

# REDD Readiness Progress Fact Sheet

**COUNTRY: Belize**

**August 2016**

## **1. R-PP Preparation and FCPF Readiness grant**

- Through resolution PC2008-2, Belize was selected as a REDD Country Participant. The Readiness Preparation Proposal was presented and endorsed by the FCPF on March of 2015. In terms of the Readiness Grant, the Government of Belize is in the process of reviewing the conditions and is expected to sign onto the document very soon (next few months). In terms of project advancement and due diligence, the country has been able to develop consensus on signing the grant agreement. At the same time the terms of reference for the project implementation team has been developed. These include the tor's for the REDD Program Director, the REDD Technical Coordinator, the REDD Social Expert and the REDD Environmental Expert. It has been agreed that the Protected Areas Conservation Trust will be the Fiduciary Agent between the Government of Belize and the World Bank. The country has also finalized the procurement plan and has been conducting advances on the operational manual for the project.

## **2. National REDD Readiness Management Arrangements**

- The National REDD Readiness Management Arrangements has been stipulated on the R-PP and has not been reviewed recently. Once the grant agreement is signed and funds are made available, the project will be re-taken and the arrangements will be reviewed and updated.

## **3. Stakeholder Consultations and Communication**

- No further stakeholders consultations and communications have taken place after the elaboration of the R-PP. During the process of preparing the R-PP consultations were held nationally to take into consideration the views and comments from different stakeholders under REDD.
- The Government of Belize appointed the Maya Land Rights Commission in January 2016 to implement the Consent Order of the Caribbean Court of Justice. The Commission will 'establish a structured framework that will ensure collaborative consultation and participation of key stakeholders of twenty-three villages in the Toledo District. It is expected that along with this structure the project will be able to engage stakeholders under REDD to enable meaningful consultation and communications.

## **4. REDD Strategy Preparation**

- There has not been any advance on the REDD Strategy preparation.

## **5. Implementation Framework**

- Still being developed and considered.

## **6. SESA**

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- Little work has been carried out on SESA. However a USAID regional project has offered Belize assistance on SESA (Cancun) to advance on the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessments for REDD.

### 7. Development of a Reference Scenario

- The Development of a Reference Scenario has advanced at a slow pace.

### 8. MRV

- Trainings have been provided by the GIZ REDD/CARD Project. However, there has been limited progress at the national level to advance the work on MRV. Studies on above and below ground biomass are being conducted through the measurement of Belize's Permanent Sample Plot network that will contribute to the project output.

### 9. Other

- There have been some delays in the signing of the grant agreement for several reasons. Initially Belize had elections in November of 2015 at which time it was not the appropriate time since there was uncertainty of which party would have formed the new government. At the beginning of 2016 there were many delays. These include issues with the indigenous peoples of southern Belize. The Government of Belize went back to the IP's and engaged them once more asking for their involvement in the REDD Project. In addition to all these delays, Belize experience hurricane Earl which battered its coast and inland areas in July of 2016 causing millions of dollars in damages. Many sectors were affected including agriculture, forestry and housing infrastructure.
- The Key Biodiversity Areas Project (KBA) implemented by the World Bank has been conducting consultations with Mayan communities in the Toledo District in preparation for the development of the Management Plan for the Columbia River Forest Reserve located in the Toledo District. The project is also undertaking and exercise to assess degraded land and forest areas throughout the country with the aim of conducting rehabilitation of these degraded land and forest areas.
- At the Policy level, a National Forest Policy has been prepared by the Forest Department and the Forest Act is scheduled for review and updating in the last quarter of 2016 and which will make provisions for REDD and other flexible mechanisms.