

REDD+ Readiness Progress Fact Sheet

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

APRIL 2014

1. R-PP Preparation and FCPF Readiness grant

- El Salvador submitted a Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) to the Facility Management Team (FMT) in September 2012, which was reviewed by a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), a working group consisting of Participants Committee (PC) members established for this purpose, and the World Bank. The PC acknowledged the extensive efforts made by El Salvador, and the high quality of the R-PP. The PC at its thirteenth meeting decided to allocate funding to El Salvador to enable it to move ahead with the preparation for readiness.
- The following are the key issues that El Salvador needs to address before entering into a Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement with the Trustee of the Readiness Fund.
- Further improve the consultation plan, with special regard to the engagement of forest-dependent indigenous peoples and forest dwellers, and civil society organizations, aiming at strengthening the overall governance of the REDD+ Readiness preparation process.
- Provide details on how REDD+ strategy options would be developed and applied so that relevant stakeholders can be engaged in the process and possible consequences of such strategy options on forest-dependent indigenous peoples and forest dwellers will be considered.
- Further elaborate on specific capacity building plans for forest-dependent indigenous peoples and forest dwellers, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders involved with the REDD+ program, and revise the budget accordingly.
- El Salvador presented an updated R-PP in March 2013, and the FCPF FMT carried out the completeness check.
- The World Bank, as Delivery Partner, carried out a mission in April 2013 to provide technical guidance on additional activities and information required in preparation for the due diligence.
- Following recommendations made during a technical mission, El Salvador updated the R-PP and provided additional information on the R-PP components and on the SESA process with technical support provided by the Delivery Partner.
- El Salvador finalized its due diligence process in October 2013 and the World Bank also finalized its internal review process in order to negotiate the grant agreement with the Government of El Salvador (GoES), in accordance with resolution PC/13/2012/1.
- The Government of El Salvador and World Bank signed the USD3.6 million grant agreement for REDD+ Readiness.

2. National REDD Readiness Management Arrangements

- High level: The Climate Change Committee of the National System for Environment Management, created in August 2012, serves as a deliberative body of policies, plans and programs related to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Committee is currently formed by the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Public Works, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. This committee will be the Directive Body of the REDD-Plus Strategy and form the platform for high-level advocacy and coordination.
- Operational level: A cross-sectional advisory level. The Climate Change Committee shall establish an Advisory Committee with the participation of representatives of all the key sectors. To facilitate active cross-sectional participation processes, Working Groups for Dialogue and Consultation will be established, which under the Mitigation-based-on-Adaptation approach, will attend specific themes, advising and providing guidelines for the design, preparation and implementation of the National REDD+ strategy.
- Dialogue Working Groups for Forestry Development have been established and coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, through the General Directorate of Forestry, Watersheds and Irrigation Management. These working groups are made up of representatives of forest producers, government agencies, environmental local and tourism offices, cooperatives and community associations.

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- MARN has established a dialogue process with Indigenous Communities for the National Policy on the Environment, as well as for their full participation in the formulation process of the National Environment Strategy. To follow up on this process, the Indigenous People formed a roundtable by representatives of indigenous leaders, both women and men, from across the country. The “Mesa Nacional Indígena” currently includes 15 leaders representing all four of the indigenous areas in the country and its members have participated in some of the REDD+ early information sessions as well as several of the pre-SESA dialogues hosted by MARN. The MARN has issued a Ministerial Decree to formalize the “Mesa Nacional Indígena”.
- As part of the implementation of the R-PP and with the support of the FCPF grant, it is expected that the Government of El Salvador will formally establish the Inter-sectoral Consultative Platform (Instancia Consultiva Intersectorial) with a well-defined mandate that includes principles of operation, roles, financial resources and responsibilities to ensure that representation is achieved in the REDD+ dialogue and information reaches all key stakeholders in a systematic manner.

3. Stakeholder Consultations and Communication

- As part of early dialogue and information sharing meetings, over 1200 participants from different key stakeholders groups, such as governmental institutions, private sector, academy, local communities and indigenous groups have been engaged. There is a general agreement that more systematic work needs to be done during the readiness preparation phase.
- To inform the completeness check, El Salvador presented a revised version of the R-PP that included a new text describing additional early dialogue activities which lays out how the preliminary consultation and participation Plan will be designed and implemented. In addition, it gives an update on the current status of the outreach process with special emphasis on a Capacity Building Plan for Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change, Forests and REDD+. To prepare this Plan, El Salvador carried out six workshops in four regions of the country with indigenous people’s representatives who actively contributed to design this capacity building approach. The Plan is being implemented; up to date more than 100 people were trained on the basics of Climate Change issues.
- The GoES has conducted over 46 workshops reaching over 1192 participants (431 women, 761 men). The SESA process has provided additional spaces for participation focused on the stakeholder analysis of strategic options and causes of deforestation.
- As a trans-sectoral group, women were adequately represented in the various meetings and early dialogues regarding REDD+; women represented an average of 36 % of the total participants (in some meetings it was above 50%). The updated stakeholder map contained in the R-PP and the SESA Workplan indicates that in addition to their sector specific participation as forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and members of local organizations, several women’s organizations have indicated their intention to be actively engaged in the on-going consultation, participation and SESA processes.
- A knowledge and attitudes survey was applied to 63 people from 8 key stakeholder groups. The 10-questions survey had the objective of creating a baseline for the communication strategy. Key results showed that 91% knew the R-PP and around 60% knew about general REDD+ activities. There is work to be done to explain the specifics of the adaptation-based mitigation approach and the role of stakeholders in a future REDD+ mechanism under this innovative approach. It was interesting to see that most participants have a medium to high understanding about climate change issues and a high awareness and positive attitude about the role of the forests in mitigation/adaptation processes.

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4. REDD Strategy Preparation

- Key drivers of deforestation and degradation of soils and forest ecosystems are: expansion of agricultural activities based on non-sustainable practices; urban growth and the construction of infrastructure; livestock production; extraction of firewood and wood; mangroves and forest fires, and in the case of mangroves, illegal logging and extraction of firewood and timber for housing, agriculture and livestock activities, and the establishment of salt works and small shrimp hatcheries. In addition, these direct pressures on the small forest ecosystems are intensified by the existence of a scenario of non-harmonized sectoral policies, unarticulated institutional approaches and some economic and commercial factors.
- REDD+ strategic options within the framework and logic of actions of mitigation-based-on-adaptation focus on avoiding further deforestation, and reversing the degradation of forests and especially on carbon stocks improvement activities.

REDD+ strategic options

1. Harmonize sectoral policies and legislation linked to/influencing land use and land use change.
2. Activate legal instruments related with: a. Land planning and environmental zoning; b. Land use and Land use change; c. Agricultural practices regulation; d. Harvest burning; e. Illegal timber and firewood extraction.
3. Incentives & Compensation Program, and recognize rights over forest resources managed collectively;
4. Forest conservation and restore forest ecological connectivity;
5. Increase Climate Resilient agriculture and Agro-forestry activities that are low in CO₂ emissions.

Axes of action

1. Expand agroforestry and promote transition to agriculture that is resilient to climate change, biodiverse and reduces of CO₂ emissions.
2. Conservation of forest ecosystems, protected areas, existing mangroves and restoration of degraded forests, and other supporting ecosystems.
3. Restoration of gallery forests and re-vegetation of riverside landscapes
4. Promotion of green infrastructure for retention, collection and water management and the recharging of aquifers.
5. Applied research, training and education.
6. Local and national institutional strengthening with capacity building

5. Implementation Framework

- At least two factors characterize El Salvador and force the country to adopt specific and innovative approaches. Its low percentage of tree cover (27%), so it is necessary to direct efforts at the rural area and current land uses, where the action to promote not only consists of facing the advance of the agricultural frontier, but the changes in agriculture itself. A second aspect is that, unlike other countries where there is already an established institutional platform, in El Salvador the institutional framework for the program of mitigation based on adaptation must be designed and built.
- The framework of implementation will pay attention to at least three points: the evaluation and establishment of institutional long-term arrangements, establishment of institutions and governance regimes, and an assessment of the mechanisms of compensation and incentive programs.
- The framework of the implementation is defined in three phases so that knowledge of the causes of deforestation and degradation of forests, soils and ecosystems can be increased and so as to achieve the capacity to correctly choose options (2b)

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to reverse it and address the drivers.

- The revised version of the R-PP includes more details on the different stages of implementation with additional information on how the relevant stakeholders will participate at each stage, the necessary institutional arrangements to achieve this, and the most important activities for each phase.
- It has developed a wide analysis of national legislation related with key issues of REDD+ Program.

6. SESA

- El Salvador has defined relevant groups and actors through a stakeholder analysis, and has identified priority studies and analysis to be carried out before and during the SESA process.
- Regarding the proposed REDD+ Strategic Options, the revised R-PP provides relevant information regarding the potential negative impacts on relevant stakeholders, and describes how indigenous communities will participate in the development of REDD+ strategic options.
- El Salvador started the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment process with six training workshops on SESA and a National Workshop was held on August 29 and 30, where the final draft of the SESA Workplan was discussed and validated. Over 250 people participated (84 women and 170 men) representing over 90 institutions / organizations from key sectors.
- At local level, It has developed an additional process of socialization of SESA Work Plan, which has included capacity building on SESA scope and REDD+ safeguards.

7. Development of a Reference Scenario

- In El Salvador, for the next 25 years, in a business-as-usual scenario, a strong degradation of natural resources is expected. The following steps will be undertaken to establish a Reference Scenario: establish the sinks and gases to be included; the revision/updating of the national definition of forest; the establishment of the historical period in which the emissions and removals will be estimated; the description of the methods for estimating carbon stocks; the establishment of the Ad Hoc Technical Committee, which will coordinate the preparation of the reference level and the design of the monitoring report and verification system; the identification of potential sources of information and information requirements to strengthen the System of Reference; design and implementation of a Capacity Building and Specialized Training Program of technical staff on the issue of the evaluation of sinks or carbon stocks, data analysis and systematization of information.
- The development of the Forest Inventory at a national level is planned, this will be built on the land use map; for this purpose it is necessary to perform the following activities: define the technical requirements (technical workshops to define objectives, scope, links, form the Ad Hoc technical teams; carry out the activities: design, cartography, samples of plots to calculate sampling error and the National Inventory as such. Approximately 1 to 2 years is considered necessary to complete the forest inventory.

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8. MRV

To monitor changes in carbon stocks, a map of land use and forest cover updated to the date of the calculation, the intensities of biomass for different forest types in the map and the fraction of carbon (FC) per biomass unit and forest type will be required. The monitoring system proposed for El Salvador must meet the following criteria:

1. Representative: able to represent land use / land occupation categories systems in their proportions (homogeneous or heterogeneous).
 2. Consistent over time: able to represent land use / land occupation categories systems consistently over time.
 3. Complete: all land in the country should be included, with increases in some areas to maintain a balance with respect to other areas.
 4. Transparent: In sources and data collection, definitions, methodologies and assumptions clearly described and accessible.
- In addition, the monitoring system will provide data to improve understanding of the processes of forest management and restoration of degraded forests. It should also contain information on the 5 forest carbon pools established by the IPCC: 1) above ground biomass, 2) below ground biomass, 3) deadwood 4) dead leaves and detritus, 5) soils.

9. Other

- During the preparation of the National REDD+ Strategy, a monitoring system of the co-benefits will be established which will be designed and built in a participatory manner, under the coordination of the Department of Climate Change and Strategic Affairs, and the Department of Environmental Observatory, both pertaining to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. In addition, the support and participation of specialists from government institutions, private sector, academia, NGOs and local stakeholders, will be promoted, initially based on the current capacities of national institutions and the information available. The scope of the system will increase as national capacities are strengthened.
- It should address the collection of data and information related to the co-benefits provided by forest ecosystems, as well as the evaluation of the parameters related to deforestation and forest degradation drivers. It will be necessary to develop a set of indicators and verifiers that allow us to summarize the information in standard numbers, graphs or maps and can be used to infer changes resulting from projects or REDD+ activities and provide appropriate follow-up on strategic positive social and environmental impacts, and consequently to REDD+ Safeguards, as agreed under the UNFCCC.
- It has consolidated the dialogue with coffee producers.
- MARN has established a Technical Unit for MRV. That Unit will coordinate with the Forest Technical Team of MAG and other key stakeholders to establish Monitoring System.
- For related documents and information please visit:
 - o R-PP and early dialogue documents
http://www.marn.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1821&Itemid=392
 - o SESA process
http://www.marn.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1822&Itemid=393