

REPUBLIC OF GHANA



NATIONAL REDD+ R-PP IMPLEMENTATION MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT **AND REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

SUBMITTED TO THE FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY (FCPF)

By

NATIONAL REDD+ SECRETARIAT,

GHANA FORESTRY COMMISSION

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List of Acronyms

CERSGIS	Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System, University of Ghana
ENRAC	Environmental and Natural Resources Advisory Council
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERP	Emissions Reductions Programme
ER-PIN	Emissions Reductions - Programme Idea Note
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FC	Forestry Commission
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Programme
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FORIG	Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HFZ	High Forest Zone
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LULUCF	Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry
MDAs	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science, Technology and Innovation
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NCRC	Nature Conservation Research Centre
NLBI	Non Legally Binding Instrument
NREG	Natural Resources and Environmental Governance Development Policy Operation
NRS	National REDD+ Secretariat
NRWG	National REDD+ Working Group
PC5	Fifth meeting of the Participants Committee
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
REL	Reference Emission Level
RL	Reference Level
RMSC	Resource Management Support Center
R-package	REDD+ readiness package
R-PIN	REDD+ Readiness Plan Idea Note
R-PP	REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal
SECO	Swiss Economic Cooperation Organisation
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The country long-term vision, or Ghana-Vision 2020, as set out in the 1995 National Development Policy Framework, is to achieve a balanced economy and a middle-income status by the year 2020. The Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) identified medium-term objectives for the country and represented the government's development blueprint for the period 2010-2013. Within this period, accelerated agricultural modernization and effective natural resource management were seen as the pre-conditions for economic growth and poverty reduction.

To address environmental degradation, Ghana has developed a number of national programmes; notably, the Natural Resources and Environmental Governance Programme (NREG) and the National Forest Plantation Development Programme (NFPDP), which together aim to arrest and reverse deforestation rates in the country and to take steps to increase the national forest cover. Recognizing the anticipated social and economic impacts arising from climate change, and the associated development challenges, the Government of Ghana is committed to mainstreaming climate change into key planning processes at the national, regional and local level, and in early 2010 the government initiated the development of a National Climate Change Policy (NCCP). A key objective of the NCCP is low carbon growth. REDD+ and other initiatives within the forestry sector have been identified as key aspects of this policy.

Ghana's M&E Framework for the REDD+ readiness process defines five intermediate impacts or long-term results of the readiness process:

- Reduced Pressure on Forest Ecosystems;
- Sustainable Management of Forests;
- An institutional and legal/ regulatory framework that supports sustainable management of forests and protects the rights of local communities;
- New and additional resources for climate- and forest-friendly projects;
- Integration of learning by development actors active in REDD+.

Faced with one of the highest rates of forest cover loss on the continent and degradation of its forest estates, which form a major backbone of the national economy, Ghana subscribed to the REDD+ mechanism as a feasible pathway to addressing this threat.

In 2007, the Government of Ghana submitted its REDD+ Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank which was subsequently approved in July, 2008, paving the way for the signing of a Preparation Grant Agreement on 1st April, 2009 for the sum of US\$ 200,000. This came as financial support for the preparation of a REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) for the country. After an elaborate process of consultations and analytical studies involving a wide range of stakeholders and experts, both local and international, Ghana's REDD+ R-PP was submitted to the FCPF in December, 2009 which was assessed and approved by the FCPF PC at the PC5 in Gabon as per Resolution PC/5/2010/3 of March, 2010 subject to revision.

The revised R-PP was submitted to the FCPF in accordance with the PC 5 resolution in December, 2010. In early October, 2011, the FCPF Readiness Grant preparation process

which included fiduciary arrangements, World Bank due diligence and preparation of the R-PP Assessment Note were completed culminating in the signing of a Readiness Grant Agreement of USD 3.4 million to support the implementation of the R-PP in late October, 2011. This brought the total contribution of the FCPF to the REDD+ process in Ghana to \$3.6M. The formal launch of the REDD+ Readiness Programme took place in Accra on the 26th of April 2012; however it is worth noting that some initial preparatory work had begun prior to the signing of the grant agreement and formal launch.

Ghana’s R-PP presents a three-step approach towards REDD+ readiness, including the development of a REDD+ strategy, as well as technical, policy, legal, management, and monitoring arrangements necessary for full participation in the evolving REDD+ mechanism. The implementation of the R-PP covers the period of 2011-2014. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of Ghana's phased approach for REDD+ readiness as captured in Ghana’s R-PP.

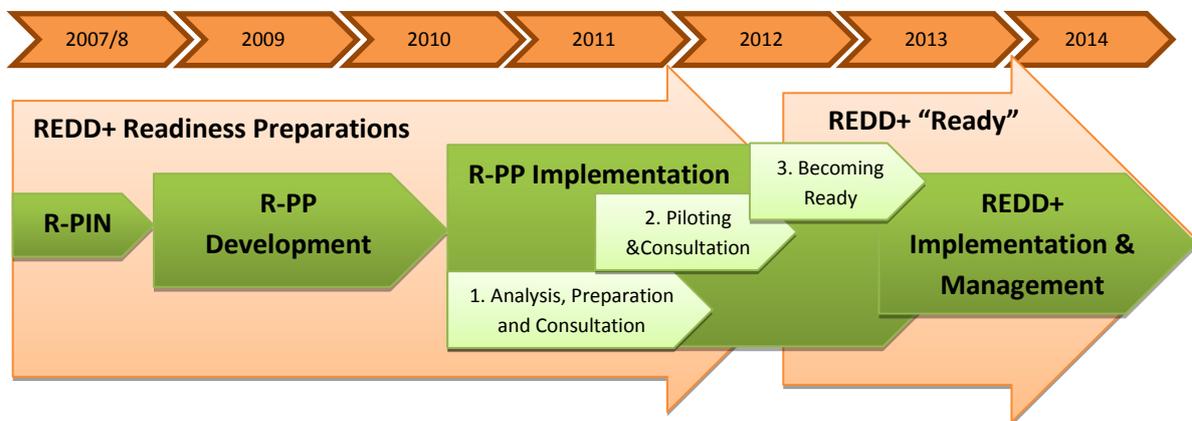


Figure 1: Phasing of Ghana's progress towards being ready for REDD+

Despite initial delays with the release of funds for the commencement of implementation due to administrative bottlenecks, Ghana has nonetheless made substantial progress in its REDD+ readiness, as depicted in Table 1 below.

Table 1: A Self-Assessment of Progress status of Ghana's R-PP implementation -

COMPONENT	SUB-COMPONENT	PROGRESS STATUS
1. READINESS ORGANISATION AND CONSULTATION	1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements	Progressing well, further development required
	1b. Consultation, Organisation and Outreach	Significant Progress
2. REDD+ STRATEGY PREPARATION	2a. Assessment of Land use, land use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance	Progressing well, further development required
	2b. REDD+ Strategy options	Progressing well, further development required
	2c. Implementation framework	Progressing well, further development required
	2d. Social and Environmental Impacts	Progressing well, further development required
3. REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL/ REFERENCE LEVEL	3a. REL/RL	Progressing well, further development required
4. MONITORING SYSTEMS FOR FORESTS AND SAFEGUARDS	4a. National Forest Monitoring System	Progressing well, further development required
	4b. Information System for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards	Further development required

Progress has been made on all four key components under the readiness grant agreement i.e.;

1. Readiness Organisation and consultation;
2. REDD+ strategy preparation;
3. Reference Emissions Level (REL) /Reference Level (RL); and
4. Monitoring System for Forests and Safeguards.

In March 2014, the Secretariat commissioned an international REDD+ expert to carry out an independent assessment of its readiness process to date. The assessment which was completed at the end of April 2014, is reflected significantly in this report. *(Please find on NRS website).*

It is noteworthy that Ghana's REDD+ readiness process is being complemented by other closely related initiatives in the forestry and environment sectors. The REDD+ Readiness process has also contributed to greater coordination of donor support of Ghana's REDD+ agenda, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and IFC on the FIP, as well as with the EU on the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) initiative. Coordination amongst these initiatives and sources of support is imperative to maximizing synergies.

Under Ghana's R-PP implementation process, various relationships have also been forged with both local and international partners, and efforts at exploring avenues for collaboration and cooperation in the pursuit of REDD+ objectives will be sustained in the coming years. Such partnerships have been beneficial to the readiness process in significant ways.

The specific initiatives complementing REDD+ Readiness are listed below and the web links to relevant documents are provided in Annex 1.

- FLEGT-VPA: The European Union's Voluntary Partnership Agreement with timber exporting countries aimed at ensuring that only timber products from legal sources enter the European market.
- FIP: Ghana is a pilot country of the Forest Investment Program (FIP), with implementation set to begin mid-2014.
- NREG, is a donor budget support programme for the environment sector in Ghana aimed at improving resource governance.
- IUCN Pro-poor Programme; This initiative aims to test concepts of equitable benefit sharing and access to resources in the Wassa Amenfi district of Ghana.
- Low Carbon Growth Strategy; This programme is being developed by the Government of Ghana under the auspices of MESTI.
- UN-REDD: Ghana took steps to join the UN-REDD programme in 2011 and currently has observer status and does not receive direct support for its national readiness programme.
- REDDX: The REDD+ Secretariat, in collaboration with the Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC) and Forest Trends, has also undertaken a multi-year national REDD+ finance tracking initiative. The REDDX project currently provides information on funding sources and recipients for all REDD+ related initiatives in the

country from 2009-2012. Work to assess 2013 funds is set to begin in the third quarter of 2014. The current REDDX report is available on the website of the Forestry Commission. (www.fcghana.org/nrs).

- Ghana’s Emissions Reduction Programme: Ghana has recently been selected into the pipeline of the FCPF Carbon Fund following approval of an Emissions Reduction Programme Idea Note (ER-PIN) by the Carbon Fund in Brussels in early April, 2014. In line with Ghana's emerging national strategy options, the ER program targets the cocoa and forests mosaic landscape within the High Forest Zone, with a vision to reduce carbon emissions driven by cocoa farming practices and other agricultural drivers, while enhancing farmers’ productivity and fostering a multi-stakeholder, public-private sector, collaborative effort across the program area.

Figure 2 below presents the broad timelines for Ghana’s three REDD+ related initiatives—FCPF REDD+ Readiness, FIP, and ER-Programme. Due to the approval of Ghana’s FIP and ER-Programme, the REDD+ process in Ghana no longer follows the originally envisaged sequencing, as outlined in Figure 1, with readiness preparations preceding the investment phases (e.g. piloting leading to results based payments). Instead, it acknowledges that there will be some overlap in the readiness and investment phases (Figure 3). Nonetheless, the complementarity of the proposed FCPF and FIP financing provides a powerful opportunity to leverage substantial policy reform and implementation impacts toward sustaining standing forests in Ghana, improving forest management in the sector, and addressing key agricultural drivers.

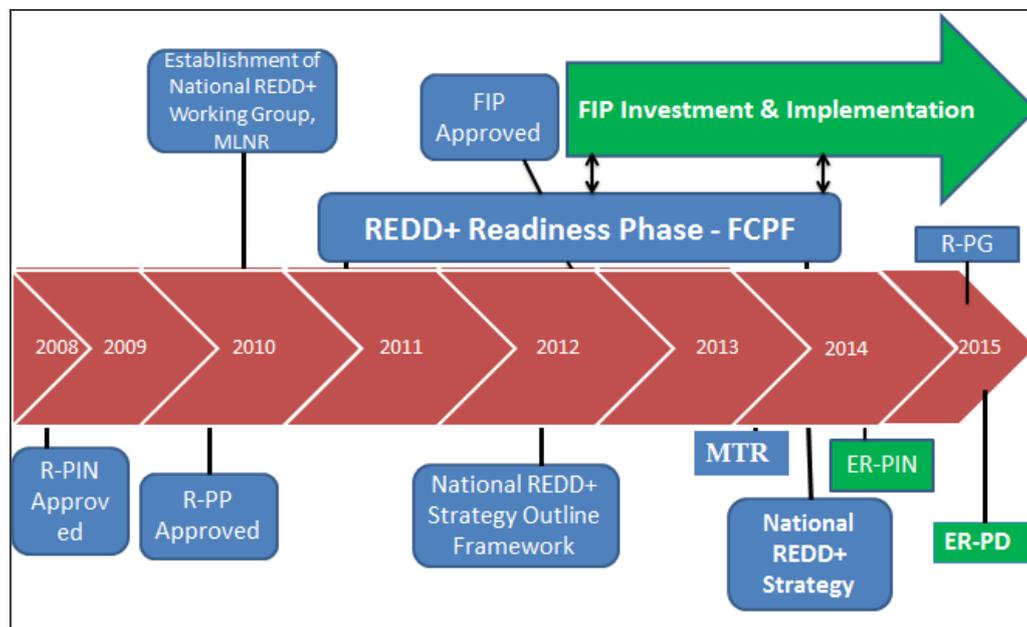


Figure 2: Timeline for Ghana's REDD+ related initiatives



Figure 3: Overlap in Ghana's REDD+ readiness and investment phases

As part of preparation for FCPF REDD+ Readiness grant, steps have been taken to minimize or eliminate duplication of efforts among ongoing initiatives and to ensure that results from these programs are leveraged as Ghana develops its National REDD+ strategy.

For instance, the UN-REDD programme is supporting the strengthening of synergies between the EU-sponsored VPA-FLEGT and the REDD+ readiness processes. Furthermore, the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) has demonstrated commitment to supporting the initial implementation of five (5) off-reserve REDD+ pilots out of the seven (7) selected pilot projects.

This report, developed by Ghana's REDD+ Secretariat summarizes progress that has been made on REDD+ readiness, and highlights the key gaps that remain and require attention. Based on the documented progress towards completion, a formal request is also made for additional finance to support Ghana in achieving this REDD+ readiness milestone.

In preparing this mid-term report, a stock-taking exercise was performed to track Ghana's progress to date, and to look forward to the readiness assessment stage and ask what will it take for Ghana to attain REDD+ readiness. In terms of progress, the major items of work under REDD+ Readiness have commenced. All of the consultancies for the development of frameworks for SESA, REDD+ Strategy, Benefit Sharing, Grievance Redress Mechanism, Forest Monitoring System and MRV/REL/RL have been commissioned. Of these, MRV, SESA and REDD strategy are progressing well per milestones set for this work with completion of draft strategy, SESA analysis and ESMF, and REL for deforestation expected by October 2014. Analysis for the setting of REL for degradation however still remains to be done, hopefully upon the granting of Ghana's request for additional finance for further work on the quantification of carbon emissions from forest degradation. Final reports have been delivered by the consultants for the Communications Plan, Benefit Sharing, Grievance Redress Mechanism, and M&E framework. These reports are being reviewed and next phase of work will be commenced based on the completed work.

In terms of gaps, the REDD+ Secretariat examined the remaining activities under the Grant Agreement (for delivery in October 2014), and identified the following key gaps that will need to be addressed prior to submission of an R-Package—anticipated in November, 2015. These include additional activities related to MRV, Registry, Benefit Sharing, Grievance

Redress Mechanism, and Information System for Multiple Benefits. Details of these gaps are further elaborated in Section 7.

As noted, the Government of Ghana commissioned an independent assessment of its mid-term progress and the report is available on the FC website. In the box below, some of the key findings are highlighted;

- Ghana's vision for REDD+ is clear and ambitious.
- The national REDD+ Secretariat has shown effective leadership in managing the implementation of the R-PP and in pushing beyond the readiness phase to develop a subnational ER Program for the Carbon Fund.
- Strategy development is on track to be completed by the end of 2014.
- Early progress in engaging the private sector is encouraging and spreading.
- Civil Society's interest in Ghana's REDD+ plans has moved from resistant to supportive. This is due, in part, to an effective stakeholder engagement process that built off the successful VPA Platform.
- The mandates of the national REDD+ institutions are clearly established and mutually supportive.
- The consultancies are strong and with a high degree of local ownership.
- A well-developed, comprehensive communications strategy has been finalized.
- Available evidence and opinion of participants and stakeholders indicates that Ghana is on track to completing the implementation activities identified in its R-PP by the end of 2014.

Box 1: Highlights of Independent Assessment Report, April 2014

The report provides important insights for the management of the REDD+ readiness process in Ghana from an objective third party perspective and some key findings that are considered to merit critical attention have been discussed in Annex 8.

Prior to submission, this report was circulated to the NRWG for review and received the endorsement of the Group at a meeting held on May 6 2014 chaired by the Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources.

2.0 AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDD+ READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL

This section provides information on the status of implementation progress on the R-PP, with an in-depth assessment of each of the 4 key components, their respective sub-components and the various activities that fall under them. It also seeks to clearly set out what remains to be done to bring them to completion, as well as highlighting the interconnections and possible synergies with other REDD-related initiatives, both current and of the recent past that are of relevance to the goals of the R-PP.

2.1) Component 1: Readiness Organisation and Consultation

This component comprises 2 sub-components which have been reported below;

Sub-component 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements

Substantial efforts have been invested in developing national institutional infrastructure and management arrangements needed for the implementation of a multi-faceted mechanism such as REDD+. The entities and institutions involved have been leading in defining REDD+ policy, as well as coordinating and managing implementation in an effective manner, and they include a wide array of actors from civil society, the private sector, research and academic institutions, and inter-ministerial bodies. The capacity of the various identified entities to engage and function appropriately in the readiness process is key, and therefore significant resources have been applied to this end.

Figures 4 (below) shows the multi-tiered institutional arrangement for implementing REDD+. Figure 5 provides a brief overview of the specific roles and responsibilities at each levels of the hierarchy.

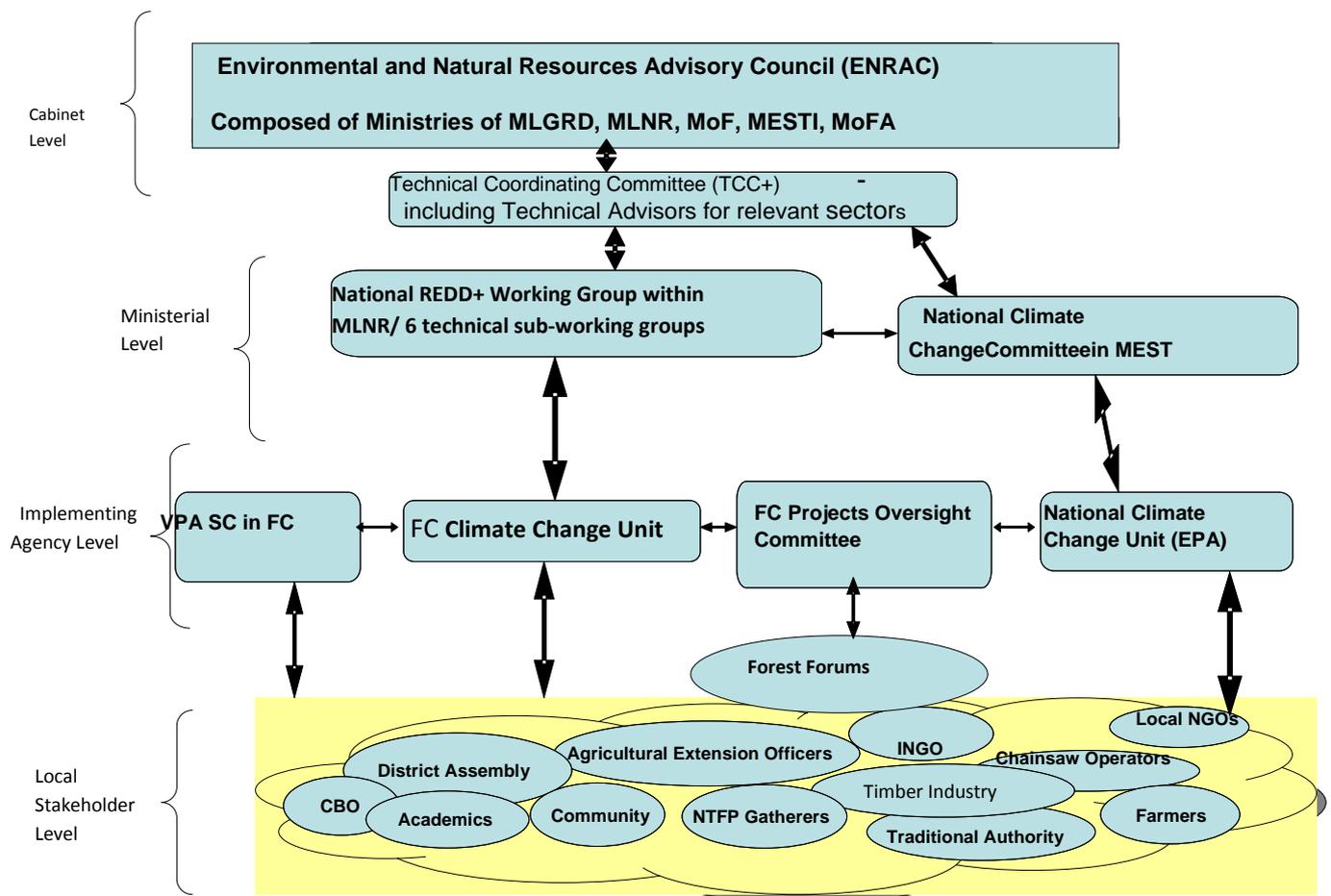


Figure 4: Institutional framework of Ghana's REDD+ readiness

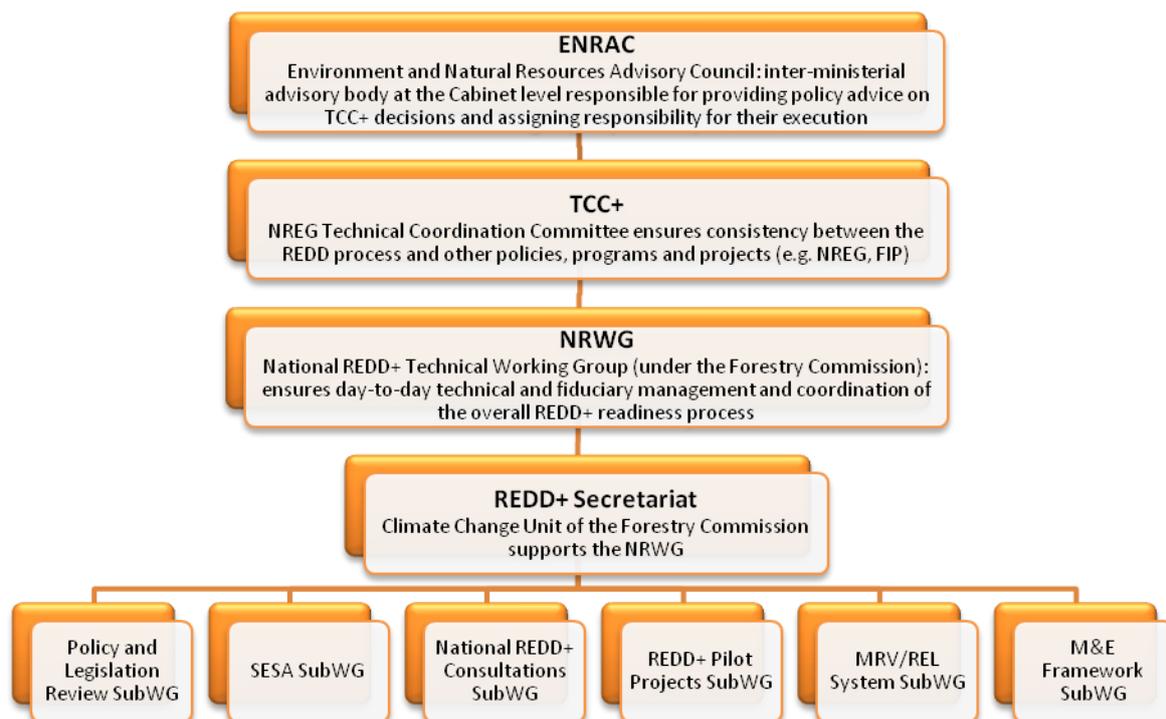


Figure 5: Mandate of key bodies of Ghana's REDD+ readiness process

Annex 2a provides a full description of the critical management institutions outlined in Figures 4 and 5. This description includes a review of their operating structures, roles, and experiences to date. The Annex also describes other key bodies and institutions (not shown in the figures) that are linked to these management arrangements including the Forestry Commission's Projects Oversight Committee, and the Green House Gas Inventory Team. Annex 2b provides the specific terms of reference (TOR) for the ENRAC and the NRWG.

Institutional arrangements for the administration and management of carbon revenue accruing from emission reduction efforts within the boundaries of Ghana need to be firmly agreed and clarified as a fundamental requirement for a future performance-based REDD+ regime. It should be noted that considerations for putting in place such an arrangement (National Fund Management Arrangement) are not reflected in Ghana's R-PP and would need to be regarded as an additional critical step to be taken ahead of a full implementation of the REDD+ mechanism in Ghana. In particular, establishing the operational modalities for such an arrangement and putting it to the test to see how it will perform in terms of meeting acceptable accountability and transparency standards is critical. This is further elaborated in Section 5.

The REDD+ process in Ghana has been conducted in an open and transparent manner. For instance when demonstration activities of the readiness process commenced, a call for proposals, including a clear set of criteria, were placed in the national print media for interested persons and organisations to submit their initial ideas for consideration by an Expert Review Panel. Seventeen (17) proposals were received and scrutinized, at the end of which, 7 proposals were selected. Throughout the process, openness and transparency was demonstrated.

The REDD+ secretariat has also received many different views from various stakeholders on technical and social issues. For example, the NRWG was once petitioned by an individual who was of the view that the current national forest definition truncates opportunities for REDD+ projects in the northern savanna zone of Ghana, and therefore needed to be looked into. The NRWG, based on available biomass distribution data from the Forest Preservation Project, which was financed by the Government of Japan, was able to determine that at the moment the current definition was the most suitable for the country.

In its quest to ensure that donor-funded projects are executed effectively for the realization of the expected outcomes, and that such projects are managed in an accountable manner that fosters trust amongst its stakeholders, the Forestry Commission has put in place a Projects Oversight Committee (POC). This is one of the internal management structures of the FC with special focus on projects. Its function is to support projects to succeed through regularly monitoring their performance in order to take corrective action where needed. This is important for institutional ownership, mainstreaming, and leveraging of pool of human and other resources in the FC.

This also helps with coordination and bridging gaps between projects in a major way. Through the POC, projects are able to benefit from institutional memory and deal with the problem of duplication of efforts and its associated inefficiencies. The POC is chaired by the Chief Executive of the FC, with project coordinators, managers and field liaisons as members.

Various outputs from all the consultancy assignments have been scrutinize at meetings of the POC where the consultants have had to do in-person presentations. This has been helpful for the quality of output delivery. Furthermore, the POC has on many occasions participated in contract negotiations with consultants.

A new sub-website on REDD+ under the FC official website has been developed and is functioning. The website (www.fcghana.org/nrs) is dedicated to REDD+ and related issues in order to make it easier to access information about the NRS and associated activities. For this reason, a member of the NRS team has been designated to be responsible for updating the sub-website, working closely with the FC staff at the IT unit.

In order to promote stakeholder engagement, the NRS has also developed a database for persons and organisations that have interest in developing or partaking in REDD+ projects. This will help in designing targeted programmes for various stakeholder categories. Two workshops have already been held for this group in late 2012 and early 2013.

With technical assistance from Baastel consultants and supported by the FCPF, the REDD+ Secretariat has developed a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. Whereas in Component 6 of the R-PP the main functions of the monitoring mechanism are described, the proposed M&E framework was not developed into a full-fledged results based monitoring system. The M&E Framework will be used to as a management tool to track progress in a number of key initiatives including FCPF, NDPC, FIP, NREG and VPA. Compiled in late March, the report was completed by the consultant in mid-April.

All the structures outlined in Figures 4 and 5 are well-recognised, sectoral and multi-sectoral entities with a clear mandates and missions as described in Annex 2a and 2b. Whereas a few of the bodies were specifically constituted to support the R-PP implementation process, e.g. NRWG, the majority were already been in existence, either as statutory national bodies or as the products of past and present projects/programmes which have been leveraged for the effective implementation of REDD+ in Ghana, e.g. NREG, FLEGT-VPA, NLBI, FIP, etc.

The financing arrangements that support these entities and management structures largely depend on donor funding, such as the FCPF and FIP, and to a lesser extent support from GoG. An implementation strategy for the National Climate Change Policy is being drawn up and upon completion, it is expected to contain actions plans and budgetary estimates that will be mainstreamed in the national development planning process. This will provide the basis for budgetary allocations from GoG to be made for various interventions identified in the policy document.

The on-going REDD+ readiness process takes into account the need for alignment with both existing and evolving national and sector policy and legislative frameworks. This is crucial for developing an enduring and effective national REDD+ strategy that is compatible with long-term national development goals. To facilitate this, most of the key structures involved in the implementation of Ghana's R-PP are cross-sectoral in nature and made up of a wide array of stakeholders to ensure that decisions taken are broad-based rather than parochial.

The ENRAC, NRWG, TCC+, NCCC, and the NFF operate at different levels, i.e. from national to community, ensuring that REDD+ readiness is informed by and implemented within the context and reality of national and sectoral policies.

The National REDD+ Secretariat is manned by an appropriate number of staff of the right calibre currently available in the FC. The individual members making up the various bodies that are leading the implementation of the R-PP are technical experts in their own rights, with considerable years of experience. Therefore the existing capacity for the technical supervision of the REDD+ readiness process is reasonably adequate. However, the Secretariat would like to add an additional staff member with expertise in GIS and Remote Sensing to improve coordination and planning of related activities.

Various capacity building activities have also taken place in the past to sharpen the skills of these bodies to make them more effective at their roles. These include various training programmes on the development and formulation of REDD+ projects, carbon stocks assessments, MRV and REL establishment, etc.

The NRWG and the sub-working groups under it have been deeply involved in the development of ToRs for engaging consultants for various assignments, and have also been highly useful in reviewing and providing feedback on draft reports submitted by consultants.

Institutional arrangements for the administration and management of carbon revenue accruing from emission reduction efforts within the boundaries of Ghana need to be firmly agreed and clarified as a fundamental requirement for a future performance-based REDD+ regime. It should be noted that considerations for putting in place such an arrangement does not reflect in Ghana's R-PP and would need to be regarded as an additional critical step to be taken ahead of a full implementation of the REDD+ mechanism in Ghana.

Instead of establishing an entirely new structure to execute such a function, it may be more beneficial to harness and build upon existing systems and processes that have been employed for the purposes of channeling funds to entities and individuals who are entitled to them on the basis of well-acknowledged rights.

A case in point is the flow of revenue from the timber extraction industry received on the behalf of landowners by the Forestry Commission and channeled to them through the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL). This system has been in operation for decades and achieved with a reasonably good degree of credibility over time. This arrangement may be explored and enhanced to be able to serve the purpose of distributing funds generated from carbon assets. This could work well in close association with the deployment of a national carbon accounting registry which will make it possible to document and track exchange of carbon assets for carbon revenue between national and the international carbon trading institutions.

Funds from the FCPF are being managed by the Forestry Commission, which hosts the National REDD+ Secretariat, and are being administered in line with established World Bank guidelines. The Bank's financial management and procurement procedures are being applied to ensure efficient financial management. Internally, the current Government of Ghana Public Procurement Authority guidelines are being applied and the existing financial mechanism i.e. Public Finance Management System are used for internal disbursement and management of funds.

At the start of the project, a group of FC staff from the NRS, the FC Finance and the Procurement Unit were given training on the World Bank's guidelines for disbursement of funds and general procurement processes.

Financial audits are undertaken periodically by firms hired by the World Bank Country Office to ascertain whether funds have been applied judiciously and in accordance with laid down financial procedures and regulations. All associated records are available at the FC.

Ghana is expected to have a functional GRM system in place in order to that grievances pertaining to REDD+ can be voiced and addressed. Under the R-PP, a consultant has been hired to develop a proposal for outlining options for the establishment of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). A draft report has been submitted and is being reviewed by the Policy and Legislation Sub-working group of the NRWG. The document will be finalized once feedback has been received.

Whereas the consultancy was supposed to analyse options for a GRM, the focus has shifted to establishing or possibly expanding existing systems to meet the needs and requirements of REDD+. This is further elaborated on in section 5.

An amount of USD200,000 has been earmarked for the implementation of the GRM during the readiness phase. Ghana has yet to receive this funding and therefore intends requesting for it in order to set up a functional GRM.

Sub-Component 1b: Consultation, Participation, and Outreach

The process of consultation and participation is integral to the development of an effective strategy for REDD+. The development and implementation of Ghana's R-PP is guided by a Consultation and Participation (C&P) Plan. In its design and implementation, the C&P Plan draws on many contributions provided by stakeholders during the R-PP development process, as well as lessons learned from the development of the FLEGT, VPA and the NREG programme. It is worth noting that the multi-stakeholder consultation process, on which the forestry reform agenda under FLEGT/VPA was based, was very successful and has laid an important foundation for the REDD+ process.

The goal of the C&P Plan is to achieve collective ownership of the REDD+ process amongst all the relevant stakeholders. An important component of the C&P plan is the development of a communication strategy to guide the consultation process on Ghana's REDD+ implementation. This work has been completed and the final report of the consultant was submitted in October, 2013. (See Ghana's REDD+ sub-website for a copy of the communication strategy).

The communication strategy outlines an action plan for implementation in the short, medium and long terms so that the objectives of the strategy can be attained. It is proposed that the activities earmarked for the short term be implemented immediately so that feedback from the field testing of the activities can be utilized for refinement of the communication strategy prior to the submission of Ghana's R-package in November, 2015. The full range of activities to be undertaken are as follows:

- Development and launching of REDD+ branding and image profiling publicity campaign;
- Creation of REDD+ ambassadors, particularly in the public universities of Ghana;
- Production and assembling of simplified communication products such as policy briefs, posters, factsheets, FAQs and one page media briefers;
- Organisation of a retreat for media personnel on REDD+ implementation in Ghana;
- Production of a comprehensive television documentary on REDD+ readiness activities in Ghana;
- Development of a quarterly newsletter on REDD+ activities in Ghana;
- Weekly community radio programmes with phone-in sessions on REDD+ implementation in Ghana.

Key stakeholder groups identified for engagement, consultation and participation include:

- Government – State level and statutory level actors with a focus on cross-sectoral linkages e.g. MLNR, MOFA, MESTI, FC, EPA, Ghana Cocoa Board etc.
- Private Sector – including timber industry, agricultural sector, and financial institutions.
- Civil Society – including local and international NGOs, and community based organisations across all relevant thematic areas
- Development Partners

The activities outlined in Ghana's R-PP for implementation under this sub-component are as follows:

1. Establishment of a C & P Working Group;
2. Broad information sharing on REDD+ through stakeholder based information sharing and consultation;
3. Expert and Focused Consultation through Working Groups and National Expert Consultations;
4. Stakeholder based consultation on key pilot projects and legal / institutional changes;
5. Validation of a national strategy for consultation and participation.

During the implementation of the R-PP, concerted efforts have been made to complete these key activities as discussed below:

1. Establishment of a C&P Working Group

A multi-stakeholder sub-Working Group on Consultation and Participation under the National REDD+ Working Group has been set up to oversee the implementation of the C&P plan and the REDD+ Communication Strategy to ensure sustained engagement with local institutions and communities involved in the REDD+ process.

The Communication Strategy for REDD+ implementation seeks to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To enhance understanding of climate change and REDD+ concepts, carbon financing and forest conservation among different stakeholders to increase their understanding of and participation in REDD+.
2. To enhance understanding of forest related policies and environmental issues among forest adjacent communities and other stakeholders in Ghana.
3. To strengthen the relationship and communication with the Ghanaian news media to enhance wider coverage of climate change and REDD+.

2. Broad information sharing on REDD+ through stakeholder based information sharing and consultation

The Secretariat has utilized a variety of approaches to share information with stakeholders. REDD+ brochures that provide a simplified explanation of REDD+ implementation in Ghana have been prepared and distributed to about 10,000 people. Forest Forums at various levels have also been used for dissemination of

REDD+ information to grassroot forest communities and other stakeholders. The Secretariat has also upgraded the REDD+ website and regularly upload relevant materials for the general public. See Annex 3 for copies of REDD+ brochures and posters.

Civil society platforms like the Forest Forums, which operate at national, regional and local levels and are existing structures for consultation in the forestry sector, have been used for dissemination of REDD+ information to grassroot forest communities and other stakeholders. Frontline staff of the FC from all ten regions of Ghana have been sensitized on REDD+ readiness and their role in REDD+ implementation in Ghana. The first phase of sensitization was completed in January, 2014. The REDD+ secretariat will undertake a training of selected staff from the Forestry Commission on the key outputs of the R-PP implementation in May, 2014. The trained staff will then serve as trainers for further training sessions scheduled to happen at the FC's regional and district levels.

3. Expert and Focused Consultation through Working Groups and National Expert Consultations

A guiding principle of Ghana's REDD+ C&P plan is to ensure the significant engagement of all stakeholders, including marginalized groups, who are significantly affected by, involved in the implementation of, or otherwise interested in REDD+, regardless of their sector. In order to ensure broad-based consultation, the REDD+ Secretariat has built a database of REDD+ actors for the purpose of enhancing networking, sharing of experiences, knowledge exchange, opening of feedback channels as well as assisting in the development of effective capacity building programmes. The NRWG and technical sub-working groups are composed of members drawn from the key stakeholder groups of the REDD+ process.

For example, the REDD+ Secretariat, in collaboration with IUCN and other stakeholders have developed a road map to mainstreaming gender considerations into Ghana's REDD+ process. The road map was developed in November, 2012 and aims to give both men, women and the youth equal opportunities to access, to participate in, contribute to and benefit from various REDD+ policies, programs and funds and thereby contribute to environmental and social sustainability. The REDD+ secretariat is liaising with stakeholders to operationalize this road map.

Another example of expert consultation and exchange occurred between VPA and REDD+ experts in an effort to strengthen and enhance opportunities for effective collaboration in addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. As part of this, a working session, facilitated by Tropenbos Ghana, was held in 2013 to identify the common areas for collaboration to ensure that synergy is realized between the two separate but closely linked initiatives. Experiences were also drawn from the VPA stakeholder consultation process to enhance early REDD+ readiness activities.

In addition, the Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) is expected to provide local communities with financing and learning mechanisms to support their participation in the FIP investment programs and projects, which have significant overlap with REDD+.

4. Stakeholder based consultation on key pilot projects and legal/institutional changes

During the development of Ghana's R-PP, multiple consultative workshops were organized for stakeholder groups drawn from government agencies, community based organizations, civil society, the private sector and development partners. These participatory and consultative workshops have continued throughout the R-PP implementation phase. In order to enhance the capacity of forest fringe communities particularly those located close to proposed REDD+ pilot sites, training on REDD+ has also been organized for these communities.

A call was made both locally and internationally for interested organisations, individuals and institutions to submit feasible REDD+ proposals that would be subjected to piloting and testing on the ground. A total of seven (7) proposals were selected out of 17 proposals submitted. The project proponents have been taken through a series of training workshops on REDD+ related issues. The views and opinions of the pilot proponents have also been sought to define the right implementation modalities for the pilots. Consultative workshops have also been organized at the pilot sites for traditional authorities, landowners and local communities.

The Secretariat is committed to implementing outcomes from consultations and enabling public discourse about those outcomes. As such, it manages the information that it receives from stakeholders in a manner which is sensitive to the needs and concerns of the stakeholders. Information from stakeholders is consequently utilized to continually refine Ghana's REDD+ process and most recently has been incorporated into the ToRs of the various consultants and refinement of strategies.

5. Validation of a national strategy for consultation and participation

The C&P plan has been validated by the NRWG and the C&P sub-working group. Implementation of activities under this sub-component is also guided by the FCPF assessment framework, details of which are outlined below.

Despite the considerable progress that has been made, there are some activities that remain and gaps that need to be filled. The 2014 work plan of the REDD+ secretariat outlines various activities related to sub-component 1b to be completed by the end of November, 2014 when the grant agreement with the FCPF expires. These activities are enumerated below:

- Meetings and training workshops for the purposes of engaging and strengthening the regional and district forest forums and other stakeholders;

- Sensitisation and REDD+ capacity building training sessions for selected staff of the Forestry Commission (Training of trainers);
- REDD+ Roadshow across Ghana;
- Further dissemination of REDD+ communication materials;
- Regular updating of REDD+ website;
- Expert consultations on REDD+ strategy.

2.2) Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation

This component constitutes one of the core elements of the REDD+ readiness process, with a view to establishing effective measures and mechanisms for addressing deforestation and forest degradation. This requires rigorous situational analysis leading to the formulation of a set of policies and programmes, as well as prescriptions for setting up adequate and transparent institutional, economic, legal and governance arrangements necessary to implement REDD+ strategy options.

The process for the development of the REDD strategy is illustrated below:

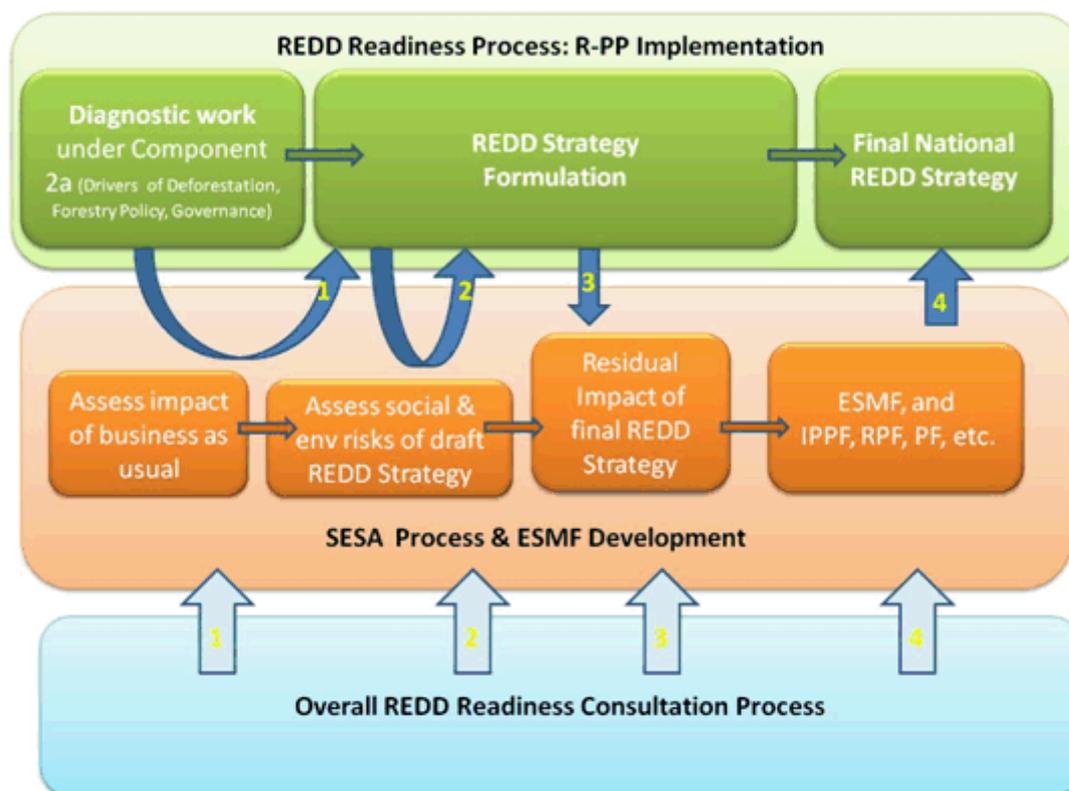


Figure 6: SESA process and its relationship to national REDD+ strategy development

There are 4 sub-components under this component which have been examined below;

Sub-Component 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance

As part of the R-PP, the assessment of forest law, policy and governance benefited from a substantial amount of analytical work conducted under various natural resource management programs in the years prior to the formulation of the R-PP (particularly under the VPA program). The analyses and lessons learned from those programs was validated and/or updated during the R-PP preparation in order to present a comprehensive analysis of recent historical land-use trends and an assessment of relevant issues related to land tenure and titling, natural resource rights and benefit sharing (including traditional/ customary), livelihoods, forest law, policy, and governance.

On land and tree tenure issues, the REDD+ Secretariat benefitted, in 2010, from work by Forest Trends, the Katoomba Group and NCRC, which built on years of existing work, to outline potential implications of the legal and policy framework for tree and forest carbon in Ghana. Following from this work, a country legal study was conducted by Forest Trends and the Katoomba Group, in collaboration with NCRC and the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission to review the existing legal (legislative and common law) framework relating to land and forest tenure in Ghana with a focus on Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) and other currently-available legal and institutional infrastructure, to identify promising platforms for ensuring secure rights and equitable benefit sharing to individuals, families, communities and traditional authorities responsible for generating carbon benefits. This study was completed in 2011. In addition, there is an on-going analysis of carbon rights in Ghana by FORIG with support from the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). In addition, the readiness pilot projects and FIP projects will include components that will inform policy decisions on tenure and carbon rights, including "policy pilots" that test new management and benefit sharing arrangements.

The Independent Assessment Report notes that "there will be no simple solution to land tenure reform in Ghana. The persistence of traditional land tenure arrangements within the colonial land tenure system has resulted in a complex dilemma for creating policy incentives for REDD+ at the national level".

Over the last couple of decades, the democratization process in Ghana has led to a greater level of respect for the rule of law and a conducive climate for open, unrepressed discourse on various issues of citizen rights. This development has emboldened various sections of society that are calling for land and tree tenure reforms which is important for the successful implementation of REDD+ in Ghana.

A second phase of Ghana's Natural Resources and Environmental Governance programme (NREG), supported by the World Bank, will tackle working on tenure reform and the FIP will pilot any resulting new policies as part of its project activities. Under this initiative, a *National Expert Consultation on Allocation of Terrestrial Carbon Rights* is planned, and discussions will focus on the implications of current land and tree tenure arrangements for the allocation of carbon rights, and will advise on any changes to legislation that are likely to be required to operationalise carbon rights. It will also consider the risks in the current tenurial context which undermine community and business interests, and find ways to mitigate those risks. At the time of writing, the dates for the consultations and timetable for reporting had not been set.

There are several existing reports from studies conducted in the country that favour devolution of management rights to communities from which strong justification can be made for such a major policy shift.

Assessment of drivers has progressed from an initial analysis under the R-PP, to a more detailed assessment of drivers within the High Forest Zone, as part of the development of Ghana's ER-PIN. Since then, further analysis, as part of the national strategy and SESA consultancies, have been conducted with a focus on establishing the inter-relationships between the candidate strategies and the drivers of deforestation and degradation. The results of this analysis will be delivered as part of the national strategy in September, 2014. The results will provide insights for identifying and prioritizing actions and interventions for addressing the drivers of deforestation in the REDD+ strategy.

Sub-Component 2b: REDD+ Strategy Options

Central to the REDD+ readiness process is the formulation of a clearly defined strategy for addressing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, with a thorough analysis of the agents behind them and the actions needed for bringing about widespread behavior change leading to adoption of sustainable, climate-smart land-use practices.

The assessment of REDD+ strategy options should not underestimate the legal and political difficulties associated with any option that will require reforming legislation, particular constitutional law related to land tenure.

The following is an evaluation of the National REDD+ Management Arrangements based on the Readiness Assessment Framework;

Presentation and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options

During stakeholder consultations culminating in the formulation of Ghana's R-PP, a set of 13 candidate strategy options for REDD+ were identified and documented, as presented in the table below;

Table 2: REDD+ candidate strategy options

Candidate Element within National REDD Strategy	Activities Proposed Under R-PP
A: Improve the quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue and decision –making	Maintain links to ongoing Forest Policy Review
B. Clarify rights regime	National Expert Consultation on the Allocation of Carbon Rights, to review terrestrial carbon rights, benefit sharing and tree tenure
C. Improved FLEGT	Maintain links to VPA process, and integrate actions as appropriate
D: Address unsustainable timber harvesting by supporting sustainable supply of timber to meet export and domestic / regional timber demand	National Expert Consultation on Provisioning of the Timber Supply
E. Address problem of local market supply	Working Group on Local Market Timber Supply (or amalgamate with proposed VPA action)
F: Mitigate effects of agricultural expansion (particularly cocoa in the HFZ)	Liaise with MoFA, COCOBOD and Cocoa Research Institute Working Group on REDDplus-friendly Cocoa Production (Cocoa Carbon) Working Group on Low Carbon Agro-industrial Development
G. Strengthen local decentralised management of natural resources	Maintain links to existing NREG strategy and Ghana’s long-term development plan (under preparation; successor to GPRSII)
H. Improve sustainability of fuel wood use	Working Group on Charcoal and Fuel wood
I. Improve quality of fire-affected forests and rangelands	Maintain links with National Wildfire Policy and Sustainable Land Management Programme Challenge Fund for projects on Fire Control
J. Address local market demand	Same as A-E
K. Improve returns to small-scale enterprise	Same as F, G, I
L. Improve regulation of mining activities to reduce forest degradation	Maintain links to NREG
M. Implement actions to address acts of God (wind and natural fire events, floods, pests and diseases)	Review permanence and liability issues as the R-PP develops.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (Ghana) Limited (PWC) has been contracted to subject these strategy options to a thorough evaluation. Using a multiple criteria assessment technique and extensive stakeholder consultations, these strategy options will be evaluated for their effectiveness to address the drivers of deforestation and degradation. This will ultimately be subject to consultative process and result in the development of a workable and pragmatic National REDD+ Strategy for Ghana.

These 13 strategy options have been condensed into 7, taking into account the overlapping elements. These 7 options are being evaluated under the SESA consultancy for their possible impacts and the measures necessary for mitigating such impacts. The final report is due to be completed by September 2014.

According to the R-PP, it is envisaged that REDD+ components of a National Strategy for Ghana will fall into two broad and overlapping thematic areas:

- **Theme A: Timber policy and supply.** Approaches here will focus on traditional forest and timber sector operations, processes, policies and laws, and on the potential for broadening public participation in the sector and its management. This will involve consideration of both on- and off-reserve supply, and the potential of REDD payments to improve the management and emissions performance of each.
- **Theme B: Wider aspects of forest policy including agro-forestry and other carbon conserving activities.** Approaches here will reflect the potential for actions in the agriculture, agro-industry and fuel wood sub-sectors to contribute to avoided deforestation and degradation. Some of these options will be suitable for pilot interventions during step 2 of R-PP implementation.

In light of other initiatives that are already in place or emerging (e.g. VPA-FLGT, FIP, and ER-Programme), the importance and relevance of this strategy cannot be understated. For it to be effective, however, strong synergies and collaboration must be established.

Preliminary findings from the consulting team as presented at a Project Oversight Committee meeting on April 3, 2014 include the following:

- Experts' analyses highlight rights regime and agro-forestry as 'high' priority strategy options, i.e. tackle the drivers with highest impact.
- Forest management is a long-term "business". This uncertainty on investment returns translates into actual or perceived risks. This is a barrier to private sector to engage more actively in REDD+ projects.
- Projects-approach has not worked to curb the sectors challenges (drivers) during the past 30 years.
- Emphasizing "Co-Benefits" of a Ghana's REDD+ Strategy may actually be more important than purely focusing on CO2 reduction.
- In absence of a full-fledged carbon market, a lot remains based on assumptions. The consultants are expected to provide full feasibility assessment of strategy options by October 2014, which will help envision the future of Ghana's REDD+ programme with greater clarity.

The final national strategy will draw on other key components of the REDD+ readiness process as indicated below;

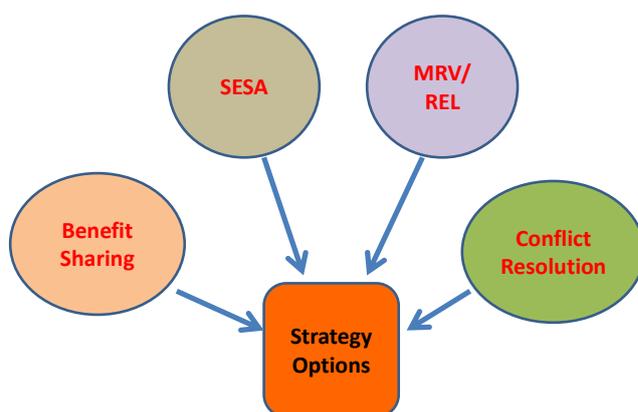


Figure 7: Relationship between national REDD+ strategy and other readiness components

The National REDD+ strategy is expected to be far-sighted and also well-aligned with other national development policies and programmes, taking into account the policy dynamics in other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, water, energy, mining, gender, etc.

The REDD strategy formulation process will entail extensive expert stakeholder deliberations, with a view to ensuring that important national developments that are germane to REDD+ and the broader national efforts at combating climate change are not overlooked. There are legitimate concerns about the tensions between environmental quality objectives on one hand and extractive industry activities such as mining and timber logging that provides much needed employment opportunities for several Ghanaians, as well as export earnings for national revenue. A similar situation is observed between forestry and other agricultural activities that produce major export commodities of international importance that drive forest cover loss, such as cocoa. New approaches are being developed to ease these tensions and work towards a common goal of economic growth based on principles of environmental sustainability. The emerging cocoa REDD+ programme under the Carbon Fund targeting climate-smart cocoa production in the forest mosaic landscapes of southern Ghana has a great potential for demonstrating that economic goals can actually be compatible with environmental goals.

Activities remaining to be completed by PwC are the development of a situation assessment and draft strategy options as well as carrying out of multi-stakeholder workshops for validation of the national strategy, which should be delivered by September 2012.

Sub-Component 2c: Implementation Framework

Adoption of legislation and regulations

The most significant achievement to date is the reform of the Forest and Wildlife Policy of 2012 and the formulation of the National Climate Change Policy of 2013, both of which recognize the importance of REDD+ as a pathway for emissions reduction. The Policy, Legislation and Governance sub-working group has been very influential on bringing these issues into the policy dialogue, culminating in the formulation of these policies.

As a result of the input from the sub-working group, REDD+ Secretariat, and relevant stakeholders, the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy (2012) acknowledges the importance of tree tenure on farms in off-reserve areas and the non-consumptive values of forests. The revised policy also recognizes climate change and REDD+ as having far reaching implications for forestry and livelihoods.

Through a consultative process, the National Climate Change Committee, with representation from the REDD+ Secretariat, completed the National Climate Change Policy. The policy outlines Ghana's mitigation, adaptation, and low carbon growth agenda, and includes REDD+ as a fundamental component. Efforts are also currently underway to develop a Low Carbon Development Strategy for Ghana, with a series of national level stakeholder consultations already conducted.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture acknowledges the need for building climate resilience into the agriculture sector. It is therefore anticipated that Ghana's agricultural policy of 2009 will be revised to take on board climate smart approaches for activities in the sector. The COCOBOD strategy which is still being developed is expected to promote climate smart agriculture given the importance of cocoa and other tree crops to the national economy and rural livelihoods.

A broader process of developing a coherent, streamlined and sustainable land use planning and management system, initiated in 2003, is being undertaken under the Land Administration Project (LAP) within the MLNR. The MLNR has overall responsibility for land issues. The issue of land and tree tenure is important for REDD+ because clarity of title is a fundamental requirement for determining carbon rights. Rectifying these tenure issues presents a challenging agenda for Ghana given the complexities and interconnected nature of land and tree tenure, but further progress is needed to minimize potential conflicts and the role of the traditional (customary) authorities, landowners and local communities will be key. Customary authorities are the allodial title holders for more than 80 percent of the land in the country and are responsible for the allocation, administration and management of these lands. The Traditional Authorities hold the land in trust for the community and its future generations, and are expected to dispose of lands in the interest of and with the

consent of the community. Until these issues are fully clarified, the CREMA model presents enormous opportunities for making progress on sustainable land use planning and complex land ownership issues with traditional authorities and local communities. This is because the Minister divests the right to manage and benefit economically from the natural resources within a CREMA area to the CREMA communities.

Under current legislation, while farmers and land owners have legal rights to planted trees, it is illegal for farmers and other users of off-reserve lands to harvest any naturally growing trees for commercial or domestic purposes, even if it is growing on their land. The FC has management rights over the trees in the off-reserve areas, but the exercise of such rights, in the form of granting timber rights permits, can only be concluded with the permission of the land owner. While logging and mining without authorization is prohibited, in practice better enforcement is needed. Integration with other natural resources projects and programs that address governance and enforcement e.g. NREG and VPA-FLEGT, are important.

The Renewable Energy Act of 2011 (Act 832) provides for the regulation of the production and supply of woodfuel and bio-fuel, and will still depend heavily on primary products such as fuelwood and charcoal.

The national forest plantation strategy is still under development to encourage adequate re-stocking of off-reserve timber and enhance forest plantations development.

Key elements of the implementation framework

Implementation is coordinated and monitored by the National REDD+ Secretariat which is hosted by the FC. In pursuit of accountability, transparency and equity in the implementation of REDD+, the Secretariat serves as the information clearing house through the Forestry Commission sub-website for REDD+. This is useful for tracking progress of project implementation, publicly sharing relevant information and holding accountable the various State and non-State actors involved in the REDD+ readiness process. There is also a Project Oversight Committee (POC) which ensures that donor funded projects are executed effectively and managed in an accountable manner. Various outputs from the consultancies have been scrutinized at meetings of the POC. The NRWG also provides oversight of the Secretariat's activities including an avenue for grievances from stakeholders to be redressed.

At the FC, which hosts the National REDD+ Secretariat, funds from the FCPF are being administered in the project mode using the World Bank guidelines. The Bank's financial management and procurement procedures are being applied to ensure efficient financial management. Internally, the current Government of Ghana Public Procurement Authority guidelines are being applied and the existing financial mechanism i.e. Public Finance Management System are used for internal disbursement and management of funds.

Piloting and testing of policies and interventions is one of the 3 phases of the R-PP. The desire to learn "from the ground up" was intended for creating opportunities for learning lessons that would feed into the policy and strategy formulation process. A process for the selection of pilot projects was launched in early 2012. The Demonstration sub-working group has oversight responsibility for the piloting of REDD+ under phase 2 of the R-PP. Calls for REDD+ pilot project proposals were placed through the national print media. Seventeen

(17) submissions were received from various proponents from government agencies, NGOs, and individual private developers. An expert evaluation panel was constituted to evaluate the proposals in the light of pre-determined criteria and subsequently seven (7) pilot projects were selected (*See Annex 4 for a Summary Table on the Pilot Projects*).

In an effort to improve the financing situation for REDD pilots, the REDD+ Secretariat sought bilateral support from SECO which has offered to provide financial assistance for five of these projects located in the off-reserve area. To date, this funding has yet to materialize. As a lead up to this potential funding, an analytical study on the economic viability of implementing the REDD+ pilot projects was commissioned by SECO through the ITTO to be undertaken by the REDD+ Secretariat, Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG), researchers from the University of Bern, Switzerland and the Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources of KNUST. The “REDD+” study was part of efforts to share technical experiences and lessons learned during the research within the project sites with policymakers, project developers and stakeholders, with the objective to inform REDD+ pilot project and strategy development. The REDD+ report presents experiences and advice on the risks, costs and revenues of REDD+ projects, thereby informing not only the development of the national REDD+ strategy, but also the possible benefit sharing options and non-carbon benefits. This report is yet to be validated and published.

The idea was that lessons learnt from the piloting phase would inform the formulation of the REDD+ strategy. However, given the late start of the pilots within the readiness timeframe, and the absence of funding to support their implementation there is a risk that the generation of results and lessons learned may arrive after some of the elements of the national REDD+ strategy have been implemented. Therefore, it is deemed important to consider the following:

- The NRS is aware of other REDD+ related initiatives on the ground (e.g. Rainforest Alliance’s experience piloting REDD+ in the Western region; Forest Trends / NCRC feasibility assessments of REDD+ projects focused on cocoa, charcoal, and a CREMA model supporting a wildlife corridor) that could furnish the REDD+ strategy development process with useful lessons and experiences. Going forward, the NRS proposes to compile and analyse the lessons and best practices for input into the national REDD+ strategy.
- Report from studies conducted with SECO support underlined the fact that with respect to tree tenure and benefit sharing, it could be very instructive to implement “policy pilots” that explore and test carbon definitions and benefit sharing arrangements. If SECO funding for the five pilots does not materialise in the time frame required to inform the national strategy, then the NRS will focus on the most feasible national REDD+ pilots that have taken early actions on the ground such as IUCN, Portal Limited, Vicdoris Limited and Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG). This will require additional funding and the detailed request is included in Section 5.
- Ghana’s FIP, which focuses on the Western Region and the Brong Ahafo Region, is scheduled to begin implementation in June, 2014. Early efforts and experiences that will come out of the associated projects and components can be used as crucial input to inform the REDD+ strategy formulation and review.

- Going forward, development of Ghana’s ERP will happen in parallel with the implementation of REDD+ readiness in Ghana. Development of the Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme will have to draw heavily from experiences and lessons learned in the cocoa sector, as well as those from the forestry sector in order to inform a feasible and implementable program. It is anticipated that Ghana’s REDD+ strategy will also benefit from the lessons and experiences from the cocoa sector.

There is already experience in Ghana with innovative benefit-sharing mechanisms, such as Community Resource and Environmental Management Agreements (CREMAs), which are recognized under Ghanaian law once registered by the MLNR.

Consideration of options for benefit sharing arrangements for REDD+ is being undertaken through a consultancy with FORIG. The Consultant’s draft report provides an analysis of the perceptions and challenges to implementing benefit sharing arrangements, as well as implications for possible adoption in REDD+ implementation. Table 3 summarizes this assessment.

Table 3: Assessment of benefit sharing models in the forest sector

Benefit sharing mechanism	Perception	Implication for REDD+
Constitutional Timber Revenue benefit sharing	<i>Inequitable:</i> Farmers and land owners (e.g. families) other than ‘Stools and Skins’ are left out of the benefit sharing arrangement	Not compatible with REDD+ objectives that seeks to reward individuals, groups and cooperate effort toward emissions reduction.
Modified Taungya System	<i>Insecurity:</i> no legal documentation of benefit sharing agreement; conflict-prone; no conflict management mechanisms. 40% applies to Taungya farmer group and no mechanism for benefit sharing among individuals. Strong emphasis on monetary benefits <i>Uncertainty:</i> Functional in forest reserves.	Model is only operative in forest reserves and off-reserve. Would be difficult to operate in off-reserve areas where they is multiple property boundaries, multiple land uses and land users and owners.
Private Plantation Revenue Sharing (Reserve)	Highly oriented toward private investment with limited public or state contribution.	REDD+ projects involves significant establishment, operational and transactional costs. REDD+ projects cannot

<p>Private Plantation Revenue Sharing (Off-Reserve)</p>	<p>Highly oriented toward private investment with limited public or state contribution.</p>	<p>afford 90% payment to plantation owners.</p> <p>Requires secured land tenure. Seem conducive for REDD+ but percentage shares needs revision taken into account establishment, operational and transactional costs of REDD+ project.</p>
<p>CREMA</p>	<p>Does not alter existing land/tree tenure arrangement.</p>	<p>From a REDD perspective, all of these factors combine to significantly increase the likelihood of permanence.</p> <p>It must be noted, however, that national benefit-sharing legislation or tax laws may have implications for the CREMA's benefit-sharing formula.</p>
<p>Traditional benefit sharing arrangement</p>	<p>Based on customary arrangement and riddled with conflict.</p> <p>Legal backing for such traditional arrangements since there has been several cases of breach of benefit sharing terms and cheating due to lack of legal documentation.</p>	

The draft report remains to be validated. The consultancy was to designed to analyse options for a benefit sharing arrangement. However, for Ghana to have a functional system, the system itself needs to be established. This presents a gap which needs to be filled and is further elaborated in Section 5.

National REDD+ Information System/REDD Registry

In January 2012, the REDD+ Secretariat created a technical working group to advise the development of a national REDD+ registry. This working group developed a draft concept note about REDD+ registries and used that as the basis for a set of recommendations to guide the REDD+ Secretariat and NRWG on the development of a registry for Ghana. This

process resulted in the publication of the document, “*Ghana’s REDD+ Registry: Pathways to Development*”, which explains the concept of a REDD+ registry and outlines the major decision points and options in its development.

The current FCPF Readiness Grant will not cover the cost to develop a national REDD+ information system or registry and tracking system for ER units. Ghana will seek the Participant Committee’s approval of an additional/supplemental grant from the FCPF Readiness Fund to support this work.

Sub-Component 2d: Social and Environmental Impacts

A consultancy for the preparation of the ESMF/ SESA has been awarded and the consultancy work is anticipated to be completed by September, 2014. The framework expected out of this consultancy is to provide clear directions for managing and mitigating the environmental and social risks and impacts of future investments (projects, activities, and/or policies and regulations) associated with implementing a country’s REDD+ strategy.

The SESA work will help integrate environmental management and socio-economic decisions at the earliest stages of planning activities and investments. It will also provide avenues for the involvement of the public, communities/landowners, proponents, private interest groups and government agencies in the assessment and review of any proposed interventions. In accordance with UNFCCC and the World Bank guidelines, special consideration will be given to livelihoods, rights, cultural heritage, gender, vulnerable groups, governance, capacity building and biodiversity.

As part of efforts to achieve this, FC, in collaboration with IUCN-Ghana, developed a roadmap to mainstreaming gender considerations into Ghana’s REDD+ Process and this document was launched on 13th November, 2012, at the Alisa Hotel, Accra.

The FCPF and FIP synergies were discussed at the FCPF mission in Feb 2014 with follow up at the FIP mission in May 2014. Key areas identified and agreed upon for coordination between the two initiatives are SESA, the work on benefit sharing, and the development of REDD+ strategy options. FIP will use the findings of the analytical work of SESA for implementation of its investment plan.

The C&P Plan is also being implemented to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are brought on board and are able to participate actively in the readiness process without any hindrances.

To date, SAL Consult has submitted an inception report including a gap analysis and work plan, and is currently carrying out stakeholder consultations and data collection in the field. The initial consultations will be followed by three regional workshops to validate and prioritise the issues arising from the preliminary consultations.

The work of other relevant consultancies, i.e. GRM and benefit sharing will be shared with SAL consult to inform their work.

The SESA report will be ready by August, 2014. The report on ESMF which outlines interventions to address anticipated social and environmental impacts emanating from proposed strategy options will be ready by September 2014.

Figure 8 outlines the steps in the SESA development process, and SAL Consult is currently at Step 2. With respect to the environmental and social priorities, key environmental and social issues associated with the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation will be identified and an assessment of trade-offs / opportunity costs of forests conducted.

SESA Strategic Dimension Process



Figure 8: SESA strategic dimension process

The work plan and deliverables for the SESA consultancy are presented below in Figure 9.



Figure 9: Work plans and deliverables of SESA consultancy

2.3) Component 3: Reference Emission Level/ Reference Level

This component of the R-PP is one of the pivots of the REDD+ readiness process. Apart from its usefulness for measuring carbon stocks, it has powerful utility value for forest management and land use planning on a national scale. The overall objective of Component 3 is to develop reference scenarios that forecast the trajectory of carbon emissions and removals in the absence of the REDD+ scheme. The R-PP outlines the two sub-goals necessary for the accomplishment of this objective as follows:

- Quantification of historic emissions/removals from deforestation, degradation, and enhancement of C stocks (DDE) for the period post 2000 to 2007+ at a national scale using the IPCC framework; and
- Development of future trajectories of emissions/removals over different time periods and under different economic and development scenarios.

According to emerging guidance from the UNFCCC, when setting their national reference scenarios, countries should do so “transparently, taking into account historical data, and adjust for ‘national circumstances’”. Information provided on national circumstances is critical for clarifying a country’s vulnerability, its capacity and its options for adapting to the adverse effects of climate change, as well as its options for addressing its GHG emissions within the broader context of sustainable development.

In this light, Ghana’s R-PP outlined six (6) activities to be undertaken during the REDD+ readiness process, these activities include:

1. Capacity building, staffing and technological upgrades to improve the ability of Forestry Commission, related Ministries and research organizations (FORIG) to produce reference scenarios that forecast emissions and removals of CO₂ into the future in the absence of REDD+ incentives;
2. Quantification of activity data for deforestation, forestation and forest degradation in Ghana from 2000-2009 at national and sub-national scales;
3. Development of emission factors for deforestation, forest degradation, and enhancement of carbon stocks (forestation and in forests remaining as forests);
4. Combination of the activity data with emission factors to develop total historical emissions/removals;
5. Assessment of the uncertainty in historic emissions/removals; and
6. Development of a future trajectory under different economic and development scenarios.

These activities could be therefore condensed into two major goals: capacity building and technological upgrades of staff from relevant stakeholders and the technical work which should eventually lead to the setting up of Ghana’s reference emission levels and future emissions trajectories.

Capacity building and technological upgrades

The development of a REL/ RL is building on earlier works in this field such as the development of a country biomass map produced through a collaborative effort between Forestry Commission, Katoomba group, NCRC and Oxford University; as well as the completed carbon estimation study conducted under the Forest Preservation Programme (FPP) which was funded by the Japanese Government.

Under the FPP, high resolution LiDAR satellite imagery and LANDSAT/ DMC and ALOS imagery were procured. After ground verification, the satellite imagery were analysed and processed into wall to wall LULUCF maps for Ghana for 3 epochs: i.e. 1990, 2000 and 2010. However, some technical flaws have been detected with the land cover classification of this work and is being currently reviewed for correction. Also, under the FPP, various remote sensing hardware (such as servers, workstations and printers), software (such as ArcGIS and ERDAS) and survey equipment (GPS, tree measurement tools etc.) were procured and installed primarily at the Resource Support Management Centre (RMSC) of the Forestry Commission. Two (2) weeks of training in GIS/ Image Processing and LiDAR/ Forest Inventory and Biomass Estimation was also undertaken for 38 staff of the Forestry Commission in April, 2012.

A tailor-made module-based training programme on spatial analysis and geo-information production for Ghana's MRV system and setting of a REL/ RL for Ghana was undertaken for staff from the REDD+ Secretariat, EPA, CERSGIS and IUCN. The training commenced in October, 2013 and was completed in April, 2014 and was organised by CERSGIS, in collaboration with the University of Twente, KNUST and the Forestry Commission of Ghana.

Astrum in collaboration with GIZ and CERSGIS organised an 8-week modular training programmes based on German remote sensing technology for forest monitoring for selected staff of the Forestry Commission between 2012 and 2013.

At the end of the readiness phase, the institutional arrangements for the ongoing establishment of Ghana's MRV system and updating of its REL will need to be in place. The Forestry Commission would make arrangements to develop internal capacity for the operationalization of the MRV system once it is installed. This will have budget implications for the Forestry Commission, including consideration of an MRV expert to be part of the REDD+ Secretariat team to handle the MRV arrangements and REL issues, including technical assessments and coordination with the National GHG Inventory team at the EPA.

Technical Work Leading to the Setting Up of Ghana's REL

The technical work for this component (setting up of an REL/ RL) and for the establishment of a National Forest Monitoring system (Component 4A) are being treated jointly. Indufor Oy has been engaged as consultant for this work.

The objective of the consultancy is to support Ghana in the development of REDD+ reference levels and systems for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of REDD+ impact using suitable approaches based on careful analyses of forest inventory, remote

sensing and other monitoring capacities and historical data, and thereby strengthen national capacities.

The key deliverables expected from the consultancy are given as follows:

1. Review of the existing national land use and land cover classification scheme, the accuracy of existing land-use assessments, and of carbon stock and inventory data;
2. Development of methods and approaches for establishing reference levels; and
3. Development of methods and approaches for establishing a national MRV.

Indufor Oy has submitted an inception report and progress report on work completed to date. The GOG is working closely with the consultant on the development of an MRV design document for Ghana that will clearly spell out the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the MRV and REL/ RL system for Ghana’s REDD+ scheme. The conceptual framework for the MRV design document has been completed by Indufor Oy (Figure 1) and the final output of the consultant is anticipated by October, 2014.

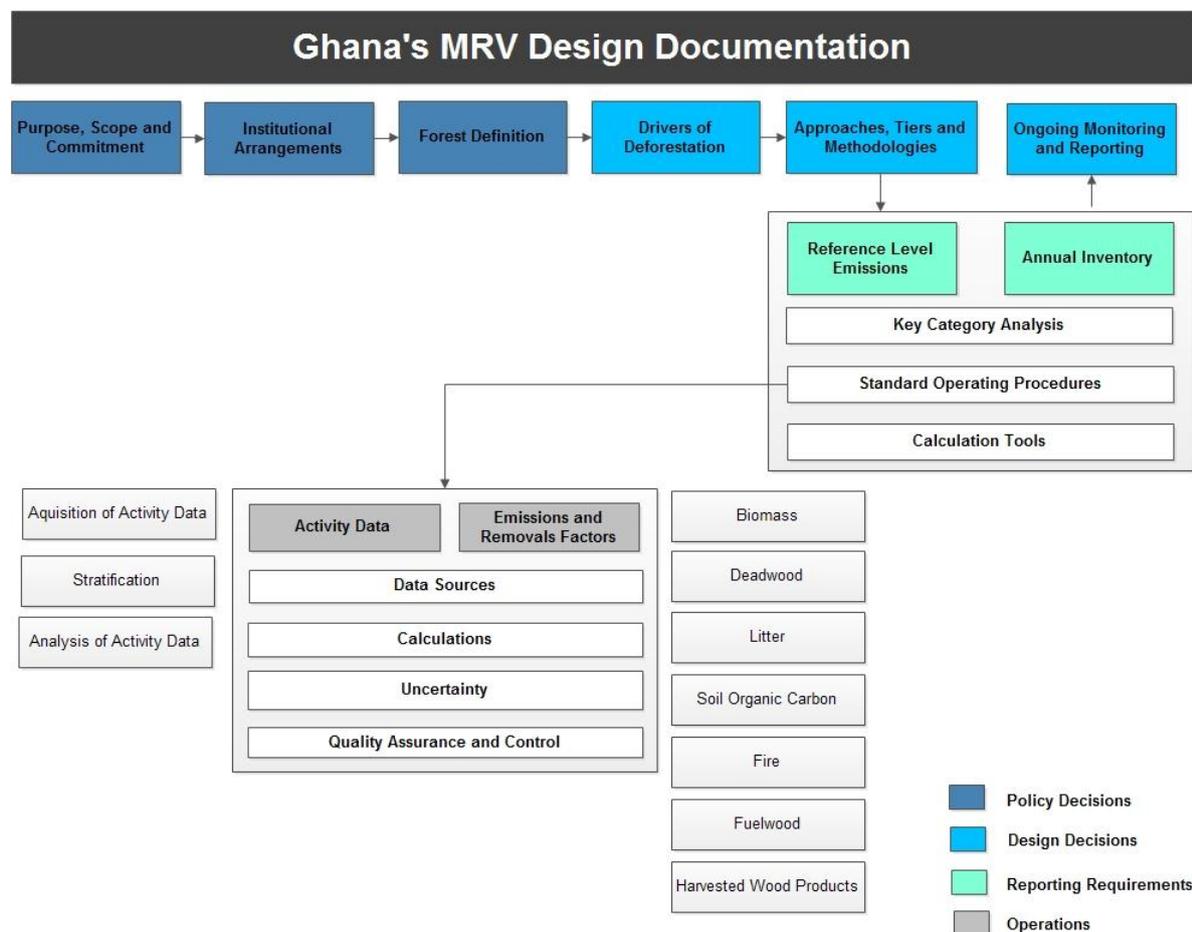


Figure 10: Conceptual framework of Ghana's MRV design

Understanding of the methods, procedures and standards involved in the establishment of MRV/REL/RL has been enhanced through regular and structured meetings amongst subject area specialists involved in Ghana’s REDD+ readiness process. Specifically the consultant has

been interacting on a regular basis with members of the MRV/REL sub-working group both individually and as a group. Also, a wider stakeholder workshop has been organized to discuss relevant issues on the MRV/REL.

One of the problems relating to weak capacity in GIS application and deployment within the FC stems from the over concentration of the available expertise in a small Unit of the organization i.e. the Forest Monitoring Unit of the Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC). This situation places enormous strain on the Unit and renders them ineffective in meeting demands for GIS products from other sectors. This can be addressed through up-scaling of GIS know-how amongst the technical staff of the FC and other relevant institutions e.g. COCOBOD.

The framework for development of REL/ RL is consistent with the relevant FCPF assessment framework as mentioned below:

1. Demonstration of methodology: The MRV design document being developed by the consultant will outline a coherent methodology and approaches for constructing Ghana's REL/ RL.
2. Use of historical data, and adjusted for national circumstances: The process of setting up approaches for constructing a REL/ RL for Ghana is making use of historical data that were collected from previous work, particularly the satellite imagery from the FPP.
3. Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/ IPCC guidance and guidelines: The methodological approach being proposed by Indufor Oy will be consistent with approaches, guidelines and recommendations on construction of REL/ RL by the UNFCCC and the IPCC.

Remaining Activities

It is expected that the consultancy service leading to the establishment of a REL/ RL will be completed by October, 2014. As indicated above, establishment of the REL/ RL and National Forest Monitoring System are being treated jointly. The key activities which are yet to be fully completed by Indufor Oy (REL/ MRV consultant) are as follows:

1. Development of methods and approaches following established international protocols for establishing reference levels associated with the key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;
2. Development of methods and approaches for establishing a national MRV; following good international practice and established techniques;
3. Establishment of carbon modeling and development of capacity of relevant national stakeholders involved in MRV and REDD implementation (on technical issues).

4. Tutorials and workshops amongst policy –makers and senior staff on Ghana’s forest MRV.

2.4) Component 4: Development of Monitoring Systems for Forests and Safeguards

Sub-Component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System

This component is supporting the mapping and planning of institutional and technical needs for the construction of a reference scenario and a system for monitoring carbon fluxes in the LULUCF sector. It will cover all REDD+ activities such as deforestation, degradation, sustainable forest management, conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks.

The overall objective of Component 4 is to develop a monitoring, reporting and verification system that allows for transparent accounting of emissions and removals of CO₂ through time that can be compared against the projected reference scenario. The outcome of this component will be a functional system capable of MRV of the performance of REDD+ interventions in Ghana.

The REDD+ secretariat is represented on the technical group developing a national GHG inventory for Ghana. Consequently, issues on Ghana’s MRV for REDD+ implementation are being integrated in the national GHG inventory process. Also, in the mid to long-term, Ghana intends to establish a unified approach for monitoring Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs). The MRV system being developed under Ghana’s REDD+ readiness will thus feed into this national monitoring system.

The activities outlined in the R-PP for this sub-component can be categorized as follows:

1. Establishment of a technical MRV working group;
2. Designation and piloting of an MRV system for Ghana’s REDD+;
3. Verification auditing of the MRV system.

A REL/RL and MRV sub-working group has been set up with a mandate to provide the necessary technical backstopping for the development of Ghana’s MRV and REL/ RL. The Forest Resource Inventory Unit of the Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) of the Forestry Commission and CERSGIS, University of Ghana have both developed significant capacity on remote sensing and spatial analysis and have also been involved in the design of the MRV and carbon accounting system to ensure continuity and the strengthening of local capacity.

As outlined above, the technical work which is leading to the development of a MRV and REL/ RL systems are being treated jointly in Ghana’s REDD+ readiness process. The consultancy work will however lead to the development of approaches in a MRV design document. Further work should therefore be undertaken to operationalize these approaches.

The relevant FCPF assessment framework serves as a guide for the development of the MRV system for Ghana's forest monitoring as indicated below:

1. Documentation of Monitoring Approach: The MRV framework is being developed by Indufor Oy to satisfy external review and be consistent with existing and emerging guidance for setting up an MRV system for REDD+ implementation.
2. Country Ownership of MRV System: Indufor Oy has been interacting with stakeholders including members of the MRV/REL sub-working group to ensure that key stakeholders are involved in the process of developing the MRV system. These interactions will ensure that key stakeholders are involved in the implementation of Ghana's MRV system. Indufor has drawn up a training plan for skills transfer to staff of relevant institutions to ensure continuity.
3. Institutional arrangements and capacities: Various remote sensing and GIS hardware and software were procured under the FPP and installed at RMSC. However, issues of low capacity and lack of GIS workstations and software at the REDD+ Secretariat needs to be addressed.

Remaining Activity and Gaps

The remaining activity for this component is the completion of consultancy for the establishment of a Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system for Ghana's REDD+ implementation. *(Please see component 3).*

Prior to the submission of Ghana's R-package, the MRV system will be operationalized to incorporate all the REDD+ elements including forest degradation. This activity will require the acquisition of high resolution remote sensing data. The cost element of this exercise is discussed in section 5.

Sub-Component 4b: Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards

This component specifies the need to provide a transparent and consistent information system to capture all information on non-carbon benefits, impacts and governance related issues, and also to report on how identified safeguards are being addressed and respected during the implementation of REDD+ preparation activities, with due attention to the specific monitoring provisions included in the country's ESMF.

This system will be country driven, implemented at a national level, based on appropriate existing structures, accessible to all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis. As much as possible, it should be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time.

Ghana does not currently have a data management information system in place because this component was added after approval of Ghana's R-PP. However, many important aspects have been captured in Ghana's M&E framework for the FCPF readiness process. Furthermore, there have been discussions surrounding the building blocks (data sets, SESA final reports, ESMF etc.), system design and what form it should take, and the potential to integrate with the development of a national registry system for REDD+. Elements of the

information system for multiple benefits would be based on the safeguards in the Cancun Agreements in order to ensure that the following issues are addressed.

- Consistency with objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- Transparent and effective national forest governance structures;
- Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities;
- The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Conservation of natural forests and biological diversity and enhancement of other social and environmental benefits;
- Actions to address the risks of reversals;
- Actions to reduce the displacement of emissions.

Remaining Activities and gaps

Since this sub-component was developed after the R-PP had been approved, no budgetary allocations were made. Therefore, it is expected that the development of the system would require support from the Additional Finance through the FCPF. The development of this system will be based on the outcome of the SESA and ESMF work to be completed by October 2014. As noted above, the information system will be integrated with the REDD+ registry system to avoid proliferation of systems (see components 2c and 5 for discussions on setting up of registry).

3.0 AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THOSE ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY THE FCPF READINESS PREPARATION GRANT (US\$3.4 million)

An overview of the achievements, key activities and gaps of the various components of the Readiness Assessment Framework has been provided in Section 2, above. This section will therefore focus on the key issues, challenges and activities outlined in the annual work plans including the expenditure reports for the REDD+ readiness implementation process.

The table below captures fund allocations for the 4 key components of REDD+ readiness;

Table 4: Activities Funded Under the FCPF Grant

Component 1: Support to the coordination of the REDD+ Readiness Process and to Project Management including Monitoring and Evaluation for project performance	\$0.55
Component 2: Contribute to the design of the national REDD+ strategy for Ghana including strategic social and environmental assessment	
	\$0.6

a. Analytical work in support of design of National REDD+ strategy + SESA	
b. Support Information Sharing and Multi-stakeholder Consultation Process (including consultations for SESA)	\$0.6
Component 3: Preparation of National Reference Scenario for REDD+	\$1.2
Component 4: Support mapping and planning of institutional and technical needs for monitoring, reporting and verification systems for REDD+5	\$0.15
10 % contingency	\$0.3
TOTAL	\$3.4

3.1 Annual Work plans and Expenditure Reports

Implementation of the REDD+ readiness process from 2012 to 2014 is guided by annual work plans. These plans are supported by the actual expenditure reports. The work plans (2012 – 2014) and expenditure reports are attached in Annex 5.

By mid-May, 2014, 55.7% of the total FCPF funds had been disbursed whereas 82% of the funds have been committed to various work under progress. Of the amount of \$870 received as the first tranche of funds received for 2014, key activities to be catered for include support for the National Forest Fora, implementation of the short term plans for the Communication Strategy, various consultations on the REDD+ strategy, and the development of operational modalities for a national REDD+ registry.

3.2 Analysis of Key Issues and Challenges

COMPONENT 1: READINESS ORGANISATION AND CONSULTATION

Component 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements

Challenges

1. There is limited capacity with the procurement process which was evident during project implementation. There is the need to address this deficiency which afflicts many projects in the public sector in Ghana as a matter of urgency.
2. Long breaks between meetings and communications of the NRWG and Sub-Working Groups in 2013 due to some administrative challenges with fund releases had led to a lull in the activities of the NRWG and its sub-groups. This could affect enthusiasm and must be forestalled in future.
3. There is a significant challenge in getting the ENRAC headed by the Vice-President to meet according to schedule. The MESTI which hosts the secretariat for the ENRAC should find a means to address this problem.

Lessons Learnt

1. It is important to bring on board the Ghana National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to the NRWG to ensure that issues on REDD+ are integrated into national development plans. They have been accordingly requested to nominate a representative to NRWG.
2. With the anticipated flow of REDD+ funds under the ER programme, there is a need to strengthen the financial management capacity of the Forestry Commission to enhance transparency and accountability.

Component 1b: Consultation, Organisation and Outreach

Challenge

1. There is a need to carefully manage the expectations of various stakeholders, particularly forest communities in Ghana on what REDD+ can and cannot do. This can be achieved by providing reliable, uniform messaging by persons responsible for managing communication on REDD+ issues. It would be helpful to be conservative and measured in handling issues on what REDD+ can deliver to communities, bearing in mind that the scheme is still evolving and surrounded by uncertainties at this point in time. Several capacity building and training workshops have been organised for frontline staff of the Forestry Commission, as well as representatives of the key stakeholders. However, there have been some notable challenges with rolling out programmes to enable beneficiaries of past training programmes to train others in turn.

Lessons Learnt

1. The need to sustain communication efforts at the project and community level is paramount so as to ensure the creation of synergies amongst REDD+ related activities.
2. The realisation that although information delivered to the key stakeholders should be accurate, it should however not lead to the raising of unreasonably high expectations on REDD+ which could be detrimental for the future implementation of the programme.

COMPONENT 2: REDD+ STRATEGY PREPARATION

Component 2a: Assessment of Land use, land use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance

Challenge

1. Dealing with the different causes of deforestation in different ecological zones in Ghana can be technically complex, requiring in-depth analysis of diverse elements.

Lessons Learnt

1. Ghana has learnt that the most effective way to address the issue of different causes of deforestation in the different ecological zones is to develop sub-national REDD+ strategies that will be linked to the requisite eco-zone. Ghana has already started the process of developing sub-national REDD+ strategies as evidenced by its submission of the ER-PIN, which outlines strategies to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in cocoa and forest mosaic landscapes in the High Forest Zone.

Component 2b: REDD+ Strategy options

Challenge

1. There have been challenges with securing funds for the selected REDD+ pilots activities to inform the development of the REDD+ strategy. Although the REDD+ secretariat has been able to liaise with SECO to identify possible support for some of the pilots, the funds which SECO has earmarked for the five off-reserve pilots may not be sufficient to cover the key activities envisaged under the piloting phase.

Lessons Learnt

1. Piloting and testing of policies and interventions is essential for the development of a comprehensive and robust REDD+ strategy. Ghana has realized that it will need to look at programs in landscape management beyond just REDD pilots to gather important experiences and lessons that can inform the national strategy.
2. The role of private sector is critical for the effective development and implementation of any national REDD strategy. Therefore it is necessary to create the enabling environment for private sector participation and investments to guarantee sustainable financing for REDD+

Component 2c: Implementation framework

Lesson Learnt

1. Ghana has also acknowledged the need to develop sub-national multi-stakeholder REDD+ structures and strengthen capacities at decentralized levels and with traditional authorities to integrate REDD at landscape level and to ensure that there is closer linkage between the REDD+ secretariat and the sub-national REDD+ actors.

Component 2d: Social and Environmental Impacts

Lesson Learnt

1. The success of the REDD+ implementation process is dependent on the application of the safeguards principles to address the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups such as local communities and women.

COMPONENT 3: Reference Emission Level/ Reference Level

Challenge

1. Ensuring that key REDD+ actors, particularly local communities, are able to comprehend the technicalities of the REL/ RL and the entire MRV system to be developed for Ghana's REDD+.

Lessons Learnt

1. The need to acknowledge and understand the enormous diversity that exists in the forest cover of the different ecological zones in Ghana;
2. Ensuring that definitions and spatial planning of the forests is undertaken to be consistent with the different ecological conditions;

COMPONENT 4: MONITORING SYSTEMS FOR FORESTS AND SAFEGUARDS

Component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System

Challenges

1. There is limited capacity for current MRV development process to capture forest degradation as a result of the lack of accurate data and high resolution satellite/aerial imagery from previous studies.
2. Lack of a National Land Use Plan presents enormous difficulties in spatial modeling and forest monitoring.

Lesson Learnt

1. There is a need to develop local allometric equations to ensure that accuracy of Ghana's forest monitoring system is enhanced.

Component 4b: Information System for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

Challenges

1. The strong focus on carbon benefits of REDD+ other than the co-benefits of forest management at the early stages of development of the REDD+ mechanism. Co-benefits of the scheme came only as an afterthought and hence the low capacity regarding this sub-component.

Lessons Learnt

1. REDD+ implementation will not be successful without a transparent system for tracking carbon transactions, non-carbon benefits and safeguards.

4.0 AN UPDATED FINANCING PLAN FOR THE OVERALL READINESS PREPARATION ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING FUNDS PLEDGED BY, AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY, OTHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Uses of Funds (in US \$ thousands) under FCPF as at 15 th February, 2014							
R-PP Component	Total needed (A)	Funds pledged (B)	Funds used		Funds available (= B – C)	Financing gap (=A – B)	Request to (FCPF) (if any)
			Funds Committed (C)	Funds Disbursed			
<i>1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements</i>	550.94	350.94	90.39	85.00	260.55	200.00	200.00
<i>1b. Consultation, Participation, and Outreach</i>	607.06	407.06	390.00	387.04	17.06	200.00	200.00
<i>1c. Monitoring and Evaluation</i>	50.00	50.00	40.00	35.00	10.00		-
sub-total	1,208.00	808.00	520.39	507.04	287.61	400.00	400.00
<i>2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance</i>	111.28	111.28	90.50	84.86	20.78	-	-
<i>2b. REDD+ Strategy</i>	773.74	773.74	500.00	220.00	273.74	-	-

<i>Options</i>							
<i>2c. Implementation Framework</i>	1,909.62	209.62	140.00	40.00	69.62	1,700.00	1,700.00
<i>2d. Social and Environmental Impacts</i>	98.86	98.86	50.00	50.00	48.86	-	-
sub-total	2,893.50	1193.50	780.50	394.86	413.00	1,700.00	1,700.00
<i>3. Reference Emissions Level/Reference Level</i>	1,245.00	1,245.00	1,086.32	87.65	158.68	-	-
sub-total	1,245.00	1,245.00	1,086.32	87.65	158.68	-	-
<i>4a. National Forest Monitoring System</i>	3253.50	153.50	153.50	37.86	-	3,100.00	3,100.00
<i>4b. Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
sub-total	3,253.00	153.50	153.50	37.86	-	3,100.00	3,100.00
TOTAL	8,600.00	3,400.00	2,540.71	1,027.41(+870)*=1,897.41	859.29	5,200.00	5,200.00

***First tranche of funds received for 2014 in mid-May**

Sources of Funds for key REDD+ related initiatives in Ghana (in US\$ thousands)¹					
	Funds pledged (B)	Funds used		Funds available (= B – C)	Remarks
		Funds committed (C)	Funds disbursed		
UN-REDD Programme	40.00	40.00	-	40.00	Focussed on promoting synergy between REDD+ and VPA
Other Development Partner 1 (Japanese Funded Forest Preservation Programme(FPP))	7,800.00	7,800.00	7,800.00	-	Technology Transfer and Support for trend analysis of forest land change, Forest resource map, biomass and C-Stock estimation and Capacity building. Project completed in April, 2013.
Other Development Partner 2 (GIZ)	654.00	654.00	654.00	-	Supported Ghana in Forest Monitoring based on German Remote Sensing Technology. Project completed in September, 2013.
Other Development Partner 3 (SECO)	4,000.00	400.00	400.00	3,600.00	Planned SWISS State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO) Support for five (5) off-reserve REDD+ Pilots in Ghana. Analytical work has been completed at the pilot sites under the ITTO REDDES programme.
Forest Investment Programme (FIP)	50,000.00	50,000.00	250.00	49,750.00	The aim of the Forest Investment Plan (FIP) for Ghana is to address the underlying drivers of deforestation and catalyse transformational change by providing upfront investment to support the implementation of the REDD+ strategy, and generate information and experience for policy and regulatory changes.FIP Project document has been designed.
Gordon and Betty Moore	148.06	148.06	148.06	-	Utilised for stakeholder consultations and production of biomass map for Ghana. Project completed in 2010.

¹ These are key REDD+ related initiatives in Ghana. The REDDX initiative captured total funds earmarked for all REDD+ related initiatives in Ghana. A diagram outlining the total funds earmarked for all REDD+ related initiatives in Ghana and a link to the REDDX document are provided in Annex 1.

foundation					
TOTAL	62,642.06	59042.06	9,252.06	53,390.00	

5. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO THE FCPF

The Readiness Grant of USD3.4 million has contributed immensely to the achievement of most preparatory activities towards becoming “ready”. However, despite the substantial progress which Ghana has made in its REDD+ readiness process, not all key milestones can be met with the funds allocated for the implementation of the R-PP. The budget estimate for the full implementation of the R-PP was \$7.3M but this has been found to be grossly under-estimated in the light of current realities. In particular, financing gaps in areas such as the MRV system, the REDD+ registry, GRM etc. are enormous and this has necessitated a call for additional financial resources for the full realization of our readiness objectives. At present, the total estimated sum for this stands at \$12.5M. It may be noted that the pledged financial support for initial implementation of REDD+ pilots from SECO of \$4.0M is yet to materialize.

Therefore Ghana will submit an application for additional funding of USD5.2 million to ensure that the R-package, which will be submitted in November, 2015, incorporates details of all readiness activities undertaken to achieve key milestones outlined in the R-PP.

The key gaps and remaining activities for which additional funding is being sought have been identified during the readiness process and are described below.

Component 1a): National Readiness Management Arrangements

Discussions and consultations on arrangements for the flow of REDD+ funds in the country

The REDD+ agenda will complement other ongoing national mitigation initiatives such as NAMAs, Green Economy Pathway, Low Carbon Growth Strategy, A/R CDM etc. driving the National Climate Change Policy.

Even though the current process is backed by Government, it is worth mentioning that the bureaucratic processes involved can be challenging.

Funds management arrangements for climate financing in Ghana is a critical issue that needs to given due attention in the bigger national agenda on low carbon strategy.

Proposed activities:

- Development of discussion paper for governance arrangements;
- High level meetings (with MDAs);
- National, regional and district level stakeholder consultations; and
- Development of an options paper for national coordination of REDD finance.

An estimated USD200,000 is required to follow through on this process.

Component 1b): Consultation, Participation and Outreach

Communication surrounding update of the REDD+ strategy, benefit sharing and GRM

The national REDD+ Strategy, expected to be developed by October, 2014, will need to be updated with the outcomes of the work financed through the additional funding request, for example, benefit sharing arrangement, GRM and the REDD+ registry. The updated strategy will need to be communicated and validated by stakeholders.

Proposed Activities:

- Publication and dissemination of updated strategy documents;
- Development of relevant communication materials and briefs; and
- Workshops, specialized meetings and durbars

These activities will require additional support of USD 200,000 for implementation.

Component 2c): Implementation Framework

Establishment and operationalization of Ghana's REDD+ registry and information system

This system, if operationalized, will be a REDD+ data information hub or platform to provide Geo-referenced data on projects, funding, benefits and transactions. The system should allow for transparency and should be robust to prevent potential double counting.

In terms of design, it is envisaged that the REDD+ registry will be a repository of data comprised of three windows:

1. carbon (projects/ programs database including emissions/ removals data),
2. co-benefits (information systems for multiple benefits) and
3. tracking of carbon transactions (emissions reduction payments).

Development of the registry will be done in two phases:

Phase 1 - the program database and information system for multiple benefits, and then

Phase 2 - transaction tracking system.

Proposed activities:

- Identification of institutional arrangements (an Administrator, a System Operator and a forest M/E entity) for the REDD+ registry;
- Undertake cost assessment for full REDD+ registry establishment and operationalization;
- Design and test system; and
- Installation of operating system for the registry (could be web-based).

USD 400,000 is requested for phase 1 of REDD+ registry and information system establishment and operationalization.

Operationalization of the Grievance Redress Mechanism

The GRM consultancy is to propose options for a GRM. However, for Ghana to have a functional system, the system itself needs to be established.

It is expected that an amount of USD200,000 be earmarked for the implementation of GRM during the readiness phase, which Ghana has not yet received, will be requested for setting up a functional GRM for Ghana.

Proposed Activity:

- Operationalization of the GRM options

Project preparation support for piloting (including ER Program, as relevant) to test arrangements for: benefit sharing, non-carbon benefits, land and tree tenure issues of agro forestry systems, carbon rights, safeguards and private sector engagement to inform the national strategy.

Other REDD+ related initiatives on the ground will be analysed for relevant lessons to inform the national strategy. Such initiatives could include Rainforest Alliance, NCRC, and the IUCN pro-poor REDD+ projects.

The NRS is also proposing to focus on the national REDD+ pilots that have taken early actions on the ground such as IUCN, Portal Limited, Vicdoris Limited and Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG). The testing will be done on pilots that advance to stages where arrangements important to the national strategy - for benefit sharing, non-carbon benefits, land and tree tenure issues of agro forestry systems, and carbon rights - can be tested.

Proposed Activities:

- For existing activities: compile and analyse lessons and best practices for uptake into the national REDD+ strategy;
- For pilot projects:
- Develop survey instrument;
- Conduct field survey;
- Analyse data from field survey; and
- Document and share lessons;

USD 800,000 is requested for this activity.

Validation of the suitability of appropriate benefit sharing mechanisms

The consultancy was set up to analyse a suite of potential options for benefit sharing arrangements, but significantly more work will need to happen before Ghana is able to establish a functional system.

Proposed Activities:

- Stakeholder consultations on suitable benefit sharing mechanism(s);

- Consolidation of lessons from pilots;
- Selection and validation of an appropriate benefit sharing mechanism;

USD 200,000 is requested for this activity.

Update to the national strategy to enable input from the additional work

After the above processes and work is completed, there will be the need to update the National REDD+ Strategy, which would already have been completed, so that it reflects the additional work and thinking.

Proposed Activities:

- Stakeholder consultations on proposed update to the REDD+ strategy i.e. benefit sharing mechanism, GRM etc.
- Expert group meetings at multiple levels
- Two national workshops would be carried out in the Northern and Southern Sectors of the Country respectively.

The estimated cost of these workshops and stakeholder consultations is USD100,000.

Component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System

Acquisition of data on forest degradation

TerraSAR-X SpotLight scenes would be procured to map forest degradation and further observed degradation due to selective logging.

Proposed Activities:

1. Acquisition of Radar Images (TerraSAR-X SpotLight) for hot spot areas:
First coverage of 30 (10 x 10 km) samples orthorectified (descending/ascending merge) including change detection layer.
2. Acquisition of Optical Images (2.5 m color SPOT6) for Quality Assurance.
3. Geometric and Radiometric rectification of acquired satellite data for further processing.

An estimated cost of USD 500,000.00 will be incurred to acquire the relevant data on forest degradation.

Operationalization of the MRV system including degradation

A functioning MRV system is critical for the successful implementation of REDD+. It is therefore important that Ghana operationalises its MRV system prior to the commencement of results-based REDD+ initiatives.

Proposed Activities:

1. Field data collection and ground truthing.
2. Classification of satellite data to obtain Landuse/Landcover map for the country (by building upon the FPP model)
3. Implementation of an effective accuracy assessment scheme to ensure reliability of final results
4. Analyses of the satellite data to determine national baseline carbon stocks
5. Construction, Resourcing and strengthening of a Remote Sensing/GIS laboratory at the Forestry Commission Headquarters and engagement of an independent agency (for example, the Centre of Remote Sensing and GIS, University of Ghana) to serve as a repository and verifier of MRV data.
6. Acquisition of a wall-to-wall satellite datasets (possible for year 2015) for monitoring and evaluation
7. Acquisition of Hardware and Software for all 10 Regional FSD/WD Offices, and Headquarters RS/GIS Laboratory
8. Capacity building of Staff of the Forestry Commission to man the MRV system
9. Acquisition of a dedicated bandwidth for publishing MRV data online to enhance transparency of the system
10. Development of web-based interactive biomass/ carbon map.

The estimated cost for this activity is USD 2,600,000.00

Component 4b: Information Systems for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

This has been included in the request for the establishment of a registry (Component 2c).

In summary, a total of USD5,200,000.00 is estimated to be the cost of additional financing needed to complete readiness. Table 5, below, summarizes the additional work, costs and time-frame.

Table 5: Estimated costs for additional activities

Sub-component	Activities	Estimated Cost (US\$)	Timeline			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1a. National Readiness Management Arrangements	Discussions and consultations on arrangements for the flow of REDD+ funds in the country	200,000.00				
1b. Consultation, Participation and Outreach	Communication surrounding update of the REDD+ strategy, benefit sharing and GRM.	200,000.00				
2c. Implementation Framework	Establishment and operationalization of Ghana's REDD+ registry	400,000.00				

	Operationalization of the Grievance Redress Mechanism	200,000.00				
	Project preparation support for piloting (including ER-Program as relevant) to test arrangements for: benefit sharing; non-carbon benefits; land and tree tenure issues of agroforestry systems and cocoa landscapes; carbon rights, including assessment of existing legal frameworks and implications for carbon rights, transfer of titles to emission reductions; safeguards; and private sector engagement to inform the national REDD strategy.	800,000.00				
	Validation of the suitability of appropriate benefit sharing mechanisms	200,000.00				
	Update to the national strategy as relevant	100,000.00				
4a. National Forest Monitoring System	Acquisition of data on forest degradation	500,000.00				
	Operationalization of the MRV system for deforestation and forest degradation	2,600,000.00				
4b. Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards	Design and implementation of the Information System	Captured under development of registry				
Grand total		5,200,000.00				