



REDD+ Readiness Package

COSTA RICA REDD+ SECRETARIAT

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List of acronyms

National institutions

ACICAFOC: Indigenous and Peasant Coordinating Association for Central American Community Agroforestry
AFE: State Forestry Administration
CATIE: Tropical Agriculture Research and Teaching Centre
CCF: Forestry Chamber of Costa Rica
CIAgro: Professional Association of Agricultural Engineers
CNSF: National Commission for Forest Sustainability
DCC: Climate Change Division
FONAFIFO. National Fund for Forestry Financing
ICE: Electricity Institute of Costa Rica
IMN: National Meteorological Institute
INBio: National Biodiversity Institute
INEC: National Institute of Statistics and Censuses
INTECO: Technical Standards Institute of Costa Rica
MAG: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MINAE: National Ministry of the Environment and Energy
ONF: National Forestry Office
SEPSA: Executive Secretariat for Agricultural Sector Planning
SINAC: National System of Conservation Areas
UNA: National University
UNAFOR: National Forestry Union

FCPF Process

ER-PIN: Emissions Reduction Programme Idea Note
ERPA: Emissions Reduction Purchase Agreement
ERPD: Emissions Reduction Programme Document
ESMF: Environmental and Social Management Framework
CF: Carbon Fund
FCPF: Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FMT: Facility Management Team of the FCPF
GRM: Grant Reporting and Monitoring
LOI: Letter of intent for emission reduction purchasing
M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation framework
R-Package: Readiness package for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.
R-PP: Readiness-Preparation Phase
SESA: Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment

Process in the Convention

AFOLU: Agriculture, forestry and other land use
CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity
CFRN: Coalition for Rainforest Nations
UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
COP: Conference of the Parties
LULUCF: Land use, land-use change and forestry
MRV: Measuring, Reporting and Verification
NAMA: Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions

UNFF: United Nations Forum on Forests

REDD+ concepts

EN-REDD+: Costa Rica REDD+ National Strategy

REL/RL: Forest Reference Emission Level / Forest Reference Level

REDD+: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and the role of conservation, enhancing forest carbon stocks and the sustainable management of forests

SIS: Safeguard Information System

SNMB: National Forest Monitoring System

International and intergovernmental organisations

FAO The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FRA: The Global Forest Resources Assessment of the FAO

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IPF/IFF: Intergovernmental Panel on Forests / Intergovernmental Forum on Forests

ITTO International Tropical Timber Organization

NORAD: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

UNREDD: United Nations Development Programme for REDD+

REDD/CCAD/GIZ: German cooperation REDD programme with support from the Central American Commission on Environment and Development

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature

UKaid: UK Department for International Development

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

VCS: Voluntary Carbon Standard

Others

ADUU: AGRESTA – DIMAP – University of Costa Rica – Polytechnic University of Madrid (Consortium)

ASP: Protected Wild Areas

BTR: Indigenous Territory Blocks

CDI: Carbon Decisions International

C-Neutrality: Carbon Neutrality

INF: National Forestry Inventory

JNR: Jurisdictional and Nested REDD

LiDAR: Light detection and ranging

PIR: Relevant Stakeholder

RMP: REDD+ Market-Readiness Project

PES: Payment for Ecosystem Services

RapidEye: Satellite Sensor

RIBCA: Bribrí Cabecar Indigenous Network

SIGERFO: Forestry Regencies Management System

ITs: Indigenous Territories

TORs: Terms of Reference

UCC: Costa Rica Compensation Units

Introduction

In 2005, as part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, negotiation began on one of the most important international mechanisms for mitigating climate change: reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, fostering the conservation and sustainable management of forests, and enhancing forest carbon stocks, known as REDD+.

REDD+ includes a series of policies, positive incentives and programmes to deal with the causes of deforestation and forest degradation, promoting social and economic development, fostering the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and enhancing forest carbon stocks. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) was launched in the 13th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bali and became fully operative in June 2008. This is a global alliance that supports countries with tropical and subtropical forests to develop systems and policies for REDD+ with resources for readiness evolving towards a system of results-based payments. It is administered by the World Bank.

Costa Rica applied to the FCPF and was selected to implement the Readiness Plan to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation¹. This project was approved for its implementation stage in July 2010 by means of Resolution PC2008/2. Coordination for the national strategy readiness process is assigned by Executive Decree to FONAFIFO as an entity belonging to the MINAE (the Ministry is the governing body in the sector) and representing the government of Costa Rica.

One initial approach to the REDD+ Strategy was represented in the R-PP, where policies and programmes are determined to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, foster conservation, enhance carbon stocks and promote sustainable forest management. REDD+ also seeks to improve people's livelihood in indigenous areas and rural communities, in keeping with national priorities of sustainable development, forestry policy and the national strategy on climate change.

REDD+ readiness in Costa Rica seeks to develop the elements agreed by the COP in Cancún²; specifically the country's national strategy, a level of reference, a forest monitoring system and the system for providing information on safeguards, all on the basis of respect for the legal and political framework that operates in the country as the driving force behind this initiative had prior successful experiences in this matter. Preparation began in 2011 and will conclude in 2015 with the national strategy consultation, which has been called the "Forest and Rural Development Programme"

In line with its participation in the FCPF, Costa Rica is developing its readiness package, a requirement and necessary step for proposals to be approved by the Carbon Fund. In addition to the specific elements requested by the COP, and as a complementary aspect, a consultation and participation process was developed for the FCPF, as an information exchange and compensation payment mechanism as well as to provide a framework for social and environmental management.

Costa Rica produces its readiness analysis to help with the readiness assessment process, which consists of two stages: i) a national self-assessment by multiple relevant stakeholders (which leads to the readiness package) and ii) an assessment of the readiness package by the Participants'

¹http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion/r-ppcostarica_2a-2.pdf

² Paragraph 71, 1/CP.16

Committee with contributions by the Technical Assessment Panel, the associate member in charge of implementation (e.g. the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, or the Inter-American Development Bank) and others. The readiness package for REDD+ should be backed by the PC before the country sends an Emissions Reduction Programme and an emissions reduction purchase agreement (ERPA) is signed.

This package provides an overview of the most important aspects in Costa Rica's readiness process, and sets out significant achievements and areas that need additional development, as well as measures where, in the view of the REDD+ Executive Secretariat and based on the results of consultations with Relevant Stakeholders, more work is needed.

It is based on a common framework approved by the FCPF³ to measure a country's progress in basic readiness activities. This package presents a template of the subcomponents that are expected to be covered by all countries for successful readiness. It consists of four components (and their subcomponents, 1a to 4b) as well as the contribution of the executive body, which for Costa Rica is the World Bank. For all of them, a series of diagnostic questions have been prepared, and in some cases guidance notes, and it is suggested that each country uses them as the basis of their readiness package (R-Package).

The following chapters develop the overview or summary of the readiness and self-assessment methodology used by relevant stakeholders, and also include the results of this self-assessment according to the consultancy report produced by systematising the self-assessment workshops.

Relevant stakeholders are groups that have a legitimate interest or right to the forests, forestry systems and/or agroforestry systems or policies and investments along the sector's production chain. They are the groups that will be potentially affected, either negatively or positively, by the activities to be carried out as a consequence of implementing the REDD+ Strategy and any resulting actions and activities. They are partners in the country's efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+).

The REDD+ Technical Secretariat asked the "Widening Informed Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+" (WISE REDD+ Costa Rica) that is implemented by Conservation International (CI) to take charge of organising, facilitating and promoting the self-assessment process for Relevant Stakeholders, with a view to ensuring transparency in the process by having it conducted by an organisation that was not directly involved. The [Stakeholder Self-Assessment Process Report](#), submitted by CI in representation of the government of Costa Rica, is therefore an independent report that forms the basis of this package.

It was requested for this to be based on the SESA process, which throughout the national strategy preparation stage promoted dialogue and the inclusion of perspectives from the various stakeholder groups, from the initial readiness preparation stages onwards. Accordingly, the methodologies, announcements and participation structures used were those defined during the SESA, and since 2008 the Social and Environmental Management Framework (MGAS).

³ This is a document titled "Readiness Assessment Framework Guide" (Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, 2013 (c)).

Readiness Summary

Component 1: Readiness organisation and consultation

Subcomponent 1a: National agreements for REDD+

National agreements and transparency

The process for drawing up the REDD+ Strategy in Costa Rica was formally allocated to the National Fund for Forestry Financing by means of [Executive Decree no. 37352-MINAET](#), as published in official gazette La Gaceta, issue 220, on 14 November 2012. Said decree legally consolidates the political mandate that the Government of the Republic previously granted to the National Fund for Forestry Financing (FONAFIFO), so that on 29 June of that same year the “Supplementary Grant Agreement for Costa Rica Readiness Preparation Proposal” was signed with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to implement the project.

In the decree, the Executive Secretariat is established as the support entity for the REDD+ Strategy design, based on the National Fund for Forestry Financing (FONAFIFO) of the Ministry of the Environment and Energy, and is also assigned as the body responsible for administering the grant and entrusted with the fundamental responsibility for drawing up the final version of the REDD+ Strategy and submitting it to the Minister for approval. It is also assigned specific functions relating to the basic components of the strategy both in its substantial aspects (level of reference; system for monitoring, reporting and verifying changes in carbon stocks; the strategic environmental and social assessment or SESA; and the information system on safeguards; among others) and in terms of participation from stakeholders, so that their full involvement is ensured in the strategy design process (developing a readiness and consultation plan and a communication strategy, preparing and running workshops with relevant groups involved in the process, especially with peasant and indigenous communities, and supporting the Executive Committee, among other relevant aspects).

The Executive Secretariat prepares regular progress reports, of which Relevant Stakeholders are informed by means of the established mechanisms explained below, as well as the medium-term assessment, the aide-memoires for the follow-up missions, and progress in specific products, maintaining a transparency-based approach throughout the process, in accordance with the country’s legal framework and the requirements of specific international regulations relating to this issue.

The stated decree also creates the REDD+ Executive Committee, made up of three representatives from the government and four representatives from the stakeholders (Indigenous Peoples, small forestry producers, logging companies, and one representative from civil society and owners of overused land). This Committee responds to demands from Relevant Stakeholders identified during the 2011 SESA Workshop, in particular in the representation of Indigenous People and of small producers and peasants, who do not feel properly represented in the existing formal mechanisms (National Forestry Office, FONAFIFO Governing Committee, Regional Councils of the MINAE).

Among the Committee's most relevant functions are the following: a) Issue policy recommendations for REDD+; b) Resolve conflicts during the REDD+ Readiness process; c) Guarantee the involvement of key stakeholders; d) Promote the exchange of coherent and transparent information between relevant stakeholders; e) Approve technical studies; f) Provide a follow-up to the SESA; g) Systematise the consultation processes; and h) Guarantee application of the Prior, Free and Informed Consent in the consultation processes, particularly with Indigenous Peoples. It has the technical and operational support of the Executive Secretariat, meets regularly every month or extraordinarily when considered appropriate, and is the clearest and most direct expression of the involvement of Relevant Stakeholders in the REDD+ Strategy construction process and its various products and supplies, which should be shared by the different members with their representatives.

Regarding the legitimacy of participation, each group of Relevant Stakeholders defined its own transparent self-selection procedure for assigning Committee representatives, who should keep appropriate channels of communication open with their representatives to provide the Committee with feedback on their positions. The Executive Secretariat prepares an "aide-memoire" for each Executive Committee session and makes them available to all Relevant Stakeholders for information and transparency purposes on the REDD+ website⁴.

In order to foster the participation of the various public entities potentially involved in REDD+, the aforementioned decree determined that said entities should assign a person to act as contact with the strategy. In this way, an Inter-institutional Committee was created, which has also had involvement from the academic and scientific sector. This Committee has in turn generated specific work "sessions" on matters of methodology, remote sensors and monitoring technology, among other issues, and has become an appropriate vehicle for inter-institutional coordination, building common positions and identifying barriers to implementing REDD+ in various areas. The materials generated are also made available to the public.

As well as FONAFIFO and the Executive Secretariat, it is clear that other national institutions with competencies in forestry matters, particularly the State Forestry Administration (run by the National System of Conservation Areas and the National Fund for Forestry Financing) and its specific governing bodies, in particular the National Forestry Office and the FONAFIFO Governing Committee, have been considered from the very beginning as central to the institutional nature of REDD+ by virtue of its own legal mandates. The public institutions such as those mentioned have the legally imposed responsibility to prepare annual work reports, which are made publicly available. FONAFIFO, in turn, makes a public presentation of the results of its work. The National Forestry Office is comprised of representatives from the various subsectors in the private forestry sector and acts as an entity for coordination and dialogue with the Executive Power to advance in defining and implementing national forestry policies.

Both SINAC and FONAFIFO provide resources to strengthen the actions by this entity, which is answerable to the Office of the National Comptroller General. The Professional Association of Agricultural Engineers also has functions entrusted by law with regard to controlling the quality and efficiency of the regency practices that associated professionals provide for producers involved in the Payment for Ecosystem Services programme, as these are professionals who draw up

⁴ <http://www.reddcr.go.cr>. The REDD+ Costa Rica website has made available to the general population most of the documents that are produced as a result of consultations and processes supporting the readiness process that have been financed with resources from different funding sources. The documentation is organised for users by stages of readiness, enabling updated documentation to be accessed relating to the various elements both from the R-Package and the ERP.

management plans and hold themselves responsible, under the principle of public service, for verifying contractual compliance between producers and the State, in order to guarantee that the objectives set are fully met. To that end, the professional association provides general supervision, attends to and resolves complaints over the noncompliance of duties and imposes disciplinary measures on associates deemed not to be acting in accordance with legislation and professional ethics, for which it also receives public funding.

Operation and supervisory capacity

The way in which State institutions incorporate the actions of their duties, including those dealing with REDD+ issues, in accordance with the national legal framework, is the planning-budgeting process based on joining together actions resulting from the National Development Plan.

Thus, both the National System of Conservation Areas and the National Fund for Forestry Financing, as well as entities directly involved in REDD+, should incorporate into their yearly produced institutional operating plans the actions and budgets assigned to each one, with a view to supporting compliance of strategic objectives resulting from the National Development Plan, as is the case with REDD+. Consistency and mutual reinforcement of the actions stated occurs through inter-institutional coordination, which is reflected in progress reports drawn up as part of the system, and which are systematised by the Planning Division of the Environment Ministry. Additionally, regular meetings on political control and management are held, which are led by the Minister of Agriculture and the Environment, during which the managers of the various entities that make up the institution must report on the progress achieved in implementing their institutional operating plans, including budgetary implementation reviews. The National Forestry Development Plan and the National Strategy on Climate Change act as a specific guiding framework for supervising the progress of REDD+ actions carried out by each entity to meet the policy targets set in higher political frameworks.

Apart from the above, as a result of the creation of the Inter-institutional Commission, which as described previously includes all public-sector entities directly or indirectly involved in REDD+, an operating coordination mechanism is in place between these entities, particularly in order to deal with technical elements through the Technical Sessions.

Technical preparations for REDD+ readiness⁵ were led by the REDD+ Executive Secretariat in close collaboration with the entities responsible for generating data and preparing reports on greenhouse gas emissions, to ensure consistency and compatibility with the methodology requirements of the UNFCCC and the IPCC. Accordingly, a Technical Committee or Session on issues of methods and measurements, including by means of remote sensors, where, as well as FONAFIFO, other institutions involved are the National System of Conservation Areas (in charge of the State Forestry Administration and consequently of the national forestry inventory and of public and private forest monitoring), the National Meteorological Institute (responsible for preparing National Communications and biannual updates to the UNFCCC and following the directives of the IPCC), the Climate Change Division (in charge of following up on the National Strategy on Climate Change), the National Geoenvironmental Information Centre (responsible for the National Environmental

⁵ The main preparations include defining the reference level and the monitoring, reporting and verifying system – including the national forest monitoring system.

Information System), the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Territorial Information System (SNIT) and the academic community (education and forestry research entities).

The aforementioned Technical Session forms the central basis of analysis and recommendation of the technical guidelines for designing the methodological and technological tools required for building the main elements, requirements and quality of information, and their availability and options available at a national or international level, so that a level of quality is ensured that is appropriate to the country's needs and possibilities, but also to the need to ensure the generation of robust and consistent information to deal with REDD+ requirements in the context of national efforts to reduce emissions. This working mechanism in particular has helped and supported the role of the Secretariat in following up on technical matters and also helped to bring public and private institutions together with capacities that can be strengthened at a national level, and finally led to the creation of capacities for appropriate follow-up thereof.

Coordination

Within the Forests and Rural Development Programme (PBDR)⁶, the [REDD+ National Strategy](#) has been formally incorporated as one of the relevant political elements in the National Development Plan, which is the main planning instrument for medium-term national development and guides the work of the Executive Power in general, although it does assign specific responsibilities to certain institutions or Ministries. In turn, under the new administration of Solís Rivera, the Executive Power has determined the need to create a coordination and political direction mechanism at the highest level, which helps implement and monitor elements of the National Development Plan, consisting of the creation of "Planning Sectors". That is how, through the "Executive Power Organisation Decree", the Environment, Energy, Water, Sea and Land Use Planning Sector, which in addition to the Ministry of the Environment includes the Ministry of Agriculture, the Institute of Rural Development and other public entities related to the application of policies in relation to land management and use with the purpose of ensuring efficient and consistent coordination in terms of political guidance at all levels of national planning (sector, regional, local).

To these ends, the Strategic Planning Secretariat for the Sector as a technical and management body, and a specific governing body is established consisting of the Sector Council, made up of the highest hierarchical levels of each institution in the sector, precisely to ensure the decision-making process at the highest level, in this case including the REDD+ Strategy, as it is recognised as such in the National Development Plan and which informs the actions taken by all entities in the sector, in accordance with their specific competencies, at national, regional and local levels. Specific actions are planned in the policy proposals to strengthen said coordination between sectors and to provide integrated support for the parties involved in REDD+.

At the inter-institutional level, the PBDR is fully in line with both the National Forestry Development Plan and the Protected Areas Policy of the National System of Conservation Areas, as well as the

⁶ The Forests and Rural Development Programme (PBDR) consists of a group of initiatives that the present administration (2014–2018) is developing to help achieve targets and priorities in both the National Forestry Development Plan and the National Development Plan. Among these initiatives is the REDD+ National Strategy. Its application will be long-term and will coincide with the timeframe negotiated for implementing the Sustainable Development Targets and other policy work that the government has been implementing with the clear intention of generating results that are consistent with REDD+ and which should be appropriately compensated.

National Strategy on Climate Change, as all these policy instruments are designed to support the country's goal of becoming a carbon-neutral economy by 2021. Additionally, the aforementioned Inter-institutional Commission provides coordinated actions on specific matters among the relevant entities, and the convergence and joint work with the agricultural sector is being strengthened by means of a mixed commission made up of three representatives from the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture.

During the development of some products in the Preparation, at a practical level there was a lack of full inter-institutional coordination. Efforts are currently being made to identify specific roles that should be assumed by the different public institutions, particularly the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC), the National Fund for Forestry Financing (FONAFIFO) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), by means of the process of involving them in identifying the costs of the strategy, so that in the near future the responsibilities of each one can be more clearly defined according to their areas of legal competency and the needs for specific institutional agreements, if required. The above will also be of great relevance in defining priorities with regard to assigning resources to implement REDD+ policies and actions. Negotiations are at the highest political level in the Ministry of the Environment (which is home to both SINAC and FONAFIFO) for agreements to be formal and explicit.

Apart from formal coordination mechanisms in the context of governmental institutionality, both regular and specific REDD+ spaces are kept open through the Executive Committee as stated in the previous section, as well as the coordinating role that the National Forestry Office fills, in which all the main subsectors of the private sector are represented.

Fund Management

Although one of the responsibilities of the REDD+ Executive Secretariat is to administer resources from FCPF-assigned readiness grants, and it is responsible by legal provision for coordinating other resources from international cooperation in support of REDD+, it has the support of the administrative and financial capacity of FONAFIFO, and the resources are in turn executed by means of financial mechanisms carried out by the main bank in the National Banking System (Banco Nacional de Costa Rica). Given the nature of FONAFIFO as a public entity, it is subject to all control, auditing and accountability regulations that apply to the public sector in general, including investment monitoring by the Ministry of Finance from budgeting onwards, which should comply with the Institutional Operating Plan and be approved by the FONAFIFO Governing Committee and forwarded to the Ministry of the Environment to be incorporated into the ministry's budgetary programmes before being submitted for approval by the Legislative Assembly.

FONAFIFO is also subject to inspection by the Office of the National Comptroller General and submits annual reports on its technical and financial management in public events with the involvement of various public and private stakeholders, the latest of which can be found at the FONAFIFO website⁷, where the minutes of Governing Committee meetings can also be found, as well as annual financial reports, plans, budgets, internal control aspects, human resources, etc.

The complementarity of funding and technical assistance for the preparation stage is used by the REDD+ Executive Secretariat as a focal point of cooperation on this issue, and the technical or

⁷ http://www.FONAFIFO.go.cr/actualidad/noticias/ultimasnoticias/RC_FONAFIFO_2014%20peq.pdf visited in July 2015.

financial resources from partners other than the FCPF are allocated to specific requirements where gaps or a need for complementarity have been identified. Thus, for example, resources from German cooperation have been channelled particularly to producing up-to-date maps of land use and forest cover, the national forestry inventory and the national forest monitoring system; UN-REDD resources are aimed at achieving progress in the information system on safeguards, improving capacities to achieve institutional agreements, determine costs and funding strategies, etc.; the CI-DOS project (WISE-REDD+) fosters extended involvement from Relevant Stakeholders in information and consultation processes relating to various issues (Indigenous Peoples, self-assessment by Relevant Stakeholders, initial consultations for the SIS and the initial design of the Benefit Distribution Mechanism, etc.); IUCN and the INBio support specific elements to do with identifying and assessing non-monetary benefits and joint benefits, etc. This is also in line with the policy directive issued by the Environment and Energy Minister with regard to achieving an efficient and rational use of the resources available to REDD+ from both national and international cooperation.

However, the issue of coordinating donations is a challenge for all countries, and Costa Rica is no exception. For example, it has been identified that despite efforts, the FONAFIFO-BM/SINAC-GIZ relationship has not been successful in opening up a real and systematic space for joint coordination and collaboration. Making a session for donors and coordinating technical cooperation operations improve said relationship.

With regard to the level of institutional efficiency in programming, operational and financial management, although it is true that there is no specific monitoring at an institutional or ministerial level, in recent years the Office of the National Comptroller General has conducted an assessment of the institutional efficiency of most public-sector institutions. In the case of FONAFIFO, according to said assessment (Institutional Management Index), which includes an analysis of capacities with regard to planning, financial-accounting administration, internal control, administrative contracting, budgeting, IT, user service and human resources, it was ranked ninth out of 162 public institutions assessed, with a score of 88.9 out of 100, making it the most efficient entity in the environmental sector⁸. This assessment clearly and unequivocally shows the capacity of FONAFIFO, and consequently the Executive Secretariat, to handle strategy resources with transparency, efficiency and accountability.

Information and claim-handling mechanism

Costa Rica has extensive positive experience over a long time in implementing feedback and complaint mechanisms to deal with disagreements from inhabitants regarding the quality of the services provided by the institutions of the Executive Power. Since its creation in 1992, the Ombudsman's Office for Inhabitants of the Republic (DHR) has been the main institution for managing activities to deal with complaints relating to disagreements by any person (national or foreigner) who feels that any entity of the Executive Power is failing to comply fully with its responsibilities in the provision of public services to the population in general, according to its framework of competencies and responsibilities. As a mechanism of public control under the authority of the Legislative Assembly, its main responsibility is to supervise the overall performance of the public sector (including, of course, the environment sector) in accordance with the applicable

⁸ http://www.cgr.go.cr/rev_dig/mem_anual/2014/files/assets/downloads/publicacion.pdf visited in July 2015.

legal and moral framework, to ensure the protection of the population's rights as recognised in the current constitutional and legal framework, which naturally includes all international agreements ratified by the country.

The Ombudsman's Office can intervene on its own behalf (at its own discretion) or by request of an interested party to deal with any issue relating to the extent of legal authority of an entity against which the complaint is brought, and submits an annual report to Congress with a summary of all interventions carried out, except for conflicts between private individuals and those brought against the Judicial Power. The DHR can ask institutions involved to take all necessary measures to deal with the problem of noncompliance and provide appropriate answers to the affected individual or group, as well as submitting cases to the courts if deemed appropriate. The DHR has a long record of involvement in dealing with environmental complaints made by citizens, and its annual reports can be viewed on a website⁹.

Specifically for REDD+, Costa Rica developed a mechanism for information, feedback and complaints as a specific channel of communication based on participatory work by FONAFIFO and social stakeholders. It responds to the conditions and needs of social groups and other Relevant Stakeholders involved in the REDD+ process. Both the conceptual framework and a specific procedure have been developed to use the mechanism, with information measures generated as well as explanations on how they work, and this has been tested in a pilot stage that includes different methods of access (in writing, telephone, email and online through the strategy website). The mechanism makes a distinction between three types of use: information or clarification, feedback and making complaints, and the stages that each type follows are clearly described, from making the request to its final resolution, and the interested party can follow the status of their request online.

This mechanism is institutionalised through FONAFIFO's Services Comptroller Office, which is in turn entered in the framework provided by the National System for Service Comptroller Offices, which is coordinated by the Ministry of National Planning (MIDEPLAN), with the aim of ensuring transparency, and with institutional service comptroller offices depending in technical terms on MIDEPLAN and not on the institutions in which they operate. The chief aim of the system is to ensure that due attention is given to complaints presented by users in relation to the quality of the service that they receive from the respective institutions in the observance of their competencies and legal responsibilities.

In other words, Costa Rica already has a formal mechanism for dealing with user complaints, and the specific mechanism for REDD+ complements the system with a specific focus and objective and with broader forms of access, ensuring REDD+ users receive quick, accessible, transparent and impartial treatment to resolve any disagreements relating to REDD+. To that end, the Services Comptroller Office must forward regular reports and an annual report to MIDEPLAN informing on cases received and the courses of action taken to solve them. The reports are publicly available on the REDD+ or FONAFIFO website.

The budgetary resources for operating the Service Comptroller System should be budgeted in the regular institutional operating plans, and both FONAFIFO and the other institutions in the public sector have several years of experience in implementing these resources. In this specific case for REDD+, the additional costs that would be required for full operation are yet to be fully defined, in particular because it would not work solely in FONAFIFO, but also in the Ministry of the Environment

⁹ <http://www.dhr.go.cr/biblioteca/> visited in July 2015.

and the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as Indigenous Development Associations, and the structure that SINAC has already established and must assume responsibilities under as part of extending the range of the system to rural populations and regions with more limited access to electronic means.

Subcomponent 1b: Organisation, consultation and dissemination

Within the framework of the preparation stage, in order to build a participatory REDD+ Strategy, the Costa Rican government established dialogue early on with Relevant Stakeholders (PIRs) through FONAFIFO. Relevant Stakeholders are defined as organisations or individuals who live from the forest or have some impact on it.

Participation and involvement of main relevant stakeholders

By means of an Executive Decree, an Executive Committee was created which is made up of a proprietary member and their deputy from the following Relevant Stakeholders: Indigenous Peoples, logging companies, small forestry producers, National Banking System, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, civil society or owners of overused land (Article 3, Decree 37352-MINAET). In accordance with the decree, institutional representatives were appointed by their respective institutions. With regard to the indigenous sector, the representative on the Executive Committee was selected at assemblies held by 19 of the 24 territories. The civil sector or owners of overused land, in turn, carried out a process of initial selection at a regional level and the regional representatives subsequently appointed the national representative.

The involvement of small and medium agroforestry producers was brought about through a process of social organisation using various platforms representative of the sector, including UNAFOR, a platform consisting of 230 nationwide peasant agroforestry organisations. This organisation is made up of five regional subsidiaries, namely: Brunca, Huetar, Pacífico Central and Chorotega. Despite the fact that UNAFOR includes a significant number of agroforestry organisations from civil society, there are other civil organisations in each region that do not form part of this organisation. Accordingly, and respecting the principle of transparency and inclusion, the Executive Secretariat coordinated with ACICAFOC to conduct six regional workshops in June 2013, open to all agroforestry organisations.

Furthermore, the leaders of the 24 Indigenous Peoples in the country decided to organise themselves into four territory blocks, formed by geographic location, culture and world view. They also established their form of participation during the REDD+ Strategy preparation, taking into account their culture and both national and international legislation.

Logging companies established their own information and feedback process through the National Forestry Office and the Forestry Chamber of Costa Rica.

The academic community and the government established their dialogue through the inter-institutional commission and technical dialogue sessions.

Consultation Process

Indigenous Peoples stated that their participation would be based on a process consisting of three stages: firstly, information, in the form of a culturally appropriate explanation about what REDD+ is and the advances made in the process. To that end, the cultural mediators programme was implemented for Indigenous People who were trained in matters relating to REDD+, and who are able to get simplified information across in their own languages. Participatory plans were also created, which defined the most appropriate channels of communication to be used to disseminate the information. The second stage is pre-consultation, for analytical discussion on special indigenous issues, safeguards and joint benefits, among others. And finally, there is the consultation stage as such, which acts as a final validation of the REDD+ Strategy and other documents. Also, in order to ensure the sustainability of the dialogue with the Indigenous Peoples, and on their request, indigenous commissions were formed, which were divided according to matters of technical, cultural and legal competency. These groups seek to maintain an active dialogue, with the aim of ensuring constant feedback on the process throughout all of the REDD+ stages.

In 2011, the SESA workshop was developed, in which social stakeholders, holders of rights, defined the different stakeholders that make up the forestry sector, which are the Indigenous People, small and medium forestry producers, logging companies, the academic community and the government, which form the Executive Committee, which is an advisory committee that fosters discussion between sectors. They also gave feedback on the Costa Rica Readiness Proposal and their involvement in it.

Exchange of Information

The information process is based on a strategy of participatory communication, which includes the cultural mediators programme and culturally appropriate media, as defined with the Indigenous Peoples. Accordingly, media have been created with information on climate change, the importance of carbon in forests and REDD+ activities. Also used were two information videos, posters on how Indigenous Peoples interpret the concept of REDD+ according to their world view, radio spots, pamphlets and local media, such as posters and flyers. There is also a website, social networks, two case studies, and around 20 news items in nationwide media.

An organisation and participation process has been established that has succeeded in strengthening indigenous capacities and dialogue with the government, with the aim of improving the quality of life of communities and their rights, and ensuring transparency in the process. The consultation process will soon enter its last stage, disseminating its results, strengthening women's involvement, and the critical route of special issues for Indigenous Peoples, an aspect that will be dealt with by the indigenous commissions, to ensure a sustainable dialogue can be maintained.

Component 2: Preparing the REDD+ Strategy

Subcomponent 2a: Evaluating Land Use, Forestry Policy and Governance

Studies and base situation

To draw up the R-PP (Government of Costa Rica, 2011), with regard to the matter of land use and deforestation, information was incorporated on deforestation in Costa Rica based on a study produced by FUNDECOR for REDD+ (FUNDECOR, 2010), using a series of maps showing forest cover over time. Four strata of land use dynamics were used to study deforestation and regeneration. Carbon rights in and out of the PPSA were described.

Based on these initial studies and on the approach that led Costa Rica to promote REDD+ in the international community, various initial policy options were considered to begin the preparation processes with relevant stakeholders. However, the need was recognised to go into more detail in the study of forest cover, deforestation, degradation, etc., in a coherent and systematic way, and with a regional or subnational geographic perspective, i.e. to determine the spatial location of deforestation and degradation.

The academic community and the same institutions had produced different studies, but these were pursuing different aims, so the difference in methodologies, definitions, scopes and so on did not allow for a consistent and systematic timeline to be established that could be accepted in the different possible frameworks for recognised results on the country's REDD+, such as the FCCC, the FCPF or the VCS-JNR, etc.

Thus, through the REDD+ Secretariat, Costa Rica began the task of carrying out studies for the consistent timeline, the Reference Level, the spatial location of deforestation and the causes for it, analyses and comparison with the methodology frameworks. An international consortium was hired with the aim of reprocessing the historical timeline of changing land use. This was financed by the CF of the FCPF and one of its products, consisting of a series of maps from the 1990s to the present day, and a protocol for generating new maps in the future. Between August 2014 and March 2015, the AGRESTA-DIMAP-UCR-UPM (ADUU) Consortium developed the consultancy "Generating a historical series of changing land use for the Costa Rica REDD+ forestry reference level", under the supervision of the Committee on Remote Sensors and Other Technologies in REDD+ and the Executive Secretariat.

In 2015, the consultancy company Carbon Decisions International (CDI) has been working on developing the "Reference Level for forest emissions/forest reference levels for Costa Rica REDD+". They are presenting an evaluation of the driving forces behind deforestation and degradation, and of the barriers to dealing with factors of this kind (including barriers to improving carbon reserves) and proposing a spatially explicit model of land use in Costa Rica based on the analysis of these driving forces.

The process of inventorying existing information and the competencies and legal assignments of the different institutions that generate information that could be used for the consistent historical series and be applicable to the frameworks referred to, led to a slower coordination process than was expected. The process of producing the consistent timeline, the Reference Level, the spatial location

of deforestation and the causes for it, analyses and comparison with the methodology frameworks was completed at the end of the preparation stage, whereas it should have been one of the main activities so it could have informed the whole consultation and policy formulation process.

Use of analysis in prioritising REDD+ actions

So as not to halt the dissemination and consultation process, or the policy development resulting from the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and the Social and Environmental Management Framework (MGAS), a preliminary analysis was carried out by compiling studies on the subject of changes in land use and deforestation in different years in Costa Rica.

The consultation process (in its information and pre-consultation stages) conducted a series of dialogues that identified both positive and negative social, environmental and political risks or impacts that could result from the actions proposed within the framework of each of the Strategic Options originally considered in the R-PP.

But advances have also been made in the analysis of the legal and political framework in force, in particular for the forestry sector, focussing on the system of ASPs and the PES and on the consideration given to safeguards. For example, in the MGAS an action plan was produced to mitigate the environmental and social risks regarding land use, possession and ownership of land, rights over natural resources, means of subsistence and management, where additional measures were described and the necessary resources identified. An Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) was also drawn up by the World Bank.

This has been used to draw up a REDD+ Strategy at a nationwide level, where policies are generated that deal with the five REDD+ actions of Decision 1/COP XVI, paragraph 70 (see [REDD+ National Strategy](#)). There was no specific prioritisation, but rather a costing is expected to be carried out and implementation plans proposed for the different policies, with different timeframes possible for each one.

Analyses of the consistent timeline, the Reference Level, the spatial location of deforestation and the causes for it, and the barriers to increasing forest carbon reserves, as well as analyses and comparison of methodology frameworks have influenced the approach of the Emissions Reduction Programme (ERPD) that Costa Rica will have presented to the FCPF in mid-2015.

These analyses have enable a coherent programme to have been established with regard to the ownership of carbon rights, accounting and meeting commitments to reduce emissions by preventing deforestation and through regeneration (see [ERPD](#) document).

With regard to the possible implications in terms of necessary legal changes based on the findings of these studies and the consultation, the modifications to the National Strategy that may be needed have been decided upon, chiefly by generating new instruments or types of PESs, such as indigenous PES or peasant PES, for which legal support with preparation funds is now provided.

Subcomponent 2b: Strategic REDD+ options

Presenting strategic policies

During the preparation stage for the REDD+ National Strategy, the framework for analysis used was the “Strategic Options” concept, which consisted of a group of 8-10 potential areas, in order to tackle implementing REDD+ actions in the country. These “Strategic Options” have been subject to information gathering and pre-consultation with Relevant Stakeholders during successive processes, which, in their current stage, began with the SESA workshop in 2011. Dialogues focussed on identifying both positive and negative social, environmental and political risks or impacts that could result from the actions proposed within the framework of each of the Strategic Options. Initial policy proposals and actions were based on the following criteria: a) The current legal and political framework, particularly for the forestry sector, focussing on the system of ASPs and PESs; b) Framework of national and international opportunities resulting from the progressive construction of REDD+; and c) Opportunities and guidelines resulting from the actions of agencies or multilateral or bilateral mechanisms to promote REDD+ readiness.

Annex 1 of the [REDD+ National Strategy](#) was used as reference for the participatory and transparent construction process carried out in the preparation. It involved five macro-sectors: logging companies, government, small and medium agricultural and/or forestry producers, Indigenous Peoples, and the academic community and NGOs. More than 180 workshops were held, in which more than two thousand people took part. Information and pre-consultation activities were carried out, and as part of the SESA process, risks and other important information were identified to foster involvement from sectors in subsequent stages.

The underlying objective of identifying risks during the process of dialogues on REDD+ is to make sure policy measures or actions are suitable for dealing with any resulting risks or impacts. With this criterion as a background, the REDD+ team in Costa Rica proceeded to systematise the multiple social, political and environmental risks identified, with the aim of identifying broader categories that will enable similar questions to be combined, which will help to identify policies and actions to be finally incorporated into REDD+CR. For this, it was decided not to use the framework of strategic options, given that in the risk analysis a lot of duplication was identified between components of different strategic options.

Following this systematisation, five main risk areas were identified. In methodological terms, this was done using a table containing all the environmental, social and political risks (positive and negative) that were identified throughout the process, guaranteeing traceability and consistency between individual risks and the five risk areas.

A similar process was used for policy proposals. In dealing with risks and safeguards, specific actions were identified that were aimed at dealing with the individual risks that were identified, which were then placed into a block of seven policies, which make up the risk areas (except that three policies were identified in the first area due to their complexity, and one policy for each of the following) for a total of six strategic policies generated. The policies were in turn divided into actions and activities, at this level of consideration.

The policies are national in their scope, including the five REDD+ actions from paragraph 70 (Decision 1/COP XVI), and for the purposes of the National Strategy they will be prioritised based on the cost analysis that is being carried out throughout the whole of 2015.

As stated previously, there is prioritisation based on what is feasible to deal with in the immediate term and what the Emissions Reduction Programme Document (ERPD) has generated.

Social and Environmental Feasibility

The process of Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) enabled expected social and environmental impacts to be captured. This process, however, lacked the grounds for the technical studies which, as stated in the previous section, were not dealt with on time for the period that covered the whole of the SESA process (2011 to 2014).

Despite this, during the information and pre-consultation stages, appropriate people were counted on who knew of the problems in their parts of the country and who had a clear perspective on the impacts and risks. This made it possible, at least in part, to resolve the lack of technical information, creating a series of products.

The Environmental and Social Management Framework (MGAS) that was developed in 2014–2015 is the instrument by which the environmental and social priorities that were established in the SESA and incorporated into the policies of the REDD+ National Strategy are examined and their possible adverse and positive environmental and social impacts are identified, which are managed through procedures to implement safeguard plans and monitoring to mitigate them, respecting national regulations, as well as the operational policies of the World Bank, the Cancún agreements and the safeguards of REDD+. Within this framework, the policies of the REDD+ National Strategy and its ERPD were the product of examination and prioritisation conducted in the SESA and the environmental and social feasibility established in the MGAS.

Coherence with other policies

Parallel to this, and as new information has been generated on the driving forces behind deforestation and on the technical possibilities of developing actions that have an effect on reducing emissions in the forestry sector, the seven policies mentioned previously have been complemented with actions of this kind, if they did not already include them.

In this way, the policies generated, therefore, address the driving forces behind deforestation and the “+” actions of REDD+. And other policies were considered in the framework of other national planning instruments, such as the National Development Plan, the PNDF, the ENCC, the ENB and those relating to SINAC, in such a way that the necessary consistency and complementarity is guaranteed. Some of the actions of each strategic policy are in some sort of conflict with other national policies (see Section 3 of the [REDD+ National Strategy](#)). Policies, their actions, and the people responsible, are all described in that document.

The technical team organised by the Costa Rican REDD+ Secretariat is working to develop action plans for said policies, with a need to identify intermediate targets, tasks, supplies and costs, as well as the timeframes and deadlines for each task, a process that will lead to operational actions being drawn up that can help produce the Institutional Plans required in the framework of the National Planning System.

Subcomponent 2c: Framework of REDD+ implementation

Adopting legislation

The national legal framework that applies to REDD+ is based on the principle of people's right to enjoy a healthy and ecologically balanced environment, and on the duty of the State to guarantee and comply with that right, as established in Article 50 of the Political Constitution, and which has been strengthened by means of several provisions from the Constitutional Court. The international legal framework that has been ratified by the country consists of more than 50 international treaties and conventions on matters of the environment and sustainable development, including instruments at global, continental (in the framework of the Inter-American System) and subregional (in the framework of the Central American Integration System) levels, by virtue of which the country has assumed commitments on various issues, such as biodiversity, climate change, combatting desertification, forests, natural and cultural heritage, chemical substances, protecting the ozone layer, etc. It is also an integral part of the internal regulations of the instruments signed and ratified by the country on matters of human rights, both those that form part of the Inter-American System and instruments of a global nature, including the rights of workers and Indigenous Peoples agreed within the framework of the United Nations or the International Labour Organisation.

The REDD+ National Strategy is included both implicitly and explicitly in the main instruments of national policy. Explicitly, the proposal exists to maintain the implementation of the REDD+ National Strategy and to enter into the ER-Program, which will help to meet established national emissions targets (in the National Development Plan and the National Strategy on Climate Change). Implicitly there are many actions that are mentioned in the policy instruments that have “consequences” for REDD+, i.e. which may be considered REDD+ actions as they have an impact on emission reduction or on maintaining or increasing carbon stocks, or they form part of the approach taken with regard to social and environmental risks and on safeguards that the National Strategy should take into consideration.

The [REDD+ National Strategy](#) documents how Costa Rica has adopted legislation that is both advanced and fully compatible with REDD+ issues, such as Organic Law on the Environment 7554, Forestry Law 7575 of 1996 (creating the PES, the instrument that forms the inspiration behind the national efforts made to develop REDD+ within the framework of CMNUCC), the Biodiversity Law 7788 of 1998, and the law relating to the creation of the National Parks Service and the Wildlife Department, which later became the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) by means of the aforementioned Law 7788.

Different policy instruments are also analysed, such as the Alberto Cañas Escalante 2015–2018 National Development Plan, the 2011–2020 National Forestry Development Plan, the National Strategy on Climate Change and the National Strategy on Biodiversity, which shows how consistent national policy is with REDD+ objectives.

Governance

As a mechanism of organisation and governance on matters of REDD+, the State of Costa Rica introduced into the national legal framework [Executive Decree 37352-MINAET](#), as published in official gazette La Gaceta, issue 220, on 14 November 2012. This decree defined the organisational structure and functions for the REDD+ Executive Committee and the REDD+ Executive Secretariat. Also, Article 7 defines that the public institutions are the involved parties that are to assign the

contact person for this project, leading to the establishment of an Inter-institutional Commission. To establish REDD+ governance, an attempt was made to make use of the existing institutional structure, supported by an Executive Committee and an Inter-institutional Commission.

There are bodies for decision making that is representative, participatory and informed with regard to the Relevant Stakeholders. To these ends, a REDD+ Executive Committee was formed¹⁰, as an entity to draw together the main sectors involved, or Relevant Stakeholders, and as a body to advise and coordinate with FONAFIFO and the REDD+ Secretariat. Selecting the members of the Executive Committee consisted of a self-selection process, in which the main groups used a participatory process to choose their representatives.

The Inter-institutional Commission and the Technical Sessions are spaces for coordination between State institutions, which can sign up depending on where their interest lies for REDD+. The current focus is aimed at ensuring the technical operation at national and State levels and at presenting a platform for inserting local or sector-based technical matters (e.g. indigenous community monitoring, remote sensors, etc.).

The Executive Secretariat has been operational since April 2013, with technical, social and communication specialists. It is led by the REDD+ focal point and is hosted at FONAFIFO.

Benefit Distribution Mechanism

Without there being a formal definition or a definition of consensus, the REDD+ Benefit Distribution Mechanism is a set of rules, procedures and mechanisms for applying for, administering and assigning the financial benefits resulting from reduced emissions or other types of recognition for results from implementing and complying with the objectives of the REDD+ National Strategy. Costa Rica has considerable experience in benefit distribution mechanisms for the forestry sector by means of the Payment for Ecosystem Services programme, and the legal framework has been revised, under which a nationwide mechanism can be defined for distributing financial benefits resulting from REDD+.

The proposed [Benefit Distribution Mechanism for REDD+](#) presents an analysis of:

- a) Organic Law on the Environment:
- b) Forestry Law:
- c) Forestry Law Regulation:
- d) Decree creating the Office for Joint Implementation (OCIC):
- e) Decree creating the “Specific national fund for the conservation and development of greenhouse gas deposits and sumps” (No. 25067, dated 21-03-96)
- f) MINAE Organic Regulation.
- g) Ruling on Regulations and Operations of the Domestic Carbon Market (Decree 37926-MINAE)

¹⁰ Executive decree 37352-MINAET validates the structures of REDD+ governance and its functions. Currently, the said decree is being reviewed, given the progress in the readiness process, and the need has been identified in the REDD+ Secretariat technical team to order roles, delve further into the institutional agreements reached, lay the foundations for the benefit distribution mechanism, etc., so that the country is more adequately prepared for the implementation stage.

It also presents the steps to be taken to complete and formalise the mechanism:

- a) Identifying legal and institutional gaps or overlaps.
- b) Political agreement to define the duties and responsibilities of public stakeholders with regard to institutional agreements to clarify the process of applying for and administering resources from reduced emissions brought about by the REDD+ Strategy.
- c) Dialogue with Relevant Stakeholders
- d) Issue of Executive Decree.

The document also suggests features that are being subjected to approval by the appropriate national authorities.

Register

As regards the national emission reduction register, this forms part of the country's carbon neutral programme, as REDD+ and the forestry sector are part of the country's programme led by the Climate Change Division. For the purposes of the current REDD+ implementation, there is a working register at FONAFIFO for PES; however, it does not include forestry production activities outside the PES programme. With the new Climate Change Division register to be developed in 2015, this limitation at a national level is expected to be overcome. The carbon-neutral register is inter-sectorial, and REDD+ forms only one part of it, so funds need to be merged between various programmes of the World Bank (FCPF and RMP) and other aid providers.

Subcomponent 2d: Social and environmental strategic assessment

Social and Environmental Impacts and the MGAS

The Social and Environmental Strategic Assessment (SESA) is an analytical methodology which includes a process of participation and which supports the preparation stage and contributes to the design of the REDD+ National Strategy from the key stakeholders' point of view. It also seeks to integrate social and environmental considerations during the process of designing the REDD+ Strategy, and its main product is the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), which will guide the REDD+ implementation stage in terms of effective management of social and environmental risks and impacts.

The national SESA workshop held in 2011 included broad participation from the stakeholders. The strategic options proposed in the R-PP were discussed in the workshop. Risks were identified and prioritised following an exhaustive analysis of the options. The pre-consultation SESA¹¹, carried out in late 2014, looked at these issues again, evaluated the advance in technical studies as a result of the risks identified in the 2011 SESA workshop and opened up new areas of discussion. The [Social](#)

¹¹ The aim of the SESA process is to identify and integrate into the REDD+ design the risks and benefits in the environmental, social, legal and political spheres that are directly involved in and relevant to developing the REDD+ National Strategy.

[and Environmental Strategic Assessment](#) document presents the results of these meetings and workshops.

In parallel with the SESA (late 2014 and early 2015), and as a complementary instrument, the [Social and Environmental Management Framework](#) (MGAS) was carried out, the document from which is linked to this report. The Framework identifies the most relevant social and environmental impacts and draws up plans for safeguarding and monitoring actions and mechanisms for resolving or mitigating adverse impacts; it also assigns responsibilities that are specific to the appropriate entities depending on their legal competencies or identifies institutional gaps that need to be resolved.

The said document and the process of systematising social and environmental risks were key for designing the [REDD+ National Strategy](#) with regard to defining policies and actions, particularly those relating to environmental and social situations; to achieving coherence in terms of policy, legislation and good governance; to providing multiple other benefits to society; and to the actions taken being participatory and socially accepted.

Safeguard Information System

Through the process of implementing safeguard plans and monitoring the implementation of the REDD+ National Strategy, the MGAS will generate valuable information on indicators relating to the matter of safeguards and to positive and negative impacts; this information will serve to: i) take any corrective measures, if needed; ii) inform Relevant Stakeholders on the safeguard process and compliance; and iii) provide information for the Safeguard Information System (SIS).

Accordingly, Relevant Stakeholder self-assessment and the dialogue process based on the participatory and methodical analysis of responsibilities and the level of involvement and contribution of each one in the implementation of the REDD+ National Strategy provides the MGAS with important information on safeguard compliance, on the state of progress of the strategy and on the weaknesses and opportunities to continue to improve in terms of each of the Relevant Stakeholders, which will enable the MGAS to triangulate the information obtained from the monitoring process and improve the management of any possible adverse impacts.

Furthermore, in relation to social and environmental impacts, Costa Rica is working on an information system on social and environmental safeguards. The purpose is to create capacities to process information on developing MGAS safeguard plans, and it serves to give feedback on social and environmental dimensions of public policies on matters regarding the management and conservation of natural resources, particularly those resulting from implementing the National Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

Costa Rica is in the process of consolidating an official environmental information system, known as "SINIA" (National Environmental Information System), which fills a gap that has been known to exist for many years. This system will be administered by the National Geoenvironmental Information Centre (CENIGA), which is responsible for, among other things, coordinating the country's entities with appropriate competencies and complying with technical standards relating to the generation of official information. The Safeguard Information System (SIS) will then be incorporated into the SINIA platform. The link for the SIS is as follows: <http://www.sinac.go.cr/ceniga/?q=content/sistema-de-informaci%C3%B3n-para-las-salvaguardas-de-redd-sis>, and there is a proposal document for the [Safeguard Information System Design](#).

Component 3: Forest Reference Emission Level / Forest Reference Level

Costa Rica defined its reference level for REDD+ as the historic average of net annual emissions for the forestry sector from the 1997–2010 period. The reference level includes greenhouse gas emissions due to deforestation and degradation, as well as CO₂ absorptions due to regeneration and forest growth and due to the growth of forest plantations. The reference level also includes carbon stock conservation and is defined as the forest cover that was present in 1987 and that remained standing in 2010. The reference level is defined in tons of equivalent CO₂ per year, as well as carbon stock conservation, which is expressed in tons of equivalent CO₂ for the 1987–2010 period.

For the reference level, Costa Rica conducted an analysis of land use change for the 1987–2010 period, with the aim of improving consistency, transparency and accuracy of activity data. The analysis included seven points in time: 1987, 1992, 1997, 2001, 2008, 2011 and 2013. This is an unprecedented level of analysis in the country, which covers the entirety of the national territory (with the exception of the Isla del Coco in the Pacific Ocean). This analysis was based on LANDSAT images, with a resolution of 30 m, and uses a level of stratification that is consistent with the national greenhouse gases inventory. How the images were processed and categorised, and how the change was analysed, is described in the [ERPD](#) report.

The reference level also uses the information produced by the national forestry inventory, another unprecedented instrument. The forestry inventory covers all kinds of forests in the country and provides information on above-ground biomass, organic mulch, dead wood and carbon in soils. The information on carbon stocks in forests from the forest inventory is complemented by emission factors based on scientific literature produced at a national level, as well as default IPCC factors, such as the carbon fraction. The reference level includes CO₂ and non-CO₂ emissions based on the burning of biomass in forest fires.

The reference level is consistent with the national inventory of gases, as the data from the former were used to recalculate for the agriculture, forests and other land uses (AFOLU) sector. This implies that the activity data and emission factors are identical in both and that the methods are consistent and adhere to the IPCC as per its directives from 2006. This process was facilitated, as the land use change analysis used a stratification that was consistent with IPCC land use categories.

The reference level will be reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change before December 2015, with the aim of entering the Secretariat review period, which begins in March 2016. Furthermore, the national inventory of greenhouse gases was updated for the Biannual Update Report (BUR), and in the said update the AFOLU sector was recalculated with the aim of making the reference level consistent with the reports submitted to the Convention.

The reference level will be validated over the 2010–2020 period, during which time a payment for results agreement is expected to be entered into with the Carbon Fund. After that date, the reference level will be recalculated to reflect the most recent national circumstances, with the aim

of establishing a base point for intended nationally determined contributions (INDC) for the forestry sector, as defined by Costa Rica.

The reference level was produced by FONAFIFO, with support from Carbon Decisions International, by means of a contract with the World Bank that was financed by the Carbon Fund to improve the Emissions Reduction Program Idea Note (ER-PIN). The methods and data used are in the reference level report included in the [ERPD](#), and are also documented in the national greenhouse gases inventory update due to be reported in Costa Rica's first BUR.

During the development of the reference level, and the analysis of land use change, more than ten governmental and academic institutions took part in the review and feedback process. The institutions provided the REDD+ Secretariat with comments and opinions on the drafts and final versions of the technical reports, which were considered and incorporated as appropriate. There is documentation on how these views were incorporated into the final documents.

Component 4: Forest monitoring systems and information about safeguards

Subcomponent 4a: Forest monitoring system

The forest monitoring system, which will be useful for measuring and reporting on REDD+ activities, is in the design process and is expected to be completed in October 2015. The system is designed to meet the requirements of national and international reporting. For example, at a national level, the system has to monitor progress on compliance with the Forestry Law and the National Forestry Development Plan currently in force. Furthermore, the system has to provide information on the country's progress in complying with the UN Conventions on Biodiversity and Climate Change in relation to the forestry sector, and on reporting requirements for the Regional Strategy Programme for Managing Forest Ecosystems, among others. As well as meeting the requirements of national and international reports, the design of the system is aimed at identifying existing national capacities for monitoring forest ecosystems. These capacities are to be found in government and in the academic community, so the system will define appropriate institutional agreements to build on the existing systems and make the best use of available capacities.

The monitoring system takes the systems and subsystems already in operation into account. These include, for example, the information on the forestry management units and the system on forest use, both of which form part of the SINAC. Another example is the monitoring of the FONAFIFO Payment for the Ecosystem Services programme. In terms of focus and scale, the monitoring system will apply to the whole of the national territory, but it will have provisions for initiatives and actions on a local scale. What is more, the monitoring system will incorporate monitoring of all initiatives at a national level regarding land use change, reduced emissions from mitigation actions and the most important elements of forestry resource assessment and monitoring. This implies that the monitoring system will include actions within the framework of the Domestic Carbon Market, as well as agricultural Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and REDD+.

Other instruments have also now been developed that are key for the country's monitoring. These include, for example, the national forestry inventory and the land use change estimation protocol. There is also a compilation of allometric equations by the FAO-CATIE and studies funded by the FCPF on prior estimations of biomass by forest types and carbon deposit. All these elements form part of the broadest system of monitoring expected for the country.

Specifically, and based on the reference level and the national greenhouse gases inventory, there are clear delineations for REDD+ monitoring. Over the 2010–2020 period, the monitoring will use the same methods that were used for both the reference level and for the greenhouse gas emissions inventory. Monitoring will take place on a biannual basis in terms of activity data, and emission factors will be updated as far as is possible and in subsequent forestry seasons. The academic community and other private organisations are also working on compiling historic permanent monitoring data to make it accessible.

Although the institutional agreements have not been formalised as yet, part of the monitoring for REDD+ was put into effect by means of the national forestry inventory of 2012–2013 and the map for 2013. Both sources of information are useful for informing the first monitoring event for the 2010–2020 period and are consistent with the reference level and national greenhouse gases inventory.

Subcomponent 4b: Information on multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

Identifying priorities

The process of systematising social and environmental risks has been commented on in general terms above. This section explains how priority aspects not related to carbon and questions on social matters and safeguards for REDD+ preparations have been dealt with, depending on the sector.

For Indigenous Peoples, this has been achieved through workshops and agreements from most of the participating territories, where indigenous representatives defined the most relevant issues and the procedures for organising and dealing with the said urgent problems.

For the peasant community, it has been achieved through participatory workshops for various REDD+ activities, including those relating to SESA 2011, workshops for the REDD+ information process, and SESA 2014 and MGAS 2014 workshops, in which participants established the main risks, mitigation actions and other priority issues to be covered in the REDD+ programmes and policies. The extensive list of elements mentioned by the participants was then reduced to summary form.

However, from the analysis carried out, actions are recommended to strengthen capacities for different Relevant Stakeholders.

Additionally, the government has prioritised policy elements that are consistent and complementary and that strengthen the REDD objectives: alleviating poverty, policies relating to the natural heritage of the state, strategy and plan of action regarding climate change – all aimed at seeking benefits beyond carbon. The priority focus of PES is, from the outset, one of the consistent elements of policy throughout the whole process, which in addition to carbon benefits has environmental and social objectives (Forestry Law).

Exchange of Information

The regular FONAFIFO and SINAC reports, including their annual reports, contain references to the benefits beyond the carbon generated by forest conservation and improved carbon stocks. Some specific studies relating to the impact of biodiversity conservation policies, water resources and ecotourism are also carried out in the country, in many cases by independent researchers or academic bodies. IPBES, WAVES and other global initiatives have been an important point of reference for the country.

MGAS presents a system of tracking, monitoring and assessment by applying an information-gathering instrument applied in the field for actions and tasks implemented by the REDD+ National Strategy, which will be followed up during the time of its implementation. With MGAS, a report will be produced every six months with the results of the impacts on aspects not related to carbon and safeguards, and upon completion of the execution of the REDD+ National Strategy will provide information on this issue for the final report. Information will be presented on whatever indicators may be necessary for the SIS¹² administered by CENIGA, who will make it available for the Relevant Stakeholders and any other social sector involved.

Mechanisms and capacities for non-carbon and safeguard issues

The MGAS analysis matrix specifies tasks for mitigating the risks and the needs and/or specific tasks by sector and institution. This work is being completed and improved by the different institutions involved in the policy actions. The process began on Tuesday 20 May with a workshop attended by the institutions involved and by representatives from the Ministry of Finance to work on the costing based on the actions to be taken.

The specific obligations resulting from the policy actions for dealing with risks will include identifying the people responsible, activities and tasks, as well as the provisions and associated costs, with a considerable level of detail. Work is focussing on achieving additional political direction or institutional agreements to ensure the full implementation of EN-REDD, which has the highest level of political backing, as it forms part of the National Development Plan and will also have a managerial monitoring mechanism within the SPESA framework.

MGAS is expected to include an information management plan which, through the Safeguard Information System will use and, in a culturally appropriate way, disseminate information relating to the effect that the policies, actions and tasks of the REDD+ National Strategy will have and to the application of applicable safeguards from the World Bank, the Cancún safeguards and those of the FCPF, particularly in the variables of means of rural subsistence, biodiversity conservation, the

¹² A Safeguard Information System has been developed, as described in subcomponent 2d. It states that it will be housed in an official environmental information system, known as "SINIA" (National Environmental Information System). This system is administered by the National Geoenvironmental Information Centre (CENIGA), which is responsible for, among other things, coordinating the country's entities with appropriate competencies and complying with technical standards relating to the generation of official information. The link for the SIS is as follows: <http://www.sinac.go.cr/ceniga/?q=content/sistema-de-informaci%C3%B3n-para-las-salvaguardas-de-redd-sis>. The document in its latest proposed version is the Safeguard Information System Design.

provision of ecosystems services, and key management factors that are directly pertinent to REDD+ implementation and the application of safeguards.

For the procedure to follow, the MGAS stipulates that in the specific case of the Involuntary Resettlement Framework and process (and, if applicable, the Abbreviated Involuntary Resettlement Plan, the Procedural Rules for Restricting Resources and the Protocol for Granting Land), information will be provided on the acquisition of land, restricting resources and possible scenarios of granted land as an effect of the implementation of REDD+ National Strategy actions on affected people in the areas of intervention, for which the proposal will be explained to them using culturally adapted methods and instruments, the potential impacts and their legal rights will be explained to them, their view will be listened to and their requests will be incorporated as far as is reasonably possible and pursuant to national and international legislation.

In the case of the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework, following up on MGAS for indigenous monitoring and assessment during the implementation stage of REDD+ National Strategy actions strengthens the structures of the indigenous governments, which should be the first to promote control of the areas considered in the REDD+ National Strategy, in the first instance, takes the traditional norms of custom established for that purpose by each Indigenous People into account, and an audit will be carried out by FONAFIFO to ensure that the World Bank's operating policies and the legislation in force are being properly applied. A proposal is made to use far-reaching participation to draw up the environmental and cultural criteria and indicators established by communities to ensure that the traditional use and management of natural resources are protected in accordance with the agreements reached with communities and in compliance with legal regulations. This new control scheme is managed so it can be carried out at the community level by means of the Dualgö Kimá (resource guard), so that the objectives of the REDD+ National Strategy can be achieved and to protect the biodiversity and habitats of indigenous territories.

Other issues: Timeline, budget, monitoring and assessment

Costa Rica is also working on the design of costings for the Strategy that will eventually allow budgets to be produced and the most effective policies to be tracked and monitored more effectively.

The cost of the Emissions Reduction Programme and the Funding Strategy are based on the REDD+ Strategy, and it is a process that is divided into two phases. The first phase consists of the cost of or budget for the seven policies (previously known as Strategic Actions) and their main actions, which are included in the REDD+ Strategy. Within this group of policies, those linked to the Emissions Reduction Programme were chosen to draw up the budget. This process first involves the public institutions that have a responsibility to implement the REDD+ Strategy, namely the Ministry of the Environment (MINAE) and its adherent bodies, such as the National Meteorological Institute, SINAC, FONAFIFO and the Ministry of Agriculture. Also involved is the Ministry of Finance, which is reconsidering the traditional ways of drawing up budgets for initiatives such as REDD+, the Biodiversity Funding Strategy (BIOFIN), and the national accounts of natural capital (Green Accounts) as part of their contribution to what is called the transition to a Green Economy. Each one

of these institutions has specific responsibilities in drawing up the budget and will be assisted by the managerial team at the Secretariat and the cooperating bodies accompanying the process.

A [Funding Programme Technical Note](#) is drawn up, as the result of the analysis of the national methodological approaches and of the work by specialist agencies (UN-REDD+, Terra Global Capital), the aim of which is to create this budget and the costs associated with the Emissions Reduction Programme.

The basis of the second phase is to draw up budgets and quantify needs to identify national funding sources, which include State budgets, tax incentives and alternative sources, as well as private sources, such as from the internal carbon market. International funding sources may be bilateral or multilateral, including the Green Climate Fund.

This process is part of the financial architecture on the climate that is being developed by the country in light of demands on resources that are being faced by a diverse range of initiatives to mitigate and adapt climate change, in view of the different international commitments, particular the FCPF and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Procedure and methodology for participatory self-assessment

In May 2015, the self-assessment process of Relevant Stakeholders (PIRs) began on the REDD+ Strategy preparation stage. As the process is new, and due to the characteristics of each of the sectors involved, it took a period of three months. It started with the design of the methodology, and from this the preparation and logistics of the technical workshops.

The "Guide to the Assessment Framework for Preparing the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)", published in June 2013, was considered as reference material for developing the self-assessment process. As suggested in the Guide to the Assessment Framework, Conservation International, representing the REDD+ Focal Point of the Costa Rican government, reviewed the Framework for Assessment and Forest Management Tracking of the Forests Programme, Social and Environmental Standards on REDD+ of CCBA/CARE International, Assessments of Participatory Management of UN-REDD, and other assessment frameworks such as those mentioned in Annex I of the note by the Fund Management Team 2012-10, to increase the concept about the process.

Readiness self-assessment and assessment offers a common framework for measuring the country's relative progress in the basic preparatory activities. The REDD+ Strategy self-assessment is based on the proposed elements from the nine subcomponents dealt with above.

The overall objective of the self-assessments is to encourage a dialogue from the participatory and methodical analysis with the different Relevant Stakeholders, on responsibilities, level of involvement and the contribution each makes to the preparation phase of the Costa Rica REDD+ Strategy. This process enabled participants to assess the state of progress of the core activities until the completion of the preparatory phase of the Costa Rica REDD+ Strategy. At the same time, weaknesses and other opportunities for further improvement were observed from the perspective of each Relevant Stakeholder. The self-assessment process also offered an opportunity to demonstrate the commitment of the Relevant Stakeholders to the REDD+ activities.

The REDD+ Technical Secretariat asked the "Widening Informed Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+" (WISE REDD+ Costa Rica) to take charge of organising, facilitating and promoting the self-assessment process for Relevant Stakeholders, with a view to ensuring transparency in the process by having it conducted by an organisation that was not directly involved.

This chapter develops the methodology that guided the self-assessment process as indicated.

Background

Costa Rica has been a proactive stakeholder in international negotiations on REDD+ at the UNFCCC since its beginnings in 2005. It was also among the first countries to present its Readiness Proposal (R-PP) to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in 2010, and in 2012 the Grant Agreement was signed between FONAFIFO and the FCPF to fund the process of preparing for REDD+. One element relating to this process consists of the "Self-assessment of the Participation of Relevant

Stakeholders in the REDD+ Strategy”, which should be developed as part of the “Readiness Package” (R-Package).

In compliance with Executive Decree 37352 and the national SESA workshop held in May 2011, the Relevant Stakeholders were defined for the REDD+ Strategy readiness process. These sectors are: Indigenous Peoples, small and medium agricultural producers, logging companies, the academic community and the government.

Costa Rica is currently in the final stage of developing the readiness package, which will assess the country’s performance in its position of REDD+ readiness. This package (which consists of the Strategy preparation, the Implementation Framework, the reference level, the forest monitoring system and the plan for the safeguard information system) should include a visual summary of the overall achievements of each subcomponent, using progress indicators as in the following rating scale:

- **GREEN = considerable progress**
- **YELLOW = good progress but more development needed**
- **ORANGE = more development needed**
- **RED = shows no or very little progress**

This assessment is part of a participatory and inclusive report which should reflect the perspectives and experiences of the participants in the preparation process.

This process of self-assessment will be participatory, coordinated by the REDD+ Executive Secretariat, facilitated by the WISE-REDD+ project as a partner of the REDD+ Strategy, and then submitted for consideration/validation by the REDD+ Executive Committee.

Communication and participatory construction of the methodology

The self-assessment methodology will be reported first to the Relevant Stakeholders depending on the regular channels of communication that have been used between the stakeholders and the government of Costa Rica, by means of FONAFIFO and the REDD+ Executive Secretariat, during the process of preparing for REDD+. The Indigenous Peoples will be informed of the methodology in a workshop, with participation from the leaders of Indigenous Peoples’ development associations, in order to ensure the right focus on the cultural characteristics of the Indigenous Peoples. For the small producers, the academic community, logging companies and the government, the methodology will be sent by email and will also be made available via an online tool (<http://www.reddcr.go.cr/centrodedocumentacion>), with the aim of obtaining the pertinent feedback with regard to the methodology, as well as in terms of assessing the criteria, which will be publicly available on the strategy website (<http://www.reddcr.go.cr/>) for improved access by the Relevant Stakeholders.

The Relevant Stakeholder self-assessment process was coordinated by the REDD+ Technical Secretariat and Conservation International, by means of the WISE REDD+ Costa Rica project. Organisation and promotion were by the Secretariat, as was the design of the first version of the methodology. Conservation International (CI) was in charge of the process of facilitating workshops and then adapting the methodology used for each of the Relevant Stakeholders, as a product of assessing the specific condition of the Relevant Stakeholders.

Defining the methodology for self-assessment

Once the feedback on the methodology had been obtained from the Relevant Stakeholders, the self-assessment was developed through workshops/meetings, which had the format that had been developed and implemented with each group throughout the preparation process. An invitation was sent to the Focal Point of each of the Relevant Stakeholders, and people who had maintained a link of some kind throughout the Strategy preparation stage were asked to take part. However, on occasion, people took part who were not greatly involved in the REDD+ preparation stage, which is part of the democratic, open and participatory announcement process used, where the main criteria are legitimacy and autonomy of representation.

A five-hour workshop was initially considered; however, due to the characteristics of the different Relevant Stakeholders, on occasion two workshops had to be held, for a total of ten hours. An initial commissioning workshop to find out the methodology and examine the instrument in depth with the components, subcomponents, criteria and diagnostic questions and to assess potential adjustments to the methodology. A second workshop where the results were analysed and agreement reached, to get the process indicators (rating by colours) by subcomponent. A performance indicator was assigned for each subcomponent. At the end of this chapter there is a timeline showing the meetings and workshops held.

The criteria used for the Relevant Stakeholders' self-assessment are based on the national legal framework of governance and competencies of the various public institutions, and on the guiding criteria incorporated into the Readiness Package Assessment Framework, approved by the FCPF Participants' Committee (also available at <http://www.reddcr.go.cr/centrodedocumentacion>).

The REDD+ Technical Secretariat was in charge of the invitations and promoting the event for each Relevant Stakeholder, as well as designing the methodology. It was also in charge of making the documentation generated during the preparation phase available to the public at the address <http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion>.

A presentation was devised on the preparation stage of the REDD+ National Strategy, which was used as a point of reference for the participants with regard to the most significant advances made in the activities that each of the Relevant Stakeholders had taken part in throughout the REDD+ Strategy preparation stage, and which is available at <http://reddcr.go.cr/es/centro-de-documentacion/paquete-de-preparacion-2015>.

The call for each Relevant Stakeholder was examined by the Secretariat, made on the basis of a representative selection of people who, due to their specific interest in the sector, have been involved during the preparation phase of the Strategy. An invitation was sent to the Focal Point of each of the Relevant Stakeholders, which mentioned participation to the people who have maintained a link throughout the preparation phase of the Strategy, some of them identified by the processes or mechanisms that were created or improved with SESA. However, on some occasions, people who were not very involved in the preparation phase of REDD+ participated; this is due to the democratic, open and participatory process of the call used, where the fundamental criterion is the legitimacy and autonomy of representation.

The guide approved by the FCPF consists of an assessment framework, which has 4 components, 9 subcomponents, 34 self-assessment criteria and 58 diagnostic questions. General guidelines are

provided to be taken into account when dealing with the respective criteria. In a prior process, supporting information is selected that could be useful so that the different Relevant Stakeholders can provide feedback on their assessment, including systematised, recently prepared documentation.

As stated previously, each workshop, as well as the consultation process in general, was driven by an independent facilitator that is not answerable to the directives of the REDD+ Executive Secretariat. Conservation International was chosen for this role, given the organisation's necessary skills to lead a productive and participatory process with the Relevant Stakeholders. Their experience in the sector and the level of knowledge of local issues were highly valued. Furthermore, this organisation has a recognised trajectory and credibility among the Relevant Stakeholders, so an impartial posture was maintained that would guarantee transparency in the process, which mainly involves not becoming involved in the underlying aspects, but rather only in the methodology, for the active participation of the representatives from the Relevant Stakeholders involved.

The announcement for the Relevant Stakeholders was made by the Secretariat and was based on a representative selection of people who, due to sector interests, have been actively involved during the Strategy preparation stage, as part of the "Participation and Consultation Plan". Some of them were identified by means of the processes or mechanisms that were created or improved upon during the preparation stage, particularly in the case of Indigenous Peoples and small agroforestry producers and peasants; in other cases it was through the existing organisations in line with the legal and institutional framework in force.

Reports for the meetings and focus groups and feedback obtained using the tool available on the website were prepared by the independent facilitator as an element of transparency. The facilitator has a main role of encouraging participants to get involved in analysing and weighing the criteria from a purely pedagogical point of view, but should not prompt for answers or provide substantive information on the issues under discussion, to ensure the process is conducted in a neutral manner.

Each workshop consisted of the following stages:

- a. Before the workshop, the methodology was forwarded to the Relevant Stakeholders to get their feedback. All suggestions were considered by the Executive Secretariat and case adjustments made, where appropriate.
- b. The materials resulting from the various processes and relevant activities are available on the REDD+ website for access by any Relevant Stakeholder.
- c. During the workshop, a comprehensive presentation is made by the Executive Secretariat, which goes over the most relevant activities so as to deal with the diverse range of criteria that have been carried out with each sector during REDD+ preparation. A summary is also presented of issues pending development for each of the subcomponents and their current status.
- d. The REDD+ Executive Secretariat representative that presents the information at the beginning of the session, will be available for the duration of the session to deal with any queries or additional clarification that may be required by Relevant Stakeholders on the substantive information presented, and is available for rating the criteria, but would not be able to influence the rating analysis process by the Relevant Stakeholders.

- e. An explanation of the methodology to be used by the independent facilitator¹³.
- f. A summary has been prepared for each component according to the information in the "Guide to the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework" to be provided to participants as the basis for their group work. As a measure for facilitating the diagnostic by subcomponent, a matrix was created in Microsoft Excel, which included each of the guiding questions per subcomponent¹⁴. With all these items, each group was asked to dedicate itself to assessing each subcomponent depending on its perspective and degree of knowledge.
- g. For the second part of the group work, each group was provided with another matrix in Microsoft Excel, which outlined the components, subcomponents, criteria and aspects to consider for each subcomponent. In this way, a visual summary of the overall achievements by subcomponent was obtained in groups as a result (product), using progress indicators. This matrix had a subjective scale, as the rating for each subcomponent was represented by a colour, as per the colours described previously.
- h. A plenary session was held, in which: i) the results were agreed to produce a single visual summary for each sector. ii) the capacity for managing, conducting and planning specific REDD+ actions by the Technical Secretariat was discussed, as well as the involvement and participation of each one of the Relevant Stakeholders throughout the REDD+ preparation stage. iii) by brainstorming, information was obtained on significant achievements and areas that need additional development with regard to the 34 assessment criteria, and actions that deal with these areas where further work is needed.

Once all the workshops/meetings/focus groups have been held with the Relevant Stakeholders, the results will be systematised in line with the traffic light colours and, as far as is possible and methodologically appropriate, the independent facilitator will prepare a report of the various meetings, which will also contain a consolidated table of colours for the components, which will be submitted for presentation during an extraordinary session of the Executive Committee. The report includes a) a description of the process, the discussions and the results of the workshops or meetings; b) the assessment results: progress indicators (rating by colours) of the nine subcomponents, significant achievements and areas that need additional development with regard to the 34 assessment criteria; and c) actions that could tackle these areas where further work is needed. For the areas where it was determined that further work is needed, the REDD+ Technical Secretariat asked the CI project to provide support in creating a Monitoring Plan, which should serve to update the MGAS in the coming months, as a measure for improving the involvement of Relevant Stakeholders in subsequent actions of the REDD+ Strategy, conceived as an ongoing process.

The results of this process will be sent to all the participants by email as part of the disclosure. This will be done once the CI technical team has made all the corrections, clarifications and suggestions to the process report. They will also be released publicly on the website <http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion>. Cultural mediators and

¹³ It is important to stress that all the criteria established in this document should be explained in a language that is understandable for the people attending the workshop, as well as culturally appropriate.

¹⁴ In particular, in the case of indigenous territories, on 27 March 2015 a workshop was held to submit a draft of the methodology that was submitted for discussion. The inputs of this workshop were to adapt the fundamental methodological approach towards this sector in terms of the use of language and the interpretation of concepts and key words.

representatives of small and medium-sized producers will coordinate to amend the report in a culturally appropriate way for indigenous territories and rural communities and for its subsequent publication.

Considerations for components 3 and 4

Because of the technical complexity of components 3 and 4, the more in-depth assessment will be carried out at the REDD+ technical session. This session is made up of 18 state institutions.

The results of these assessments will be consolidated and submitted for consideration or validation by the REDD+ Executive Committee, as described previously, and the final results will be sent to the Relevant Stakeholders and released on the Strategy website.

The following table shows the specific minimum sections that each Relevant Stakeholder should tackle, although, as stated previously, some Relevant Stakeholders may decide to assess all criteria.

Summary Table for Components, Subcomponents, Assessment Criteria, Guiding Questions and Suggested Relevant Stakeholders to be consulted for each criteria.

This table is aimed at presenting, in condensed form, the central elements of the consultations according to the criteria established by the FCPF, for each component and subcomponent, the guiding questions and the Relevant Stakeholders identified in principle so that they can answer them, although some Relevant Stakeholders can answer all the questions in their entirety if they feel it appropriate.

Component	Subcomponent	Criterion	Guideline Question	Relevant Stakeholder
1 Readiness organisation and consultation	1a National Management Mechanisms for the REDD+ Programme	1. Accountability and transparency	1. How are the national institutions of REDD+ and the management mechanisms they operate showing themselves to be open in terms of accountability and transparency?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers, logging companies
		2. Operating mandate and budget	2. How do the national institutions of REDD+ show that they are operating within the framework of mandates that are mutually strengthened and with adequate, foreseeable and sustainable budgets?	Government
		3. Multi-sector coordination mechanism and inter-sector collaboration	3. How are the national institutions of REDD+ and the management mechanisms that are coordinated by REDD+ activities ensuring that they are integrating with and influencing the general frameworks of national or sector-based policies (e.g. agriculture, environment, natural resources management, infrastructure development and land use planning)?	Government
		4. Technical supervision capacity	4. With what level of efficacy and efficiency are the national institutions of REDD+ and the management mechanisms directing and supervising multi-sector readiness activities, such as regular supervision of technical preparations?	Academy
		5. Fund management capacity	5. How are the institutions and mechanisms showing that they are conducting effective, efficient and transparent management, which includes co-ordinating with activities funded by other associates for development?	all
		6. Mechanism for information exchange and claim compensation	6. What evidence is there to show that the mechanism is operating at a national, subnational and local level, that it is transparent and impartial, has a clearly defined mandate and appropriate experience and resources?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
	1b Consultation, participation and social dissemination	7. Participation and involvement of main relevant stakeholders	7. How is the full and effective participation of the main relevant stakeholders shown through institutional mechanisms (which includes additional efforts to involve marginal groups, such as women, young people, Indigenous Peoples and local communities living off the forest)?	All
		8. Consultation processes	8.1 What evidence is there that the consultation processes at national and local levels are clear, inclusive and transparent and facilitate prompt access to information in a culturally appropriate way?	Indigenous Peoples
			8.2 What evidence is there that the institutions and decision-making processes of Indigenous Peoples are being used to improve the consultations and participation?	Indigenous Peoples
			8.3 What evidence is there that the consultation processes take the perspective of gender into account and are inclusive?	Indigenous Peoples
		9. Exchange of and access to information	9.1 How have the national institutions of REDD+ and the management systems shown a transparent, coherent, integral and prompt dissemination of information (in relation to all readiness activities, such as developing the REDD+ Strategy, the reference levels and the monitoring systems) in a culturally appropriate way	All
			9.2 What evidence is there that the relevant stakeholders can access information (e.g. in a format and language that they can understand) and receive it?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
		10. Release and public dissemination of consultation results	10. How are the results of the consultations integrated (incorporated, publicly disseminated and distributed) into the systems of management, the development of the strategy and the technical activities relating to the development of the reference levels and the monitoring and information systems?	all
2 Preparing the REDD+ Strategy	2a . Assessment on the use of land, factors	11. Assessment and analysis	11. Does the summary of the work carried out during the formulation and preparation of the readiness proposal present an analysis of the recent historical trends in land use (including traditional uses), and an	Indigenous Peoples, small & med.

causing changes in land use, forestry law, policy and management		examination of the pertinent questions relating to possession and ownership of land, rights over natural resources, means of subsistence (including traditional and usual means), and questions relating to forestry legislation and to policies and management?	producers, academic community
	12. Establishing priorities regarding direct and indirect causal factors/barriers to increasing forest carbon stocks	12.1 How was the analysis used to classify the order of priority of the main direct and indirect causal factors that will be used when dealing with the programmes and policies included in the REDD+ Strategy? 12.2 Did the analysis take into account the main barriers to activities to increase forest carbon stocks (when appropriate) that the programmes and policies included in the REDD+ Strategy should tackle?	Government, small & med. producers
	13. Relationships between causal factors/barriers and REDD+ activities	13. What evidence shows that systematic connections were identified between the main causal factors of and/or barriers to the activities to increase forest carbon stocks (when appropriate) and REDD+ activities?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
	14. Action plans for dealing with rights to natural resources, land possession and management	14. Do the action plans to achieve progress in the short, medium and long terms within the work of dealing with the pertinent issues on land use, possession and ownership of land, rights over natural resources, means of subsistence and management describe additional means and identify the necessary resources in priority regions relating to specific REDD+ programmes?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
	15. Implications for laws and policies on forests	15. Does the assessment identify implications for the law and policies on forests and other pertinent long-term questions?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
	2b. REDD+ Strategy options	16. Presenting and establishing priorities for REDD+ strategy options	16. Were REDD+ strategies (their priority having been established based on an integral assessment of the direct and indirect causal factors of deforestation, barriers to activities to improve forests and/or the influence of other factors, when appropriate) selected by means of a transparent and participatory process?
17. Feasibility assessment		17. Were strategic REDD+ options examined and their priority determined based on their social and environmental feasibility, risks and opportunities, and on the analysis of costs and benefits?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers, logging companies
18. Implications of the strategy options on existing sector-specific policies		18.1 Have any significant incompatibilities been identified between the priority REDD+ strategy options and the policies or programmes in other sectors related to the forestry sector (e.g. transport, agriculture)?	Government
		18.2 Have a timeline and a process been agreed on to resolve incompatibilities and integrate REDD+ strategy options with the pertinent development policies?	
	18.3 Are more general objectives of development promoted, and do they have broad community support?		
2c. Implementation framework	19. Adopting and implementing legislation/regulations**	19. Have the laws and/or regulations relating to the REDD+ programmes and activities been adopted?	Government
	20. Directives for implementation	20. What evidence is there that the framework of implementation defines carbon rights, the mechanisms for the distribution of benefits, the types of REDD+ funding, the procedures for official authorisations (e.g. REDD+ pilots or projects) and mechanisms for lodging claims?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers, government

		21. Benefit distribution mechanism	21. What evidence is there to prove the transparency of the benefit distribution mechanisms?	All		
		22. National REDD+ register and activities of the REDD+ monitoring system	22. Is there a system or a record of georeferenced information on the REDD+ programme in operation that has all pertinent information (e.g. information on location, ownership, carbon accounting and financial flows for subnational and national REDD+ programmes and projects) and ensures public access to information about REDD+?	Government		
		2d. Environmental and social impacts	23. Analysis of issues relating to social and environmental safeguards	23. What evidence is there that matters relating to social and environmental safeguards corresponding to the national context have been identified/analysed, by means of pertinent studies or diagnoses and in consultation processes?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers	
			24. Design of the REDD+ Strategy with regard to impacts	24. How were the SESA results and the identified social and environmental impacts (both positive and negative) used to establish priorities and design the REDD+ strategy options?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers	
			25. Environmental and social management framework	25. What evidence is there of an MGAS and of how environmental and social risks are managed, as well as the possible impacts relating to REDD+ activities?	Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers	
3. Emission reference level / Reference level		26. Demonstration of the methodology	26.1 Is the reference level clearly documented and based on a focus of gradual improvement, when appropriate?	Government, academic community		
			26.2 Are future data needs and plans for their improvement identified?	Government, academic community		
		27. Use of historic data and data adjusted to national circumstances	27.1 Are historic data taken into account that are consistent with the national situation?	Government, academic community		
			27.2 Are historic data taken into account that are consistent with the national situation? In the case of adjustments, are they credible and defensible?	Government, academic community		
		28. Technical feasibility and attachment to COP decisions and IPCC directives	28. Technical feasibility and attachment to COP decisions and IPCC directives. Is the reference level transparent, complete, accurate and compatible with the COP guidelines and IPCC directives, allowing for data, methods and hypotheses to be assessed?	Government, academic community		
		29. Documentation for monitoring focus	29.1 Are there clear reasons for choosing the methodology and for the improvement plan over time?	Government, academic community		
			29.2 Has the focus been technically revised, is there national approval, and is it consistent with the international position?	Government, academic community		
			29.3 Have sources of uncertainty been identified?	Government, academic community		
		4. Forestry monitoring and safeguard information systems	4a National Forestry Monitoring System	30. Demonstration of early implementation of the system	30.1 What evidence is there that the system is capable of monitoring the specific activities prioritised in the REDD+ National Strategy?	Government, academic community
					30.2 How are leakages identified and assessed, and what initial results are there?	Government, academic community

			30.3 How are Relevant Stakeholders involved in the early development or implementation of the system, including verifying and compiling the information?	Government, academic community	
		31. Institutional mechanisms and capacities	31.1 Are the mandates clearly defined for forestry monitoring, such as the processing of satellite images, carbon inventories, and the exchange of information?	Government, academic community	
			31.2 Are data and monitoring results publicly shared, at least in an initial stage of operation?	Government, academic community	
			31.3 Has the need for resources and capacities been identified and estimated for operating the system?		
	4b Information system for multiple benefits, other impacts, management and safeguards	32. Identifying pertinent aspects not related to carbon, and social and environmental issues	32. How have priority aspects not related to carbon and questions on social matters and safeguards for REDD+ preparations been dealt with? Is any type of capacity development recommended regarding these aspects?		Indigenous Peoples, small & med. producers
		33. Follow-up, presenting reports and exchange of information*	33. What evidence is there that a transparent system is presented of regularly sharing data on aspects that are not related to carbon and safeguards and that are at least in an initial stage of operation?		Government
		34. Institutional mechanisms and capacities	34.1 Have the obligations been defined to carry out tasks to do with aspects not relating to carbon and safeguards?		Pueblos Indígenas, P y M productores
			34.2 Have the associated needs of resources, capacities, training, hardware and software, and the necessary budget been identified and estimated?		

Timeline of workshops held

On 5 June and 17 July, self-assessment workshops were held by the small and medium-sized agroforestry producers sector. They were attended by representatives of various organisations; they took place at the Federation of Social Organisations (FOS) and in the offices of Conservation International (CI), in San José, respectively.

On 6 July, the self-assessment workshop was carried out by the Costa Rican indigenous sector, with the participation of representatives of 17 indigenous territories; it was held at the Central American Institute for Social Studies (ICAES), located in San Isidro de Coronado. It should be noted that prior to the self-assessment workshop, a workshop was held to present the methodology, and to put it to discussion, for adaptation by the indigenous sector on 27 March 2015. The goal was to familiarise the indigenous representatives with the instrument to be used in the self-assessment, and to take their suggestions with regard to the use of language and the interpretation of concepts and key words present in the instrument, upon which adjustments were made to adapt it.

On 8 July, the self-assessment workshop for the private forest production sector (the timber industry), was held with representation from the Costa Rican College of Agricultural Engineers (CIAgro), the Costa Rican Forestry Chamber (CCF) and the National Forestry Office (ONF); it took place at the Radisson Hotel in San José.

On 24 July, the self-assessment workshop was held for academia, which took place at the facilities of the National Fund for Forest Financing (FONAFIFO), Moravia.

On 18 August, there was a self-assessment workshop for the preparation phase of the REDD+ Strategy by the government sector. It was carried out at the Coordinating Association of Indigenous and Community Agroforestry in Central America (ACICAFOC).

The [Relevant Stakeholders' Self-Assessment Process Report](#) of the independent facilitator has enclosed the workshop agendas and lists of participants. Also enclosed are photographs of the events and the tables that were used to produce the systematisation by colours and the assessment summary.

Report on the participatory self-assessment results

The REDD+ Technical Secretariat, taking as a starting point the "Guide to the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework", requests the participation of an independent body to facilitate the self-assessment process. In addition, it considered that the development of the process requires an adequate level of management autonomy. The support and commitment of a facilitator should be ensured prior to starting the process and be linked not only to the legitimacy of possible conclusions but also to actions to improve that will need to be developed as a result. The Widening Informed Stakeholder Engagement for REDD+ (WISE REDD+) in Costa Rica became involved in this way. This project is carried out by the Centre for Peace and the Environment of Conservation International. Coordination between the REDD+ Technical Secretariat and CI began in March 2015 to develop the self-assessment process of the Relevant Stakeholders.

The facilitation of the self-assessment process was carried out by two consultants from Conservation International. Those directly responsible were the forestry and agro-ecological engineer, Ginnette Cruz, who coordinates the daily work in the framework of WISE REDD+ Costa Rica, and the agronomy engineer with a PhD in anthropology, Ruth Martínez, of the Ecosystem Services Programme, in the Science division. Both have extensive experience, knowledge and prior involvement with the Costa Rican forestry sector.

The full report of the results from the Relevant Stakeholders' self-assessment is presented in its entirety at the following link as part of the transparency and independence that Costa Rica has been keen to show in the process:

http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion/autoevaluac_pirs.pdf

Furthermore, because of how important it is in showing the representativeness and participation of Relevant Stakeholders in the self-assessment process, a direct link was created to the agendas of the workshops, the lists of participants, photographs of the events and the tables of systematisation, as well as a summary of the assessments.

The link for Annexes 1 to 3 (agenda, participant registers and photographs) is:

http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion/anexos_1_a_3.pdf

The link for Annexes 4 and 5 (systematisation tables and summary of assessments) is:

http://reddcr.go.cr/sites/default/files/centro-de-documentacion/anexos_4_y_5.xlsx

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Annex 1: Definition of Relevant Stakeholders and social stakeholders

The Relevant Stakeholders are groups that have a legitimate interest or right to the forests, forestry systems and/or agroforestry systems or policies and investments along the sector's production chain. This includes government and regional institutions (ICE, SINAC, MIDEPLAN); indigenous organisations such as Associations for the Integral Development of Indigenous Territories, the Bribri and Cabécar Indigenous Network (RIBCA); cultural mediators; the academic community (teachers and researchers); the private agroforestry sector (industrial companies, dealers, producers), including [Novelteak Costa Rica S.A.](#); the National Agroforestry Union (UNAFOR); organisations such as the National Forestry Office and the Forestry Chamber of Costa Rica; and institutions such as the Professional Association of Agricultural Engineers, among others. These agencies will be potentially affected, either negatively or positively, by the activities to be developed as a result of the implementation of the REDD+ Strategy and any actions and activities resulting therefrom. They are partners in the country's efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+).

Relevant Stakeholder	STAKEHOLDER
Logging Companies	CCF = Forestry Chamber of Costa Rica
	ONF = National Forestry Office
Government	SINAC = National System of Conservation Areas
	DCC = Climate Change Division
	CIAGRO = Professional Association of Agricultural Engineers of Costa Rica
	IMN = National Meteorological Institute
	FONAFIFO = National Fund for Forestry Financing
Small and medium forestry and agroforestry producers	UNAFOR = National Forestry Union
	UPANACIONAL = Union of Small Agricultural Producers of Costa Rica
	ONF = National Forestry Office
	Platform for leading figures in the sector of small producers
Indigenous Peoples	RIBCA BLOCK:
	CENTRAL NORTE BLOCK
	NAGBE BLOCK
	PACÍFICO CENTRAL BLOCK
Academic community/NGOs	CATIE, UCR, GIZ, UN, BM, INBIO...

These sectors constitute one of the main engines of development in the country, particularly for rural territories. Furthermore, they are part of the national management mechanisms for REDD+ and are involved in the context of planning and implementing REDD+ activities. They help to ensure

that the REDD+ programmes respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in particular and comply with applicable national and international obligations.

Annex 2: Information provided

Component	Criterion	Information presented
1. Organisation and consultation	1. Accountability and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports submitted to FCPF • FONAFIFO annual accountability reports
	2. Operating mandate and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits
	3. Multi-sector coordination mechanism and inter-sector collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee minutes • Inter-institutional commission minutes. • Technical session minutes • Inclusion of REDD+ in PNOF
	4. Technical supervision capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee minutes • World Bank aides-memoire
	5. Fund management capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits
	6. Mechanism for information exchange and claim compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint mechanism document
	7. Participation and involvement of main relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of stakeholders • Attendance lists
	8. Consultation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation plan • SESA work plan
	9. Exchange of and access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural mediators programme • Communication strategy
	10. Release and public dissemination of consultation results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process information
2. Preparing the REDD+ Strategy	11. Diagnostic assessment and questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-PP
	12. Establishing priorities regarding direct and indirect causal factors/barriers to increasing carbon stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-PP
	13. Relationships between causal factors/barriers and REDD+ activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-PP
	14. Action plans for dealing with rights to natural resources, land possession and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-PP
	15. Implications for laws and policies on forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-PP
	16. Presenting and establishing priorities for REDD+ strategy options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	17. Feasibility assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	18. Implications of the strategy options on existing sector-specific policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	19. Adopting and implementing legislation/regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	20. Directives for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	21. Benefit distribution mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	22. National REDD+ register and activities of the REDD+ monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	23. Analysis of issues relating to social and environmental safeguards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	24. Design of the REDD+ Strategy with regard to impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	25. Environmental and social management framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
3. Emission reference level / Reference level	26. Demonstration of the methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process
	27. Use of historic data and data adjusted to national circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in process • Map of forest types

	28. Technical feasibility of the methodology focus and congruence with the guidance and directives of the UNFCCC and IPCC	• Information in process
	29. Documentation for monitoring focus	• Information in process
	30. Demonstration of early implementation of the system	• Information in process
	31. Institutional mechanisms and capacities	• Technical discussion session minutes
4. Forestry monitoring and safeguard information system	32. Identifying pertinent unrelated aspects	• Information in process
	33. Follow-up, presenting reports and exchange of information	• Safeguard Information System
	34. Institutional mechanisms and capacities	• Executive Decree • Draft of decree for implementation.