circumstances and how they were considered.[16]
- The REL/RL should maintain consistency with anthropogenic forest-related GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks as contained in each country's GHG inventories.[17]
  - The definition of forest used should be clearly provided.[18]
  - The pools and gases included should be clearly provided, along with a rationale for the exclusion of any pools or gases.[19]
  - The activities included should be clearly provided, along with a rationale for the exclusion of any activities.[20]

The REL/RL should be built around the major drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and the other REDD activities. This will encourage linkages among the REL/RL, REDD+ strategy options, and the design of the national forest monitoring system.

Countries may also wish to provide information identifying current gaps and additional needs, such as data, resource and technical capacity needs.

Component 4: Monitoring Systems for Forests, and Safeguards

Subcomponent: 4a. National Forest Monitoring System

Rationale: The national forest monitoring system should generate information that allows comparison of changes in forest area and carbon content (and associated greenhouse (GHG) emissions) relative to the baseline estimates used for the REL/RL. A robust and transparent national forest monitoring system can contribute to strengthen forest governance and to further consider counter measures to deforestation and forest degradation. The development of an operational forest monitoring system is a long-term effort, generally serves multiple purposes (e.g., natural resource management more generally), and commonly entails a combination of remote sensing and field-based data collection from the national forest inventory or other sources. A national forest monitoring system assimilates data collected nationally and locally (e.g., through sampling in community-managed forests), helps build trust among local constituencies via a participatory approach, and contributes to the national GHG inventory that countries report to UNFCCC in their National Communications and Biennial Update Reports. Countries may not be able to finalize the design of the national forest monitoring system for the emission reductions and removals in the absence of definitive guidelines from the UNFCCC, and thus may use a step-wise approach to gradually develop the system (starting with data collection, analytic work, capacity building etc. with further refinements being made later as guidance becomes available).

This part of the Assessment Framework focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring systems. It describes the approach of how the system is expected to be enhanced over time as capacity increases, more data become available, and guidance from the UNFCCC is provided. It describes the information that is generated and its use and application, and includes output from early work (e.g., mapping forest cover change in high deforestation areas). It provides clear institutional arrangements, including budgeted action plans and human resource needs.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

29. *Documentation of monitoring approach*
    - Is there clear rationale or analytic evidence supporting the selection of the used or proposed methodology (combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches, systems resolution, coverage, accuracy, inclusions of carbon pools and gases) and improvement over time?
    - Has the system been technically reviewed and nationally approved, and is it consistent with national and international existing and emerging guidance?

15 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 8; Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 7.
16 Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 9.
17 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 8.
18 Annex to Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph (d).
19 Annex to Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph (c).
20 Annex to Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph (c).

- Are potential sources of uncertainties identified to the extent possible?

30. *Demonstration of early system implementation*
    - What evidence is there that the system has the capacity to monitor the specific REDD+ activities prioritized in the country's REDD+ strategy?
    - How does the system identify and assess displacement of emissions (leakage), and what are the early results (if any)?
    - How are key stakeholders involved (participating/consulted) in the development and/or early implementation of the system, including data collection and any potential verification of its results?
    - What evidence is there that the system allows for comparison of changes in forest area and carbon content (and associated GHG emissions) relative to the baseline estimates used for the REL/RL?

31. *Institutional arrangements and capacities*
    - Are mandates to perform tasks related to forest monitoring clearly defined (e.g., satellite data processing, forest inventory, information sharing)?
    - What evidence is there that a transparent means of publicly sharing forest and emissions data are presented and are in at least an early operational stage?
    - Have associated resource needs been identified and estimated (e.g., required capacities, training, hardware/software, and budget)?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon supporting documentation produced during the readiness preparation phase and describe the approach used to design and develop a national forest monitoring system. Information should be consistent with UNFCCC guidance[21] and the most recent IPCC guidance and guidelines.[22] In the absence of definitive guidelines from the UNFCCC, countries can use a stepwise and iterative approach, as appropriate, to develop their national forest monitoring system, with further refinement as guidance becomes available. Countries may find it useful to draw upon peer-reviewed technical guidance (e.g., GOFC-GOLD REDD Sourcebook, Winrock International for Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Draft Methodological Framework for Developing Reference Levels for REDD+, etc.).

UNFCCC guidance stipulates countries should:

- Strive for robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems, with, if appropriate, subnational monitoring and reporting as an interim measure in accordance with national circumstances and with the provisions contained in decision 4/CP15.[23, 24]
- Use a combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches for estimating, as appropriate, anthropogenic forest-related GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks and forest area changes.[25]
- Provide estimates that are transparent, consistent, as far as possible accurate, and that reduce uncertainties, taking into account national capabilities.[26]
- Make certain results are available and suitable for review, as agreed by the Conference of the Parties.[27]

It is good practice for forest monitoring systems to:

- Build upon existing systems, as appropriate.
- Enable the assessment of different types of forest in the country, including natural forest, as defined by the party.

21 Relevant UNFCCC decisions on forest monitoring systems and measurement, reporting and verification include 2/CP.13, 4/CP.15, 1/CP.16 (paragraphs 69–71, specifically paragraph 71(c) and appendix II paragraphs (b) and (c), 2/CP.17 paragraph 64 and 12/CP.17 and Draft conclusions contained in FCCC/SBSTA/2012/L.31. Countries should also be consistent with relevant UNFCCC decisions on reporting and verification of nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries in National Communications (every four years, with biennial updates (every two years)), contained in decisions 1/CP.16, paragraphs 60–64 and decision 2/CP.17 paragraphs 12–31 and Annex 3 and 4.

22 IPCC Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (2003), IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Volume 4 Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (2006).

23 Recognizes that developing country Parties in establishing forest reference emission levels and forest levels should do so transparently taking into account historic data, and adjust for national circumstances.

24 Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71 (c).

25 Decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 1 (d) (i).

26 Decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 1 (d) (ii).

27 Decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 1 (d) (iii).

- Be flexible, allow for improvement and reflect, as appropriate, the phased-approach.[28]
- Identify potential sources of uncertainties to the extent possible.
- Include monitoring and reporting of emissions displacement at the national level, if appropriate, and reporting on how displacement of emissions is being addressed, and on the means to integrate subnational monitoring systems into a national monitoring system.[29]
- Provide data and information used in the estimation of anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes that are transparent, consistent over time and with the established REL/RL.
- Express the results from the implementation of activities measured against the REL/RL in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- Assess the existing capabilities and provide information on planned stepwise evolution from their current capacity towards an enhanced monitoring system capable of monitoring REDD+ activities.

Countries may also wish to provide information identifying current gaps and additional needs, such as data, resource and technical capacity needs.

Subcomponent: 4b. Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards

Rationale: This component specifies the non-carbon aspects prioritized for monitoring by the country (e.g., key quantitative or qualitative variables representing rural livelihoods enhancement, conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem services provision, key governance factors directly pertinent to REDD+ implementation in the country, and the impacts of the REDD+ strategy on the forest sector). The system should be capable, or at least in an early operational stage, of reporting how safeguards are being addressed and respected during the implementation of REDD+ preparation activities, with due attention to the specific monitoring provisions included in the country's ESMF.

Assessment criteria and diagnostic questions:

32. *Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues*
    - How have relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental safeguard issues of REDD+ preparations been identified? Are there any capacity building recommendations associated with these?

33. *Monitoring, reporting and information sharing*
    - What evidence is there that a transparent system for periodically sharing consistent information on non-carbon aspects and safeguards has been presented and is in at least an early operational stage?
    - How is the following information being made available: key quantitative and qualitative variables about impacts on rural livelihoods, conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem services provision, key governance factors directly pertinent to REDD+ preparations, and the implementation of safeguards, paying attention to the specific provisions included in the ESMF?

34. *Institutional arrangements and capacities*
    - Are mandates to perform tasks related to non-carbon aspects and safeguards clearly defined?
    - Have associated resource needs been identified and estimated (e.g., required capacities, training, hardware/software, and budget)?

Guidance Notes:

Countries should draw upon the outcomes of dialogues with key stakeholders and the documentation produced during the formulation and implementation of the R-PP, including SESA, and ESMF. The information system should be consistent with applicable World Bank and/or other Delivery Partner safeguard policies as provided for under the Common Approach, relevant UNFCCC guidance,[30] and other relevant safeguard processes (such as the Convention of Biodiversity process on biodiversity safeguards).

[28] As referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 73 and 74.
[29] 1/CP.16, paragraph 71 (c), footnote 7.
[30] Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(d) and Appendix I, Decision 12/CP.17 paragraphs 1–6, Decision 1/CP.18 paragraph 40.

Countries should describe the information system for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance, and safeguards, including the roles and responsibilities of national institutions for the design and implementation of the system. Countries may not be able to finalize the design of the information system due to lack of explicit UNFCCC guidance.[31] Thus, a full information system may have to be developed gradually, with further refinements made later on. Some countries may wish to integrate their national forest monitoring system and information system for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance, and safeguards as one system, or to develop two separate monitoring systems.

UNFCCC guidance:

- Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis.
- Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time.
- Provide information on how all of the safeguards referred to in Appendix I to decision 1/CP.16 are being addressed and respected.
- Be country-driven and implemented at the national level.
- Build upon existing systems, as appropriate.[32]

If a stepwise approach is envisioned, it is good practice to describe the timeframe in which the phases will be developed and the key outcomes expected. It is also good practice to:

- describethe role of relevant stakeholders in the information system, including the effective and appropriate participation of civil society, Indigenous Peoples, forest dwellers, and other stakeholders in community-based participatory monitoring and information systems or independent monitoring and review.
- consider use of a forest governance assessment framework to assist in providing information on governance.

Countries may also wish to provide information identifying current gaps and additional needs, such as data, resource and technical capacity needs.

31 SBSTA will continue considering issues related to safeguard information systems (including the timing and frequency of summaries from REDD+ countries on safeguards) and plans to conclude its consideration at SBSTA 39 (2013).

32 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraphs 2(b)–(f).

Section 3

Guidance on Performing the Multi-Stakeholder Self-assessment

The multi-stakeholder self-assessment by the country is a participatory and inclusive process—encompassing the perspectives and experiences of a range of stakeholders.

Countries can conduct the multi-stakeholder self-assessment process in a manner that is appropriate to the country circumstances, building existing institutions or processes created for REDD+ (e.g., those established through the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) or existing national or international procedures for program monitoring and evaluation).

The following is intended to help guide the national multi-stakeholder self-assessment, and draws from existing good practices.[33]

Preparing for the Assessment

1. *Identification of organizing team, facilitator, and sponsor.*
   - The organizing team is tasked with overseeing the assessment, including managing the process, preparing background materials, compiling reports and disseminating information. The team may also convene or oversee the stakeholder consultations, or a separate facilitator could be tasked to perform this role.
   - The facilitator requires the skills to run a productive, participatory stakeholder process. The organizer/facilitator should have expertise in the sector, including some level of knowledge of local issues, familiarity and credibility with stakeholders in order to encourage them participate and accept the process as fair.
   - A sponsor can give official standing to the assessment and bring recognition to the outcome.
   - These three roles could be fulfilled by the same or separate entities. The assessment may be organized, facilitated, sponsored and funded by the Government. It may also be that a bilateral development partner or non-government organization jointly conducts the assessment or is delegated the task by the Government to organize or facilitate the process.

2. *Development of a process and schedule, and allocation of a budget.*
   - An efficient and effective way to conduct the self-assessment is through a multi-stakeholder event/s using mechanisms that were established or enhanced during the readiness preparation phase (e.g., working groups, committees, task-forces or other fora that have a representative cross-section of stakeholders). However, it may not always be possible, appropriate or efficient to hold a single national multi-stakeholder event and the assessment may be performed through a series of events, possibly with regional or issue-specific focus (e.g., on governance, safeguards, REL/RL, MRV etc.), or via workshops, working groups, field visits, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, public comment periods, (etc.), or a combination of different formats.
   - To ensure consistency in approach, countries may wish to arrange an initial inception workshop to consider interconnectedness of the R-Package components, before breaking into clusters and then reconvene to discuss the findings and cross-cutting issues.
   - Where possible, the multi-stakeholder process should be combined with other relevant consultations (and some topics may have already been covered during earlier consultations). Countries should consider how to draw on existing national arrangements to perform the assessment (as used for the SESA, national monitoring and evaluation

[33] See for example PROFOR Framework for Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance; CCBA/CARE International REDD+ Social &Environmental Standards; UN-REDD Participatory Governance Assessments; or other, but not limited to, assessment frameworks identified in Annex I of FMT Note 2012–10.

processes, or international assessment frameworks). The chosen process and timeline for the multi-stakeholder assessment should be made publicly available.

- Countries should also ensure an adequate budget is allocated to fund the assessment process. Preparation of the R-Package is not expected to require significant funds. The R-Package document is to be produced at a stage when the majority of readiness activities are well advanced or completed, and participatory and consultative approaches were used to perform them. In that sense, producing an R-Package will largely entail the compilation and synthesis of previously prepared information, and a national multi-stakeholder consultation exercise.

3. *Identification of stakeholder participation.*
   - Participants of the assessment should include a representative cross-section of relevant stakeholders identified using mechanisms that were established or enhanced during the readiness preparation phase. Countries may need to update stakeholder representation, where relevant (e.g., to reflect current stakeholder interests) or wish to expand participation (e.g., to include technical experts or the private sector), as appropriate. The role of the respective participants in the assessment process should be identified and communicated.
   - It is important that the approach to generate the assessment's outcome is based on the practices that were established for stakeholder consultations during the readiness preparation phase. Countries may also wish to consider additional assessment components, such as expert/independent inputs or review.

Conducting the Assessment

4. *Preparation of stakeholder events (e.g., workshops or focus groups).*
   - Participants may need to adapt the Assessment Framework to the country-specific context. This may involve translating the Assessment Framework into relevant languages or culturally appropriate formats. Countries may also choose to tailor the Assessment Framework to more accurately or meaningfully reflect country circumstances, for example by including country specific terms[34] or additional criteria or diagnostic questions to the Assessment Framework (e.g., on the basis of issues that have emerged during readiness formulation or preparations).
   - All inputs to the assessment process will need to be compiled. This includes preparing background materials (e.g., documents summarizing the readiness preparation process, the assessment criteria, the assessment methodology and other information relevant to performing the assessment) and collating relevant documents or outputs of readiness preparation process (the national REDD+ strategy; information on the REL/RL, MRV system, safeguards (including the ESMF and FGRM; and other supporting documentation as required). Inputs should be made publically available in advance of the multi-stakeholder assessment process.

5. *Facilitation of the assessment process.*
   - With stakeholders informed of the assessment methodology and relevant background material provided, the multi-stakeholder assessment process should aim to arrive at progress indicators (color scores) for the subcomponents, as well as discuss strengths and weaknesses of the country's progress related to the 34 assessment criteria, and actions (and priorities) for further improvements. It is important to note that the progress indicators are only a means to synthesize the assessment outcome (by subcomponent) and are complemented by corresponding detailed and comprehensive descriptions of achievements, gaps, and actions going forward for the 34 assessment criteria. REDD Country Participants may wish to use the progress indicators (color scores) to further summarize progress on the respective 34 assessment criteria.

[34] Countries should draw from existing definitions and guidelines, e.g., as available for the R-PP or within the specific country context.

Communicating and Disseminating the Assessment Outcomes

6. *Synthesis of outcomes.*
   - It is important to capture the process, discussions and outcomes in a multi-stakeholder self-assessment report. Key elements include:

     1. Summary of the multi-stakeholder process and discussions; and
     2. The assessment results: progress indicators (color scores) for the nine subcomponents; significant achievements and areas requiring further development related to the corresponding 34 assessment criteria; and actions that address identified areas for further work.

7. *Dissemination and validation.*
   - Countries should publicly disseminate all inputs, outputs and outcomes, in a culturally appropriate manner. Countries may wish to allow for multi-stakeholder or independent validation (of accuracy and completeness) of the draft multi-stakeholder self-assessment report before finalization.

For additional information, please visit:
www.forestcarbonpartnership.org

or email the Facility Management Team at:
fcpfsecretariat@worldbank.org

Carbon Finance

AT THE WORLD BANK

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