



Readiness Fund REDD+ Belize Participants Progress Report

v. 2018



FCPF Readiness Fund: REDD+ Belize Participant Annual Progress Report

About this document

This template is for use by Readiness Fund (RF) REDD+ Country Participants to report their annual progress on REDD+ readiness activities in general, and on FCPF-supported activities in particular. The data provided through these reports represents a central information source for measuring progress against the FCPF's expected results and performance indicators, as articulated within the FCPF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework.

Report preparation

Reports cover progress through 30th June of each year.

When preparing the report, RF REDD+ Country Participants should draw upon the country M&E system for REDD+ (component 6 of the R-PP) and should consult members of the national REDD task force or equivalent body. Inputs from stakeholders including IPs and CSOs should be integrated, with any divergent views recorded as appropriate. Detailed, indicator-by-indicator definitions and reporting guidance are provided within the FCPF M&E Framework (<https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/monitoring-and-evaluation-0>).

Reporting schedule

Completed reports should be submitted to the FCPF's Facility Management Team (FMT) by **15th July** every year.

SECTION A: NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. In brief, what were the main REDD+ readiness-related activities delivered within your country during the last year?
 - For example, strategy / policy drafting, stakeholder consultation events, capacity building / training, awareness raising initiatives
 - Please be as specific as possible, e.g. name, date and number of participants in consultation events (sex disaggregated, if available), name of policy being drafted, institutions involved in policy drafting

Project coordination

After a prolonged search, in December 2017, Belize hired a REDD+ Readiness Preparation Director to coordinate the Project. Likewise, in March 2018, Belize contracted the services of a Communication Officer and a Social Expert to support the REDD+ preparatory actions, specifically to engage key stakeholders to and communicate to them crucial activities of the Project.

Overall approach

A review of the R-PP that was prepared in 2013/2014 was conducted to ensure that it was in line with the decisions of the Paris Agreement and the current national circumstances such as Belize's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2019, and National Environmental Action Plan 2015-2025, among other important documents. Considering the national and international contexts, a "roadmap" was proposed, making necessary changes on the way to proceed with the REDD+ Project, in the context of Belize. Such proposal also benefited greatly from the lessons learned and the experiences of other countries that have gone through the Preparation Phase. The proposed approach, as referred to above, is focused on the need for Belize to update its database related to the

forestry sector since it does not have transparent, comparable, consistent, complete and accurate data to understand the dynamics of the forestry sector. The year with relevant information, for example, is 2010.

Project activities

Open Foris/Collection Earth for Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forest (LULUCF) Assessment

After extensive discussions with the relevant parties, Open Foris/Collect Earth (CE) together with free high/medium resolution imagery available online was adopted to visually assess LULUCF between 2000-2017 and, thus, identify the major drivers of the deforestation and forest degradation along with their associated emissions. The reason for choosing this tool is that it will provide an understanding of the land use changes for all the activity data that should be reported in the Greenhouse Gases Inventory (GHGi), which in turn is the basis of the Reference of Forest Emissions/Forest Reference Level (FREL) of the country.

Having agreed on the tool, Belize took the necessary steps to create capacity on the Collect Earth. In February 2018, four Forest Department technicians received a one-week intensive training in the use of this tool at the FAO facilities in Rome, Italy.

After understanding the necessary preparatory steps and processes to implement CE, the different classifications of Land Use that is in line with the activity data that will be reported in the GHGi using the IPCC 2006 Good Practice Guidelines as well as a forest definition for Belize to be used from here onwards were concluded. These were delivered by the technical staff of the Forest Department and the National Climate Change Office, with the active participation of the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, and Sustainable Development (MAFFESD). Furthermore, a 'Mapathon' Protocol was developed to guide the use of the Collect Earth tool. This is especially necessary for the interpretation of satellite images of high and medium resolution.

For the Collect Earth activity, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for an AD Lead Coordinator, an AD Assistant, and five technicians in various roles have been prepared and the procurement process is underway. As noted above, this activity will provide the necessary activity data to develop the GHGi and in turn the FREL. Of equal importance, the data will provide different possible scenarios to decision makers of Belize, which in turn will inform the best structure for a REDD+ Strategy, taking into account all five REDD+ activities.

LULUCF Map of Belize

Based on discussions with various technical experts, Belize decided to use Sentinel-2 to prepare the LULUCF map of 2017. The ToR has received No-Objection from the World Bank (WB), and the and the procurement process is underway.

Forest Monitoring System

The REDD+ Coordination Unit had an extensive discussion with the WB expert on the comprehensive design and planning of a National Forest Monitoring System, a forest inventory system, and the expansion of the existing Permanent Sampling Plots network.

Communication Strategy and Capacity Development

At the moment, the Communication Strategy and training modules on the concept of REDD+ is being developed, which is expected to lead to a national sensitization and capacity building initiative, including within the MAFFESD staff which is considered of critical importance. The Communication Strategy will rely on extensive stakeholder engagement process, including with indigenous and non-indigenous communities, the forest sector, the agricultural sector, academia, community organizations, non-governmental organizations, and various government agencies. In addition, key stakeholders are being engaged to initiate the Consultation and Participation Plan activity. Contact has been made with non-government organizations Indigenous organizations (the Maya Leaders Alliance, the Toledo Alcaldes Association, the National Garifuna Council, and the Belize National Indigenous Council) and non-indigenous communities (National Association of Village Councils).

SESA Process

The REDD+ Coordination Unit is currently preparing a SESA work plan based on the guidance and experience from other countries and from discussions with the WB experts. As discussed with the WB Team, SESA-activities will intensify after Belize have preliminary LULUCF activity data.

2. What were the main REDD+ readiness-related achievements in your country during the last year?

- For example, x number of individuals attended REDD+ consultations (sex disaggregated, if available), national REDD+ strategy was finalised, government formally adopted national REDD+ related policy/s, NFMS was established, partnership agreement with private sector association signed

Noting the importance of robust and current data in the context of Belize, the early implementation efforts focused on that. In addition, an important achievement this year is an improved understanding of REDD+ within the Forestry Department, the NCOO, the MAFFESD, the University of Belize, and the Ministry of Natural Resources, which are all considered to be important national stakeholders in the context of Belize.

Collect Earth Tool and protocol has been established. This will lead to the development of FREL/FRL.

A Draft Communication Plan is being socialized with all relevant stakeholders.

Planning for the Consultation and Participation Plan is being conducted with key stakeholders.

The Grievance Redress Mechanism activity is being procured.

3. What were the main REDD+ readiness-related challenges and/or problems during the last year?

- For example, lack of engagement from key stakeholders, political barriers, limited funding

Staffing/Operationalization of REDD+ Coordination Unit

One of the main challenge last year was the procurement process for the hiring of staff and operationalization of REDD+ Coordination Unit (R+CU). This challenged was by and large addressed.

Technical approach and related processes

The biggest challenge Belize has had is to have a better understanding of the technical aspect specific to FREL and LULUCF map, the procurement process, as well as the SESA process. Belize is convinced that the administrative issues and technical understandings among everyone are being solved.

Expectations management

Based on preliminary stakeholders' consultations, it seems that there is a fundamental misunderstanding on the REDD+ Readiness process within the country and related expectations. Such challenge is being addressed through effective communications and clarifications about the Readiness Phase which is meant to enhance the underlying capacity of various stakeholders in implementing REDD+.

4. What are the main REDD+ readiness-related activities that you hope to deliver during the next year?

- For example, hold x consultation events, submission of R-Package to the PC, finalisation of SIS, commission research into REDD+ strategy options

- Update forest data related to Land Use changes, from 2000 to 2017 using the Open Foris/Collect Earth tool.
- Develop emission factors for different land uses classification to meet GHGi tier 2 approach.
- GHGi data from 2000 to 2017 to have information ready to use in Forest Reference Emission Level.
- Develop a 2017 Sentinel 2 map.
- Conduct a legal analysis of the feasibility of REDD+ in Belize.
- Analysis of FREL scenarios.
- First draft report of the Forest Reference Level.
- Develop a SESA Workplan.
- Build a Grievance Redress Mechanism.
- Develop a REDD+ Communications Strategy.
- Develop a REDD+ Strategy of Implementation.
- Develop a Consultation and Participation Plan.
- Conduct a Gender Study.

SECTION B: READINESS PROGRESS

5. Please provide your own assessment of national progress against all REDD+ readiness sub-components:

(Indicator OV.1.B: Number of FCPF supported countries that have in place a National REDD+ Strategy, FREL/FRL, NFMS and SIS; Output 1.3 indicators)

Progress rating key:

Complete	The sub-component has been completed
	Significant progress
	Progressing well, further development required
	Further development required
	Not yet demonstrating progress
N/A	The sub-component is not applicable to our process

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)	Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)
R-PP Component 1: Readiness Organisation and Consultation		
Sub-component 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements	Complete	The management arrangements are largely in place, including the REDD+ Coordinating Unit and the Project Steering Committee. The next step is to establish the Technical Expert Group.
Sub-component 1b: Consultation, Participation and Outreach	Complete	A draft Communication Strategy has been prepared by the R+CU. It is being reviewed for adoption. In addition, preparations are being made to embark on the national consultation on the Consultation and Participation Plan; to be conducted by the R+CU. This had resulted in initial contact with almost all key stakeholder groups. The Grievance Redress Mechanism, another key activity, is in its procurement stage.
R-PP Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation		
Sub-component 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance	Complete	Activities related to Land Use and Land Tenure will be conducted in 2019.
Sub-component 2b: REDD+ Strategy Options	Complete	The Open Foris/Collect Earth tool will produce information necessary for FREL and the GHGi. This data will allow Belize to develop a strategy. This data is yet to be produced (see Section 1).
	Complete	

Sub-component	Progress rating (mark 'X' as appropriate)	Narrative assessment (briefly explain your rating)	
Sub-component 2c: Implementation Framework		The only activity contemplated for 2018 in this sub-component is in relation to Consultation on a REDD+ Strategic Option/s for Belize. As for the 'enabling environment activities' for a Results-Based Payment, they are contemplated to be conducted in 2019 and 2020, after Belize has developed a draft REDD+ Strategy.	
			x
			N/A
Sub-component 2d: Social and Environmental Impacts		As mentioned above, a key activity to be embarked in the coming month is the Consultation and Participation Plan. In addition, a Gender Study will also be conducted to ensure the participation all genders in the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment, the Environmental and Social Management Framework, the Indigenous Peoples Policy Framework, and the drafting of a REDD+ Strategy for Belize.	
			x
	N/A		
R-PP Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels			
Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Levels		The procurement process is underway for the collection and analysis of activity data for the reference period. Terms of Reference are also being prepared for the consultancy to develop the Forest Reference Emissions Level.	
			x
	N/A		
R-PP Component 4: Monitoring Systems for Forests and Safeguards			
Sub-component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System		REDD+ is yet to establish Permanent Sampling Plots, which will contribute toward the national Forest Inventory. The National Forest Monitoring System is foreseen to be initiated in 2019.	
			x
	N/A		
Sub-component 4b: Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards		The National Information System for Non-Carbon Benefits is foreseen to be initiated in 2019.	
			x
	N/A		

SECTION C: NON-CARBON BENEFITS

6. Does your national REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan include activities that directly aim to sustain and enhance livelihoods (e.g. one of your program objective/s is explicitly targeted at livelihoods; your approach to non-carbon benefits explicitly incorporates livelihoods)?

(Indicator 3.2.b: Number of RF REDD+ Country Participants whose REDD+ Strategies include activities that directly aim to sustain and enhance livelihoods)

	No
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If yes, please provide further detail, including attachments and/or references to the documentation that outlines your approach:

Belize does not have a REDD+ Strategy as yet.

7. Does your national REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan include activities that directly aim to conserve biodiversity (e.g. one of your program objective/s is explicitly targeted at biodiversity conservation; your approach to non-carbon benefits explicitly incorporates biodiversity conservation)?

(Indicator 3.3.b: Number of RF REDD+ Country Participants whose REDD+ Strategies include activities that directly aim to conserve biodiversity)

	No
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If yes, please provide further detail, including attachments and/or references to the documentation that outlines your approach:

Belize does not have a REDD+ Strategy as yet.

SECTION D: FINANCE

8. Please detail the amount of all finance received in support of development and delivery of your national REDD+ readiness process since the date that your R-PP was signed. Figures should only include secured finance (i.e. fully committed) – ex ante, (unconfirmed) finance or in-kind contributions should not be included:

(Indicator 1.B: Amount of finance received to support the REDD+ Readiness process (disaggregated by public, private, grants, loans))

Amount (US\$)	Source	Date committed	Public or private finance?	Grant, loan or other?
\$3,800,000	FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant	03/2017	Public	Grant

9. Please detail any ex ante (unconfirmed) finance or in-kind contributions that you hope to secure in support of your national REDD+ readiness process:

Amount for 1 year (US\$)	Source	Public or private finance?	Grant, loan or other?
\$92,000	Forestry Department	Public	Other
\$40,000	National Climate Change Office	Public	Other
\$48,800	Government of Belize	Public	Other

SECTION E: FCPF PERFORMANCE

10. To help build an understanding of the FCPF strengths, weaknesses and contributions to REDD+, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

(Indicator 4.B: Participant Countries' assessment of FCPF's role within and contribution to national REDD+ processes)

Mark 'X' as appropriate

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely agree
A. The FCPF's support has had a central influence on the development our national REDD+ systems and processes			X		
B. The FCPF's support has improved the quality of our national REDD+ systems and processes				X	
C. The FCPF's support has improved national capacities to develop and deliver REDD+ projects			X		
D. The FCPF's support has helped to ensure substantive involvement of multiple stakeholders (including women, IPs, CSOs and local communities in our national REDD+ systems and processes)				X	

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

- A. Neutral since the R+CU, while in communication with the WB Team, has focused on the national circumstances while meeting UNFCCC requirements for REDD+. The project is still at its early stage to have a central influence but it will pretty soon.
- C. The R+CU does not foresee the implementation of subproject during the Preparation Phase of REDD+; hence the neutral.

11. To help assess the usefulness and application of FCPF knowledge products (publications, seminars, learning events, web resources), please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

(Indicator 4.3.a: Extent to which FCPF learning, evidence and knowledge products are used by Participant countries)

Mark 'X' as appropriate

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely agree
We regularly access FCPF knowledge products to obtain REDD+ related information				X	
FCPF knowledge products are relevant to our REDD+ related information requirements			X		
FCPF knowledge products are sufficient to address all of our REDD+ related information requirements			X		
The FCPF website is a useful resource for accessing FCPF and REDD+ related information				X	

Comments / clarifications, if appropriate:

- **We regularly access FCPF knowledge products to obtain REDD+ related information:** The R+CU has accessed the FCPF products on a regular basis to understand some of the issues from FCPF perspective related to REDD+ readiness process in Belize. This always leads to excellent discussions among the R+CU as it seeks to have the best decision for Belize readiness process. R+CU admit that the interaction to improve ToRs from FCPF experts has been useful to all of us.
- **FCPF knowledge products are relevant to our REDD+ related information requirements:** There is plenty of FCPF knowledge products but not all of them are in line with UNFCCC mandate which is the information requirement needed in Belize. Hence, the neutral score.
- **FCPF knowledge products are sufficient to address all of our REDD+ related information requirements:** We score Neutral because the R+CU considers that the FCPF knowledge products are insufficient. This is related to the comments immediately above—that not all the products are in line with the UNFCCC mandate. FCPF products should be more in line with Warsaw REDD+ Framework under UNFCCC to avoid confusions of deliverables.
- **The FCPF website is a useful resource for accessing FCPF and REDD+ related information:** The R+CU team access the website as needed, that is why it is scored as neutral.

SECTION F: FINAL COMMENTS

12. If appropriate, please provide any further comments or clarifications relating to your work on REDD+ Readiness during the last year:

Belize’s efforts from July 2017 to June 2018 has been to organize the work of the REDD+ Readiness Preparation Project; to incorporate the latest UNFCCC Decisions related to REDD+, including the Paris Agreement; to create capacity among the Forest Department, the National Climate Change Office, the R+CU, and other key stakeholders; to prepare a National Communication and Sensitization Plan to transmit the real objectives of the REDD+ Project, so as to avoid false expectations regarding implementation of the current Phase.

After several consultations with key decision makers within the MAFFESD, it is agreed and understood that there is a need for reliable and robust data. This will provide Belize with a REDD+ Strategic Options and identify the drives of deforestation and forest degradation from all five REDD+ activities, as decided in paragraph 70 of Decision 1/CP16 (Cancun Agreement). At the same time, the R+CU is doing consultations on how stakeholders will be engaged in the Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment process.