The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)
Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) Template

March 8, 2008

Guidelines:

1. The purpose of this document is to: a) request an overview of your country's interest in the FCPF program, and b) provide an overview of land use patterns, causes of deforestation, stakeholder consultation process, and potential institutional arrangements in addressing REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest degradation). This R-PIN will be used as a basis for the selection of countries into the FCPF by the Participants Committee. Information about the FCPF is available at: www.carbonfinance.org/fcpf
2. Please keep the length of your response under 20 pages. You may consider using the optional Annex 1 Questionnaire (at the end of this template) to help organize some answers or provide other information.
3. You may also attach at most 15 additional pages of technical material (e.g., maps, data tables, etc.), but this is optional. If additional information is required, the FCPF will request it.
4. The text can be prepared in Word or other software and then pasted into this format.
5. For the purpose of this template, "Deforestation" is defined as the change in land cover status from forest to non-forest (i.e., when harvest or the gradual degrading of forest land reduces tree cover per hectare below your country's definition of "forest." "Forest degradation" is the reduction of tree cover and forest biomass per hectare, via selective harvest, fuel wood cutting or other practices, but where the land still meets your country's definition of "forest" land.
6. When complete, please forward the R-PIN to: 1) the Director of World Bank programs in your country; and 2) Werner Kornexl (wkornexl@worldbank.org) and Kenneth Andrasko (kandrasko@worldbank.org) of the FCPF team.

Country submitting the R-PIN: Congo
Date submitted: 16 May 2008

1. General description:

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b) List authors of and contributors to the R-PIN, and their organizations:

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c) Who was consulted in the process of R-PIN preparation, and their affiliation?

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2. Which institutions are responsible in your country for:

a) forest monitoring and forest inventories:

CNIAF: Centre National d'Inventaire et d'Aménagement des Ressources Forestières et Fauniques (National

Centre for the Inventory and Management of Forest and Fauna Resources)

Directeur Général de l'Economie Forestière (National Director of Forest Economy)

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b) forest law enforcement:

Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (Ministry of Forest Economy)

Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Environnement (Ministry of Tourism and Environment)

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c) forestry and forest conservation:

Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (Ministry of Forest Economy)

Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Environnement (Ministry of Tourism and Environment)

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d) coordination across forest and agriculture sectors, and rural development:

Ministère du Plan (Ministry of Planning)

Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Elevage (Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle-Breeding)

Ministère des Mines, des Industries Minières et de la Géologie (Ministry of Mines,and Mining and Geology Industries)

3. Current country situation (consider the use of Annex 1 to help answer these questions):

The Congo extends over 34.200.000 hectares and is unequally distributed between forests (22.471.271 hectares) savannas (11.678.729 hectares) and inland waters (50.000 hectares). The forests which account for 65% of the national territory and approximately 1/10thof the Central African dense forests are to be found in:

- The Department of Kouilou in the south-west of the country, with the Massif of Mayombe, on the Atlantic coast, which covers a surface of 1.503.172 ha of dense and clear forest on dry land;
- The Departments of Niari and of the Lékoumou in the south-west of the country, with the massif of Chaillu, covering a surface of 4.386.633 hectares of dense and clear forest on dry land;
- The Departments of the Likouala, the Sangha, the Basin and Western Basin in the North of the country, covering a surface of 15.991.604 hectares of dense and clear forest on dry land (7.351.849 hectares) and of flooded forests (8.639.755 hectares).
- The Departments of Bouenza, the Pool and the Plateaux in the south-east and the center of the country, with forests galleries and some forest mosaics covering 589.862 hectares.

Some savannas, in particular shrubby savannas (10.017.730 hectares) are at the limit of the forest definition if one considers the three following criteria: height of the trees above 5 m, cover superior to 30% and one contiguous zone equal to or larger than 1hectare.

a) Where do forest deforestation and forest degradation occur in your country, and how extensive are they? (i.e., location, type of forest ecosystem and number of hectares deforested per year, differences across land tenure (e.g., national forest land, private land, community forest, etc.)):

Deforestation and forest Degradation are observed with variable degrees:

- gallery and other mosaic forests subjected to the collection of wood-energy and the urbanization of the

populations of the large human concentration centers, in particular the four main cities (Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, Dolisie, Nkayi) and the main cities of some departments and districts of the country (Ouesso, Owando, Gamboma, Madingou, Sibiti, Kinkala, Pokola, etc) (see Annex 1, part 1). Populations are concentrated along the penetration axes (roads and railway);

- in some forest concessions opened to industrial exploitation of timber;
- and in certain forest zones subjected to agriculture and the harvest of NWFP (non wood forest products).

It affects primarily two types of forest ecosystems, namely: forest galleries and forest-savanna mosaics in the south-east and the center of the country, the dense forests and clear forests forests on dry land in the south-west and the north of the country. Most of the land in Congo is state-owned even if some parts (Plateaux Batéké, centre of the country) are under traditional property rights. There is no special land tenure for DD which occurs everywhere in the country.

The flooded forests and the network of protected areas which benefit from their complex geographical and ecological location (flooded area) or their legal status (national park or reservation) are not yet very touched by Deforestation and forest Degradation.

Estimates of the Deforestation and forest Degradation rates are very low. The 2006 report 2006 on the state of the forests of Central Africa indicates for Congo the following values: rate of deforestation: 0.03% and rate of forest degradation: 0,01%.

An evaluation of the deforestation rates at Congo Basin scale is under development by the CARPE program, and produces very close results to those of the State of the Forests 2006.

As regards degradation, JRC and UCL estimated at 0,01% the annual rate of forest degradation between 1990 and 2000

Table 1: Areas for some land use and land cover in Congo

	Official Data	State of Forest 2006	FRM
Country area (ha)	34 200 000	x	X
Dense forest area (ha)	22 471 262	22 263 000	X
Protected area (ha)	3 264 810	x	X
Area under concession (ha)	11 387 154	x	X
Apart from management	x	x	9 220 781
Management under process (ha)	x	x	2 878 367
Management Plan agreed (ha)	x	x	1 804 241
Available Inventoried area (ha)	x	x	4 542 584

b) Are there any estimates of greenhouse or carbon dioxide emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in your country? If so, please summarize:

Reliable estimates of greenhouse gas or carbon dioxide emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in Congo do not yet exist.

The final report of the of Greenhouse Gases inventories (reference year 1994), carried out in 2000 on behalf of the initial National Communication on climate changes of Congo, provides some indications on the surfaces occupied by the various vegetation groups, the rate of deforestation, the acreages by department

and ecological area, the planted surfaces, the surfaces assigned to pasture, and provides a first assessment of the Greenhouse Gas emissions and sequestrations in the sector Land Affectation and Forestry. A negative balance is given in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. Estimates of GHG emitted by the burning of savannas and of agricultural residues are as follows:

- CH4 8,35 Gg
- CO 188,31 Gg
- N20 0,18 Gg
- Nox 6,4 Gg

These data are confirmed by the recent studies carried out in 2007, within the framework of the Second National Communication.

The final report of the GHG inventories (reference year 2000), carried out in 2007 on behalf of the Second National Communication on climate change of Congo, provides some indications on the surface areas occupied by the various vegetal formations, deforestation rate, cultivated suface areas by Département and ecological regions, planted surfaces, surface areas allocated to pasture, and provides a first assessment of the GHG emissions and sequestrations in the sector Land Affectation and Forestry. It mentions a negative balance in terms of GHG emissions.

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c) Please describe what data are available for estimating deforestation and/or forest degradation. Are data published? Describe the major types of data, including by deforestation and forest degradation causes and regions if possible (e.g., area covered, resolution of maps or remote sensing data, date, etc.).

An impressive amount of data can be used in the REDD context.

- A land use map produced by Global Land Cover; see Annex 2, map 2.
- recent results of the management inventory carried out on 8.646.490 hectares (i.e. 38,47%) of the national forest estate (70% in North Congo, 25% in the South and the balance in the center of the country);
- results of planning inventories carried out in the years 1970 to 1980 by the CTFT and Polytechna;
- seasonal results of the logging inventories which enable to plan the annual removals of exploitable stems.

A study carried out by Winrock International in the Congolaise Industrielle de Bois (CIB) forest concession in North-Congo estimated the impact of the forest logging on the carbon stock in a tropical forest at 0,27 Mg C, extracted per m^3, to which are added 0,46 Mg C/m^3 extracted, which is damaged by logging.

Another study is in progress in the framework of an ITTO project ITTO carried out by Winrock International (April 2007 at April 2009), the CNIAF and the NGO WCS, with for objective, amongst others, to define a method of measurement of the biomass and carbon from high-resolution satellite imagery.

Within the framework of the preparation of their Management Plan, assessments of logging impacts are carried out in terms of surfaces affected by the various activities. They constitute an excellent database to estimate the impact of forest logging on the carbon stock.

Studies dedicated to the impact of the logging on carbon stocks must be quickly undertaken, in order to better include forest logging in the policies to be drawn, in the line of the study suggested by Winrock.

In the near future, the OFAC (the Observatory of the Forests of Central Africa) will provide useful data on various subjects (cf Appendix 3) with the assistance of project FORAF. These data will relate in particular to the surface areas for each forest type and the deforestation and forest degradation rates.

Data resulting from several types of inventories, more or less recent, could be helpful to obtain a better knowledge of the forest, the tree distribution and the biomass concerned: large inventories conducted in the 70s for the paper pulp industry needs, data collected in the last 10 years with the forest management planning process (4,5 million of ha available), and finally harvesting inventories, less useful in the REDD context. Moreover, the remaining forest surface under concession will gradually be inventoried as well.

d) What are the main causes of deforestation and/or forest degradation?

The diagnosis-assessment established in 1994 within the framework of the PAFN made it possible to identify the leading causes of Deforestation and forest Degradation in Congo. They are primarily:

- shifting slash and burn agriculture;
- the increasing demand in fuel wood;
- forest logging;
- bush fires.

Family or traditional agriculture, which represents the type most practised in Congo, is based on the technique of slash and burn, and requires to move about. Because of rather characteristic poverty of certain savanna soils (ferralitic soils), most of the farmers chose the forest grounds, considered as fertile. According to FAO, approximately 17.000 hectares of forest and other timbered grounds, are annually destroyed by itinerant slash and burn agriculture. This agriculture starts to be affected by the gradual reduction of the fallow period observed for the rest and the restoration of the grounds.

The satisfaction of the households in domestic energy is a crucial issue in the Congolese cities, in which more than 60% of the national population live. Almost the whole of the Congolese households still use wood energy as the main fuel for cooking and heating purposees. Since 1985, the wood energy field became a “refuge” activity for those without employment. Many young people in search of a more lucrative job turned to this wood energy sector. The current situation, which is characterized by a heavy pressure on the meager resources available around the agglomerations, places Congo in front of two serious problems: the degradation of the periurban forests and a domestic energy market battling with obstacles such as price and availability of fuels in the areas of sustained demand.

Forest logging in Congo remains rather selective because in particular of the requirements of the international wood market and the limited local market. It rests on the development of the Forest Management Units of Installation (UFA) of average (50.000 to 100.000 hectares) or large (150.000 to 1.200.000 hectares) size. The annual production of sawlog approaches already the annual possibility of the forest estimated at 2.000.000 m^3 of logs. In North Congo, forest logging concerns less than ten species which are currently exploited, particularly of the Meliacea family species. In the South Congo on the other hand, about thirty species are currently exploited by the forest companies installed in this sector. The proximity of the Southern zone of the Pointe-Noire seaport (exit gate for the wood) and the presence of two railway lines (the CFCO and the COMILOG), justify this situation. The durability of the forest resource remains alarming for certain commercial species with a low rate of reconstitution (lower than 50%). It is particularly the case for *Pericopsis elata, Tryplochiton sauyauxii, etc*. Moreover, the associated effects must be taken into account: layout of roads, construction of base camps.

Bush fires are very frequent and contribute to the greenhouse effect (through the emission of methane, CO2 and other gases).

In a near future, several causes of DD could also be identified, such as mines, and the restart of the agricultural sector, due to the increase of food price on the world markets. These trends should be taken into consideration in the baseline design.

e) What are the key issues in the area of forest law enforcement and forest sector governance (e.g., concession policies and enforcement, land tenure, forest policies, capacity to enforce laws, etc.?

The Congo forest resources play an important economic and sociocultural part. The economic weight of the forest sector is significant (5% of the GDP, more than 12.000 direct and indirect jobs, 110 billion FCFA turnover and 100 billion FCFA export value).

Within the framework of the socio-economic and environmental review carried out in 2006-2007 by the World Bank[1] it appears clearly that the period of successive conflicts (1993, 1997,1998,1999) had effects on the forest sector, with in particular the disorganization, and even the destruction of the economic fabric. The sustainable management of the forest resources is a requirement declared by the Government. The rate of deforestation and that of forest degradation still remain very low. The sustainable forest management dynamics engaged since 2000 continues normally.

The estimate of the Congolese population in 2006 (3.700.000 inhabitants) shows a clear increase compared to 1984 figures (1.300.000 inhabitants). Because of importance of the urbanization, the rural populations now only account for 18,50% of the total population of the country.

Congo works to finalize its Strategic Document for the Reduction of Poverty (DSRP). The Ministry in charge of forests, the environment, agriculture and town and country planning benefit from the sectorial policies, based on: the National Forest Action plan (PAFN), the National Action programme for Environment (PNAE), the Rural development strategic scheme (SDDR), the National Scheme of Land Affectation (SNAT) and the Strategic Document for the Reduction of Poverty (DSRP).

Congo voluntarily adopted the tools for controlling of the application of the forest law and of its subsequent texts, eleven departmental directorates and fifty four forest economy brigades were created and constitute the main control tool of the forest administration. To these devices was added in 2003 a public structure in charge of controlling the forest products for export, implemented with the assistance of SGS.

The NGO REM was put in charge in 2007 of the independent observation Project of forest law application and the governorship in Republic of Congo, on funds from the European commission, DFID and the World Bank, in collaboration with the Ministry of Forest economics of the Republic of Congo. The general objective of the project is to contribute to the implementation of the principles of good governance in forest activities and to support the policies in place for a sustainable development in the Congo Basin, with a view to prepare the negotiation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) between the Republic of Congo and the EU.

Funding is in the course of being concluded with the AFD for the assistance to the forest management of forest concessions of the South Congo.

The FLEGT process (Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade), which will help to improve the governance in the forest sector, started by the Ministry of Forest economics since January 2007, led in June 2008 to the opening of the negotiations prior to the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership agreement (VPA) with the European Union.

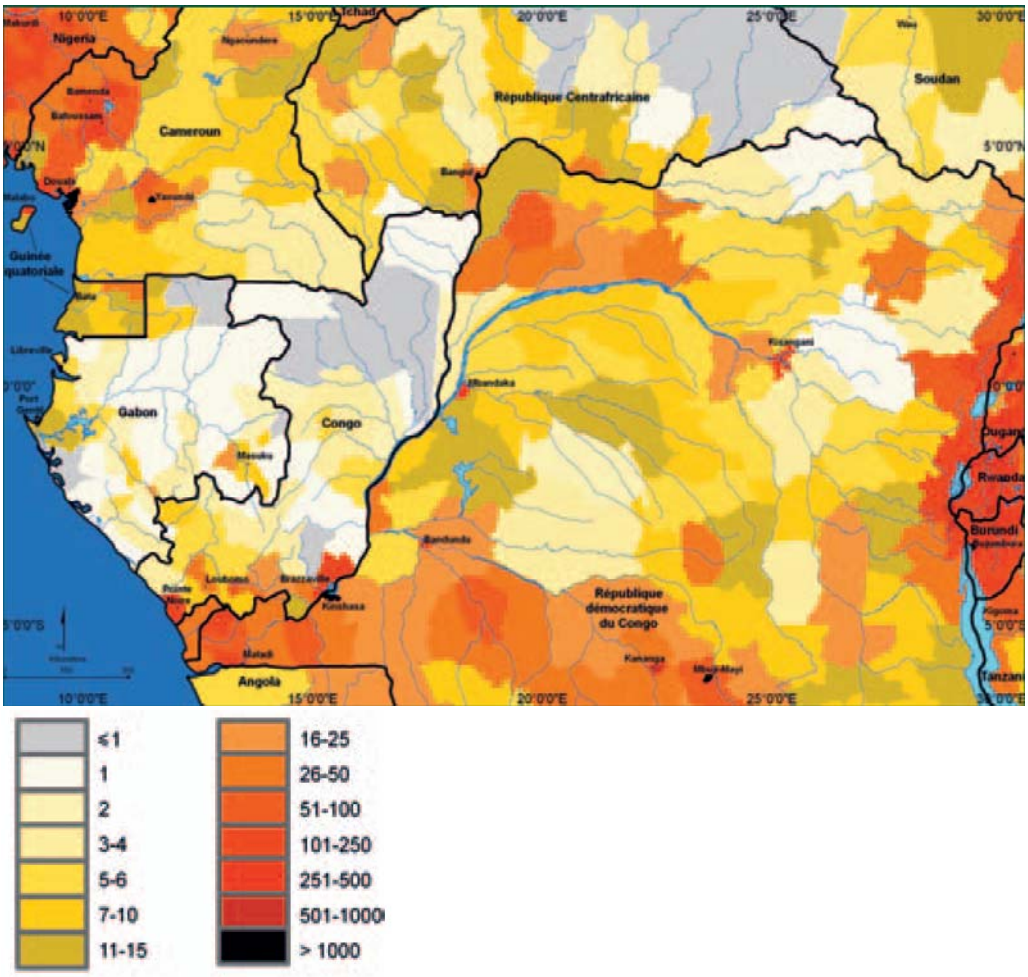
The Congolese authorities define the communal forests (city or administrative entities). However, these forests are not really developed yet and an effort should be made to increase the surface of forest placed under this type of land tenure. The Ministry of Forestry economics and the Ministry of Territory Administration and Decentralization are involved in the development of the communal forests. However, the qualifications and the capacities are lacking at local level to control these communal forests.

Congo could improve the forest sector governance by revising its forest code to make it a strong means of dissuasion based on the application of the law. Congo should continue its efforts to control the forest sector, by adopting suitable laws on the responsibilities and a clear process to allocated the forest concessions.

[1] World Bank, 2007. Etude socio-économique et environnementale du secteur forestier. Rapport de synthèse. In progress.

4) What data are available on forest dwellers in lands potentially targeted for REDD activities (including indige nous peoples and other forest dwellers)? (e.g., number, land tenure or land classification, role in forest management, etc.):

Data on forest dwellers is partly incomplete. The State of the Forest 2006[2] provides a map of the population density over the entire Congo basin.



The National Centre for Statistics and Economic Studies (Ministry of Planning) is in charge of collecting the demographic data. The last census was carried out in 1984, the more recent demographic data are obtained by extrapolating the results of this census.

The population of Congo is 3,6 million inhabitants (estimate 2006), of which approximately 2 million live in towns. The population is increasingly concentrated in the cities. The average population density in rural areas is approximately 2 inhabitants/km². The population density is very low in Northern Congo, around 1 hab/km ². The southern part of the country is more densely populated, and forest are under pressure due to population concentration (up to 25 hab/km ²)…. The rate of population increase is estimated at 2,93% in 20073. The population is divided into ten main ethno-liguistic groups: Baya, Kongo, Kota, Mbere nzabi, Mbochi, Makas, Punu, Sangha, Teke and seminomads “Pygmies”.

Pygmies are concentrated in the forest areas, particularly in the departments of Bouenza, Kouilou, Lékoumou, Likouala, Niari, Sangha and the Pool. They are hunters and gatherers and cohabit with bantou populations, less dependent on the forest resources and who mainly practice slash and burn agriculture.

The census of 1984 established that semi nomadic populations (Babongo and Bambenga) make up 2,29% of the country’s population.

Additional details relating to the social situation of the populations are gathered in environmental impacts studies, in the management plans of the forest companies and of the protected areas.

NGOs also offer data, more or less precise, but which include data on social aspects. As the manager of protected areas, WCS holds extensive data on human settlements in and around protected areas.

Demographic data are collected by the forest concessionaires, in partnership with the Ministry of Forest Economy, within the framework of the preparatory studies of the management plan of their UFA. This data is forwarded to the administration.

In the near future, OFAC will also offer a data collection on these issues (see Annex 2).

5. Summarize key elements of the current strategy or programs that your government or other groups have put in place to address deforestation and forest degradation, if any:

a) What government, stakeholder or other process was used to arrive at the current strategy or programs?

The Government of the Republic took a certain number of engagements for the implementation of the plan of convergence through one specific strategy aiming at protecting and at sustainably managing the natural resources.

These commitments are articulated on the international, regional and national levels.

For several years already, Congo is in line with an approach of sustainable management of its natural resources. In addition to three conventions of Rio, namely those relating to the fight against desertification, biological diversity and climate changes, Congo ratified several other international and regional treaties: those of London (African wildlife) 1933; of Maputo (African conservation of natural resource) 2004; from Washington (CITES) 1982; from Paris on the protection of the cultural and natural world heritage, (1985); of Ramsar (Wetlands of international importance) 1996; Lusaka (illegal trade of wild fauna and flora) 1996.

At the regional level, Congo is a member of the COMIFAC (Commission of the Forests d' Africa Centrale) which is the sub-regional coordination structure of the sub-regional strategies for the conservation and the sustainable management of the forest ecosystems in central Africa. The protected areas, the sustainable management of the forests, the involvement of the stakeholders and the equal sharing of the benefits are the main components of the Plan of Convergence of the COMIFAC. Congo is also a member of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). The CBFP initiative was launched at the Earth Summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg in 2002.

Cooperation agreement between the governments of the Republics of Cameroon, CAR and Congo relating to the installation of the Sangha Tri National, and the Agreement on the interzone Dja-Odzala-Minkébé.

In addition, Congo is a member of a certain number of organizations: UICN, CEFDHAC, RAPAC and the GRASP Initiative.

At the national level, Congo devoted itself to several exercises of planning namely: PNAE, PAFN, SDDR, SNAT, SNPA, PNALDS, DSRP, the Strategy and the Action plan on climate change.

We must stress that Congo set up a national working group in charge of validating all the studies carried out within the framework of the sustainable management of the forests. It is currently setting up the commission on sustainable development.

A planning exercises went along with organised dialogue and consultation structures (management committees, steering committee, forestry commission etc)

b) What major programs or policies are in place at the national, and the state or other subnational level?

The main sectorial policy documents and the legislative framework aiming at the implementation of the international and regional (plan of convergence of the COMIFAC) agreements underline the objectives of conservation and sustainable and concerted management of natural resources and, more particularly of the forest resources, while guaranteeing the socio-economic development of the populations.

The legal framework in which the policy of the government in the sector forest/environment aims at a rational exploitation and an installation to the constant output of the forests. He is primarily consisted:

- law n°20/96 of April 15, 1996 instituting the national day of the tree;
- law n°003/91 of the 23/04/1991 on environmental protection;
- law n°16/2000 of the 20/11/2000 bearing forest code and its decrees on enforcement of a law;

- law n°10-2004 of the 26/03/2004 bearing code of the field of the State.

There are moreover the Code mining and the law on decentralization approved and promulgated. That relating to agriculture was worked out and is in the course of adoption.

However, an important national engagement was taken against deforestation and degradation through the sustainable management of the forest and the development of protected areas, although the decision predates the debate on REDD and climate change. The process was launched ten years ago in Congo and formalized by the ratification of the "Yaounde Declaration" with the neighbouring countries under the COMIFAC (Commission for the Forests of Central Africa). The Congolese forest Code obliges the forest concessionaires to engage in the sustainable management process. Results are already available: approximately 2/3 of the main forest block of the North East is engaged in sustainable management and the southern area is recovering from the conflicts which took place about the year 2000. The country decided, with a French funding, to launch an ambitious program to reinforce capacities and provide services in relation with the sustainable management of the southern forest block.

Congo has been active for several years to implement all efforts as regards reforestation, conservation and forest management:

- 84.421 hectares of forest plantation were established between 1950 and 2007;
- 3.513.438 hectares of protected areas were established between 1950 and 2007;
- 1.804.241 hectares of forest concessions were under sustainable management planning managed between 2001 and 2007. 6.842.491 hectares are in the process of finalising their management plan.

By 2015, approximately 75% of the 15.203.356 hectares of the forest surface area assigned to wood production will have a forest management plan.

The tax on deforestation, applicable on the deforestations carried out in natural forests, in particular on constructions of road, log yards and forest living camps for forest management operations, is an incentive measure to limit deforestation and forest degradation.

The creation of an Agency specifically in charge of the management of the Protected areas is currently being studied.

Two projects were submitted to the GEF, to install a sustainable finance mechanism for the Protected areas and for the management of the Tele and Tumba Lakes landscape. Several projects about REDD are taking shape in Congo. The most advanced project concerns the area of Brazzaville, with the objective to limit the pressure on the remaining forest around the city by encouraging energy efficiency and by creating new wood resources while planting in partnership with the SNR. The same kind of project is also at reflexion stage around the town of Nkayi.

The Congolese forests are however threatened in the near future, by the expansion of the population, the restart of agriculture and the economic pressure on the natural resources.

6. What is the current thinking on what would be needed to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in your country? (e.g., potential programs, policies, capacity building, etc., at national or subnational level):

a) How would those programs address the main causes of deforestation?

To prevent the causes of deforestation and forest degradation, five distinct, but simultaneous approaches can be implemented:

- reduce the pressure on the natural forest stands by creating alternative sustainable production and economically viable systems and by diversifying the wood resource;
- reduce the quantity of fuel wood consumed by the households and the craftsmen, users of this type of energy (in wood equivalent per head of users);
- diversify the energy alternatives beyond the wood sector and cogeneration;
- promote a sustainable agriculture;
- master and valorise customary right (control and final resolution of the land tenure problem).

b) Would any cross-sectoral programs or policies also play a role in your REDD strategy (e.g., rural development policies, transportation or land use planning programs, etc.)?

The main orientations laid down by the PAFN[4], the PNAE[5] and more recently the PAN[6] are integrated in a common strategic vision and rest mainly on: (i) the reduction of the degradation of the natural ecosystems and the conservation of the biodiversity, (ii) the fight against the degradation of the soils and the forests (reduction in vegetation cover, hydro erosion of the grounds, bush fires, agricultural practices, silting of the rivers), (iii) the promotion of participative management practices associating all the actors concerned and (iv) the consolidation of the institutional and legal framework.

The National land planning scheme (SNAT) elaborated in 2005 also insists on the safeguarding of the environment and the ecosystems. It specifies in particular that the main criterion on which must rest the land affectation (apart from the protected ecological zones) is the safeguarding of the forest resource, one of the main issues for the SNAT. It recommends also to reserve at least 1% of the zones for reforestation activities

Conscious that the poverty reduction objectives are closely related to maintening the natural resources, the DSRP-I places the sustainable management of the natural resources at the heart of the national priorities by supporting a multisector approach integrating the socio-economic development sectors into the environmental issues. It acknowledges also and emphasizes the need to revalorize the rural sector, taking into account his potentialities to support the economic growth and the reduction of poverty.

c) Have you considered the potential relationship between your potential REDD strategies and your country's broader development agenda in the forest and other relevant sectors? (e.g., agriculture, water, energy, transportation). If you have not considered this yet, you may want to identify it as an objective for your REDD planning process.

We considered REDD as a transversal issue covering of agriculture, education, water, labour, economy and more generally speaking rural development. The strategy to build should cover a very large area. A special attention will be given to the coordination between all field teams and the follow-up of the REDD initiatives. Large consultations of all stakeholders, including all levels of information, from small forest dwellers up to Ministers, should be designed. REDD should be considered as a complementary action of our national development agenda. Congo made a strong commitment to maintain forest integrity under the forest law through the process of sustainable management, REDD will help us go further in this direction and in the monitoring of the forest exploitation.

REDD is also considered as an encouragement to develop a land-use plan, taking into consideration the population needs for new arable land obtained by conversion of the land. As regards the natural increase of

the local population and the current population density in forested areas, especially in the northern part of the country (less than 1 inhabitant/km²), targeting absolute zero deforestation seems rather unrealistic. The baseline scenario should take into account the demographic fact. Congo is not auto-sufficient for its food supply. REDD should not oppose auto-sufficiency and deforestation, with an arbitration between getting a reward for protecting the forest or stopping to spend money for supply food. The problem is the same regarding the energy sector, however, the harvest of fuel wood could be organized on a sustainable basis.

The transportation network remains deficient in Congo, and REDD should not be an obstacle to develop this network. Human settlements are always occurring along the road, thus road building will for ever be a major cause of deforestation/degradation.

As acknowledged by the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, "responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty".

We are facing a crucial interrogation when comparing the economic return of protected areas against the economic return of forest concessions, on the local point of view. There are not many other sources of income for the protected area, beyond tourism, which does not bring high levels of income. The proportion of protected areas should therefore remain equivalent, but forest is facing other possible income sources such as conversion to oil palm… Congolese authorities did not published call for bids for this kind of activity, even under the current strong pressure from the market. This commitment could however change under international pressure.

d) Has any technical assistance already been received, or is planned on REDD? (e.g., technical consulting, analysis of deforestation or forest degradation in country, etc., and by whom):

COMIFAC, AFD and GTZ organized a meeting, in March 2008 in Paris, in order to present the technical aspects of the monitoring. Congo was represented by two experts. Congo benefited in addition from a multiform assistance by:

- ONFinternational and CIRAD Forêt consortium;
- FORET RESSOURCES MANAGEMENT (consultation for the drafting of the R-PIN, on French co-operation funding);
- FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (AFD);
- THE WORLD BANK (BM).
- FORAF Project

This technical support should intensify to help Congo to reinforce the local capacities of its experts within the framework of process REDD.

Other consultations will be necessary to obtain an comprehensive approach of the technical, technological and socio-economic aspects in REDD issues. Field studies should be carried out in order to define complete development strategy to reduce the irrational practices of management of the grounds and to encourage the use of better agricultural techniques in order to avoid Deforestation and forest degradation.

A great need for technical and scientific research is felt, as obstacles must be overcome, on the technical sides of the monitoring, as well as on the accounting of carbon, and the social, policy and financial aspects. Cf Appendix 1, Paragraph 4.6.

OFAC could also play a central role in collecting information required by the monitoring of GHG emissions. Countries should rely on OFAC to concentrate the efforts for the technical aspects of monitoring and calculation of GHG emissions. Congo authority would like to see OFAC playing a central role in the monitoring.

7. What are your thoughts on the type of stakeholder consultation process you would use to: a) create a dialogue with stakeholders about their viewpoints, and b) evaluate the role various stakeholders can play in developing and implementing strategies or programs under FCPF support?

a) How are stakeholders normally consulted and involved in the forest sector about new programs or policies?

The Government of the Republic of Congo through its Department in charge of forests obliges concessionaires to elaborate management plans.

The consultation and involvement of the stakeholders improved considerably with the implementation (started in 2000) of the forest management operations of the Kabo concession (held byCIB, FSC certified), located on the edge of the Nouabalé Ndoki protected area. The opinion of the local stakeholders was collected through public field surveys and consultation of the local population. The Mokabi (Rougier Group) and Ngombé (Danzer) concessions fell into step with Kabo. The sustainable management process includes a validation by the local populations of the final sustainable forest management plan of the Concession.

The development of the normative texts in forest matters includes a consultation of the logging and forest management private operators during national workshops. The Superior Council of the Environment was created in 1982 to be used as a concertation body on Environmental decisions between the various ministries and other actors involved in this field. This authority is not functional at the present time.

FAO finances a think tank and proposition body on environmental issues, the National Working Group (NWG).

Various stakeholders must be taken into account: national and international NGOs (WCS, WWF…), the local population (through elected representatives eventually or committee presidents), the administration, the private sector. Democratic elections on a local level are requested to obtain a reliable local structure, permitting local consultation through elected representatives.

b) Have any stakeholder consultations on REDD or reducing deforestation been held in the past several years so, what groups were involved, when and where, and what were the major findings?:

This recent creative process did not take shape in the various national consultations yet. However within the framework of the implementation of certain sectorial policies, awareness raising meetings are held in the forms prescribed by the texts in force. It is for example the case of the traditional national day of the tree which is held each year in the whole country. It gives the opportunity to raise awareness and involve sensitize and imply the populations with the management of trees and forest plantations. Regular awareness raising meetings also take place on the problems of the climate changes.

c) What stakeholder consultation and implementation role discussion process might be used for discussions across federal government agencies, institutes, etc.?

Ideally, sectorial policies should be the object, within the framework of their development, of reflexions and of exchanges between representatives of the groups of partners concerned (administrations, town councilors, traditional authorities, local populations, civil society, private sector,…) on the definition of the objectives and the development of the strategies best adapted to reach them, the policy orientations being given beforehand by the Government.

Within the framework of the REDD which is under development, the Congolese Government prepares to install a framework for dialogue and decision making. This dialogue framework will groups all stakeholders involved in the process. (administrations, town councilors, traditional authorities, local and indigenous populations, women communities, national and international NGOs, private sector, training and research institutes, religious groups, etc).

d) Between the State and other subnational governments or institutions?

Harmonization has been promoted between all Congo Basin countries through the COMIFAC[7] convergence plan. The first axis of this plan stresses the 1992 Rio de Janeiro conventions. Congo is a member of the COMIFAC since 1999 and ratified the COMIFAC Treaty in 2007.

The six forest-rich countries (Cameroon, CAR, Congo, DRC, Eq. Guinea, Gabon) of the COMIFAC have clearly indicated that they want to position themselves at a regional level in the international debate on climate change and have already done so, by regularly submitting joint proposals to UNFCCC.

The establishment of a regional platform constitutes the instrument of coordination. This platform could be a prolongation of the already existing MDP COMIFAC Network platform. A synergy is desirable to avoid the conflicts of interest and the disfonctionnements of the programs between REDD and MDP. This platform could also be a genuine motor for the reinforcement of the national capacities, on the basis of workshops and training courses, public consultations and information circulation[8].

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e) For other stakeholders on forest and agriculture lands and sectors, (e.g., NGOs, private sector, etc.)?

The REDD Advisory committee, which is to be set up, will be in charge of formalizing the involvement mechanisms of all stakeholders of the REDD process. We however underline the representative character of the majority of the administrations concerned by REDD in the ecological zones.

In in several forest concessions, NGOs, administration, private operators and local populations deal with the management of the biodiversity, through partnership agreements.

IFO (Industrie Forestière d'Ouesso, UFA Ngombé's concessionaire), for example, signed an agreement with the Congolese government (represented by the Ministry of Forest Economy) and WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society) to organize the sustainable management of the fauna. Similar agreements have been negociated by CIB and other concession holders.

This model of partnership will have to be capitalized and/or reinforced in the REDD process.

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f) For forest-dwelling indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers?

The majority of the forests are either classified under protection zone, or under UFA.

(I) In the UFA, a socio-economic study is included in the forest management process; including a stage of consultation/validation by the local population.

In the managed concessions, the concerns of the local populations and indigenous peoples are taken into account within the framework of the management of the Community development series (area) . This series is managed by a consulting council made up of representatives of public administration, local populations, ONG and economic operators.

There is however, a great difference between the North and the South of the country, as the process in the North is more or less respected but does not really exist in the South.

A local development fund, financed by the royalty of 200 FCFA per cubic meter on the marketable volume exploited annually by the forest company, is set up to finance the development activities of the series. The REDD could use this experience to implement the different programmes.

(II) In the peripheral protected areas and zones, PFBC and CARP work with the government and ONGs to develop zones of stock management based on the communities. *

(ii) For the protected areas and their peripheral zones, CBFP and CARPE are working with government and NGOs to develop community based natural resource management zones (CBNRM zones) These zones are

being set up through a participatory process where a strategy, based on stakeholder engagement, guides the development of sustainable natural resource use plans. Communities and marginalized sectors (semi-nomads and women in particular) are brought into the process of reflecting, along with the government and NGOs, on current land use practices and ways to plan sustainable activities.

8. Implementing REDD strategies :

a) What are the potential challenges to introducing effective REDD strategies or programs, and how might they be overcome? (e.g., lack of financing, lack of technical capacity, governance issues like weak law enforcement, lack of consistency between REDD plans and other development plans or programs, etc.):

A big challenge in the Congo Basin will be to build a fair baseline. An historic baseline is not acceptable for any country of the Central African Basin. There is a strong need to consider current economic conditions to determine the baseline. A serious study should be dedicated to this crucial point.

There is a global need in all the sectors concerned, due to the non observation of the technical and administrative standards. Congo does not suffer from a strong governance problem but rather requires support for capacity building. Some requirements could be clearly explained, others will come while implementing the process.

Another very strong requirement at the regional scale should be the construction and development of a satellite imagery reception station in Central Africa. This station would enable to update the data collection, resolve the cloud cover issues and provide the high quality satellite data required for the degradation analysis. Funding agencies are interested in such a station, including France and Germany. A free public access to the satellite imagery could encourage comparative work to be done by third parties (NGOs…) to check the accuracy of national carbon balance.

A consensus exists, as the Congo Basin is an integrated ecological region as well as more and more integrated economic zone, that those challenges could be effectively managed at a regional level, resulting in an economy of scale.

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b) Would performance-based payments though REDD be a major incentive for implementing a more coherent strategy to tackle deforestation? Please, explain why. (i.e., performance-based payments would occur *after* REDD activities reduce deforestation, and monitoring has occurred):

The performance-based payments should be a positive incentive in the country. The population, involved in the REDD strategy, will not be sensitive to the performance-based payments before seeing the effects of such payments. However, the performance based payments could be a very good way to develop a feeling of cause and effect on a local level, even more if the payment is annual. Each year, the local population should be informed by a commission in charge of the accounting of carbon and decide, by a process of consultation, on how the funds will be granted in accordance with the provisions of the codes planning the transfer of forest tax revenues to local development. The performance based payments will therefore be privileged.

However, certain national laws, among which the forest Code, prescribes:

- exclusive holding of the planted land and the property of the trees to the actors (art.36);
- transfer of the tax revenues to the populations for the development of the regions (cf article 91).

9. REDD strategy monitoring and implementation:

a) How is forest cover and land use change monitored today, and by whom? (e.g., forest inventory, mapping, remote sensing analysis, etc.) :

The CNIAF which benefited from the financial support of the OIBT, develops since 2004 a programme for monitoring the the forestry exploitation and controlling of the application of the forest law with the use of GIS and remote sensing. By this program which was completed in February 2007, the CNIAF played a significant part at the national level, in the monitoring of the forest cover. The development of the management planning process of the forest concessions and protected areas improves the quality of the biophysic and socio economic data for monitoring the forest cover.

Regional or national monitoring of land-use and land-use changes are new initiatives in Central Africa. The forest stratum in the Republic of Congo covers important surface areas. It is not well known as it is difficult to access. The OFAC Observatory (FORAF), under the COMIFAC guidance, is currently monitoring the forest cover of the whole Congo Basin. The FORAF Project is currently monitoring deforestation rate between 1990 up to 2000 and between 2000 up to 2005. It relays the JRC and UCL initiative that has estimated recent deforestation and degradation of the forest of the region. This FORAF project analyses Landsat TM and ETM+ images using segmentation at two levels, on a systematic ½ degree sampling grid of 20*20km (covering 4%), resulting on a good estimate at the country level. It assesses deforestation / reforestation and tries to monitor the dynamics of degradation / regeneration.

A collection of aerial photos was constituted in the 60s and is still available at the Institut Géographique National français. These photos are too old to be of use but could help understanding the DD dynamics by giving historical information (villages localization, former forest cover, localization of swamps…). De plus, old land use maps produced in the framework of those previous inventories are still available and in a satisfactory state. They could be used to analyse deforesation over a relatively long period.

b) What are the constraints of the current monitoring system? What constraints for its application to reducing deforestation and forest degradation? (e.g., system cannot detect forest degradation of forest stands, too costly, data only available for 2 years, etc.):

The main obstacles for the monitoring of the Congolese forest remain:

- the shortage of technical personnel likely to lead the studies and work of ground for the follow-up of the emissions of the GHG;
- the absence of biophysics and socio economic data derived from the national forest inventory;
- the obsolescence of the data treatment and analysis equipment and software;
- lack of high-resolution satellite imagery for an annual or bi-annual outline.
- difficulty of access to the recent satellite images.

For our needs, the temporal resolution and the space coverage of the FORAF project should be improved. To monitor forest degradation, high-resolution, expensive satellite imagery, is a requirement. The techniques must be consolidated.

The unique database of forest inventories data should be used to fine tune the techniques and validate the performed image analysis. The methodology consolidation should be supported by the collection of new high resolution imagery. It should be extended outside forest concessions, especially to monitor forest savannas.

c) How would you envision REDD activities and program performance would be monitored? (e.g., changes in forest cover or deforestation or forest degradation rates resulting from programs, using

what approaches, etc.)

Quantification of carbon stock from forest lands is based on a method combining a national scale work with local analysis to accurate the results. Firstly, a wall-to-wall mapping of the national land use is done using Geographic Information Systems and remote sensing tools. This mapping uses IPCC strata as defined in their recommendations. These strata will be linked to carbon sink pools also defined by IPCC.

Estimations of biomass stock is calculated for each identified stratum: forestry science uses forest management inventories results to obtain Volume Over Bark, linked to each kind of forest. The treatment of these data combined with Wood Density and expansion factors (BEF, Biomass Expansion Factor, VEF, Volume Expansion Factor, Roots-to-shoot ratio…) are employed to estimate the stock of all biomass "pools" in forest areas.

Another method is suggested to quantify local biomass stock in areas where forest inventories results are not available. This method combines basal area of trees with volume by an allometric equation. This relation needs to be studied in depth for each identified stratum.

Once the volume of these areas has been obtained, Wood Density and expansion ratios are used to determine precisely the biomass stock. This method must be improved, but once developed; it could much faster and cheaper than to conduct forest inventories and will be really useful to monitoring the national state.

Finally, surfaces of different strata combined with the biomass stock of each stratum determine the biomass at a national scale.

Methodology summary

1. Selection and definition of the forest strata in accordance with IPCC standards and according to carbon storag variability,
2. Identification of the corresponding forest strata on map,
3. Analysis of the available forest management inventory data for each forest stratum,
4. Quantification of the Volume over bark for each forest strata:
    a. Based on the analysis of field inventory data when available,
    b. Based on the use of a quick appraisal field method (see Annex 1, part 4.3) when inventory data is not available (as in protected area, in concessions not involved in management process…),
5. Quantification of the entire Volume over bark,
6. Use of the different coefficients to estimate carbon storage of all the biomass pools.

Refer to Annex 1 for more complete information.

10. Additional benefits of potential REDD strategy:

a) Are there other non-carbon benefits that you expect to realize through implementation of the REDD strategy (e.g., social, environmental, economic, biodiversity)? What are they, where, how much ?

The forest represents a very important economic sector for the national economy but the sensitivity of the forest is also very important as regards environmental conditions (regulations of the water regulation and microclimate), biodiversity, social aspects (religious, traditions…). Protecting the forest will therefore consolidate these different sectors.

Other benefits could be envisaged:

- Reinforcement of the capacities through the training programs;
- Fight against poverty by improving the livingσ conditions of the populations through the sustainable management of natural resources, the REDD is an excellent opportunity here;
- Involvement of the forest concession holders in the environmental protection and the socio economic development under the responsibility of the State.

Is biodiversity conservation being monitored at present? If so, what kind, where, and how?

An action plan and a national strategy were worked out by the "Biological diversity" project for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Biological diversity. The implementation of this policy results in:

- the taking into account of forest and faunal managements;
- the implementation of fauna monitoring programs at the level of some protected areas;
- forest and faunal inventories of the forest concessions.

However, we record insufficiencies in the implementation of this policy at the national level (weak knowledge of the natural potential, shortage of the technical skills, shortage of the financial and material means).

c) Under your early ideas on introducing REDD, would biodiversity conservation also be monitored? How ?

A multiform support of the REDD proves necessary in order to reinforce the already existing biodiversity conservation programs

d) Are rural livelihood benefits currently monitored? If so, what benefits, where, and how?

Follow-up mechanisms are installed but a dysfunction should be noted for lack of statutory texts.

e) Under your early ideas on introducing REDD, would rural livelihood benefits also be monitored? How ?

OFAC will play a central role in centralizing all collected data within the Congo Basin. Most of this data is collected by NGOs, the administration and the private sector but there is a need for consolidating these collections. OFAC is a tool wished for and designated by countries to improve the regional consolidation (see Annex 2).

At the national level, Congo can develop in collaboration with NGOs (WCS and ASPINAL Foundation), benefiting from a proven expertise, to build a way to monitor the impact of program REDD on the local populations.

11. What type of assistance are you likely to request from the FCPF Readiness Mechanism?

- **Identify your early ideas on the technical or financial support you would request from FCPF to build capacity for addressing REDD, if you are ready to do so. (Preliminary; this also could be discussed lat**
- **Include an initial estimate of the amount of support for each category, if you know.**
- **Please refer to the Information Memorandum and other on-line information about the FCPF for more details on each category:**

a) Setting up a transparent stakeholder consultation on REDD (e.g., outreach, workshops, publications, etc.):

The REDD is a new mechanism which allows to take into account a better management of the tropical forests in the regulation of the climate of the planet. In the short run (3 months), the National Climate change Focal Point, must have the means necessary to facilitate information circulation with all the stakeholders on the REDD process in order to install a framework for dialogue.

Congo therefore needs a reinforcement of its technical and financial, technological and institutional

capacities. The implementation of a REDD program is thus requested from the FCPF.

b) Developing a reference case of deforestation trends: Assessment of historical emissions from deforestation and/or forest degradation, or projections into the future.

Projections into the future of historical trends can not be considered as a reasonable baseline for Congo Basin countries. As mentioned earlier, pressure is increasing on forest resources for several reasons and data is lacking to achieve a clear comprehension of the evolution of the forest savannas. Funds should be raised to help developing an alternative baseline, not only based on historical trends but also on a heavy prospective work relating to the development of the agricultural sector, the airport, railway and road infrastructures, and the population growth.

The periods of instability known by Congo in recent history caused the decline of many economic sectors, in particular that of agriculture.

Considering these various factors, the context is favorable to a strong restart of the agricultural activities: the world context is characterized by a current shortage in raw materials, deemed to worsen, in particular of food stuff, thereby provoking a potential revival of the agricultural productions sector, which remains to be programmed and organized in Congo;

The CNIAF must be supported to carry out the necessary evaluation for the establishment of reference scenario, as it must also be supported for the follow-up (monitoring) of the DD, by an assistance and international partners.

c) Developing a national REDD Strategy: Identification of programs to reduce deforestation and design of a system for providing targeted financial incentives for REDD to land users and organizations (e.g., delivery of payments, governance issues, etc.):

Congo, being a virtuous country in the conservation of its forests and benefiting from a low level of deforestation and forest degradation, plans a flexibility in the approaches to be considered within the framework of the REDD funding. Efforts made for the sustainaable management of forest and faunal resources remain under the responsibility of the country.

The former planning exercises (PNAE, PAFN, SDDR) arrived to a major recommendation, the establishment of a landu use plan.

In Congo, the REDD will concern the main following programmes

- establishment of a land use plan;
- establishment of a national forest inventory;
- development and determination of allometric equations;
- development and implementation of pilot REDD projects;
- training;
- research.

d) Design of a system to monitor emissions and emission reductions from deforestation and/or forest degradation:

An important effort is still to be made to clarify several aspects of the proposed methodology. The most important point concerns the degradation monitoring. There is a striking lack of consolidated and reliable methodology on the subject, we propose in the Annex 1, part 4.2 a program of work to rapidly achieve this goal.

Another priority is to increase sharply the knowledge on forest savannas. These zones, of low interest in terms of economic return, are placed under strong pressure by the local population and are included in the REDD issue as they are included in the forest definition. We provide some reflexion leads in the Annex 1, part 4.1.

Funds should also be raised to obtain a better idea of the impact of wood harvest on carbon stock. Some articles were published but data is still sparse considering the dynamics of revegetation in the gaps left by harvested trees, we precise some ideas in Annex 1, part 4.4.

Finally, the methodologies proposed suffer of a lack of applicable ratio regarding equations to calculate biomass stock, both Above and Belowground. These ratios should be consolidated based on African forest sampling. Details are also given in Annex 1, part 4.5 and 4.6.

See Annex 1, part 4.

e) Other?:

BUDGET

establishment of a land use plan	(PM)
establishment of a national forest inventory; :	(PM)
Pilot activities (plantation/replantation, conservation…)	1 500 000$
development and determination of allometric equations;	500 000$
Elaboratio and assessment of REDD projects; :…	1 000 000$
Training (capacity building)	1 000 000$
research. ……	500 000$
TOTAL	4 500 000$

PM : Programs in progress on State and partners funding

12. Please state donors and other international partners that are already cooperating with you on the preparation of relevant analytical work on REDD. Do you anticipate these or other donors will cooperate with you on REDD strategies and FCPF, and if so, then how?:

The principal donor States and other already identified partners are:

- The World Bank

- FAO within the framework of the national forest inventory Program

- France through the French Development Agency (AFD)

-- European Union through the FORAF Program

Germany, the USA and other international partners could in the same way be identified as potential donors in the implementation of the REDD.

13. Potential Nest Steps and Schedule:

Have you identified your priority first steps to move toward Readiness for REDD activities? Do you have an estimated timeframe for them yet, or not?

We believe that precising the methodology through the above mentioned recommended studies (see Annex 1, part 4) is a true emergency. By 2012, methodologies should be consolidated and reliable to integrate

easily the REDD issue in the Convention on Climate Change Framework. Methodology should be applied, tested and gradually corrected, this work should be scheduled all along the available period, from now up to 2012. Regarding the complexity of such a methodology, the remaining three years should be employed to build and structure a strong methodology. A delay to start the consolidation would be extremely detrimental to the project.

The urgency is also real for the economic study on the effects and causes of the payments, on enforcing legal aspects, on building national and regional capacity as mentioned above with the establishment of a regional scientific panel…

To sum up, there is an urgent need to start and awareness should be raised on the short time left for such a wide ranging work. We do not want complaints or concern form the society at large, we want the World Bank to help us build a strong REDD vision on all the aspects covered by providing financial help so that we can meet the international demands on climate change mitigation.

List any Attachments included

Appendix 1 Methodology Proposal to monitor African Forest Carbon Stock

Appendix 2 Indicators monitored by OFAC (Extracts)

Appendix 3 Congo Vegetation Map

Appendix 4 Acronyms and abreviations used