

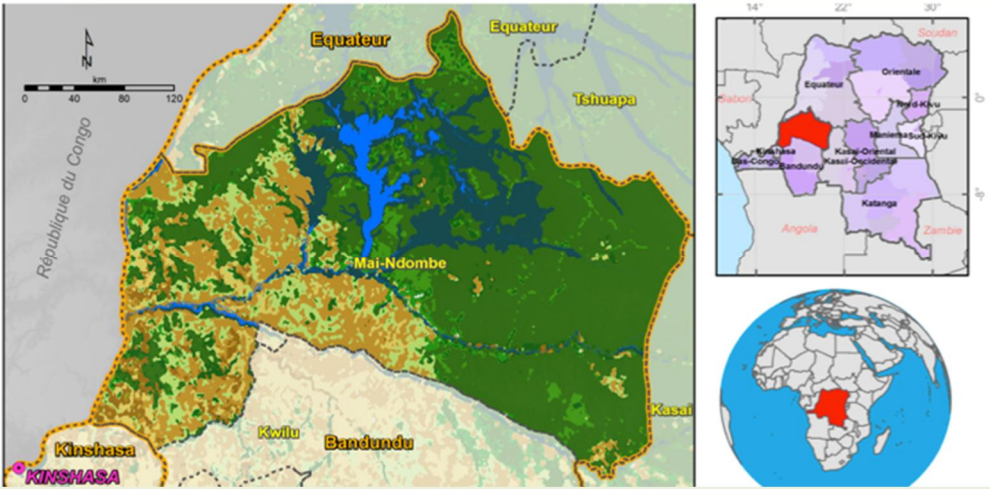
MAÏ NDOMBE EMISSION REDUCTIONS PROGRAM DOCUMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SNAPSHOT

The Government of DRC views the Mai-Ndombe Emission Reductions (ER) Program as a first step in implementing the country's national REDD+ strategy at jurisdictional level, as a model for green development in the Congo Basin, a key test of climate action on the African continent and for REDD+ results-based payments in HFLD countries. The ER Program is a unique opportunity to secure long-term public and private finance for delivering on the Paris Agreement's goal and sustainable development.

- Program goal: The ER Program aims at implementing the country's green development vision at scale by providing alternatives to deforestation and rewarding performance to address the challenges of climate change, poverty reduction, natural resource conservation and protection of biodiversity.
- Jurisdiction: Mai-Ndombe province, Democratic Republic of Congo
 - 🌿 12.3 million hectares total area
 - 🌿 9.8 million hectares of forest
- Duration: The program has a long-term perspective of 20 years with an ERPA period of 5 years (2016 – 2021)
- CO₂ Reductions: 30 million tCO₂ estimated to 2021
- Budget: USD 70 million of up-front investment finance and a potential of results-based payments for 30 million tCO₂ over 5 years

The Proposal is for the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Carbon Fund to sign an Emission Reduction Payment Agreement for 15 million tCO₂.



CONTEXT AND AMBITION

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a key player to address global deforestation and mitigate climate change. The country has the second largest swath of rainforests in the world—152 million hectares, accounting for most of the remaining rainforest in the Congo Basin. Although rates of deforestation in the DRC are low compared to tropical forests in the Amazon and Southeast Asia, almost half a million hectares are lost each year. As one of the least developed countries (LDC) in the world, economic development is a top priority and the country's forests are under increasing threat. Representing a High Forest Cover and Low Deforestation (HFLD) country, DRC is at a critical juncture. Keeping deforestation rates low in HFLD countries is one of the main strategies in the forest and land use sector to deliver on the Paris Agreement's goals to limit temperature increase to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The Government of DRC is committed to implementing this objective through a low carbon development pathway including REDD+. It views the environment and efforts to combat climate change as one of the strategic areas of its national policy and submitted to the UNFCCC an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) on mitigation that presents specific emission reduction goals for the land sector including reducing deforestation, increasing reforestation, and improving agricultural practices. In particular, the DRC Government is committed to slowing, and eventually halting, forest loss. In 2012, it adopted a National REDD+ Strategy, which illustrates a vision for how a country can meet its long-term development aspirations through a green economy. The strategy aims to stabilize forest cover on two-thirds of the country's land area by 2030 and maintain it thereafter. The DRC has been engaging in and championing the REDD+ process since 2008 and has developed a large-scale REDD+ program for result-based payments in the Mai-Ndombe Province to deliver significant climate impact, critical development benefits and unprecedented learning for the FCPF Carbon Fund. The country was one of the first to submit an Emission Reduction Program Idea Note (ERPIN) in April 2014 and the first to present a Readiness-Package in Mai 2015. The design of the Emission Reductions Program Document (ERPD) for Mai Ndombe has progressed over a period of nearly two years in close and frequent consultation with local, national and international stakeholders, including civil society and Indigenous Peoples.

The ambition of the Mai-Ndombe ER-Program is to implement a model for green development at provincial level that provides alternatives to deforestation and rewards performance to mitigate climate change, reduce poverty, manage natural resources sustainably and protect biodiversity. The program is designed to combine different sources of funding, such as the Forest Investment Program (FIP), the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF) and the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), and to leverage private funding to scale up pilot activities and support the shift of a land use trajectory at large scale.

Consultations and information in the design phase of the Mai Ndombe ER Program has taken place at multiple levels. Beyond the extensive consultations in the context of the REDD+ readiness process, significant efforts have been undertaken to inform and consult local stakeholders in Mai Ndombe (Indigenous Peoples, local communities, civil society organisations, decentralized administration, companies) through meetings in every territory, outreach activities and trainings in the capitals of the former as well as the new province (Bandundu Ville and Inongo).

DRIVERS AND UNDERLYING CAUSES OF DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION

The main direct drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the program area are slash-and-burn agriculture, fuelwood production, uncontrolled bush fires, artisanal logging and industrial logging. The underlying reasons for these drivers are population growth, poverty, the absence of economic and technical alternatives, poor management of natural resources, and unregulated land















tenure. These direct and indirect drivers constitute strong trends towards increased pressure on forests. The Mai-Ndombe Province is located at the frontier of the Kinshasa supply basin for agricultural and wood products and the primary forest of the Congo Basin. Agricultural production is the main source of income for 90% of the households in the province. Cassava and maize are the main cash crops sold primarily to Kinshasa and Mai-Ndombe has become an important source of charcoal supplies for Kinshasa as a result of the depletion of the forests of the Lower Congo between 2000 and 2010. This pressure on Mai-Ndombe's forest resources will continue to be exacerbated as demand from Kinshasa rises and the surrounding forests shrink. Moreover the demand for slash-and-burn farming land is significant (if unsuitable or occupied land is excluded the remaining forested area represents approximately 46% of the province's total area). With a population growth rate of 3% it is estimated that in approximately 33 years the non-concession and non-flooded forests of Mai-Ndombe will be totally lost to agriculture.

INTERVENTION STRATEGY AND PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In order to be transformational, the program is designed to provide a balanced combination of (i) enabling activities, such as strengthening governance, capacity building, local level land-use planning, and securing land tenure, and (ii) sectoral activities, such as improved agricultural practices, reduced impact logging, agroforestry, fire management and charcoal production. The operationalization of a green development model means for the province to offer a sustainable supply of fuelwood, lumber and agricultural products for the megalopolis of Kinshasa while at the same time increasing the incomes of the local population and maintaining significant forest cover.

More specifically on the set of sectoral activities, the program strategy is geographically adapted and involves a land-use planning process centered on the sustainable development of natural resources. This includes (i) offsetting the demand for unsustainable wood products from the province-city of Kinshasa with reforestation and regeneration activities on savanna lands and along the river, in particular in the district of Plateau, (ii) orienting agricultural production in the forest towards practices that are less land-consuming than fallow-slash and burn farming, such as perennial crops and agroforestry (iii) incentivizing the conservation and sustainable management of forests.

A summary of the program's activities in line with the seven pillars of the national REDD+ strategy is provided the following table:

<i>Pillars</i>	Sectoral activities	Enabling activities
<i>Agriculture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Agroforestry and improvement of cultivation techniques  Perennial crops development in non-forest areas (coffee, cocoa, palm oil and rubber) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Strengthening agricultural value chains
<i>Energy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Assisted natural regeneration for charcoal production  Afforestation/Reforestation for charcoal production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Formalization and strengthening of the fuelwood sector
<i>Forest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Reduced impact logging  Conservation of local community forests  Conservation concession  Afforestation/Reforestation for lumber production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Strengthening forest and wildlife law enforcement  Legal compliance of industrial logging operations  Development of community forestry  Support management of protected areas

Governance,
demography,
land planning
and tenure

- ✔ Capacity-building of decentralized State services
- ✔ Multi-level capacity-building and Sustainable Development Plans design
- ✔ Implementation of collective and strategic facilities
- ✔ Family planning

REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL

The Reference Emission Level (REL) is stratified in accordance with the analysis of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and the ER-Program mitigation strategy. This stratification allow (i) to use different methods of estimating carbon emissions appropriate to different drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and (ii) to provide adapted performance-based incentives to different actors in line with their mitigation activities. The following table provides information about the strata, their associated drivers, the methodologies and results of the REL as well as the potential of Gross Emission Reductions (including ERs to be set aside in buffer accounts) according to the program strategy.

The net Emission Reductions (i.e. excluding buffer accounts) for the 5 years period amount to 30 million tCO₂.

<i>Stratum (associated drivers)</i>	Methodologies in compliance with Carbon Fund Methodological Framework	2004-2014 historic REL (tCO ₂ /year)	Capped adjustment (tCO ₂ /year)	ER Gross potential (tCO ₂ for a 5 year period)
<i>Unplanned Deforestation & Degradation (agriculture, fuelwood, artisanal logging)</i>	Manual classification of sampled remotely sensed imagery, consistent with IPCC Approach 3 techniques, which uses an intelligent filter to recognize and ameliorate potential land-use transition anomalies.	101,648,395	To be monitored (cap 2,751,811)	36,349,393
<i>Planned Degradation (industrial logging)</i>	Based on existing methodologies such as VM0010, VM0011 and methodologies developed by Hirsh et al. (2013) and Schmidt (2014).	701,555	2,507,683	1,872,281
<i>Afforestation/Re forestation (plantations and natural regeneration)</i>	Small Scale CDM methodology 'Afforestation and Reforestation Project Activities implemented on Lands other than Wetlands', Version 3	0	0	601,466
	<i>Total</i>	102,349,950 tCO ₂ /year	5,259,494 tCO ₂ /year	38,222,275 tCO ₂ for 5 years

BENEFIT-SHARING

Beneficiaries of the REDD+ revenues will include participants with direct and indirect influence including legal or de facto managers of forest resources, actors in the different value chains of commodities as well as political and administrative stakeholders. Indigenous Peoples will receive special recognition by the program according to the recognition of their historical role in sustainable forest management.

The benefit sharing arrangements will take into account the origin of the up-front funding and also the non-carbon benefits generated by the program Revenues from the sale of Emission Reductions will be allocated through three windows in the benefit sharing plan:

- Performance-based payments based on the amount of carbon not emitted or sequestered (Emission Reduction Credit) for forest concessions, conservation concessions and others actors willing to own directly the Emission Reductions titles;
- Performance-based payments based on proxy indicators for carbon performance, such as the number of non-deforested, regenerated, or planted hectares, to communities, private companies, medium-scale farmers and other stakeholders;
- Pooling of a share of the revenues for reinvestment in enabling and communities sectoral activities, leverage of private finance and operating costs, including a risk management mechanism for the case of under-performance of the program.

An indicative benefit-sharing plan is provided in the ERPD and will be reviewed in the context of the further ERPD development and ERPA negotiations

Beyond the revenues from sale of Emission Reductions, the program will increase household incomes and deliver socio-economic investments, such as roads, agricultural storage facilities and other infrastructure, on the ground. It will also catalyze private investments in the jurisdiction, reinforce good governance, for example tenure security, law enforcement, participation and transparency, and produce environmental co-benefits, such as biodiversity and soil fertility.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Government of DRC, through the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development and the provincial government of Mai-Ndombe, will be the signatory of the ERPA.

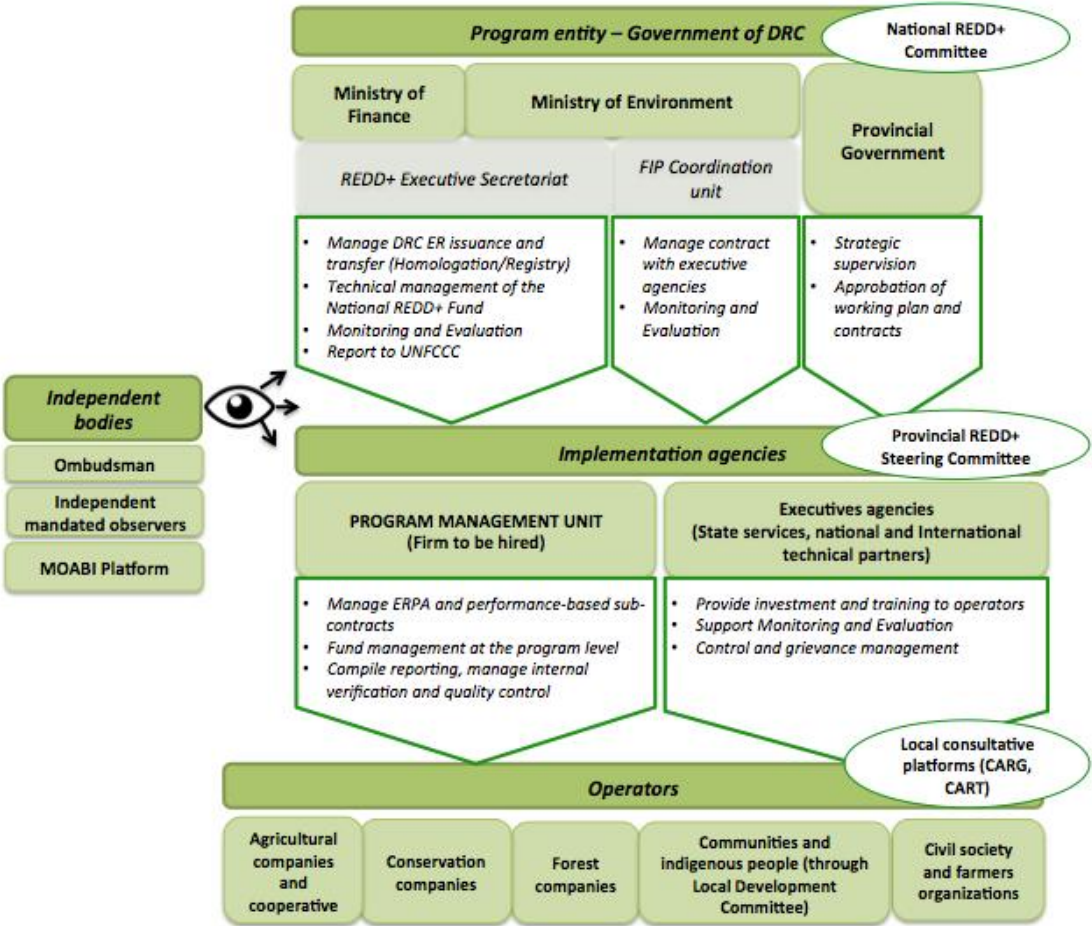
At the national level, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Finance will co-chair the National REDD+ Fund through the National REDD+ Committee and its technical body; the Executive Secretariat. This Executive Secretariat will be the entity in charge of technical tasks in relation with the National REDD+ Fund, the homologation of carbon projects, ER issuance and transfer through the National REDD+ Registry and monitoring, evaluation and reporting to the UNFCCC at national level. The Executive Secretariat will coordinate with the FIP Coordination Unit to ensure the contractual and financial management of the main investment programs in the area.

The provincial government of Mai Ndombe is the main agency responsible for the program implementation and will be technically supported by the Program Management Unit. While the provincial government's role is focused on steering and policy coordination, the Program Management Unit will be in charge of the day-to-day management of the program, including administrative and financial management, carbon and non-carbon monitoring and reporting of the program, and management of the performance-based contracts with the operators. It will also be the interface with the Carbon Fund. This unit will be a firm with a track record and recognized skills. The Program Management Unit will work closely with the provincial government and build its capacities with the perspective of transferring the program management functions to the provincial administration in the medium term.

The provincial government will furthermore be supported by the Provincial REDD+ Steering Committee, which will include representatives from all ministries, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, private sector, and the different executing agencies involved in the implementation of the ER program. The Committee will be in charge of reviewing and approving work proposed by the Program Management Unit (e.g. approve sub-contracts, work plans and budgets, validate monitoring reports) and provide strategic and policy directions).

Program activities on the ground will be implemented by various operators, such as communities and Indigenous Peoples, civil society and farmer's organization, and companies involved in logging, conservation and agriculture. These operators will be supported and accompanied by local executing agencies and decentralized State services.

The monitoring and evaluation of the program will be structured mainly around the production of two progress reports: First, a monitoring report on the emission reductions will trigger payments by the Carbon Fund and other emission reduction purchasers. This report will also be the basis for performance-based payments defined in contracts with the operators. Second, a monitoring report on safeguards and non-carbon benefits will compile information of impact studies and compliance with safeguard measures when necessary. The institutions responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the program include the Directorate of Inventory and Forest Management (DIAF), local consultative platforms (CARG and CART), independent mandated observers, the non-governmental Moabi platform and independent auditors and verifiers.



SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS MANAGEMENT

The ER Program’s intervention strategy has been developed in alignment with the National REDD+ Strategy Framework and has taken into account the recommendations resulting from the Social and Environmental Strategic Assessment (SESA) process and national Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF).

The DRC has also defined its National Social and Environmental Standards in order to put in place its own national regulatory framework and ensure the integration of social and environmental considerations in the implementation of REDD+, in full compliance with the Cancun Safeguards. The program will apply these safeguards instruments during implementation and operationalize the risk management matrix that has been prepared. The management of social and environmental impacts of the program is fully integrated into the identification, design, monitoring, and evaluation of its

activities. All projects/activities implemented by the program will need to comply with the requirements of the ESMF at every step of implementation.

The sound application of safeguards as well as the generation of non-carbon benefits will be disclosed through the following channels: (i) regular information posted in the national REDD+ registry (ii) an independent information platform (MOABI) and (iii) a regularly published monitoring report checking compliance with the National Environmental and Social Standards.

In order to manage potential complaints and conflicts, a Feedback Grievance and Redress Mechanism (FGRM) is currently being designed and will be the responsibility of the Program Management Unit and the implementing agencies. From the middle of 2016, the FGRM will be tested and the national REDD+ registry will provide a transparent platform for filing complaints and monitoring their handling.

A PARTNERSHIP AMONG:

DRC GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE SECTOR	CIVIL SOCIETY
		

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