

**Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Mechanism
Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) External Review Template**
(interim, January 12, 2011, from Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 5)

**Review of the revised draft R-PP submitted by Vanuatu:
Version 6 Working Draft (10 Jan 2013)**

Reviewer: Stephen Cobb and three other TAP reviewers

Date of revised review : 2nd March 2013

Overview of the Synthesis, produced on 12th February 2013,

The Vanuatu proposal is an important one for several reasons. It is a proposal from an LDC which is so classified because of the particular problems it faces socially and environmentally, rather than in terms of the usual economic criteria. It is a Melanesian nation and therefore represents a system of cultural and social organisation which is not only the antithesis of what is usually associated with governmental control, but it is also representative of the governance arrangements across a significant part of the Pacific from eastern Indonesia to Fiji. It is an archipelago where the small population is disproportionately spread over the islands and where geographic isolation is a strong part of its history, influencing not only different degrees of social development but also underlining the cost and difficulty of communication. While the official jurisdiction is a single country, it is more realistic to view the country as a series of quite separate communities, which will have different histories of interconnectedness and world views. It is also a country where levels of formal education and literacy are very low in general and where the relict of colonialism has bitten deeply into the trust of government and outside influences.

This brief analysis is very relevant to the issue of public consultation and the ability of the country to demonstrate the width and depth of its support for the opportunity of REDD+ in general and the FCPF support in particular. An impressive feature of the proposal is not what has been achieved in terms of the assessment criteria, but what has been newly established in terms of an on-going consultation process, acknowledging the role of traditional communities through their tribes, clans and families.

It will take a long time to cultivate the inclination for widespread consultation, let alone the degree of understanding necessary to demonstrate support for the REDD+ process and its potential benefits. Reviewers knowing the country feel that it is most likely that many people who have been engaged in the consultations are still arguing about how "the government", the "United Nations" or other outsiders are trying to steal their carbon - like they have already stolen their trees and their land. There needs to be a clear distinction drawn between statements of support which can genuinely be attributed to "the people" and those attributable to educated and articulate members of their elites.

The experience of other neighbouring states in the western Pacific, in the domain of establishing preliminary REDD+ regimes has not been particularly encouraging. Despite these daunting challenges of communication and of governance in Vanuatu, the nation quite possibly offers the best chance of establishing an effective model of how FCPF and other donors can support a Melanesian archipelago to conserve its forest through adopting REDD+ and the implicit future conditions of reduced emissions as an economically effective mechanism.

A critical issue will be how decisions are made concerning the allocation of money between the various stakeholders. There is currently a lot of attention being given to the importance of property and resource rights. There will be an opportunity to consider allocation on the basis of contributed actions to emissions reduction, taking the debate beyond the simple arithmetic of resource ownership, by providing real incentives to active management.

The potential of a future REDD-based carbon trade, generating funds to deliver finances to countries to conserve their forests, represents for nations such as Vanuatu an exhilarating opportunity to incorporate such funding into their economic planning. We have a sense that this is happening in Vanuatu, in which situation the mechanisms through which such benefits will be distributed to land and resource owners need to be very clearly thought through. Of paramount importance is the issue of delivery of basic human services and how an increase in their provision would register in progress towards the attainment of MDGs. The Government of Vanuatu should show some degree of commitment to defining the mechanisms they are considering for the benefit distribution mechanisms, as some other countries have been able to do, even if only in outline at this stage. This process is an integral part of "readiness" and the options need to be spelt out and justified, to avoid any suspicion of this funding being captured in Port Vila.

On a more down-to-earth level: the pages of the document need numbering and the section headings, styles and numbering need a thorough overhaul: our comments have often been impossible to pin to specific pieces of text, because these document management details are lacking.

In conclusion, we feel that the R-PP has come a long way, and there are encouraging promises of work taking place during February that may elevate several of the components to meeting the standard, or very nearly doing so. There is still a lot to be done, but it is do-able. The reviewers wish the R-PP team a productive few weeks and hope that this final sprint will enable the R-PP to meet the approval of the Participants' Committee in late March.

Comments on the Revised version of 27th February 2013

The team in Vanuatu has exceeded our expectations and have transformed what was still a very tentative piece of work, into a very polished and convincing one. We are impressed by the progress that has been made.

The standard has now been met for the majority of the components (9 of the 12) and the remaining three components have largely met the standard. This is a very satisfactory state of affairs.

One small feature of the document that has elevated its quality, is the consistent use of well-referenced footnotes. The section-headings are still not perfect, and some of the numbering has not quite worked.

In summary, this has now become a highly competent RPP, and the TAP reviewers note with satisfaction how much, and how rapidly, it has improved.

| Standard | Initial evaluation by TAP (September 2012) | Revised evaluation by TAP (January 2013) | Revised evaluation by TAP (February 2013) |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1a. National Readiness Mgmt. Arrangements | Standard partially met | Standard largely met | Meets the standard |
| 1b. Information sharing, Stakeholder Dialogue | Standard partially met | Standard largely met | Meets the standard |
| 1c. Consultation and Participation Process | Standard not met | Standard largely met | Meets the standard |
| 2a. Land Use, Forest Law, Policy and Governance | Standard partially met | Standard partially met | Meets the standard |
| 2b. REDD+ Strategy Options | Standard partially met | Standard partially met | Standard largely met |
| 2c. Implementation Framework | Standard not met | Standard partially met | Meets the standard |
| 2d. Social & Environmental Impacts | Standard not met | Standard not met | Meets the standard |
| 3. Reference Level | Standard largely met | Standard largely met | Meets the standard |
| 4a. Monitoring - Emissions and Removals | Standard largely met | Standard largely met | Meets the standard |
| 4b. Other Multiple Benefits, Impacts and Gov | Standard not met | Standard partially met | Standard largely met |
| 5. Schedule and Budget | Standard not met | Standard not met | Standard largely met |
| 6 Monitoring & Evaluation Program | Standard not met | Standard not met | Meets the standard |

Standards to be Met by R-PP Components

(From Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 5:)

Component 1. Organize and Consult

Standard 1a: National Readiness Management Arrangements:

The cross-cutting nature of the design and workings of the national readiness management arrangements on REDD, in terms of including relevant stakeholders and key government agencies beyond the forestry

department, commitment of other sectors in planning and implementation of REDD readiness. Capacity building activities are included in the work plan for each component where significant external technical expertise has been used in the R-PP development process.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The new version has expanded the previous material to show more detail. This is valuable and it shows amongst other things that the REDD+ Steering Committee has been elevated in the administrative structure - this indicates a welcome recognition of the importance of the REDD+ programme in the overall government programme.

This component covers mainly those relevant stakeholders that have key responsibilities in undertaking the activities of the FCPF. One of the steps which has been achieved since the initial R-PP submission has been the organisation of a governance structure. The Department of Forestry remains, appropriately, technically positioned, while primary responsibility for climate change and the REDD+ preparation initiative is placed under the general remit of the National Advisory Board for Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB). This administrative structure has been well argued. That being said there remains a need to consistently demonstrate the functional relationship between government and the authority and legitimacy of local communities and villages.

There is quite a lot of material in this component on forest governance; this would normally belong in component 2 a. While it is helpful background material, it rather gives the impression that REDD+ is seen as largely a matter for the forestry sector. This is at odds with the need for a multi-sectoral approach, that takes all aspects of land-use into account; it is also at odds with the decision, already referred to above, to place REDD+ coordination in the National Advisory Board for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. **This needs a bit more thought here.**

The roles of the private sector in the implementation of the project activities is also very important and must be connected with the responsibilities of the public institutions in execution of the project.

The cross-sectoral issues must be developed around any existing programs and activities which have some inputs whether indirectly or directly with any existing related programs and activities

Continuous consultation with the key stakeholders must be in conjunction with other related ongoing programs and activities. This project should not be seen as an entirely stand alone program and the people and government of Vanuatu, the private sector, land owners and resources users must have ownership of the project.

But there **still is no analysis of capacity building needs** and the **budget still needs more work**: more detail would be helpful and it presumably needs to run for the whole lifespan of the R-PP implementation phase.

This component now **largely meets the standard** and is likely to do so, once the items highlighted in bold have been attended to.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

This section has been vastly improved, so that the whole description of the institutional arrangements looks enormously more convincing. A big effort has been made to think

about the cross-sectoral aspects of REDD implementation, so that better and more inclusive structures are proposed. The section on capacity- building is a bit less thoughtful, but it responds to our earlier comments. The budget and planning are now of the expected level of detail, though we will ask questions later about the distribution of the proposed spending of the FCPF budget allocation.

This component now meets the standard

Standard 1b: Information Sharing and Early Dialogue with Key Stakeholder Groups:

The R-PP presents evidence of the government having undertaken an exercise to identify key stakeholders for REDD-plus, and commenced a credible national-scale information sharing and awareness raising campaign for key relevant stakeholders. The campaign's major objective is to establish an early dialogue on the REDD-plus concept and R-PP development process that sets the stage for the later consultation process during the implementation of the R-PP work plan. This effort needs to reach out, to the extent feasible at this stage, to networks and representatives of forest-dependent indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers and forest dependent communities, both at national and local level. The R-PP contains evidence that a reasonably broad range of key stakeholders has been identified, voices of vulnerable groups are beginning to be heard, and that a reasonable amount of time and effort has been invested to raise general awareness of the basic concepts and process of REDD-plus including the SESA.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The component starts with a lively section on stakeholder mapping. This dates back some time, and was evidently funded through sources other than the R-PP preparation grant, but none the worse for that. Translating the map into reaching those stakeholders, has proved to be a major challenge, though (as we indicated in the summary, at the beginning of this synthesis).

Overall, it represents a good start on how to share information, if a little bit of a textbook exercise on stakeholder mapping. There is some discussion of the National REDD+ Policy Workshop in September 2012, but little in terms of what policies will be the focus, and how stakeholder input will be used. There is no discussion of the feedback process - how the plans will be changed to meet needs of stakeholders. Participation at the National Policy Workshop was limited to national government representatives, local NGOs and regional intergovernmental agencies. It is thus questionable that the dialogue element of this component went to local communities and to the provinces.

Invitation to and participation of local key stakeholders in workshops related to project implementation should and must be encouraged. The information gained from the workshops can be communicated through local networks to resources owners and resources users if the affected provinces and communities participate fully in the process towards implementation of the project activities. The impression the reviewers have of this is that the intentions were good and honourable, but that outreach, in the time and with the resources available, was a daunting challenge.

Language capacity is often essential for the on-going transmission and application of traditional knowledge. This is missing in this component. Traditional knowledge should be encouraged as an important component, first of communication systems and media and subsequently for the implementation of the programs and activities.

This is one of those components that is about process, and not so much about content or editorial

matters. We are realistic about the short time remaining to complete the R-PP, and see no point in recommending processes that would take months or require resources that are not available. Since we learn, however, that the NGO Live and Learn has been working in recent weeks on these very issues, we would ask that they **contribute as much as they can to an improved description** (the current one - numbered section 4 - is too short and not very reassuring), that would give more comfort that what has been set in train has been able to reach rural communities and has been able to benefit from their concerns and from their wisdom. To be fair to other countries who have had a difficult time meeting this standard, we feel that we have to ask for that last effort from the Vanuatu R-PP team.

There are still **no budget numbers**, so it is hard to see what the priorities are and what will be done when. This will no doubt come after the late February budgeting workshop.

We feel that this component **largely meets the standard** and would be able to do so with the additional details called for above.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

This component, too, has been transformed. It is now one of the clearer exposes submitted by any country, of the challenges of establishing meaningful dialogue with stakeholders, particularly in the challenging demographic and geographical circumstances of a small island state. The cautionary words about managing expectations are most welcome, and the authors have obviously and rightly thought carefully about this. The establishment of national and regional (SPREP) web-based information platforms is an excellent idea, and well described. The way in which information received from the dialogue, will be brought into thinking about programme design and execution, is now adequately described. Live and learn (the local NGO) has used its time well in the last couple of weeks, and this is now a component whose basic thinking and level of detail are now in good shape. The budget and activity plan are now in good shape, too.

This component now meets the standard

Standard 1c: Consultation and Participation Process

Ownership, transparency, and dissemination of the R-PP by the government and relevant stakeholders, and inclusiveness of effective and informed consultation and participation by relevant stakeholders, will be assessed by whether proposals and/ or documentation on the following are included in the R-PP (i) the consultation and participation process for R-PP development thus far³ (ii) the extent of ownership within

³ Did the R-PP development, in particular the development of the ToR for the strategic environmental and social assessment and the Consultation and Participation Plan, include civil society, including forest dwellers and Indigenous Peoples representation? In this context the representative(s) will be determined in one of the following ways: (i) self-determined representative(s) meeting the following requirements: (a) selected through a participatory, consultative process; (b) having national coverage or networks; (c) previous experience working with the Government and UN system; (d) demonstrated experience serving as a representative, receiving input from, consulting with, and providing feedback to, a wide scope of civil society including Indigenous Peoples organizations; or (ii) Individual(s) recognized as legitimate

government and national stakeholder community; (iii) the Consultation and Participation Plan for the R-PP implementation phase (iv) concerns expressed and recommendations of relevant stakeholders, and a process for their consideration, and/or expressions of their support for the R-PP; (v) and mechanisms for addressing grievances regarding consultation and participation in the REDD-plus process, and for conflict resolution and redress of grievances.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

This is a frank and up-to-the minute assessment of what the R-PP development team, and their collaborating arms of government, have been able to achieve in consultation and engagement with important stakeholder groups. Let us just recall how enormous are the challenges. The concept of REDD+ is alien; the suspicion of authority in rural communities is great; the fragility of traditional land tenure systems has been under sustained attack for the last 30 or 40 years (mainly through logging concessions granted in the 80s and 90s); the government stakeholders themselves are weak, not because they are intrinsically so, but because in a very sparsely populated and geographically scattered archipelagic nation, any one Government department or government officer is spread extraordinarily thin; and finally, the geographical separation of stakeholders across a myriad islands, is immense.

Faced with these challenges, the R-PP gives a robust account of the efforts made to meet each of the requirements set out in the standard.

The R-PP preparation team is very clear about the distinction between what they have been able to achieve so far and what remains to be done during R-PP implementation. This is excellent.

A consultation process is described that is “currently under development for implementation through the third and fourth quarters of 2012”. This has presumably now taken place and this **therefore needs to be brought up to date.**

The preparation of a full consultation plan has been awarded to the NGO “Live and Learn”. Results are expected by the end of February and will undergo a national validation process prior to final R-PP submission. **This will be a necessary step to meeting the standard.**

Not surprisingly, given the background suspicion and geographical isolation referred to earlier, the R-PP reports that many communities felt very isolated and ‘left out’ of any decision-making. This was also the case for many non-government organisations working in communities. This cannot be resolved now, in preparation: it is too big a challenge. But the authors have done well to write about it so frankly. The work being done now, this month, **should be used to expand on this, and explain how it could be tackled during the implementation of the project itself.**

A heartening note is struck about some of the Government stakeholders, when it is

representative(s) of a national network of civil society and/or Indigenous Peoples organizations (e.g., the GEF Small Grants National Steering Committee or National Forest Program Steering Committee).

reported that the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Agriculture and the State Law Office have all offered their support to the R-PP process. This support will be very important to the Department of Forestry and the Project Management Unit under the NAB (NAB PMU) during R-PP implementation.

There is a reasonable review of grievance mechanisms provided under existing legislation, and with the support of certain government structures, such as the Ombudsman's Office.

The budget and workplan are not yet very convincing; we make general comments about this in Component 5, but **we are hopeful that the budgeting workshop planned for later this month will bring this up to standard**, for this component as for the others.

We now feel that this component **largely meets the standard** and that it is quite possible that it will indeed meet the standard, once the topics that have been identified in **bold**, have been dealt with in a few weeks' time.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

The team working on this has used its time well over the last few weeks. This is now one of the best descriptions of a consultation process that we have seen, and the details of the proposed consultation plan are very thoughtful, and prepare the ground extremely well for the implementation phase. The description makes quite clear how many different routes can be adopted in charting out how to communicate, and through what hierarchy of different competent authorities. It is not set in stone and the authors are right to point out how the decisions on consultation pathways may be more of an art than a science. The budget and activity plan have been dealt with adequately.

This component is now thoughtful and reassuring and it **meets the standard**.

Component 2. Prepare the REDD-plus Strategy

Standard 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Forest Law, Policy, and Governance:

A completed assessment is presented that: identifies major land use trends; assesses direct and indirect deforestation and degradation drivers in the most relevant sectors in the context of REDD-plus; recognizes major land tenure and natural resource rights and relevant governance issues; documents past successes and failures in implementing policies or measures for addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; identifies significant gaps, challenges, and opportunities to address REDD; and sets the stage for development of the country's REDD strategy to directly address key land use change drivers.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

This component goes through the requirements of the standard in a fairly methodical way, covering land-use, land-use change, drivers of deforestation, governance and legal issues. Most of these sections cover just about enough ground to be adequate. However, the **section on drivers, while interesting, could certainly be more detailed**. Most other countries have presented the drivers both in text and in **tabular form**. This would be a helpful thing to do, as it would lead the

reader into a clearer picture of what needs to be tackled in the next section on the strategies needed to combat the causes of D & D.

It would be really helpful to do as other countries have done, and to present **either a table or maps, or both**, that summarise one or other of the metrics of national forest cover over a time series (and by inference or calculation, the national **rates of forest loss**).

The most obvious subject **missing from this component is a description of land and forest tenure and resource rights and ownership**. This simply has to be dealt with. Some of it is touched on elsewhere, in other components, but there has to be an adequate description of it here, in this component.

A number of specific questions asked in the synthesis review of October 2012 are still not answered: for example, there **needs to be an analysis of land use patterns** and current leasing arrangements. But there is useful new material, and the new information lays the basis for the design of a REDD+ pilot project in Vanuatu. The key recommended features and steps towards such a project are not defined, however.

The component address some major issues. The need to consider the rapid population growth rate of Vanuatu and plans for future subsistence and economic developments must be weighed against the need to protect forested areas to reduce carbon emissions. These are important policy issues for government.

Soil degradation is an increasingly important issue affecting agriculture. The traditional practice of shifting cultivation, that allowed the soil to go through a process of regeneration by being left idle for extended period ranging from 5 to 10 years, is no longer possible. Shorter fallow periods contribute significantly to soil degradation. This in turn has an important bearing on forest cover and forest regeneration potential. This **should be referred to** in this component of the R-PP.

Information related to land management in Vanuatu is scattered and patchy due to the fact that land management is an integral of many different development activities hosted within different ministries and departments and information is not easily accessible and in some cases of poor quality. This has not been clearly stated in this component of the report.

This component, as others, lacks a work-plan of substance and totally lacks a budget. We expect both to be remedied after the workshop planned for later this month.

This component only **partially meets the standard**. We have highlit what we believe needs to be done to remedy this.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

The section on drivers has certainly improved, and is well referenced. It is not perhaps as well supported by quantitative data as it might have been, but the fact that the major cause of deforestation is due to a cavalier phase of logging concession leasing in the period from 1980 to 1990, is used to explain the rather concentrated phase of forest loss. This deals with the TAP's previous request to see graphic representation of forest loss over time: it cannot realistically be done.

There is a new and extremely interesting section (bringing together some text that was previously elsewhere in the document, but adding new also) on land-use, land ownership, land tenure and carbon rights. There is also now a better description of patterns of land-use. This has elevated the RPP from being very shaky on this topic, to rock solid: well researched and convincingly presented.

There is a not very convincing narrative (and Table 2) about shifting cultivation.

This component now meets the standard.

Standard 2.b: REDD-plus strategy Options:

The R-PP should include: an alignment of the proposed REDD-plus strategy with the identified drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and with existing national and sectoral strategies, and a summary of the emerging REDD-plus strategy to the extent known presently, and of proposed analytic work (and, optionally, ToR) for assessment of the various REDD-plus strategy options. This summary should state: how the country proposes to address deforestation and degradation drivers in the design of its REDD-plus strategy; a plan of how to estimate cost and benefits of the emerging REDD-plus strategy, including benefits in terms of rural livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and other developmental aspects; socioeconomic, political and institutional feasibility of the emerging REDD-plus strategy; consideration of environmental and social issues; major potential synergies or inconsistencies of country sector strategies in the forest, agriculture, transport, or other sectors with the envisioned REDD-plus strategy; and a plan of how to assess the risk of domestic leakage of greenhouse benefits. The assessments included in the R-PP eventually should result in an elaboration of a fuller, more complete and adequately vetted REDD-plus strategy over time.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

This section has been improved, and additional information has been provided, since October 2012. There is much useful information on the jurisdictional and nested approach. The discussion of strategy options is thoughtful and thoroughly realistic. It refers to the conditions of different islands, thus justifying the jurisdictional or nested approach. It does not make as much specific reference to the material in the previous component, as it might, for example to the drivers of deforestation. But the material is more general than specific. The real question will be how the demonstration/pilot activities will be implemented, but there is no bridge from this good, but slightly abstract description of the strategy options, to what might be proposed to be done to mitigate the problems.

If properly conceived proposal emerge from the budgeting exercise later this month, all will be well. **If not, this is a serious omission that has to be dealt with.**

One approach might be to base the testing of strategy options on existing pilot project for forestry such as the IFPs on Ambae, Pentecost, Malekula, Santo, Erromango etc.. This would test both the project design and the commitment of the different stakeholders (Government agencies, landowners, resource users, private sector, local communities and NGOs). It may be that these projects are not amenable to additional components being thus grafted onto them.

Under increasing development pressure, land tends to be seen more recently in some areas as a commodity that can be leased in return for cash. The strategies proposed in the R-PP will need to provide comparable or improved economic returns as the current land lease arrangements so that the resource owners and resource users can rational decisions about their options. REDD+ must be economically competitive.

There is **no work plan or budget**, but we have referred to that above and are expecting it to be dealt with later this month.

This component still only **partially meets the standard**. There is rather a lot still to do to develop the strategy options that would bring it up to standard.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

The authors have responded to the earlier TAP comments by developing a compelling case for not responding to the drivers of D & D with a conventional area-based approach, but instead by developing a series of policy options, to be applied widely over the archipelago. The reason for this is the consequence of history and geography: the degree of deforestation overall is low by comparison with other south pacific states, since there have not in the past been strong deforestation pressures; and none of the forest patches is large enough to warrant a REDD scheme of its own. Instead, a series of 9 policy options is developed, linked by a number of overarching themes, that will apply to all of them. In view of the small, dispersed population, this seems a pragmatic and sensible approach.

The budget is as well developed as other components, but it reveals that much of the effort will be devoted to thinking and planning, and not much to doing. Such implementation as is aluded to would be funded by donors not yet identified, and at a proposed financial scale that seems too low, by far. There is a risk that at the end of the implementation phase of the RPP, Vanuatu will have thought everything out very carefully and have established methods, policies, laws and institutions, but still may not have much experience of making REDD work, through the implementation of pilot activities, for example. **This still needs a bit more thought.**

This component now **largely meets the standard**

Standard 2.c: REDD-plus implementation framework:

Describes activities (and optionally provides ToR in an annex) and a work plan to further elaborate institutional arrangements and issues relevant to REDD-plus in the country setting. Identifies key issues involved in REDD-plus implementation, and explores potential arrangements to address them; offers a work plan that seems likely to allow their full evaluation and adequate incorporation into the eventual Readiness Package. Key issues are likely to include: assessing land ownership and carbon rights for potential REDD-plus strategy activities and lands; addressing key governance concerns related to REDD-plus; and institutional arrangements needed to engage in and track REDD-plus activities and transactions.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

This component contains a very thoughtful analysis of the workings of government and the strategic options employed by the government of Vanuatu, to manage the inputs of foreign assistance to the country, without too much disrupting their own vision of how to manage the economy and the budget. While such a discussion is not actually solicited in the standard, it is a comforting lead into the presentation of how REDD+ and its financial inflows (both in the preparatory phase and once a full REDD+ programme is under way) will eventually be managed. This is a broad discussion of governance concerns: not all are covered, by any means, but they are examined from an unusual and interesting perspective.

Many of the key issues are discussed. The decision to place REDD+ as part of the climate change adaptation and disaster risk domain of government activity makes far more sense,

once one has read the sections describing Vanuatu's vulnerability to natural disasters. This is a compelling part of the narrative, and the REDD+ architecture fits with the realities of the threats to a Melanesian archipelago.

The narrative would benefit from having **more detail about precisely which institution** would be responsible for what: it may be that this has not yet been decided, but if that is so, it should be clearly indicated how and when this would be defined in the early stages of implementation. One way of doing this would be as part of the work plan (see below).

One issue missing from this section is that of land ownership and carbon, land and resource rights. Though this related set of topics does appear elsewhere in the R-PP (as it must do, to meet other standards), it would be correct to **describe here how these issues will be dealt** with as part of the project implementation phase. This is particularly important in Vanuatu, with its predominance (as in neighbouring nations in the western Pacific) of privately-owned land. Just how private ownership is going to mesh with a publicly-driven initiative, is not made clear. It **needs to be discussed here**, though it is complex and we are not expecting it to be solved during this preparatory phase.

There is a schedule of interagency meetings planned, and this is encouraging. But they do not constitute a work-plan. The standard calls for this quite clearly, and this **needs to be done**.

As the authors are well aware, there is no budget yet; **this has to be dealt with**, in conjunction with the proper planning of activities.

This **standard is partially met**; we feel it could fairly easily be met, once the issues highlighted in **bold**, above, have been adequately attended to.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

The first section of this component could equally well be a part of the previous component, 2 b. The new description of the institutions is now quite convincing, in relation in particular to the multidisciplinary approach that is proposed. The description of land ownership and carbon in this component is not very detailed, but the new description of these topics is so good in earlier parts of the document (in particular in 2a) that we would like to overlook this at this juncture. The narrative about public and private ownership runs strongly through this new document, and the complexities of dispute resolution in the Vanuatu legal system are clearly described.

A process of interagency collaboration is described, with a number of helpful diagrams; they do not constitute a work-plan *per se*, but they do form the basis of an adequate working process. There is now a budget and activity plan, of comparable quality as in the rest of the document.

This component now **meets the standard**

Standard 2.d: Social and Environmental Impacts during Readiness Preparation and REDD-plus Implementation:

The proposal includes a program of work for due diligence for strategic environmental and social impact assessment in compliance with the World Bank's or UN-REDD Programme's safeguard policies, including methods to evaluate how to address those impacts via studies, consultations, and specific mitigation measures aimed at preventing or minimizing adverse effects. For countries receiving funding via the World Bank, a simple work plan is presented for how the SESA process will be followed, and for preparation of the ESMF.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The short paragraph of text comes nowhere close to meeting the standard for this discussion of social and environmental impacts and the safeguards to be applied. We would recommend that the R-PP team **consults the FCPF website**, to see the sort of degree of detail that other countries have provided. Much of it is not particularly original, nor often very tightly linked to that country. So even a **generic approach** would be at once a commitment, and a pointer to how Vanuatu would go about this.

A program of work **needs to be outlined** to set timeframe for environmental and social risk and impact assessment for the key identified issues in the selected areas for monitoring of impacts. This is necessary so that the program of work is not affected. The process for the environmental and social impacts is quite lengthy and this has to be accounted for in the report in the period during which it is expected to be undertaken.

This **work programme needs to be linked to a budget**, which has to be prepared from scratch.

As it stands at the moment, this component **does not meet the standard**. On the other hand, it is a matter of editorial work to complete the section, not necessarily demanding consultation, so ought to be amenable to fairly rapid improvement.

Comments on and assessment of the final, revised version of 27th February 2013

There is a completely new section on Social and Environmental Impact Assessment, that is textbook stuff, correct in both approach and detail, and suitably adjusted to conform with Vanuatu's existing practice and experience in this domain. There is a work programme, woven into both the text and the budget. The budget itself is rather high, in proportion to other components of the budget, but this is probably realistic in view of the complex social impacts that REDD might have, in an archipelago with such diverse patterns of land and resource ownership.

Thanks to the careful listening to the TAP's previous comments, this component now **meets the standard**.

Component 3. Develop a Reference Level

Standard 3: Reference Level:

Present work plan for how the reference level for deforestation, forest degradation (if desired), conservation, sustainable management of forest, and enhancement of carbon stocks will be developed. Include early ideas on a process for determining which approach and methods to use (e.g., forest cover change and GHG emissions based on historical trends, and/or projections into the future of historical trend data; combination of inventory and/or remote sensing, and/or GIS or modeling), major data requirements, and current capacity and capacity requirements. Assess linkages to components 2a (assessment of deforestation drivers), 2b (REDD-plus strategy activities), and 4 (MRV system design).

(FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a stepwise approach may be useful. This component states what early activities are proposed.)

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

Previous comments in the October 2012 synthesis, were that approval of this section should wait until more detail was provided in components 1 and 2. This still applies, since those sections are still incomplete. We have, we believe, given rather clear guidance as to what needs to be done still, in each of these components, to elevate them to the required standard.

In addition, **some sections here have not been completed** (there is no text beneath the headings): national circumstances and Vanuatu's national socio-economic and climatic conditions, for example.

Engagement and ownership still need to be demonstrated by the most important stakeholders, in particular the Vanuatu government. But the R-PP team have worked out a generic schedule (in Annex 3) and the budget reflects some careful thought about what will be done and when. The budget numbers might need to be reconsidered, since some of them seem low, for example for database compilation and various scenario tests.

A welcome feature of this part of the document (and section 4 a, which follows) is the accompanying references and later Bibliography. This is reassuring, telling the reader that the figures and the approaches have a basis in existing research and proper documentation.

It would be helpful to the understanding of the links between activities, if the **headings in the Activity and Budget table** at the end of this component, were to match the headings (or at least, the main ones) in the text. Some further work is needed on the budget: the precision here suggests that this budget and its unit costs may have been imported from elsewhere. Whatever the case, some of the figures look too optimistically low, and **probably need re-thinking**. Considering the geographical complexity of Vanuatu, we are surprised not to see this (and the implicit additional time involved in gaining national coverage) reflected in a rather higher budget, for this component in particular.

This component still **largely meets the standard**, and could quite easily do so, once the cross-referencing to work proposed in Components 1 and 2 has been properly woven into this narrative, and once the few comments in **bold**, above, have been dealt with.

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This is now a sophisticated and complicated response to the demands of component 3, based on interactions with a very wide range of institutions, both national, provincial and

in some cases, regional. It also shows how Vanuatu will use an array of economic and demographic models, as well as biological, in the reference level work. It gives a good account of the particular practical problems. The process will involve wide participation, which will therefore assure the degree of ownership to which the earlier TAP review had referred. Previously incomplete sections have now been completed. The budget and associated activity plan are quite detailed enough for this phase of RPP development. This is now a very competent part of the RPP. It meets the standard.

Component 4. Design a Monitoring System

Standard 4a: Emissions and Removals:

The R-PP provides a proposal and workplan for the initial design, on a stepwise basis, of an integrated monitoring system of measurement, reporting and verification of changes in deforestation and/or forest degradation, and forest enhancement activities. The system design should include early ideas on enhancing country capability (either within an integrated system, or in coordinated activities) to monitor emissions reductions and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and to assess the impacts of the REDD-plus strategy in the forest sector.

The R-PP should describe major data requirements, capacity requirements, how transparency of the monitoring system and data will be addressed, early ideas on which methods to use, and how the system would engage participatory approaches to monitoring by forest-dependent indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers. It should also address independent monitoring and review, involving civil society and other stakeholders, and how findings would be fed back to improve REDD-plus implementation. The proposal should present early ideas on how the system could evolve into a mature REDD-plus monitoring system with the full set of capabilities.

(FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a staged approach may be useful. The R-PP states what early activities are proposed.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-Plan meets this standard, and recommendations:

As the synthesis review of October 2012 stated, this component has been carefully thought out, and the budget (also apparently very precisely worked out) is consistent with the work proposed. The budget gives the impression of having been based on carefully costed unit costs, but this may be an illusion (it might have been borrowed from elsewhere, for example)

But before component 4a can be said to meet the standard, components 1 and 2, well as 4b, need to be developed to the same level so that there is integration of policy and monitoring.

It would be **helpful to have more detail on data availability and data quality**. Although a broad picture is given about the types of monitoring approach that would be adopted, there is no hint of the degree of **precision that would be needed to measure and detect change** (an essential element in knowing whether or not there have been statistically significant changes in carbon stocks over any given period.

A population estimate and growth rate for the next 10 to 20 years (human) would be helpful to calculate the rate of forest clearing for subsistence and other developments against management of the forest cover for GHG inventory. The Department of Forestry has been measuring forestry plots on some islands of Vanuatu for many years and these could be assessed for their suitability as a part of the baseline information.

It would be helpful to have more information about **the human capacity constraints** to doing this work and to know which institutions would be involved, contributing and needing what. Not much

light is thrown on the extent which could be made of using the knowledge and capacity of local communities to participate in this work.

As it stands, the **standard is largely met**, and we feel it would be met if the few points mentioned above were attended to.

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There are now detailed tables and accompanying text on available data sets that will be used in the establishment of the MRV: this looks comprehensive and shows a deep understanding of the issues involved in controlling and maintaining data quality. There is responsibility for data collection and management assigned to a very wide range of participants, both within and outside government. This is one of the more sophisticated and multi-disciplinary approaches to MRV that we have seen. As requested, there is a description of the capacity issues that this system raises; we have some concerns that the system may actually be too complex and demanding, for the overstretched agencies available to participate in this venture in the future.

This component now **meets the standard**

Standard 4b: Other Multiple Benefits, Impacts, and Governance:

The R-PP provides a proposal for the initial design and a workplan, including early ideas on capability (either within an integrated system, or in coordinated activities), for an integrated monitoring system that includes addressing other multiple benefits, impacts, and governance. Such benefits may include, e.g., rural livelihoods, conservation of biodiversity, key governance factors directly pertinent to REDD-plus implementation in the country.

(The FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a staged approach may be useful. The R-PP states what early activities are proposed.)

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-Plan meets this standard, and recommendations:

The text really only touches on the possible benefits of more closely integrating forestry activities with agricultural activities. This is of course a core part of the potential for improving rural livelihoods. But the text does not say anything about how this would be monitored, nor by whom. It is not made clear how this might be integrated with the more specific MRV system, in the forest areas. There is no mention of the monitoring of potential changes in (and improvements to) forest stocks, and the relation of this to the capacity of local communities to assist in the monitoring process. There is no mention that biodiversity could benefit REDD+ implementation, nor that to quantify this would require a separate methodology and separate institutions to do the work. All of these points **need to be attended to**, if this component is to meet the standard.

There is no budget yet, and no associated work plan. This needs to be remedied.

As it stands, this component only **partially meets the standard**.

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This revised component has some excellent features, including a better-than-average discussion of how to monitor forest governance and a good description of how communities will be involved in monitoring and how data collection capacity will be built. It is one of the few RPPs to acknowledge the vast challenge of managing the disparate sources of data. On the other hand, the previous TAP review invited some thought to be given to how biodiversity benefits would be monitored and this has not yet been done. Other aspects of the interactions between forestry and agriculture, as part of the co-benefits of human livelihoods, are not developed.

This component has certainly improved, but it is still a little patchy. **It largely meets the standard.**

Component 5. Schedule and Budget

Standard 5: Completeness of information and resource requirements

The R-PP proposes a full suite of activities to achieve REDD readiness, and identifies capacity building and financial resources needed to accomplish these activities. A budget and schedule for funding and technical support requested from the FCPF and/or UN-REDD, as well as from other international sources (e.g., bilateral assistance), are summarized by year and by potential donor. The information presented reflects the priorities in the R-PP, and is sufficient to meet the costs associated with REDD-plus readiness activities identified in the R-PP. Any gaps in funding, or sources of funding, are clearly noted.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

We have every reason to presume the Vanuatu team will be able to provide the detailed work schedules and budget proposal, that they acknowledge they need, and which they are planning to produce in the course of a workshop for this express purpose, during the course of February.

At the moment, this component **does not meet the Standard**; but we are optimistic that it will do so in a few weeks' time. It is to be noted that proper budgeting and work planning will elevate a lot of the other standards, too. A brief word of advice: make sure that the budget tables do distinguish between the activities that are to be financed by the FCPF (all other things being equal), and those financed by other donors.

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There is now a budget, laid out as an activity plan with 48 Main Activities, spread out over 4 calendar years. The total budget requested is \$7.3 million; half of this would be from FCPF and the remainder from donors not yet identified, and from the Vanuatu Government. In this presentation of the budget, the proposed distribution between FCPF-funded activities and other funders, has been lost, though it is more explicit in the components themselves. There is a risk that critical parts of the RPP implementation never find a donor, which would compromise the value of the work as a whole.

Surprisingly, the relationship between the Activities listed in the individual components and the summary budget in this component, have been lost (numbering them in the components, and

again in this summary budget, would make it easier to follow their relationship to the originals). The titles are the same, their origin obscure.

The budget is broadly convincing (with reassuringly low unit costs for many of the individual activities), but leaves some sources of concern, and therefore this component only **largely meets the standard**

Component 6. Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Standard 6: The R-PP adequately describes the indicators that will be used to monitor program performance of the Readiness process and R-PP activities, and to identify in a timely manner any shortfalls in performance timing or quality. The R-PP demonstrates that the framework will assist in transparent management of financial and other resources, to meet the activity schedule.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The text as presented (half a page) is not an adequate description of a programme M & E framework. We would expect to see a **description and a tabular presentation of the component parts of the programme** (its Activities, for example), with a reasonable attempt to define a measurable set of **indicators** that project targets have been met. The standard is not calling for a full programme Log frame, but is anticipating the early development of a useful tool by means of which, the implementation of the programme can be monitored. There are many examples on the FCPF website, of how other countries have tackled this challenge. They should be consulted.

Until this is done, the component **does not meet the standard**.

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This component now contains a thorough tabular presentation of the proposed M and E framework, and all the major elements of it give the sense that they have been carefully thought out.

There is an accompanying text describing the conceptual aspects of the M and E programme, the concept of M and E, reporting routines and capacity building for community-based M and E. This is helpful and thoughtful.

This component **meets the standard**.