

REDD Readiness Progress Fact Sheet

COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF CONGO

March, 2013

1. R-PP Preparation and FCPF Readiness grant

- The grant agreement for USD3.4 million was signed in January 2012, between the World Bank and the country's Ministry of Finance. The funds are managed by the Management Unit of the PRCTG project, at the Ministry of Planning due to their fiduciary capacity.
- As of today (February 22, 2013), US\$ 525,306.27 is disbursed.
- UN-REDD National Program is operational since the beginning of the year. FCPF and UN-REDD teams and the RoC met together in January to align their views. Annual budgets and procurement plans were validated accordingly.

2. National REDD Readiness Management Arrangements

- The formal institutional arrangements for managing the REDD+ process in the Republic of Congo have not been created yet. The decree for the creation of these structures has been sent to the *Pôle Économique*, which should discuss the document before it is sent to the *Conseil des Ministres* for final signature by the President.
- Various members of the Committee already have informal meetings to discuss REDD-related issues, including representatives from other Ministries.
- The National REDD Coordination (CN-REDD) is not formally created, but is operational with new offices fully equipped since December 2012. Staffing is ongoing.
- The CN-REDD has agreed to adopt the set of criteria / indicators of the R-Package as a "Management Tool" to monitor its activities. Each unit of the CN-REDD will specify its own set of indicators, by referring to the R-PP and the country's specifics. This will clarify expected outputs for each unit within the CN-REDD and allow an assessment of progress towards readiness completion.

3. Stakeholder Consultations and Communication

- National civil society organizations are represented by a platform coordinating their engagement in the REDD+ process (*Cadre de Concertation des Organisations de la Société Civile Congolaise et des Peuples Autochtones sur la REDD+, CACO-REDD*).
- The FCPF Capacity Building Program for CSOs and IP groups has provided a US\$70,000 grant to CACO-REDD to support department-level consultations and capacity building on REDD+. WCS manages the funds. A first payment has been disbursed in 2012 to allow for the production of communication materials on REDD+, in French and local languages. 2012 ended with some turmoil within CACO-REDD, putting this initiative at risk. Since, issues were sorted out with clarifications about CACO-REDD representatives and signatories. The legal framework was updated accordingly. A second payment (US\$35,000) is underway for deployment.

4. REDD Strategy Preparation

Under procurement:

- In-depth analysis of causes of deforestation and forest degradation, and REDD+ options.
- Feasibility study for an emission reduction program in the Sangha/Likouala Departments.

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5. Implementation Framework

Under procurement:

- Analytical study (fund management, benefit sharing, carbon ownership, REDD+ regulations)

6. SESA

Under procurement:

- Selection of a firm which will conduct the SESA process

Identified risks during the January 2013 mission: procurement processes are often delayed because of the absence of members of evaluation committees, committed to other tasks better remunerated. The CN-REDD is looking at some options to address the issue.

7. Development of a Reference Scenario

- Three persons are about to be hired, out of which two juniors financed by the FCPF. The senior expert will be financed by the UN-REDD program (FAO). A joint mission with UN-REDD is scheduled in April 2013 to align both agendas.

8. MRV

- Three persons are about to be hired, out of which two juniors financed by the FCPF. The senior expert will be financed by the UN-REDD program (UNDP). A joint mission with UN-REDD is scheduled in April 2013 to align both agendas. Indeed, it is of critical importance to the FCPF to benefit from an operational MRV system covering the ER-Program area in Northern Congo by the end of 2014.

9. Other

In parallel to the readiness, the RoC and the OLAM group are jointly working on early ideas (ER-PIN) to be presented at the CF6 meeting in Washington, D.C. (March 2013). The ER-Program might cover two departments in Northern Congo (Sangha and Likouala), with OLAM as the manager of the ER-Program, handling the interface between the Republic of Congo and project activities in the field. The set-up remains to be defined, including benefit sharing and implementation modalities.

CIB is a logging company owned by the Malaysian OLAM group. It manages 1.3 million hectares of certified forests (FSC) in Northern Congo, and developed the "North Pikounda REDD+ Project", which is likely to issue its first credits by the end of June 2013 under the VCS standard.