

TAP Synthesis Review

Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Mechanism Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) External Review Template (interim, January 10, 2011, from Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 5)

Guidelines for Reviewers:

- 1) *FCPF REDD Country Participant R-PPs will be reviewed and assessed by the FCPF Participants Committee, the FCPF's governing body, taking TAP comments into account. External (Technical Advisory Panel or other) and Bank reviewers may provide recommendations on how a draft R-PP could be enhanced, using this template on a pilot basis until a process is approved by the PC.*
- 2) *One set of criteria should be used for review: specific standards each of the current 6 components of an R-PP should be met.*
- 3) *Your comments will be merged with other reviewer comments (without individual attribution) into a synthesis document that will be made public, in general, so bear this in mind when commenting.*
- 4) *Please provide thoughtful, fair assessment of the draft R-PP, in the form of actionable recommendations for the potential enhancement of the R-PP by the submitting country. A REDD Country Participant would be allowed three submissions of an R-PP to the PC for consideration.*

Objectives of a Readiness Preparation Proposal (condensed directly from Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 3)

The purpose of the R-PP is to build and elaborate on the previous Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) or a country's relevant comparable work, to assist a country in laying out and organizing the steps needed to achieve 'Readiness' to undertake activities to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), in the specific country context. The R-PP provides a framework for a country to set a clear roadmap, budget, and schedule to achieve REDD Readiness. The FCPF does not expect that the activities identified in the R-PP and its Terms of Reference (ToR) would actually occur at the R-PP stage, although countries may decide to begin pilot activities for which they have capacity and stakeholder support. Instead, the R-PP consists of a summary of the current policy and governance context, what study and other preparatory activities would occur under each major R-PP component, how they would be undertaken in the R-PP execution phase, and then a ToR or work plan for each component. The activities would generally be performed in the next, R-PP execution phase, not as part of the R-PP formulation process.

Review of Liberia R-PP

**Reviewer : Juergen Blaser and Harrison Ochieng Kojwang,
on behalf of TAP Team (five members)**

Date of review June 5th , 2011

SUMMARY

Note: Highlighted section indicates changes from the earlier version of the TAP draft synthesis as per the revisions made in the revised formal R-PP

The present submission of Liberia is the second draft R-PP for consideration by the TAP and has thus benefitted from earlier TAP comments.

Right from the first draft it was noted that all components of the R-PP had been addressed even though certain components and sub-components needed further work to bring them to comparative levels of quality of past RPP Documents.

The current version is clearly structured and well balanced between important background

information, the descriptions of the actual situation and the general issues that are proposed to be addressed in the implementation of the R-PP, such as;

- The focus on building capacities and knowledge in the country on REDD+; and
- The realistic objectives in each of the components.

Overall, the commitment of the national government to protect large tracts of forest suggests that REDD readiness arrives at a good time. In fact Liberia has shown a strong ownership of the RPP process; a fact which has been ascertained by both in-country and external TAP reviewers.

The TAP recognizes the importance of REDD+ as a key instrument to address climate change mitigation and development concerns in Liberia, being one of the most forest-rich countries in West Africa.

Despite the strong ownership of the RPP by the government and other stakeholders in Liberia, the TAP has noted that the capacity of the responsible authorities, such as the FDA is limited with respect to the implementation of the proposed RPP. However, capacity needs have been recognized and well articulated according to the requirements of each component of the RPP.

Strengths of the RPP

The process of developing the RPP has been fully owned by the Government of Liberia and this has been confirmed by both in-country and external reviewers

Coordination arrangements have been clarified and the membership structures of various committees to oversee and implement REDD+ have been restructured and made more inclusive than in earlier versions

The RPP has now included the management of the relatively huge degraded forest lands for purposes of carbon stock enhancement, which offers the opportunity to address ‘additionality’

The stated intention to restrict commercial plantations (palm oil and other crops) to degraded agricultural lands and fallows is a significant policy position that can safeguard existing forest cover from investor-driven conversion of forest lands

The proposed REDD+ strategies appear to address the drivers in a much clearer way than in earlier RPP drafts. In addition, the cost-benefit analysis of each strategy has been provided, indicating the kind of ‘carbon benefits’ or ‘emission reductions’ associated with each. This can also be used to decide on the interventions that could be given priority in terms of their potential benefits

Components 3 and 4 demonstrate a clear understanding of the methodologies for setting reference levels (scenarios) and the monitoring of carbon stocks, co-benefits and other non-carbon variable

Areas that could be still improved

While interesting strategies have been proposed such as the transformation of the agriculture sector, there is no clear strategy on how to engage and influence that sector

The MRV Component could be stronger on methodologies for carbon assessment within the chosen pools.

In respect to the standards, the following summary can be made:

	Draft R-PP (January, 2011)	Revised Draft R-PP (March 2011)	Formal R-PP (April 2011)	Revised Formal R-PP (May 2011)
Standard 1a	did not meet	Largely meets	Met	Meets
Standard 1b	largely met	Largely meets	Met	Meets
Standard 1c	did not meet	Largely Meets	Met	Meets
Standard 2a	partly met	Partially meets	Largely Met	Meets
Standard 2b	partly met	Partially meets	Met	Meets
Standard 2c	partly met	Largely Meets	Met	Meets
Standard 2d	met	Meets	Met	Meets
Standard 3	partly met	Largely Meets	Met	Meets
Standard 4a	partly met	Largely meets	Largely Met	Largely Meets
Standard 4b	partly met	Partially meets	Largely Met	Meets
Standard 5	largely met	Largely Meets	Met	Meets
Standard 6	largely met	Largely Meets	Met	Meets

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:

In general terms, the national readiness management arrangements are now well described and the institutions that are likely to play key roles are identified.

- The institutions which are likely to play key roles in REDD + are clearly described and they seem suited to oversee the implementation of the RPP.
- The organigram (Figure 1) more clearly depicts a national REDD+ coordination structure, but in which the National Climate Change Steering Committee has a major role along side the Forestry Development Authority
- The terms of reference for the institutions or bodies in the organigram have been provided
- The role of EPA now appears to be within the National REDD+ Steering Committee
- The membership of the various committees have been restructured and more institutions have been added

Recommendation

→ *Despite the observation that there are several layers of REDD+ related committees and supporting bodies, the sub-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:

Observations

The process for stakeholder consultation and participation in the preparation of this R-PP appears to have been very good. In particular the scope and depth of stakeholders identified and engaged is very impressive. There is an excellent description and evidence of this process in the main body and in the annexes of the R-PP.

A list of crucial questions from stakeholders has been provided in the document; this list of question is later taken into account in the further proposed consultation and participation processes.

Due recognition has now been given to the fact that Liberia is living through a post-conflict period and the implications of the recent and protracted conflict on matters of public trust of such processes has now been clearly recognized.

By broadening of the membership of the various REDD+ bodies described under 1a) the TAP is satisfied that given the current circumstances, this is sufficient to deal with the earlier concerns that the RPP process needed to cultivate trust of the public in such a government led process.

Recommendation

→ *The sub-component 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 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.

³ Did the R-PP development, in particular the development of the ToR for the strategic environmental and social assessment and the

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

Observations

- The sub-component is clear and well written and the process was coordinated through a Consultation and Participation Plan used by a Consultation and Participation Task Force
- The facilitation provided by UN-REDD in the consultative process is recognized
- Key areas of concern such as '*information sharing*' and '*conflict resolution*' were included in the consultative process
- The use of regional, national and civil society consultative workshops was appropriate
- The component is concluded by a summary of 'lessons learned' which is commendable since it provides focus on the necessary follow up during the process towards REDD+ readiness and implementation.
- In the earlier draft there was little evidence of sufficient ownership of the document by stakeholders outside the parent Ministry of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA). This has now been sufficiently addressed in 1a and 1 b

Recommendation

→ The sub-component 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; 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:

Observations

A solid review has been provided of the chain of interventions and measures in the sector over the recent decades. Land use change and the drivers of deforestation and degradation have been outlined in significant detail and with quite an impressive level of data.

Concern on the quality of the existing forest data has been expressed and it is planned that data gaps will be addressed during the implementation process

There is a good discussion provided of possible opportunities to address the drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation. There is also a well presented and articulated set of activities to fill in missing gaps to be able to better understand impacts of the key drivers of D and D.

The issue of carbon rights linked to land tenure has been recognized as a key issue and has been

sufficiently addressed under implementation framework in sub-component 2 c

What could be better developed is the recognition of customary land rights as a potential problem that could affect participation and implementation of REDD+ strategies; the text is somewhat confusing as there is a new Community Rights Law - thus some clarifications are needed in this regard.

The potential for enhancement of carbon stocks in the many areas degraded by shifting cultivation and unsustainable logging and other forces has been included

The recommended Technical Review of Liberia's land use systems is quite relevant to REDD+ since it is likely to be one of the key land uses in the near future

The recognition that oil palm and other commercial plantations will be restricted to degraded lands, as opposed to virgin forest land, is in line with IPCC and UNFF Principles which strongly advise against the conversion of forest lands to plantations.

The budget items associated in table 2a page 67, have now been provided. While the budgets would seem modest on some of the proposed assessments, the issues to be addressed are appropriate.

Recommendations:

→ **The sub-component meets the standards**

Standard 2.b: REDD-plus strategy Options:

The R-PP should include: an alignment of the proposed REDD strategy with the identified drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and with existing national and sectoral strategies, and a summary of the emerging REDD strategy, and of proposed analytic work (and, optionally, ToR) for assessment of the various REDD strategy options. This summary should state: how the country proposes to address deforestation and degradation in the design of its REDD strategy; a plan of how to estimate cost and benefits of the emerging REDD strategy, including benefits in terms of rural livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and other developmental aspects; socioeconomic, political and institutional feasibility of the emerging REDD strategy; consideration of environmental and social issues; strategies in the forest, agriculture, or other sectors with the envisioned REDD 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 strategy over time.

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

Observations

This section is largely hinged on a low carbon economy document, developed by Conservation International for Liberia in 2010. The TAP is still not clear on how this low carbon economy is addressing drivers such as biomass energy, large scale conversion of forest lands. It would be important to summarize the key elements of the low carbon economy and assess their importance (negative or positive) to REDD+

In the earlier versions, a lot of gains in emission reductions were going to depend on strategies such as low impact logging, efficient timber conversion and such like activities which are generally espoused under the concept of sustainable forest management.

In the current version, the enhancement of carbon stocks on barren / degraded lands has been strengthened and is well articulated.

Furthermore, the TAP appreciates the discussion of the costs and benefits for each REDD strategic option presented

Recommendations:

- The risks that have been identified under the main sector-based strategies should be fed in to the MRV section since it is important to track them as part of the implementation and monitoring process.

→ ***The component meets the standard***

Standard 2c: 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:

The sub-component has recognized and described the key elements in a framework

- Legal framework - new legislation may give REDD+ surer legal foundations
- Institutional mandates to be clarified
- Management of REDD Revenues
- Clarifying and securing carbon rights
- National carbon accounting and nesting
- Establishment of systems (eg, MRV), strategies, benefit sharing
- Strengthening law enforcement (since SFM is a key mechanism in demonstrating reduced emissions of carbon from forests)
- Access to information

→ **The sub-component 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 sub-component has explained the rationale for carrying out Social and Environmental Impact Assessments. It is well written and comprehensive and is well thought through in respect to technical contents and at the level of the budget.

It draws linkages to recent pieces of relevant legislation, such as the Environmental Protection Act of 2002 and the National Forest Reform Law of 2006, which require the performance of Environmental Impact Assessments.

→ *The component 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:

Observations

- The component is now much more systematic and the key steps toward the development of reference scenarios are comprehensively described.
- It generally demonstrates a clear understanding of the conceptual framework required to develop reference scenarios.
- The choice of forest definitions (canopy cover of 30% and over) is now well justified, despite the observation that emissions from woody vegetation cover not classified as forest, may still be important in estimating historical emissions.
- There is a clear assessment of existing capacity, capacity gaps and a clear plan to build the necessary capacity is in the component
- Liberia will now attempt to estimate below ground biomass, using IPCC GPG recommended methods. It seems that this is an area that could be a legitimate research issue to provide more accurate data.
- The component has justified a further study to improve techniques to estimate deforestation and forest degradation. This is based on the results from two earlier studies; Forest Resources Management (FRM) Project 2004 and Liberia Forest Reassessment (LFR), both of which gave different results.
- Under 2.2 Liberia should clear on why it wants to update the forest cover map to year 2010. It would be useful if such an exercise is used to estimate deforestation trends in equal time

segments such as 2000 - 2005 and 2005 - 2010

- The component has identified the key driver variables to be used in the estimation of future emission scenarios.
- The TAP notes that the budget seems quite low for this component—given the limited capacity mentioned and the work that would need doing -especially on the ground for C stock measurements, the estimated cost seems low.

Recommendation

The proposed technical approach meets the standard

Component 4. Design a Monitoring System

Standard 4a: Emissions and Removals:

The R-PP provides a proposal and work plan 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 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:

- The stated objectives of the MRV component are both clear and relevant. Much of the vegetation mapping and cover change techniques have been sufficiently described.
- A key element such as a national sampling grid for purposes of monitoring biomass / carbon is already described in component 3.
- The TAP would appreciate more discussion as to how their MRV system will be able to monitor the proposed REDD strategies such as changes in logging practices, fuel wood, and agricultural intensification under the proposed MRV system
- The Component has justified the use of the periods 2000-2005 and 2005-2010 for use as reference periods in view of its history of civil strife.
- In general the component is quite strong on the use of remote sensing and GIS but much less so, on the technical aspects of assessing carbon stocks on the chosen carbon pools which is important for estimating emissions. In addition, the MRV will include below ground biomass
- The component is still not clear if the forest cover has high risk areas which will be given special attention in terms of monitoring.

Recommendations:

→ *The component largely 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:

Observations:

The sub-component has been improved and has stated important areas such as governance and biodiversity which will be monitored

There is no proposed collaborative structure among the institutions that will monitor the stated non-carbon variables

Recommendations:

→ *The sub-component 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:

The budget summary is clear, the overall amount is reasonable and it includes contribution from other sources. The TAP questions if the overall budget is sufficient, particularly for developing the Reference Level and MRV. The proponents should explore if there is potential to attract a small number of additional donors for the implementation of the R-PP. A more detailed schedule by main sub-activity should be provided.

Recommendations:

- Reflect if the budget in each component is sufficient to reach the components’ objectives

→ *The component 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 component has made an impressive attempt which has all the components and sub-components of the RPP Readiness Process presented into a results framework matrix, complete with indicators.

→ *The component meets the standard*