

## **Pan African Peoples Dialogue with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in Doha, Qatar (Dec. 9-11, 2012)**

### **Analysis of current REDD+ Programme in Cameroon within FCPF Programme.**

#### **Introduction:**

In 2008, Cameroon elaborated and submitted its R-PIN (Readiness Preparation Idea Note), which is a document that presents the potentials of REDD+ of the country to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank. After the approval of the R-PIN, Cameroon proceeded in its involvement in the REDD+ process by elaborating its R-PP (Readiness Preparation Proposal) and getting it approved.

Cameroon is in the process of building a REDD+ framework in line with the different phases adopted in some countries in the world namely; the **preparation , capacity building/investment and operations phases** (payments based on performance). Cameroon is actually still on the preparation phase as far as the REDD+ process is concern, and has obtained the approval of its R-PP by the FCPF during the October 2012 Participant Committee meeting held in Congo-Brazzaville. The preparation phase consist of a diagnosis of the existing institutional and legal framework in forest management, elaboration of the reference scenario, the development of a REDD+ strategy and different forest monitoring tools like the MRV (Measuring, Reporting and Verification).

**a). Indigenous Peoples engagement, consultation and participation:** The government of Cameroon through the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Developments (MINEPDED) has engaged the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that include those of the Indigenous Peoples (Forest-hunter gatherers or “Pygmies” and the Mbororo pastoralists) in Cameroon by organizing information and sensitization workshops which took place between January 2010 and June 2011). In June 27-28, 2011 at Mbalmayo a workshop was organized to engage the process of elaboration of R-PP. Representatives of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) organizations were invited amongst other stakeholders. Another one day meeting was organized in July 2011 by MINEPDED and representatives of 60 CSOs (including IPs) to discuss and organize how best to participate and contribute in all the REDD+ processes in Cameroon. A CSOs National REDD & Climate Change Platform (CSO REDD & CC Platform) was created and its cardinal role in the REDD+ process outlined as the follows:

- Organize itself to effectively take part in REDD+ processes.
- Play a key stakeholder role: - Government reminder – Assistant – Contributor
  - Disseminate information, lessons, opportunities
  - Watch dog
- Facilitate active participation of CSOs in the REDD+ processes
- Build knowledge & skills of CSOs

- Ensure proper representation of local communities
- Ensure proper defense of environment & people rights

The Governance structure of the CSO REDD & CC Platform is composed of a National Steering Committee, Regional Coordinators, Council and Village Coordinators. All these decentralized bodies include local people, women and IPs. The Platform succeeded to put in place 30 Regional Coordinators from the 10 Regions of Cameroon, with the financial support from MINEPDED and technical support from IUCN (World Conservation Union) Cameroon . Thirty percent (30%) of the IP's are Regional Coordinators among the 30 elected CSO REDD&CC Platform Regional Coordinators.

Other workshops on information and sensitization on the REDD+ processes were organized between November 2011 and June 2012 for all the ten regions of Cameroon by MINEPDED and its partners. Participants in each region included all stakeholders (including IPs organisations) and each of the workshops lasted for two days.

However it is worth mentioning that IPs & CSOs are represented in REDD+ National Steering Committee Chaired by the ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development

**b) Opportunities and Challenges:** The following opportunities and challenges have been identified for IPs including CSOs in the case of Cameroon: -

***Opportunities:***

- Parties willing to participate in REDD+ must be required to implement the UN declaration on the rights of IPs as framework, as well as to sign and ratify other relevant international instruments e.g. ILO convention 169 not ratified by Cameroon.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities have the chance to be the primary and direct beneficiaries of financing mechanisms for REDD+ where their lands, territories and resources are concerned.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities have got the chance to benefit from their conservation efforts and revenues from REDD+ can equitably be shared between and within communities, especially vulnerable groups and women.
- Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples and local communities have the chance to be involved at all stages of decision- making about REDD, from the design to the implementation as it is requirement to obtain their Free, Prior and Informed Consent from indigenous peoples and local communities when using their territories and this provides the enabling environments for their meaningful participation at all levels.
- REDD+ has provided the opportunity to improve forest governance in Cameroon e.g review of all the forestry and other related laws and instruments.
- REDD+ has provided the opportunity for more than 60 organisations (IP and Women Organizations) and networks in Cameroon to come together. More will be joining as the

National Platform on REDD+ has decentralized in all the 10 administrative regions of Cameroon . With donor support platform was establish, charter and action plan developed.

- Working relationship and instruments of collaboration on REDD+ with Cameroon government authority is in perspective. Also there is mutual good-will despite traditional misunderstanding and difference of perspectives between people exercising power and those representing those not exercising power.

***Challenges:***

- Organisation & representation of CSOs including IP still need more information and training as this was raised during the approval of the R-PP in Congo Brazzaville in October,2012.
- Communication & Networking culture has to be fostered with all stakeholders.
- Leadership, Management & Professionalization is a major challenge
- Access to Financing remains an absurdity
- Rapport with Government & CSOs in general is a challenge despite the improved good-will and understanding manifested by both parties in the recent past.
- Linguistic & cultural minority vulnerability due to the linguistic nature of Cameroon still remains a major issue.
- The last key challenge identified especially in the English speaking territory of Cameroon is the protection of the Atlantic coastal, low land humid forest, montane forest, savanna and existing wetland ecosystems and the rights, culture and livelihoods of local people. Some of the communities concerned are from Bakassi through Korup, Mungo , Akwaya in the South West Region and Bum and Ako in the North West of Cameroon.

**c) How environmental and social issues are being addressed:** Not yet addressed. However, this is going to be an important component of the future REDD+ national Strategy, and in the MRV system. The REDD+ strategy shall take into consideration the major social and environmental issues. Those will be included in the ESFM (Environmental and Social Management Framework) of the future REDD+ strategy.

**d) Inclusion of IPs in designing benefits sharing mechanisms at the local level:** Cameroon has not reached this level yet from the information provided showing that it is still at stage of preparation phase. However, the vision of Cameroon on REDD+ projects call for the involvement of Indigenous People in all pilot projects especially during the conception and validation of feasibility studies. Benefits sharing are important aspect considered during project validation.

**e) How land tenure and user rights are being addressed:** This is under review in the governance issues to be addressed by the R-PP. The land tenure and user rights are better addressed by putting in place good laws governing the different sectors involved that are formulated with the active participation of all stakeholders including the IPs and other civil society actors. The forestry law and the law on the environment are currently under revision. However it is important to state that a new policy governing the Agro-pastoral livestock subsector is being reviewed since 2009 and all key stakeholders are involved.

**f) Participatory governance:** This has not yet been done but is planned for the future and is a very important need in the process as Cameroon want to design a strategy following the different agro-ecological areas. To do that it is very necessary to involve the local population as they know and can better articulate their interest and needs.

**g) Indicators for participatory community based Monitoring and evaluation:** Still under conception as Cameroon plan to build a “strategy for the engagement of stakeholders on the REDD+ process.”

**h) Any other relevant information:** The Ministry of Social Affairs also defends the interest of IPs within the decision making framework.

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