

Comments to the programmatic elements of the FCPF Carbon Fund draft Methodological Framework

Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) would like to thank Carbon Fund participants for this opportunity to share our views on the draft Methodological Framework (MF) of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Carbon Fund. The comments in this letter focus on the programmatic elements of the MF.

There is broad international agreement that in order to ensure sustainable emissions reductions, reduce deforestation and degradation and address the drivers of deforestation, there must be structural reforms taking account of key governance, social and environmental concerns associated with REDD+. Evidence suggests that policies and laws designed through inclusive processes and delivering a broad range of benefits are more likely to be sustainable in the long term, thereby ensuring long-lasting climate change mitigation.

To achieve these structural reforms and inclusive processes, payments for emission reductions must be coupled with a combination of robust social and environmental safeguards and incentives for important non-carbon benefits. RFN urges Carbon Fund participants to ensure that the MF contributes to achieving these goals.

Safeguards

The draft MF states that Emission Reduction (ER) Programs under the Carbon Fund will be required to promote and support the so-called Cancun safeguards, as per Decision 1/CP.16 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).¹ This decision clarifies that countries are expected to address and respect the safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities, and that the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders must be ensured in all stages of REDD+ planning and implementation.

To fully reflect these elements of the Cancun safeguards, the MF should specify *how* ER Programs will be expected to address and respect these safeguards – beyond «paying particular attention to Decision 1/CP.16», as set out in Indicator 23.1. Furthermore, full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders must be ensured also in the planning and reporting on safeguards.

One way of achieving this would be to clarify that the Safeguards Plans referred to in indicator 23.2 will be expected to specify how each of the Cancun safeguards is addressed and respected. While Safeguards Plans will build on issues identified through country-specific, participatory SESA/ESMF processes, assessment of their adherence to the Cancun safeguards would greatly benefit from these plans specifying how each of the safeguards in Appendix I to Decision 1/CP.16 have been dealt with.

¹ The Cancun safeguards refer to Decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 69 and 71 (d), and its Appendix I

Furthermore, there should be further elaboration of what would constitute «appropriate» monitoring arrangements for safeguards, as per indicator 24.1. To ensure the quality of data on how safeguards are being addressed and respected, participatory monitoring practices will be required. Mechanisms should be in place, at the national and international level, for civil society to provide their assessment of the data provided through ER Monitoring Reports and Interim Progress Reports.

Grievance Redress Mechanisms

Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanisms (FGRMs) will be an important contribution to the piloting, «learning-by-doing» approach that is outlined in the FCPF Charter. To maximize the learning effect of FGRMs, data on feedback and complaints received, and their resolution, should be made publicly available as part of the required reporting on safeguards. Furthermore, indicator 25.3 should specify when the plan for improvements in FGRMs should be developed and implemented.

Land and resource tenure

Based on previously adopted guidance on the MF (such as the FCPF charter or Doha Indigenous Action Plan on the FCPF) the Carbon Fund should contribute to making progress on land and resource tenure. In the draft MF, these issues are dealt with in criterion 32 and associated indicators. The main focus of this criterion is however related to assessing the *existing* land tenure situation. This will hardly in itself be enough to ensure that progress is made on land and resource tenure, as the FCPF Charter stipulates.

The fact that the draft MF focuses strongly on clarifying the title to ERs, in combination with insufficient incentives for making progress on land tenure, is a reason for concern. In the absence of a more holistic effort to make progress on recognizing customary and traditional user rights in line with international obligations, a strong push to establish new legal regimes to clarify carbon rights or ER titles could potentially lead to further dispossession or marginalization of forest-dependent peoples.

To help achieve the FCPF Charter's goal of making progress on land tenure, indicator 32.1 should more fully reflect the participatory approach that is required in all stages of REDD+ under the Cancun safeguards. It should also make reference to the relevant international obligations relating to land and resource tenure, *inter alia* the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities as specified in the international instruments relevant to each country.

Additionally, indicator 32.2 should specify that the ER Program Document will be expected to detail how issues identified through the participatory process referred to in indicator 32.1 will be addressed.

We hope that the comments in this letter will prove useful to Carbon Fund participants in their further work on the draft MF, and we would be happy to provide further views and information at a later stage.

Sincerely,

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