

Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)

Note on Options for Improving FCPF Communications

June 18, 2011

This note presents options for improving FCPF communications in response to discussions at PC8, and the recommendations of the recent FCPF evaluation.

Background

1. One of the findings of the first evaluation of the FCPF, conducted by the consortium of Baastel and the Nordic Agency for Development and Ecology (NORDECO) between December 2010 and June 2011, is as follows:

Outreach and communication is an essential part of the FCPF mandate as a global mechanism, particularly due to the complexity, relative newness and the rapidly changing external environment of REDD-plus. Effective outreach is undertaken at three levels: the country level, within the World Bank, and in the global arena. Currently efforts by FCPF to effectively communicate key messages around REDD-plus, the program itself and the fast moving developments and innovations although adequate would benefit from a more targeted and deliberate approach.

2. The recommendation of the evaluation report with respect to communications is as follows:

Develop and implement a communication and outreach strategy to disseminate and package FCPF outcomes more widely for use at country-level, within the WB and to external audiences.

3. The World Bank management response to the recommendation is as follows:

Agree/ongoing

REDD+ is a fairly new business activity. Given the linkages with international processes, there is a need to communicate effectively and disseminate messages emerging from the FCPF and REDD+ to the Management and to the country-based staff as well as external stakeholders. Management intends to address this issue and consider a set of actions aimed at effective communication at all levels. A communications plan will be developed by the Facility Management Team. In addition efforts to regularize internal communication on the latest developments and emerging issues in REDD+ using existing Bank communication network for Bank staff supporting REDD+ will be made.

4. PC8 in Dalat, Vietnam, decided that a Working Group would be established to undertake ground work to help structure the discussions on the recommendations from the independent evaluation of the FCPF, in preparation for a session at PC9 in Oslo on this topic. The PC Working Group has met over a

series of three teleconferences and a report presenting the early views expressed during the discussions held by the Working Group on the FCPF Program Evaluation has been completed.

5. The early thoughts and views of the PC Working Group with respect to the recommendation on the communication and outreach strategy were as follows:

- i) This has been identified as a high priority*
- ii) While developing a communication strategy, FMT should at the same time develop appropriate communication actions for quick implementation*
- iii) The communication strategy could have a two pronged approach: a) General outreach regarding the overall objectives and status of the FCPF; b) Sharing of country experiences and what is happening at the country-level, and providing an opportunity for feedback from other stakeholders*
- iv) There is a need to systematize the communication and outreach and make it more proactive (i.e. newsletter, social media options, website, etc), possibly hire full-time staff*

6. The Working Group also concluded that this recommendation – if the PC agrees to it – would be targeted for the short term (i.e. actions must be initiated within the next 12 months).

7. At PC8 in Dalat, Vietnam, the PC also requested the FMT to develop a plan to enhance communications about the FCPF, including such topics as multiple delivery partners and the Carbon Fund.

8. In the light of the recommendation of the evaluation and this request by PC8, the FMT has prepared this note on options for improving FCPF communications.

Distinguishing between Communications, Public Relations, Outreach, Knowledge Management and Marketing

9. For the purposes of this note and for a better understanding and greater clarity for the future, the FMT proposes distinguishing between the different elements of ‘communications’.

10. The term ‘communications’ is usually all encompassing and includes public relations, outreach, knowledge management and marketing. Some elements of the communications plan (e.g., improvements to the website, regular newsletters) will impact on all areas of communications. Public relations forms only a part of this general area of ‘communications’.

11. However, in the context of the FCPF it is possible and important to separate from this more general area of ‘communications’ two distinct elements of the communications strategy, as follows:

a. Knowledge Management and Outreach

Knowledge Management and Outreach is a specific part of a communications strategy, and for the purposes of this options paper, refers to dissemination and sharing of appropriate technical REDD+ materials and information with the relevant audiences, including all those involved as participants and observers in the FCPF, plus Bank staff working on REDD+ and

external stakeholders. Knowledge management has been undertaken as both a Secretariat (FMT) function of the Readiness Fund as well as in REDD Methodology Support.

b. Marketing

Marketing refers to the efforts to market both funds to potential participants and, given the status of contributions to the two funds and the desire to create a real Public-Private partnership, particularly the efforts to market the Carbon Fund to potential private participants. The Carbon Fund Participants have recently approved their FY12 budget, and have allocated funding for work related to Carbon Fund marketing, which is therefore not addressed here.

Current Situation

12. In past years there has not been a separate budget line item specifically for FCPF Communications, although FCPF Secretariat and REDD Methodology Support expenses have included staff time from both a Senior Communications Officer and a Knowledge Management Analyst (shared with other World Bank carbon funds) and has covered the costs of hosting and maintaining the FCPF website and other general communications to FCPF stakeholders (e.g., brochures, the FCPF banner/poster). During the last financial year, the knowledge management work has been strengthened through the sharing of a REDD+ Knowledge Management Coordinator's services between the FCPF and the World Bank Institute. This support will continue in FY12 and is included in the FMT base budget proposal.

The Communications Plan

The FCPF Website

13. Feedback from stakeholders and organizations working on REDD+ indicates that the FCPF website is a major source of information for those who have access to the internet. The FMT recognizes that the website is overloaded with information and requires restructuring and/or redesign. The FMT has already drafted recommended revisions to the website structure and now intends to engage either internal World Bank web design staff or an external website design company to restructure/redesign the website. The estimated cost of this website redesign, including FMT input and a required security review, is approximately \$35,000.

Option 1 (Additional Full-Time Communications staff)

14. The PC Working Group on the evaluation has discussed the possibility of hiring additional full-time staff dedicated to communications. This first option therefore is to recruit into the FMT a full-time member of staff wholly dedicated to FCPF communications issues. Should the PC agree to recruiting this staff member, that person's work program may include the following:

- i) writing and distributing a regular newsletter as well as other articles, news, notes and establishing suitable distribution channels (Forests-L, Climate-L, Ecosystems Marketplace, REDD Desk etc), responding to media articles and enquiries regarding the FCPF,

- ii) support and coordination of some marketing for the Readiness Fund and Carbon Fund, i.e., initial contact, logistical follow up and coordination of contacts, meetings etc with prospective private Carbon Fund participants,
- iii) working with the Knowledge Management Coordinator as necessary to ensure the dissemination and sharing of appropriate technical REDD+ materials and information with the relevant audiences,
- iv) Publication of the FCPF Annual Report, and other publications as necessary,
- v) Coordination of improvements to and maintenance of the FCPF website,
- vi) General communications and public relations efforts on behalf of the FCPF, and activities to raise the general profile of the FCPF.
- vii) Enhancing internal communication and packaging key messages amongst World Bank staff.

15. Should this option be selected by the PC, the recruitment of a new full-time member of staff to the FMT would be subject to internal approval by World Bank management.

Option 2 (Limited Option)

16. Prior to the recent discussions amongst the PC Working Group, instead of recruiting a new communications staff member dedicated full time to the FCPF, the FMT had planned to propose a lower cost option using the services of short-term consultants and/or external contractors to fill the most urgent and pressing needs. Gaps would be filled on a priority basis by other FMT members, and assistance from the part time Senior Communications Officer and Knowledge Management Analyst would continue on a limited/shared basis. The FMT's proposal was to hire only the following specific short-term consultants and/or external contractors:

- i) Writer/editor(s) to (a) write and distribute a regular newsletter and establish suitable distribution channels (Forests-L, Climate-L, Ecosystems Marketplace, REDD Desk etc); and (b) assist in the editing and design of new informational or promotional materials (e.g., brochures, posters and similar items)
- ii) Either internal or external firm to undertake the website redesign

Additional Publications/Banner/Posters

17. Whichever option is selected, improving the general profile of the FCPF will also require additional printing of publications and/or additional banners/posters, the estimated cost of which is included in both budget options outlined below.

Brief Comparison of Options

18. The budgeted costs for the two options for the Readiness Fund for FY12 are as follows:

	Option 1 (\$000s)	Option 2 (\$000s)
Budget	220	75

19. For budgeting purposes it is estimated that the new communications staff member would start in four months time. If option 1 were selected, full year costs of this staff member would need to be included in future annual budgets.

20. With Option 1, once a full time communications staff is in post, the time dedicated by other members of the FMT to communications would be reduced, allowing them more time to progress the activities and work plans of both the Readiness Fund and the Carbon Fund, including the actual marketing of the Carbon Fund to prospective private participants. A downside of the full time option is that hiring of such staff and having them fully on board can take 6 months or longer.

21. Option 2 allows the most critical communications efforts to be carried out whilst keeping the cost to a minimum. However, the supervision and coordination time expended by other members of the FMT, including the Facility Coordinator, will reduce the time available to make progress in other important activities. This option may not fully attain the need for the systematic approach to communications and outreach that the PC working group reflected in its discussions.

Proposed Next Steps

22. The PC, as part of its budget approval process during PC9 (session 7c on the agenda), is requested to consider the proposed options, taking into account its earlier expressed preferences for strengthened support to FCPF communications.