

Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
Nineteenth Meeting of the FCPF Participants Committee (PC19)
Arlington, Virginia, United States - May 17-19, 2015
Co-Chairs' Summary

Dear Participant Committee members and Observers,

We are pleased to report that the Participants Committee (PC) of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) held its nineteenth meeting (PC19) on May 17-19, 2015, in Arlington, Virginia, USA.

Over 100 representatives of governments, Forest-Dependent Indigenous Peoples and Forest Dwellers organizations, international and non-governmental organizations and the private sector participated.

All materials, presentations, resolutions and this summary are available on the FCPF website at: <https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/PC19>. Photos are available at: www.flickr.com/photos/fcpf.

Below are the main conclusions of the meeting, which will also be available in French and Spanish.

Update on progress made since PC18

- The Facility Management Team (FMT) presented [progress made since PC18](#). Participants welcomed the key achievements since PC18:
 - US\$31.8 million in Readiness grants signed, US\$7.5 million disbursed to countries since PC18;
 - 8 more Readiness grant agreements signed;
 - 3 additional mid-term reports completed;
 - As of February 2015, Government of Finland joined the Participants Committee;
 - Green Climate Fund adopted a Performance Measurement Framework which will be informed by the FCPF Methodological Framework;
 - Potential to expand the pipeline of the Carbon Fund beyond the current 11 Emission Reduction Program Idea Notes (ER-PINs), with 9 more Countries presenting Early Ideas at the Carbon Fund meeting (CF12) in April 2015;
 - Attention to elevating REDD+ dialogue by bringing Ministries of Finance into the discussion;
 - More staff coming on board.
- Participants and Observers were happy with the progress reported by the FMT since PC18, in particular, the additional staff to support the FMT and the engagement of Ministries of Finance in mainstreaming REDD+ in World Bank interactions with countries.

Updates from UN-REDD and the Forest Investment Program

Representatives of UN-REDD and the [Forest Investment Program](#) presented developments in their respective initiatives.

Readiness Assessment Framework: Setting the stage for Readiness Package (R-Package) Reviews

PC12 defined the purpose, scope, assessment and endorsement process for the R-Package ([Resolution PC/12/2012/1](#)). Accordingly, the R-Package provides a snapshot of readiness progress relative to a country's circumstances, recognizing that capacity continues to be built beyond the R-Package milestone. The core of the assessment process is a thorough self-assessment by multiple REDD Country stakeholders. The Readiness Assessment Framework was adopted by the PC in March 2013 (PC14). A structured and systematic approach (common set of subcomponents, criteria, indicators as contained in the Framework) and expert review by a Technical Advisory Panel of the national multi-stakeholder self-assessment process, ensures comprehensiveness and consistency in a country's assessment of progress. Further guidance on the R-Package review process was provided at PC18 in November 2014.

The DRC's preparation and presentation of the FCPF's first R-Package provided an opportunity to reflect on the Readiness Assessment Framework and process for future R-Packages. Participants:

- Noted preparation of an R-Package is not the end of the road, but an important milestone in readiness preparation providing an opportunity to take stock, assess progress, identify remaining gaps and further needs and generate feedback and guidance;
- Reiterated that the inherent value of the R-Package is the participatory and inclusive multi-stakeholder self-assessment by the country, and appreciated DRC's transparent and honest self-assessment, including the development of a prioritized and budgeted work plan, and encouraged other countries to use a similar approach as they prepare their R-Package;
- Reiterated the usefulness of applying the Readiness Assessment Framework at mid-term, and encouraged REDD countries to continue doing so;
- Raised questions related to the Readiness Assessment Framework and process to consider for future R-Packages, including:
 - The FMT and Bank providing advice to REDD countries on the application of the Readiness Assessment Framework and process, including at mid-term, and the preparation and presentation of a country's self-assessment (including the appropriateness of color scores) to the PC;
 - Considering the process for reviewing R-Packages, including composition of the TAP and ways to streamline consideration of countries' R-Packages at future PC meetings to ensure ample discussion while appropriately managing PC meetings;
 - Considering the relationship of the R-Package with the overall readiness process, especially with respect to Mid-Term Report submission, and ER Program development for the FCPF Carbon Fund.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Readiness Package

The meeting acknowledged the extensive efforts made by the DRC and the DRC's readiness progress achieved to date, and was encouraged by the new legislation on indigenous peoples' rights that is under preparation. In this context, the PC adopted a Resolution: 1) endorsing DRC's R-Package; and 2)

encouraging the DRC to continue with its readiness process and to implement its work program, including: updating the national REDD+ strategy (including integration of provincial plans); strengthening the institutional arrangements to coordinate and implement REDD+ activities effectively; establishing a Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism; finalizing the national registry; reporting on the use of FCPF REDD+ Readiness funds; implementing the communication and participation plan, including strengthening information disclosure at the grassroots level and meaningful participation of relevant stakeholders such as indigenous peoples, local communities and women; and making progress on the development of the reference level.

Further, the PC encouraged the DRC to take into account the issues raised by the TAP expert, and the following issues raised at this meeting:

- Make progress on the REDD+ related reforms embodied in the Economic Governance Matrix, namely on land-use planning and land tenure;
- Implement the Prime Minister's Decree 14/018 (August 2, 2014) establishing the procedures for allocating forest concessions to local communities;
- Continue its efforts to address forest governance issues, including illegal logging; and
- Continue its efforts and make further progress to address the rights of indigenous peoples, including using innovative approaches such as participatory mapping, where appropriate.

The PC requested DRC to report to the PC on its continued readiness process and progress, including implementation of its work program, in accordance with Section 6.3(b) of the Charter and the periodic reporting under the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Where applicable, DRC is also requested to include information on how it has taken into account the above mentioned issues in this regular reporting.

Mid-term progress reports with requests for additional funding

- [Mexico](#), [Republic of Congo](#) and [Vietnam](#) presented their mid-term progress reports on their national REDD+ readiness processes, including requests for additional funding. The PC allocated additional funds of US\$5 million each to support the readiness process.
- Participants commended the three countries on the progress made, the depth of the information provided, as well as the transparency and clarity of the mid-term reports.
- Participants welcomed the lessons being learned in each country and encouraged countries to share their experience for the benefit of other REDD+ countries.

Follow up action:

- Participants encouraged each country to take into account the following issues raised by the PC, during further readiness preparation:

Mexico

- With respect to the Additional FCPF Readiness Grant resources,
 - Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society from Latin America and the Caribbean recommended that Mexico allocate 20% of the additional funding to continue strengthening participation of civil society and indigenous peoples, taking into account aspects concerning gender and youth;
 - The FMT clarified that the Additional Funding Project Paper prepared by the World Bank, as Delivery Partner, will provide detail on the proposed activities to be supported using the additional funds and will be disclosed in accordance with the World Bank Access to Information Policy;
 - Given the integrated landscape approach of REDD+ in Mexico, the PC recommended that Mexico continue its multi-sectoral coordination efforts during the implementation of the Readiness Grant with the additional funding;
- Additionally, the PC invites Mexico, in its national readiness efforts, to continue promoting a participatory and inclusive process in the design of the national REDD+ safeguard system, recognizing that no ongoing FCPF Readiness funding is being used to fund this system.

Republic of Congo

- Consider how to involve relevant sectors in addition to the forestry sector in the REDD+ institutional arrangements, in particular the national REDD+ Committee, and promote inter-sectoral dialogue;
- Provide information on a long-term vision to build forest sector capacity;
- In the development of national REDD+ strategy options, take account of national land use planning and measures to address risks of leakage;
- Develop a feedback and grievance redress mechanism;
- Continue efforts to involve indigenous peoples, local communities, and other key stakeholders, with particular attention to women, in the REDD+ process; and
- Continue with the consultation process including at provincial level, where appropriate, and ensure that relevant information flows between the national and provincial levels.

Vietnam

- Continue improving coordination of activities supported by various development partners, especially with respect to the financing of the emission reduction program proposed to the Carbon Fund. Build on the strong government leadership in REDD+ in that regard;
- Continue the important work on land tenure;
- Take a broad and integrated perspective to prepare the R-Package, considering the support from all partners and views from stakeholders, and using the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework to assess progress.

FY16 budget proposal

The FMT [presented](#) the status of the Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) budget and the proposed FY16 budget (see [FMT Note 2015-1](#)). Final accounts of FY15 will be provided as part of the FY15 Annual Report before PA8/PC20. The PC adopted a [resolution](#) approving the FY16 budget. Key aspects discussed included:

- The FMT clarified that Methodological Support to REDD Countries provided under the Readiness Fund budget is available to all REDD Countries, including those not participating in the Carbon Fund;
- The PC welcomed recent staffing additions to the FMT and noted the explanations of the FMT with regard to the forecast underspend in FY15.

Follow up action:

- The FMT will strengthen efforts to reflect REDD Country needs in the next budget;
- The FMT will provide simple guidance on the support available to REDD Countries.

Status of IP/CSO Capacity Building Program

The FMT presented an update on the [status of the Capacity Building Program \(CBP\) for Forest Dependent Peoples and Southern Civil Society Organizations \(CSOs\)](#). Progress on Phase 1 of the CBP was outlined and well received. On Phase 2, the presentation included: (i) a report on advances achieved in the internal processing of the 3 sets of regional grants (2 per region); (ii) a summary of the steps taken to help Recipient Organizations prepare for implementation of the grants, which will require them to meet the technical and fiduciary requirements of the World Bank; and (iii) an overview of the next steps.

Participants noted that it has taken longer than expected to complete the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the CBP, and welcomed the proposal of the FMT for how it plans to work with relevant stakeholders both within and outside the World Bank, to continue advancing on the preparation and approval of grants under Phase 2.

While the full eligibility criteria for support to organizations in FCPF countries has yet to be decided, the FMT in its presentation reiterated the point from an earlier FMT note and discussions with FIP, that organizations in REDD countries benefitting from the Dedicated Grant Mechanism of the Forest Investment Program (FIP) will not be eligible for support from the CBP. This approach is an attempt to ensure coordination between the FIP's Dedicated Grant Mechanism and the CBP, and to ensure that as many eligible organizations and countries can benefit from the DGM and CBP, while avoiding any potential duplications of beneficiary organizations and countries under the two programs.

The Northern CSO Observer, on behalf of all the IP and CSO Observers to the Readiness Fund, proposed that up to US\$180,000 in funds currently earmarked for these Observers' travel to meetings and related ends be re-assigned to support activities related to the preparation of the CBP. The FMT pledged to study this proposal following PC19 and to advise on whether such a reassignment would be feasible and the type of expenditures that can be financed in accordance with the World Bank's policies and procedures. The FMT also offered to provide quarterly updates to keep interested PC members and Observers up to date on the progress of CBP Phase 2.

Update on evaluation of the FCPF

The FMT provided an update on the status of the second evaluation of the FCPF which is being undertaken in 2015. Participants commented that every effort should be made to include at least two countries per region in the evaluation. The FMT will highlight this when the consultants conducting the evaluation are on board and hold discussions with the Oversight Committee. The FMT highlighted there could be time and budget implications of adding more countries but this would be discussed when the consultant team provides the inception report and the evaluation methodology.

Next meetings

- Next Carbon Fund meeting (CF13): Week of October 12, 2015, likely in Europe. The exact date and venue will be announced shortly.
- Next PC and Participants Assembly meeting (PC20 and PA8): Week of November 2, 2015, tentatively in Guatemala. The exact date and venue will be announced shortly.

Closing Remarks

As we close this meeting, we would like to express our appreciation for the hard work and collaboration of all Participants and Observers at PC19. This meeting has seen the endorsement of the first Readiness Package by the Participants Committee. It was a forum for honest and open discussion, and produced lessons learned, from which many countries and PC representatives can benefit. As was stressed during the discussion, this is a significant milestone along the pathway towards Readiness in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the fulfillment of the FCPF's objectives.

The additional three mid-term reports—from Mexico, Republic of Congo, and Vietnam—demonstrated the robust commitment REDD Countries have to move forward with readiness programs and realize action on the ground. We hope that this momentum encourages other REDD+ countries, while also providing rich lessons that contribute to the growing body of South-South learning among REDD Country Participants.

We also heard updates on a number of items, notable of which was the status of the Capacity Building Program for Forest Dependent Peoples and Southern CSOs. Progress on Phase 1 was well received, while it has taken longer than expected to transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the Program. We look forward to further progress on Phase 2 based on the proposal that the FMT presented and some suggestions from the PC and Observers which the FMT will explore.

A knowledge-sharing session on decision support tools illustrated that the FCPF is making the technical dimensions of REDD+ more accessible for REDD+ countries.

With REDD+ thought leaders focused on the upcoming negotiations in Paris, the solid progress exhibited here at PC19 further illustrates the power and the potential of REDD+.

Please do not hesitate to contact the FMT at fcpfsecretariat@worldbank.org if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Margaret Athieno Mwebesa, Uganda, on behalf of REDD Country Participants,

and

Michael Bucki, European Commission, on behalf of Donor Participants