

REDD Readiness Progress Fact Sheet

COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF CONGO

March, 2012

1. R-PP Preparation and FCPF Readiness grant

- The grant agreement for USD3.4 million was signed in January, between the World Bank and the country's Ministry of Finance. The funds are available, and being managed by the Management Unit of the PRCTG project, at the Ministry of Planning due to their fiduciary capacity.
- A call for expressions of interest in the positions in the National REDD Coordination has been issued and the hiring process is ongoing, to allow the National REDD Coordination to be fully operational. Three key studies (i. causes of deforestation / strategic options to address these causes and ii. options for the legal and institutional framework for REDD+ in RoC; iii. Feasibility study for an emission reduction program in the Sangha Department) should also be procured soon.
- The FCPF and UN-REDD Program held a joint mission in February to allow the finalization of the UN-REDD Program document to be submitted for approval by the UN-REDD, at its meeting in March 2012. The UN-REDD will focus its support on: i) REDD+ Management Arrangements (USD860K), with a strong emphasis on support to decentralized structures at the department level and hiring an international Technical Advisor ; ii) Strategy preparation, focusing on experimentation (pilot activities on the ground); iii) preparation of national safeguards standards for REDD+; and iv) the establishment of the national MRV system.

2. National REDD Readiness Management Arrangements

- The formal institutional arrangements for managing the REDD+ process in the Republic of Congo have not been created yet. The decree for the creation of these structures has been sent to the *Pôle Économique*, which should discuss the document before it is sent to the *Conseil des Ministres* for final signature by the President.
- Various members of the Committee already have informal meetings to discuss REDD-related issues, including representatives from other Ministries.
- The National REDD Coordination is not formally created, but is operational. A light team of three professionals has been put in place, through a Ministerial note, to steer the R-PP preparation. A call for expressions of interest in the positions in the National REDD Coordination has been issued and the hiring process is ongoing, to allow the National REDD Coordination to be fully operational.

3. Stakeholder Consultations and Communication

- National civil society organizations created a permanent platform to coordinate their engagement in the REDD+ process (*Cadre de Concertation des Organisations de la Société Civile Congolaise et des Peuples Autochtones sur la REDD+*). A workshop grouping over 100 local communities and indigenous peoples representatives from every department in the country took place during the joint mission in January. The main accomplishment of this workshop was to build general support for a Charter for the permanent platform. Following much discussion and debate, the representatives also succeeded in establishing a 20-person joint Steering Committee for the platform.
- The FCPF Capacity Building Program for CSOs and IP groups is providing a USD70,000 grant to the above-mentioned platform to support department-level consultations and capacity building on REDD. WCS will manage the funds. The activities will be launched in March, and led by the Platform.
- The Government led a national 'campaign' on REDD+ and on the R-PP over four months in 2011 to strengthen stakeholders' participation in the REDD+ process.

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4. REDD Strategy Preparation

- In-depth analysis of causes of deforestation and forest degradation, and REDD+ options are to be launched once the FCPF USD3.4 million grant is available. The National Coordination has refined the ToRs for these studies, which can be found in the final R-PP.
- Pilot projects proposals for submissions to CBFF, AFD and other potential donors will be prepared with the support of a technical assistant to be hired under UN-REDD financing.

5. Implementation Framework

- Analytical studies (funds management, benefit sharing, carbon ownership, REDD+ regulations) to be launched once the second part of FCPF financing is available. ToRs for these studies have been refined and can be found in the final R-PP version.

6. SESA

- Terms of Reference for the SESA have been prepared as part of the R-PP.
- Safeguards for REDD+. Environmental and social sustainability standards for REDD+ in RoC were reviewed at the January joint mission, including the SESA/ESMF approach of the FCPF and the Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (SEPC) of UN-REDD. The CSO platform on REDD (see above) expressed interest in creating a working group on "Social and Environmental Risks and Benefits", and produced notional ToRs for the functioning of this group.
- The recruitment process of an international firm to facilitate the SESA process will be launched in the coming months, once the results of the studies being launched (see above) become available.

7. Development of a Reference Scenario

- No activity to report at this stage. Activities to be launched once the second tranche of FCPF financing is available.

8. MRV

- No activity to report at this stage.

9. Other

The FCPF PC meeting in October 2012 will take place in the Republic of Congo.