

# **Independent Mid-Term Evaluation of REDD+ Readiness in Ghana**

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## Table of Contents

<b>List of Acronyms.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview of Ghana's Achievements and Challenges in REDD+ Readiness .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Summary of the Evaluation by Component .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Component 1: Readiness Organization and Consultations.....	7
Component 2: Development of the REDD+ Strategy .....	9
Component 3: Reference Emissions Level / Reference Level .....	12
Component 4: Forest and safeguards monitoring system .....	13
<b>Introduction and context of the evaluation .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Introduction .....	14
Purpose of the report.....	15
Scope of work .....	16
Methodology .....	17
<b>Detailed Evaluation by Component .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Component 1: Readiness Organization and consultations .....	18
1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements.....	18
1b. Consultations, Participation, and Outreach.....	25
Component 2. Development of the National REDD+ Strategy.....	28
2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance .....	28
2b. REDD+ Strategy Options.....	33
2c. Implementation framework .....	35
2d. Social and environmental impacts.....	37
Component 3: Reference Emissions Level / Reference Level .....	38
Component 4: Forest and safeguard monitoring systems .....	40
4a. National forest monitoring system .....	40
4b. Information system for co-benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards.....	42
<b>Annex 1: Terms of Reference and Scope of Work .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Annex 2: Working Group Members and Consultants .....</b>	<b>48</b>
NATIONAL REDD+ WORKING GROUP (NRWG) MEMBERS .....	48
MEMBERS OF THE SUB-WORKING GROUPS .....	48
1. Policy and Legislation Review .....	48
2. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).....	49
3. National REDD+ Consultations.....	49
4. REDD+ Pilot Projects.....	49
5. Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV)/REL System.....	50
6. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (logical frameworks).....	50
REDD+ CONSULTANTS and Others.....	50

## List of Acronyms

CERSGIS	Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System, University of Ghana
CREMA	Community Resource and Environmental Management Area
ENRAC	Environmental and Natural Resources Advisory Council
EPA	Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency
ERP	Emissions Reductions Programme
ER-PIN	Emissions Reductions - Programme Idea Note
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FC	Forestry Commission, Ghana
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Programme
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FORIG	Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GISD	Geo-Info Systems Developers
HFZ	High Forest Zone
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LULUCF	Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry
MDAs	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science, Technology and Innovation
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NCRC	Nature Conservation Research Centre
NLBI	Non Legally Binding Instrument
NREG	Natural Resources and Environmental Governance Development Policy Operation
NRWG	National REDD+ Working Group
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers

REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
REL	Reference Emission Level
RL	Reference Level
RMSC	Resource Management Support Center
R-package	REDD+ readiness package
R-PIN	REDD+ Readiness Plan Idea Note
R-PP	REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal
SECO	Swiss Economic Cooperation Organisation
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
ToR	Terms of Reference
TZ	Transition Zone
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement



## Overview of Ghana's Achievements and Challenges in REDD+ Readiness

Ghana's vision for REDD+ is clear, ambitious and supported by a broad cross-section of government agencies, traditional authorities, civil society, and private sector representatives. The consultancies are strong and with a high degree of local ownership. There is confidence in the national REDD+ Secretariat as well as recognition that the workload over the next year poses a challenge to their current capacity.

While excellent progress was made early on in setting up national REDD+ management arrangements and producing a strong Readiness Preparedness Proposal (R-PP), Ghana's progress in REDD+ readiness is heavily weighted to the end of the FCPF grant period. The expected logical progression from readiness phase to implementation or demonstration phase has become a situation of significant overlap, which is creating some confusion and occasionally requiring some presumption of the outcomes of the readiness phase. Administrative delays in 2013 have resulted in critical consultation processes being left to near the end of the grant term, increasing the risk of further delays and necessary stakeholder engagement. In recognition of this situation, the REDD+ Secretariat has engaged in extensive consultations with relevant actors, focusing initially on further progressing the various consultancies.

Despite the uncertainty of success that the aforementioned risk might imply, the available evidence and opinion of participants and stakeholders indicates that Ghana is on track to completing the implementation activities identified in its R-PP by the end of 2014. However, in implementing activities under the readiness plan a few gaps have been identified and addressing them may require additional time and resources. A plan is needed to assess and address these gaps and priority areas of improvement in the national MRV system (e.g. to capture forest degradation).

Civil society's interest in Ghana's REDD+ plans has moved from 'somewhat resistant' to 'broadly supportive'. This is due, in part, to an effective stakeholder engagement process that built off the successful VPA Platform. Ghana has an active NGO and CSO community and their support will be critical in holding government and actors to account. Early progress in engaging the private sector is encouraging and spreading. The major private sector actors in Ghana are focused on threats to key agriculture commodity supply chains and access to markets for agricultural products. For them, long-term trade is a key driver for engagement in mitigation and adaptation issues.

After long delays in finding funding for REDD+ pilot projects, and some administrative delays in approving FIP projects, Ghana now finds itself in the situation of having to manage the implementation of seven REDD+ pilot projects, three major FIP projects, and the development of the ER-Programme for the Carbon Fund. Clearly, the importance and value of coordination over the next few years

cannot be overstated. Understanding how all of the projects fit together will improve synergies while also facilitating the donors' and implementing partners' bureaucratic processes.

## **Summary of the Evaluation by Component**

### **Component 1: Readiness Organization and Consultations**

#### ***1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements***

Ghana has established mutually supportive national REDD+ institutions with clear mandates necessary to achieve the government's REDD+ readiness objectives. The institutional arrangements for Ghana's REDD+ Readiness take advantage of two high-level multi-sectoral bodies that will be key to making the transition from readiness and implementation. The inter-ministerial Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Council (ENRAC) is a coordination body, chaired by the vice-President, with the authority to delegate individual sector agencies. The Technical Coordination Committee (TCC+) of the Natural Resources & Environmental Governance Group (NREG) plays the critical role of ensuring that the national REDD+ agenda fits with the national environmental sector reform agenda. The National REDD+ Working Group (NRWG) is a multi-stakeholder body chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR). The Secretariat for the NRWG is established in the Climate Change Unit of the Forestry Commission.

The commitment of the Vice-President, as chair of ENRAC, to the objectives of REDD+ in Ghana will be necessary to ensure meaningful participation cross-sector dialogue and coordination. Currently, coordination at the policy level is not good – particularly on land use issues. Similarly, it will be very important that NREG (as a liaison body between NRWG and ENRAC) fully appreciates the multi-sectoral policy implications of REDD+, otherwise it will be difficult to effectively engage the relevant ministries and agencies in implementing a national REDD+ strategy.

The national REDD+ Secretariat has shown effective leadership in managing the implementation of the R-PP and in pushing beyond the readiness phase to develop a subnational ER Program for the Carbon Fund. It has demonstrated a commitment to transparency in the R-PP implementation, though there is a need to do more to extend that transparency to the full range of stakeholders. Looking ahead, the capacity of the Secretariat team will be increasingly challenged with need to manage the numerous contracts, organize consultations and coordinate activities related to the Readiness Fund, the Carbon Fund and the Forest Investment Program (FIP), among others. Additional staff would improve the Secretariat's capacity and reduce the risk of delaying the readiness outcomes.

The NRWG includes representatives from relevant government institutions, civil society, traditional authorities/tribal chiefs, private sector and research organizations. Transparency in the process to-date has been demonstrated through the REDD+ Secretariat's sharing of information through stakeholder consultations, participation and engagement through workshops, seminars and focus group discussions, as well as through a REDD Programme web-page on the Forestry Commission's public website. The REDD+ webpages on the Forest Commission website should be updated and error-checked regularly.

Based on experience over the course of 2013, an area for improvement in efficiency in the implementation of the R-PP is in the administration of contracts and funds management. Delays in 2013 related to financial administration and high-level approvals significantly affected the rate of progress, according to several stakeholders and WG members. Given the tight timelines associated with the Grant Agreement and World Bank/FCPF processes, the REDD+ Secretariat would be advised to take a more pro-active approach to the timely resolution of delays or problems with external funds management.

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for REDD+ is not yet completed but the consultants (Osafo and Associates) were expected to produce a draft report in April. At the time of writing, they were assessing the potential of existing legal structures in fulfilling the needs of the GRM for REDD+, such as Ghana's Alternative Dispute Resolution Act (2010). Based on consultations with the GRM consultants, it is expected that additional resources/funds will be needed to develop the capacities at the district or community level necessary for the successful operation of a GRM. Such a mechanism is likely to have value to stakeholders beyond the scope of REDD+ activities.

### ***1b. Consultations, Participation, and Outreach***

The full, effective and on-going participation of key stakeholders in Ghana has been demonstrated, and continues, through the National REDD+ Working Group (previously the Steering Committee) which has put in place a multi-stakeholder Sub-Working Group with agreed terms of reference on Consultations and Participation, which includes representatives from Civil Society Organizations (Tropenbos and Civic Response) and a member of the National House of Chiefs.

The involvement of the private sector in Ghana's REDD+ process is growing with the development of Ghana's ER-PIN (the 'Cocoa Forest REDD Program') and with the implementation of REDD+ pilot projects.

The FCPF funds allocated for consultations on the REDD+ Strategy Options and benefit sharing mechanism will enhance the participation of stakeholders in the final stages of the readiness plan. For the implementation of the national REDD+ strategy, additional resources will be needed to fully engage the broader group of



stakeholders and develop their capacity to effectively participate. A national process of awareness creation and consultation on REDD+ is recognized as key element of the readiness process and is being implemented in a comprehensive manner under the direction of the REDD+ Secretariat.

A REDD+ Education and Sensitization drive is focused on the training of frontline staff of the Forestry Commission to ensure that they can communicate REDD+ effectively to the local level. To reach more stakeholders, prior to and during the implementation phase, it will be necessary to fully implement the national communication strategy. The Forest Commission will be responsible for implementing the REDD+ Communications Strategy, which will require human and financial resources that could exceed current capacities and budget. Over the long term, the Corporate Affairs and Public Relations Unit of the Forestry Commission will be responsible for information sharing and enhancing the interface with public and stakeholders through more outreach activities and communication products.

There is a need to manage, and in some cases deflate, unrealistic expectations of vast financial rewards from REDD+ activities (or from doing nothing). A well-developed, comprehensive communications strategy has been finalized and there are elements in the action plan that should be implemented as soon as possible while, to manage expectations, other parts of the plan and messaging could wait until a source of financing is confirmed for the REDD activities in the area.

## **Component 2: Development of the REDD+ Strategy**

### ***2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance***

The assessment of land use, forest policy and governance presented in Ghana's R-PP is of good quality and current as it benefited from a substantial amount of analytical work conducted under various natural resource management programs in the years prior to the formulation of the R-PP. The analyses and lessons learned through those programs was validated and/or updated during the R-PP preparation in order to present a comprehensive analysis of recent historical land-use trends and an assessment of relevant land tenure and titling, natural resource rights, livelihoods (including traditional / customary), forest law, policy and governance issues.

The assessment and analysis of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance presented in the R-PP will be further assessed and enhanced through the work underway by the consulting teams working on the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), the benefit sharing mechanism, the dispute resolution mechanism and the development of REDD+ Strategy Options. Further analyses of land and tree tenure and carbon rights are continuing under the NREG programme. In addition to the development of Ghana's ER Program - *Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program* – the REDD+ Secretariat is engaged in the NRWG process to

assess cocoa and other major drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to develop mitigation options. The assessment of REDD+ strategy options should not underestimate the legal and political difficulties associated with any option that will require reforming legislation, particular constitutional law related to land tenure.

In order to prioritize candidate strategy options the consultants (PricewaterhouseCoopers Ghana, PwC) developed a multiple criteria assessment with 6 key criteria – Social, Environmental, Economic, Legal, Policy and Regulatory, Political, and Institutional. They are also seeking to align these criteria with the work and findings from the related consultancies on SESA, benefit sharing and the MRV. Ghana's recently submitted ER-PIN also demonstrates the understanding of systematic links between a key driver (the uncontrolled expansion of agriculture at the expense of forests) and a REDD+ activity (reducing the effects of cocoa in the High Forest Zone).

There are a number of complementary action plans being implemented in Ghana to address natural resource rights, land tenure and governance. There will be no simple solution to land tenure reform in Ghana. The persistence of traditional land tenure arrangements within the colonial land tenure system has resulted in a complex dilemma for creating policy incentives for REDD+ at the national level. On tree tenure, everyone consulted for this evaluation recognized that any effective REDD+ strategy would require, as a precondition, a reform of the tree tenure regime as it relates to incentives for maintaining and enhancing off-reserve tree stock. The lack of definition of carbon rights is a significant risk for the development of REDD+ programs or projects but options have been identified and the Readiness pilot projects and FIP projects will provide an opportunity to field test the options.

Given the number of processes and projects addressing these issues, the integration of lessons learned and feedback from stakeholder consultations will require concerted effort in coordination in the development of the national REDD+ strategy. Funding and institutional arrangements (including coordination and stakeholder participation through the NREG CCT+, the NRWG and its Policy Sub-WG) are in place to ensure that appropriate action can be taken over the short- to long-term, subject to high-level political will. Support of traditional authorities, civil society, communities, industry (particularly cocoa sector) and key government departments will be critical in enabling and effecting necessary legislative reforms.

## ***2b. REDD+ Strategy Options***

The development of Ghana's national REDD+ strategy is on track to be completed by the end of 2014, but as it relies on a range of inputs from other components there is a greater risk of delay in the completion of this component. The contract with PwC to develop the Strategy Options was delayed in starting. Evidence of progress by the time of writing was limited to their Inception Report and through interviews in Accra.

The prioritization and refinement of REDD+ strategy options being undertaken by PwC is employing a multiple criteria assessment model described in PwC's Inception Report based on the candidate options identified in the R-PP and incorporating relevant input from the consulting team conducting the SESA. An assessment of existing legal and policy instruments was conducted in the formulation of the R-PP and recent changes (e.g. 2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy, Climate Change Policy, Environment Policy) have been identified in PwC's Inception Report. There has been good coordination among the various consultant teams, to maximize synergies in the use of findings.

At the time of writing, the results of the SESA and the assessment and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options were not available. However, based on the Terms of Reference for the consultancies, their Inception Reports and interviews with the consulting teams, there is sufficient indication that by the fall of 2014 the recommended REDD+ strategy options will have been assessed and prioritized for their social, environmental and political feasibility, risks and opportunities, and analysis of costs and benefits.

Given the importance of the national REDD+ strategy in setting the course of investment in, and implementation of, REDD+ activities in Ghana, it is very important that the full range of stakeholders are well equipped to fully participate in the strategy selection process. This will require timely sharing of information and, potentially, additional outreach by the REDD+ Secretariat prior to the multi-stakeholder workshop.

### *2c. Implementation framework*

Much of the work on the implementation framework, as described in the R-PP, had not begun by April 2014. The REDD+ Secretariat conducted a review of their workplan in February 2014, to produce a revised schedule of activities to be completed before the end of the FCPF grant period (November 2014).

However, a key achievement for Ghana was the recent adoption of the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy (2012). This was a critical step in integrating the objectives of REDD+ into the mandate of the Forest Commission and establishing the basis for changing management practices on the ground, including REDD+ activities. The new policy represents a paradigm shift from what was essentially a timber management policy to one of conservation, acknowledging the multiple values and multiple-use of Ghana's forests.

Pilot projects to test and promote REDD+ activities in Ghana are now proceeding. A process for the selection and oversight of REDD+ pilot projects, including a steering committee, was launched in early 2012 but encountered problems relating to the lack of clarity in the call for proposals regarding eligible project types and a lack of



funding to support their implementation. This has since been resolved, in part due to support expected from the Swiss government (SECO).

The consulting team developing a benefit sharing mechanism for REDD+ in Ghana submitted a draft in mid-April. The scope of consultations had to be reduced to meet the revised timelines but fortunately there is already experience in Ghana with innovative benefit sharing mechanisms, such as the Community Resource and Environmental Management Area (CREMA) mechanism.

The REDD+ Secretariat has published *“Ghana’s REDD+ Registry: Pathways to Development”*, which explains the concept of a REDD+ registry and outlines the major decision points in its development. However, the current FCPF Readiness Grant will not cover the cost to develop a national REDD+ information system or registry and tracking system for ER units.

#### **2d. Social and environmental impacts**

The SESA for REDD+ in Ghana is proceeding on schedule. The SESA sub-working group of the NRWG assisted the REDD+ Secretariat in developing the Terms of Reference for a consulting contract to conduct a SESA and produce an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the implementation of a REDD+ strategy in Ghana. The breadth of consultations had to be reduced due to the late start of the contract, due to administrative delays, but efficiencies were found by taking advantage of the consultations and assessments that were carried out in the development of the R-PP. The SESA for Ghana’s FIP projects is being conducted in parallel with the SESA for the FCPF Readiness activities, given the obvious overlaps and value of taking advantage of the synergies.

#### **Component 3: Reference Emissions Level / Reference Level**

Ghana’s Reference Emissions Level (REL) is being developed in concert with the development of the MRV system. The terms of reference for the REL/MRV contract were prepared Secretariat with the help of the REL/MRV sub-working group. Despite administrative delays, the work is following a clear and robust plan and good progress has been made in its implementation to-date. The consultants (led by Indufor Oy) began their assessment with 3 sets of satellite imagery of land cover: 1990, 2000 and 2010. Selecting and incorporating additional datasets for intervening years would require additional time and resources but may be necessary, subject to needs related to Ghana’s REDD+ strategy. A problem was encountered with the categorization of land uses and classification of forests used for the existing map sets, which limits the potential to use them to monitor forest degradation. A re-analysis may improve the chances of differentiating between different cocoa/tree cover types but additional funding would be needed for this work.

## **Component 4: Forest and safeguards monitoring system**

### ***4a. National forest monitoring system***

Ghana's National forest monitoring system (NFMS) is being designed as part of the development of the MRV system. The consultants have been able to take advantage of a lot of work that had already been done in Ghana, including the existing technical capacity of Ghanaian institutions, and the MRV system is on course to be completed by October 2014. The system structure is modular and will have a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), based on IPCC Guidelines and related UNFCCC REDD+ decisions and guidance, for the acquisition and use of relevant data in estimating emissions and removals.

The REDD+ strategy has not yet been determined but the monitoring and MRV system, as described by the consultants, will have the capacity to monitor deforestation and afforestation based on available data sources. It will also have the capacity to monitor and measure forest degradation if suitable activity data exists. Through coordination with PwC, as well as in the development of the ER-PIN, the difficulties of monitoring changes in the cocoa forest landscape were highlighted.

To support the integration of sub-national activities with the national REL and MRV system, an SOP is currently being developed for projects and programs based on the Voluntary Carbon Standard – Jurisdictional Nested REDD (VCS-JNR) methodology.

For the operation of the monitoring system over the longer term, the current capacity is strong and is being further developed through the REL & MRV system design process with Forest Consult and RMSC/Forestry Commission staff. However, in addition to securing core budget support for the monitoring and MRV system, the Forestry Commission will need to consider organization of resources (including the role of consultants) to meet the needs over the long term. Given the importance and inherent complexity of the MRV system, the current capacity of the REDD+ Secretariat to foresee and manage the technical needs related to system implementation should be carefully considered.

## Introduction and context of the evaluation

### Introduction

Ghana has embarked on preparations for full participation in the evolving international mechanism for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) resulting from deforestation and degradation of forests, and enhancing forest carbon stocks, (REDD+) since the signing of the Grant Agreement with the World Bank as trustee and delivery agent for the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in October 2011. The REDD+ process is being coordinated by the Ghana Forestry Commission with the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholder institutions and groups. Funding for this process is mainly provided by the FCPF (Readiness Fund), with additional financial and technical support from some bilateral partners as well as regular operating budget of the Forestry Commission. The Forest Investment Program (FIP) has recently approved funding of a program of activities in Ghana that will complement its REDD+ readiness activities and support the implementation of REDD+ actions.

Ghana was one of the first countries to present a REDD+ Readiness Program Idea Note (R-PIN) and Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) to the FCPF Participants Committee (PC). A final R-PP was submitted for assessment and subsequently approved by the FCPF PC at its 5<sup>th</sup> meeting held in March 2010 in Gabon. Table 1 shows Ghana's timetable for REDD+ Readiness. To-date, Ghana has submitted 8 progress reports between February 2011 and October 2013.

**Table 1: Ghana's REDD+ R-PP Timetable**

Date	Action
2008 – 04	R-PIN submitted
2008 – 08	R-PIN approved by PC
2009 – 04	FCPF Preparation Grant Agreement signed
2009 – 11	\$200k FCPF Preparation Grant disbursed
2010 – 03	R-PP assessed and approved by FCPF PC at PC5 in Gabon as per Resolution PC/5/2010/3 subject to revision
2010 – 12	Revised R-PP submitted to the FCPF in accordance with the PC 5 resolution
2011 – 10	FCPF Readiness Grant signed
2012 – 04	Formal launch of R-PP implementation in Accra with stakeholders
2014 – 10	End of FCPF Readiness Grant Project Implementation Period

Two years into the implementation of its Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement, Ghana has reached a point where it is preparing for mid-term review of its Readiness Preparations. In accordance with its reporting obligations under the FCPF,



the Government will submit a mid-term progress report to the FCPF in May 2014 presenting the current status of the national preparatory process for REDD to the Participants Committee of the FCPF. This mid-term progress report will identify a number of gaps or constraints in current funding needed to fully realise Ghana's readiness objectives with a view to requesting additional funding from the Readiness Fund for the continued implementation of its Readiness preparation activities.

Ghana's R-PP lays out a 3-phase process anticipated for the development and implementation of the R-PP, with further elaboration of a series of stages and steps. It is also noted that the R-PP is seen as a living document and progress on different aspects may progress at different speeds, particularly as REDD+ is expected to complement other forest and natural resource governance initiatives underway in Ghana (FLEGT and NREG).

Phase 1 is the REDD+ Readiness Preparation Phase, which covers the transition between a country's initial interest in REDD+ to a point at which a country is ready to implement and manage a mechanism for REDD+ payments. This mid-term review looks in particular at the third stage of Phase 1, which is broken-down into a number of steps and areas of investigation to be undertaken in the implementation of the R-PP. Phase 2 is the REDD+ Implementation and Management Phase, which involves the implementation of the REDD+ strategy once the country is sufficiently ready, with public and private actors actively managing emissions reductions.

While currently in an intense phase of readiness preparations Ghana has also developed an Emissions Reductions Program Idea Note (ER-PIN) for the Cocoa Forest Mosaic Landscape (Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program). At the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Carbon Fund Participants (April 2014 in Brussels), this proposal was accepted into the pipeline of ERPs to be further developed for consideration in the final portfolio of ERP Agreements (ERPAs).

### **Purpose of the report**

The objective of this consultancy is to carry out an independent mid-term evaluation of Ghana's national REDD+ Readiness preparations. The evaluation will report on the overall national REDD+ Readiness process while highlighting the Readiness components that were supported with FCPF financing.

The purpose of this report is to present an independent evaluation of Ghana's mid-term progress in its national REDD+ Readiness preparations based on agreements and guidelines of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). The evaluation covers the overall national REDD+ Readiness process while highlighting the Readiness components that were supported with FCPF financing. The report is

intended to assist Ghana's Forestry Commission and stakeholders in the on-going implementation of the R-PP and to support funding decisions.

### Scope of work

In accordance with the Terms of Reference (Annex 1), the report provides an overview of Ghana's progress to date in implementing the four main components of the R-PP and their respective sub-components:

1. Readiness Organization and Consultation
  - a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements
  - b. Consultation, Participation, and Outreach
2. REDD+ Strategy Preparation
  - a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance
  - b. REDD+ Strategy Options
  - c. Implementation Framework
  - d. Social and Environmental Impacts
3. Reference Emissions Levels/Reference Levels
4. Monitoring Systems for Forests, and Safeguards
  - a. National Forest Monitoring System
  - b. Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards

For each component and subcomponent, the evaluation intends to:

- (i) Assess progress achieved to date (outputs and outcomes);
- (ii) Identify key strengths and areas requiring further work;
- (iii) Identify additional actions that may assist Ghana to achieve the objectives contained in its R-PP; and
- (iv) Identify other information, as relevant, such as significant readiness work in progress or major constraints that could hinder progress.

In addition, the evaluation considers:

- (i) Progress achieved in activities funded by the FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant, and identifies any delays in the implementation of these activities, the causes for any delays and proposed actions to address the causes of the delays;
- (ii) Overall sufficiency of available finances and plans to source resources for the overall Readiness preparation activities, including funds pledged by other development partners;
- (iii) Compliance with SESA; and
- (iv) The degree of national ownership of and participation of stakeholders in the REDD+ Readiness Process; and
- (v) Synergies with other projects / programs in the country, particularly the FIP, FLEGT and VPA.

## Methodology

The evaluation was organized according to *A Guide to the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework* (FCPF, June, 2013). This provides guidance on assessment criteria and diagnostic questions that can be used to evaluate progress to-date in implementing the components and subcomponents of Ghana's Readiness Preparedness Proposal (R-PP) (*Revised\_Ghana\_R-PP\_2\_Dec-2010*) as identified in the Terms of Reference.

The evaluation draws on relevant materials prepared during the Readiness process, including Ghana's R-PP and R-PP Assessment Note, R-PP review comments by the FCPF Participants Committee and Technical Advisory Panel, annual and semi-annual progress reports to the FCPF, and information generated through Ghana's monitoring and evaluation system.

### *In-Country Consultations*

The process of gathering current information necessary for the evaluation required working closely with the National REDD Secretariat (the Secretariat) and interviewing key stakeholder groups and institutions, including representatives of civil society and the private sector. The Secretariat assisted in organizing consultations and the author also attended stakeholder meetings as part of the preparation of Ghana's ER-PIN, which provided additional opportunities to interview key individuals involved or implicated in Ghana's readiness process. The author also attended meetings with the Forest Commission and the World Bank Facility Management Team (FMT) mission to Ghana, and meetings of the pilot projects committee. The first set of consultations took place between February 10 and March 4, 2014, in Accra and Kumasi. Due to the delayed start of some of the consultancies a second round of consultations was necessary and took place between April 14 – 18, 2014 in Accra and Kumasi.



## Detailed Evaluation by Component

### Component 1: Readiness Organization and consultations

#### 1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements

The organization of authorities, roles and responsibilities for REDD+ in Ghana has taken advantage of existing management arrangements for a number of forest and environmental governance initiatives, including the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), NREG programmes, as well as the Non Legally Binding Instrument (NLBI) of FAO/UNFF. Under the inter-ministerial Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Council (ENRAC), the Technical Coordination Committee (TCC+) is responsible for coordinating Ghana's FIP, FCPF, and other initiatives. The National REDD+ Working Group (NRWG; formerly the National REDD+ Steering Committee) is a multi-stakeholder body chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR). The TCC+ serves as a liaison structure between the NRWG and the ENRAC. The Climate Change Unit of the Forestry Commission serving as the Secretariat for the NRWG.

The ENRAC is intended to be a coordination body, chaired by the vice-President, with the authority to delegate individual sector agencies. The ENRAC's first major challenge was to address the problem of illegal and uncontrolled gold mining (*galamsay*) and it was instrumental in the setting up of the Inter-Ministerial Task Force for Illegal Mining, inaugurated by the President and chaired by the Minister for MLNR. Although measures have been agreed to curb illegal galamsey activities, there was considerable doubt among non-government interviewees about the likely effectiveness of those measures.

The NREG programme and its TCC+ is considered by the majority of those interviewed as an effective body based on its level of representation and past performance, but some donors expressed disappointment with the results of the first 5-year programme. The REDD+ Secretariat is widely respected for its capability to lead coordination and engagement efforts though institutional mandates and related politics have resulted in the somewhat confusing arrangement of responsibilities for FIP projects at the MLNR while the Forestry Commission has responsibility for the management of REDD+ processes, including readiness pilot projects.

#### *Accountability and transparency*

Ghana's national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements, described above, have demonstrated that they are operating in an open, accountable and transparent manner through its engagement of a broad base of stakeholders, its program of REDD+ sensitization, various consultations associated with readiness activities, the availability of relevant documents on a publicly accessible website, and regular progress reports. Postponement of Sub-WG meetings in 2013 led to some delays in the development of Terms of Reference for consultancies and also contributed to some skepticism in the commitment of the government to follow through on REDD+ readiness activities. Additional communications, or regular status updates, to all members of the NRWG and Sub-WGs could help to avoid loss of interest and engagement.

Ghana has followed the consultation plan specified in its R-PP, striving for full and effective participation in all activities. The current processes stem from the process established for the development of the R-PP, which involved a concerted effort by both state and non-state actors (CSOs, private sector, land-owners, community representatives and academia). At the outset, a stakeholder mapping exercise established the relevant contacts while taking advantage of the experience of broad multi-stakeholder consultations and civil society participation in preparing for the VPA as part of part of the EU-supported FLEGT Action Plan.

A series of sensitization sessions around the country were initiated by the Forest Commission to create awareness about REDD+ and to develop the incentive for various groups, institutions and individuals to participate. The sensitization sessions focused on Forest Commission staff in the 10 regions, with participation down to the district ranger level, who would be responsible for engaging with their communities. The development of terms of reference for each consultancy (Communications Strategy, RL/MRV, SESA, grievance redress mechanism (GRM), benefit sharing Mechanism, and REDD+ Strategy Options) were developed by the relevant sub-working groups and these groups will also be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations based on the products of the consultancies.

Transparency in the process to-date has been demonstrated through the REDD+ Secretariat's sharing of information through stakeholder consultations, participation and engagement through workshops, seminars and focus group discussions, as well as through a REDD Programme web-page on the Forestry Commission's public website ([www.fcghana.org](http://www.fcghana.org)) where meeting reports, terms of reference for consultancies, reports and other documentation is posted. The website is reasonably up-to-date but could benefit from more regular maintenance to ensure that links to documents or related webpages are working properly. At the local community level where the Secretariat lacked sufficient capacity, they involved community-based organizations (CBOs) such as the Forest Watch and Forest Forums to further disseminate REDD+ information to grass root forest-fringe communities. The National REDD+ Working Group also serves as an important information hub from which the representatives can channel information to and from their constituents. *"Thus, there exists a structure that allows information sharing and feedback on REDD+*

*that enriches the discussions and decision-making process on REDD+”(REDD+ Communications Strategy, 2013).*

The REDD+ Secretariat has demonstrated a commitment to transparency in the R-PP implementation but there is a need to do more to extend that transparency to the full range of stakeholders. In the REDD+ Communications Strategy (October 2013) the consultant (Mary Ama Kudom-Agyemang) found that “[k]ey stakeholders are expressing the need for receiving considerably more information about REDD+ in Ghana, the progress it is making, the rationale for the pilots, and other critical matters, in more detail and on a more regular basis”. This demand for information may be seen to come from two general categories of stakeholders; (1) those who see REDD+ actions or objectives as potentially supporting or linked to their own interests, for example, in forest conservation or sustainable supply chains, and (2) individuals who had heard that international donors or the World Bank will pay large sums for maintaining trees on their land. For the latter category, it is likely that the sensitization sessions and stakeholder consultations organized by the REDD+ Secretariat have since addressed expectations.

One of the challenges to achieving full and effective participation has been the development of an understanding and acceptance of the paradigm shift in the concept of forest management in Ghana, as formalized in the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy (2012) – from industrial logging to conservation and climate change mitigation. While many will be receptive to this change, those invested in the status quo will likely require some help, and time, to adapt. This type of transition is not unique to Ghana and therefore there are lessons from other countries that may be useful in facilitating the process.

To reach more stakeholders, prior to and during the implementation phase, it will be necessary to fully implement the national communication strategy. Given the complexity and relative novelty of REDD+, a common challenge is finding ways to present the information in an accessible manner to a diverse range of individuals, from communities to government institutions. Some success has already been achieved through the sensitization sessions. As a next step, the Forest Commission, and specifically the REDD+ Secretariat, will be responsible for implementing the REDD+ Communications Strategy, which will require human and financial resources that could exceed current capacities and budget.

### ***Operating mandate and budget***

A National REDD+ Steering Committee (NRSC), later renamed as the National REDD+ Working Group (NRWG) was set up in 2009 to lead the overall preparation of the R-PP and implementation of the REDD Readiness process in Ghana, including the activities financed by the FCPF. The coordination framework has since been revised to enhance the coordination of the multi-sectoral REDD+ agenda, consistent with a recommendations by the Technical Advisory Panel at the time of assessment of



Ghana's R-PP. The increased involvement of the MLNR in the REDD+ management arrangements was also related to Ghana becoming a member of the FIP.

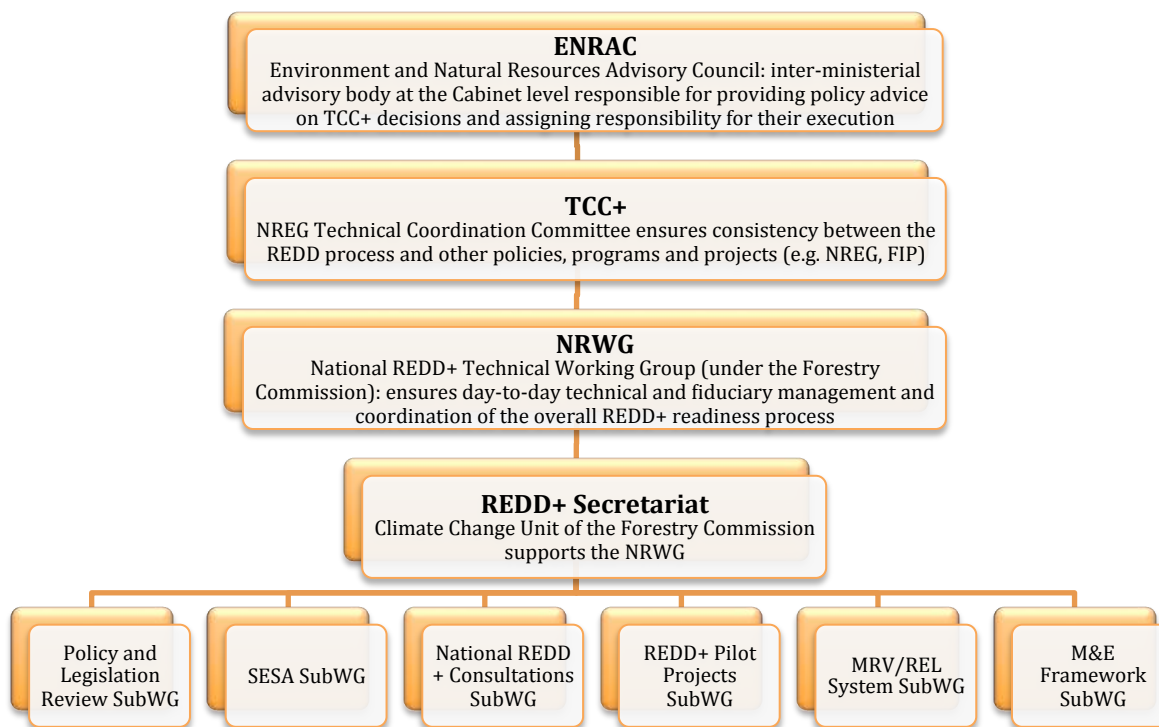
The NRWG includes representatives from relevant government institutions, civil society, traditional authorities/tribal chiefs, private sector and research organizations (see Annex 2). As a result of stakeholder consultations on Ghana's ER-PIN, a representative from the National Development Planning Council (NDPC) is expected to be added to the NRWG. The NRWG established sub-Working Groups with multi-stakeholder composition to support development of the different components of the R-PP and to inform policy and programme decisions.

Responsibility for day-to-day management and coordination of the overall REDD+ readiness process will lie with the National REDD+ Secretariat under the institutional structure of the Forestry Commission. Figure 1 below shows an organizational chart of the institutional arrangements for the REDD+ Readiness process in Ghana.

As stated in the R-PP, the Technical Coordination Committee of NREG (TCC+) plays the critical role of ensuring that the national REDD+ agenda (including for the FIP) and REDD+ strategy elements fit with the national environmental sector reform agenda. The mandate of this committee is to address the cross cutting aspects in REDD+ strategy such as the role of mining and energy sector issues and their impact deforestation and forest degradation. The original TCC was expanded to include additional members (hence the '+'): two from private sector, two from civil society, one from the Forest Forum representing community point of view, one from a research institution, one from traditional authorities, one from the Ministry of Agriculture, one from the Ministry of Energy, and one from the Lands Commission.

The Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Council (ENRAC) is an inter-ministerial advisory body at the Cabinet level, chaired by the vice-President, which will be responsible for providing policy advice on TCC+ decisions and assigning implementation roles to the relevant Government institutions. The R-PP also implicates ENRAC in further supporting the implementation of activities as decided by the National REDD+ Working Group.

Until recently, the involvement of the private sector in Ghana's REDD+ management structure had been limited to the representation of the Ghana Timber Association, Ghana Timber Millers Organization and the National Conservation Resource Center (NCRC) on Working Groups and in consultation sessions. In the process of developing Ghana's ER-PIN (the Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program) the REDD+ Secretariat was successful in engaging the major cocoa sector entities (e.g. Olam and Touton) as well as the Ghana Cocoa Board. The implementation of pilot projects is expected to engage additional private entities interested in developing carbon transactions in the country.



**Figure 1. Institutional arrangements for REDD+ Readiness in Ghana**

Budgeting for the REDD+ institutions to implement the R-PP has been adequate judging by the overall progress and quality of products seen to-date (e.g. in the level of stakeholder engagement and development of Terms of Reference for consultancies). The current FCPF Grant should be sufficient to maintain these institutions effectiveness if the demands on them do not increase substantially. However, the costs of operating these institutions is expected to increase over the course of 2014 as various REDD+ policy recommendations (in the National REDD+ strategy options, for example) go through processes of stakeholder reviews and comments, and in the development of an Emissions Reduction Programme Document.

While the operation of the ENRAC, NREG and TCC+ are funded primarily through government budgets and partly or indirectly through related program funding (from the World Bank and various bilateral partners), there has not yet been a meeting of ENRAC to discuss REDD+ and very limited engagement of the NREG TCC+. There has also been a significant lull in meetings and work of the NRW and its Sub-WGs over the past year, mainly due to administrative delays. Therefore it is reasonable to expect the funding needed for all of the REDD+ institutions to increase by the end of 2014. In addition, some readiness activities (e.g. communications and MRV system

establishment) are very likely to continue into 2015 and it is not yet clear how the longer-term budget will be funded. The MLNR intends to further support the FC in developing the Climate Change Unit and the Unit's capacity to manage activities relating to REDD+ (e.g. the on-going operation of the MRV system). However, the amount of support is not known at this stage and would not have envisioned the costs of necessary or supplementary readiness activities that were not included in the original R-PP. Development partners can influence government budget allocations to REDD+ institutions through leveraging of grant and concessional finance, and by engaging at the political level to support longer-term budget commitments.

### *Multi-sector coordination mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration*

The national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements are working to ensure that REDD+ activities are coordinated, integrated into and influencing the broader national or sector policy frameworks (e.g., agriculture, environment, natural resources management, infrastructure development and land-use planning) through the active involvement of sector representatives in the work of the NRWG and Sub-WGs. In the early stages of the work of the technical consultancies (for the SESA, Benefit-sharing mechanism, REL/MRV system and REDD+ Strategy), coordination meetings were held to ensure necessary inter-linkages were established and understood, and to coordinate the timelines for delivery of results and reports.

In terms of coordinating and integrating REDD+ with Ghana's FIP activities, the Head of the REDD+ Secretariat is a member of the FIP management committee and represents the REDD+ Secretariat in other processes, such as the National Forest Forum. As previously mentioned, the NRWG includes representatives from all relevant sectors and administrative agencies (Refer to Annex 2). These arrangements are functional but the degree of influence that the REDD+ process has on the other sectors is generally low, except in the important case of the cocoa sector where, in support of the ER-PIN, the CEOs of the Forest Commission and the Cocoa Board jointly committed to action on REDD+ and climate-friendly cocoa. This is the first time the forest and cocoa sectors have cooperated in such a practical way.

The Ghana Timber Association was supported to do their own industry stakeholder consultations to identify opportunities for collaboration and to address legal compliance issues. The FCPF readiness grant has facilitated this engagement, which has proved remarkably effective in supporting readiness and in addressing any confusion for stakeholders regarding the VPA and REDD+ processes.

A more functional engagement of the other sectors will be necessary in the development and determination of a national REDD+ Strategy. While the other sectors, such as mining, may not see as much mutual benefit with REDD+ it will be easier to engage them at the stage of identifying concrete strategies or projects. The addition to the NRWG of a representative of the NDPC should assist in cross-sectoral

collaboration but some expressed the importance of active support at a high-level (e.g. of the President or Vice-President) for REDD+ in Ghana as a pre-requisite for mainstreaming the objectives of a REDD+ strategy across government departments.

#### *Technical supervision capacity*

The five-person REDD+ Secretariat is responsible for technical supervision of the readiness activities and, with the assistance of the FCPF-FMT, has demonstrated their effectiveness in leading the multi-sector readiness activities, including the regular supervision of technical preparations. The Sub-Working Groups of the NRWG were established and successfully prepared Terms of Reference for the consultancies that will produce products and recommendations for the key components specified in Ghana's R-PP. As the supervision needs has increased with the awarding of the consulting contracts at the same time of developing their ERP and preparing their mid-term report, the current human resource capacity of the REDD+ Secretariat has been a limitation and represents a risk to the quality of the readiness arrangements. Part-time assistance from local consultants (e.g. NCRC) has been used effectively but a longer-term solution is needed – i.e. hiring of one or two additional full-time staff with the appropriate technical expertise.

#### *Funds management capacity*

Donors in the land use and forestry sector are coordinated through the Natural Resources & Environmental Governance Group (NREG). The NREG Technical Coordination Committee (TCC) facilitates the implementation of all natural resources and environment donor funded programmes. The TCC has been expanded to take into account the special requirements of the FCPF and FIP (e.g. participation of the private sector, local communities and relevant civil society groups) and has been re-branded as TCC+. Within the Forestry Commission a Project Oversight Committee has also been established to ensure that donor-funded projects are well coordinated and implemented effectively.

Based on experience over the course of 2013, an area for improvement in efficiency in the implementation of the R-PP is in the administration of contracts and funds management (including auditing). Problems with funds management in 2013 led to significant delays in awarding of consulting contracts. Given the tight timelines associated with the Grant Agreement and World Bank/FCPF processes, the REDD+ Secretariat would be advised to take a more pro-active approach in the timely resolution of delays or problems with external funds management. Coordination with other REDD-related funding initiatives appears effective at this time, though the main initiatives - the FIP program (via the World Bank and AFDB) and REDD+ pilot projects (supported by SECO) – have are yet to take off.

The REDD+ secretariat, in collaboration with the Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC) and Forest Trends International, has also undertaken a multi-year national REDD+ finance tracking initiative.

### *Feedback and grievance redress mechanism*

At the time of writing, the report of the consultants (Dr. E.Marfo, Y.Osafo and N.D.Cobbina) contracted to provide recommendations on a GRM (a.k.a. dispute resolution mechanism) was not available. Once submitted, the REDD+ Secretariat plans to organize consultations of the NRWG and relevant Sub-WG to review the report. The report will also be shared with the consultants working on the SESA/ESMF and the national REDD+ strategy options. The GRM will have implications for other sectoral activities and programs, at least as a precedent; therefore it is appropriate that the NREG TCC+ consider any recommendation prior to implementation. The REDD+ Secretariat should ensure that potentially impacted communities are made aware of, and have access to, the GRM. As the institutional arrangements for the GRM should be in place prior to the implementation of the national REDD+ strategy and associated activities, additional resources to carry out a GRM implementation plan will be needed.

Based on interviews with the consulting team, and subject to their final report, they had identified and were assessing existing legal structures in Ghana that might be relevant to a functional, transparent and impartial GRM. For example, the recently adopted Alternative Dispute Resolution Act (2010) allows for the legal recognition of traditional, customary arbitration systems thereby facilitating a decentralized and accessible GRM for communities involved or impacted by REDD+ activities.

## **1b. Consultations, Participation, and Outreach**

### *Participation and engagement of key stakeholders*

The Consultation and Participation Plan (C&P) for Ghana's REDD+ preparation phase will guide Ghana's REDD+ institutions in developing a REDD+ Strategy during R-PP Implementation. The C&P Plan was developed from the R-PP development phase in 2009 and draws on many contributions provided by stakeholders during the R-PP development process as well as lessons learned from the development of the FLEGT, VPA and the NREG programme. The underlying principles for C&P are set out in the R-PP.

The full, effective and on-going participation of key stakeholders has been demonstrated, and continues, through the National REDD+ Working Group (previously the Steering Committee) which has put in place a multi-stakeholder Sub-Working Group with agreed terms of reference on Consultations and Participation,



which includes representatives from Civil Society Organizations (Tropenbos and Civic Response) and a member of the National House of Chiefs.

The traditional ruler and Civil Society representatives on the working group are responsible for outreach and consultations within their constituencies (i.e. traditional authorities and forest-dependent communities) to build their capacity to effectively participate in REDD+ readiness and implementation.

In the development of the R-PP, it was noted that stakeholders within and outside of the Government have very different expectations with respect to the benefits and risks associated with REDD+. *“Local stakeholders are concerned about fair benefit sharing, while the Government confronts the challenge of enacting broad policy reforms without the assurance of eventual rewards from emission reductions or other environmental benefits.”* While stakeholders’ awareness and understanding of REDD+ has increased since the R-PP development, this range of expectations persists and addressing it will require an enhancement of well-organized consultations and implementation of the communications strategy. The FCPF funds allocated to the consultations on the REDD+ Strategy Options and as part of the development of a proposal for the benefit-sharing system will go partway in enhancing participation of stakeholders. However, additional resources are needed to fully engage the broader group of stakeholders that will need the capacity to effectively participate in the implementation of a REDD+ strategy.

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection is the main, central institution for addressing gender issues in Ghana. This Ministry worked with IUCN, as part of IUCN’s ongoing DANIDA funded *Pro-Poor REDD* project, and through a process of stakeholder consultations to develop the Ghana Gender and REDD-plus Road Map that was launched in November 2012. The government of Ghana can use the Gender and REDD+ Road Map as a framework for guiding and ensuring that gender considerations are mainstreamed into the REDD+ readiness and implementation process, including benefit sharing. The participation of youth and the consideration of intergenerational issues are being addressed by the Consultation Sub-Working Group and in the communications strategy through tailored sensitization programs on climate change and REDD+.

The recent launch of the FIP program in Ghana brings with it the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, which provides communities with financing and learning mechanisms to support their participation in the FIP investment programs and projects.

### **Consultation processes**

A national process of awareness creation and consultation on REDD+ is recognized as key element of the readiness process and is being implemented in a comprehensive manner. A REDD+ Education and Sensitization drive is focused on

the training of frontline staff of the Forestry Commission to ensure that they can communicate REDD+ effectively to the local level. As it is the staff at the district level who are in constant interaction with forest communities, this is a cost-effective and a sustainable approach to enhancing communication on REDD+ throughout the readiness process. Various brochures and posters that introduce REDD+ and highlight issues environmental degradation in Ghana have been published and distributed throughout the country, taking advantage of technical workshops and other Forestry Commission events. In addition, Community sensitization sessions were organized in connection to the REDD+ pilot projects and a 'REDD+ Roadshow' with a series of public events is planned for 2014, as recommended in the Action Plan outlined in the communications strategy.

The implementation of the communication strategy, building on the quality of the consultations processes to-date, should ensure that future consultation processes are clear, inclusive, transparent, and will facilitate timely access to information in a culturally appropriate form. One area of particular sensitivity is the appropriate recognition of the role of traditional authorities and not equating them with leaders of civil society organizations.

#### *Information sharing and accessibility of information*

The REDD+ Secretariat has been responsible for ensuring that information is effectively shared within the national REDD+ institutions and is accessible to stakeholders. To-date, the sharing of information among members of the working groups and through sensitization sessions with Forest Commission staff and other stakeholders has been transparent and consistent. The information sharing has been reasonably comprehensive, with the potential for improvement with the implementation of the communications strategy and with additional attention paid to ensure that the REDD+ web page is functioning properly and is updated regularly.

In the early stages of work by the consulting teams on the REDD+ Strategy Options (PwC), RL/MRV system (Indufor Oy), SESA (SAL Consult Limited) and Benefit-Sharing (FORIG), it became clear that synergies in the scope of work of the various teams necessitated an agreement to share information and coordinate activities (e.g. stakeholder consultations or workshops) in order to deliver complementary products within the contract deadlines.

The timeliness of information sharing was noted to be a concern for civil society representatives of working groups, in regards to the need to share information sufficiently in advance of scheduled meetings to allow for full and effectively consultations with their constituents. This will become more critical as more significant decision points are reached in the readiness process. In addition to establishing deadlines for sharing of information prior to meetings, increasing the human resources capacity of the REDD+ Secretariat over the next year or two may be needed.

The REDD+ Secretariat indicated that, in the long term, the Corporate Affairs and Public Relations Unit of the Forestry Commission will be responsible for information sharing and enhancing the interface with public and stakeholders through more outreach activities and communication products. These activities would be captured within the Forestry Commission's existing mandate and one additional staff will be recruited to lead this effort.

### *Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes*

The outcomes of consultations during the R-PP formulation were integrated into the final R-PP that was validated through further consultations prior to presentation to the FCPF. Several of the on-going consultancies (including for the SESA, benefit-sharing mechanism, and national REDD+ strategy) are integrating the outcomes of consultations directly into their findings and recommendations. Validation workshops are envisioned for all such findings and recommendations. Oversight by the Consultations and Participation Sub-WG should be maintained in order to monitor and assess implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes.

## **Component 2. Development of the National REDD+ Strategy**

### **2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance**

#### *Assessment and analysis*

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

A key policy development since the preparation of the R-PP is the publication of the revised Forest and Wildlife policy (2012). As a result of the input of the REDD+ Secretariat and key stakeholders of the REDD+ process in Ghana, the revised policy shifts the focus of forest management from timber extraction to include the non-consumptive values of forests, and recognizing climate change and REDD+ as having far reaching implications for forestry and livelihoods. In reviewing the 1994 Forest Policy, it was highlighted to senior government that for the REDD+ process to

succeed, the current tree tenure arrangements would have to be reformed. Building on years of analysis of land tenure issues, there is on-going analysis of carbon rights in Ghana by FORIG with support from the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). In addition, the readiness pilot projects and FIP projects will include components that will inform policy decisions on tenure and carbon rights.

Other relevant national policies and strategies that are currently under development include the national forest plantation strategy and the agricultural policy (particularly the Cocobod strategy). The Renewable Energy Act of 2011 provides for the regulation of the production and supply of wood fuel and bio-fuel and will still depend heavily on primary products such as fuelwood and charcoal.

Additional background studies funded by the FCPF and the government as indicated in the R-PP, as well as lessons learned from related policy and program analysis, have contributed to a better understanding of the geographic variation in the underlying causes and agents of deforestation and degradation. The principle drivers of deforestation and degradation in Ghana as identified in the R-PP, in order of relevance, include:

- 1) Uncontrolled agricultural expansion at the expense of forests;
- 2) Over-harvesting and illegal harvesting of wood;
- 3) Population and development pressure; and
- 4) Mining and mineral exploitation.

However, it has been found that the drivers' order of relevance varies by eco-zone. In the development of Ghana's ER-PIN, it is noted that the above-mentioned drivers are highly significant in the high forest zone and associated cocoa farming landscape. However, in Dry Semi-Deciduous Forest and Savannah eco-regions the main drivers include over-harvesting and illegal harvesting of wood, primarily for fuelwood consumption and timber exploitation, followed by agricultural expansion associated with yam cultivation. Mining is also a driver in these areas.

The assessment and analysis of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance presented in the R-PP will be further assessed and enhanced through the work underway by the consulting teams working on the SESA, the benefit-sharing mechanism, the dispute resolution mechanism and the development of REDD+ Strategy Options. In addition to the development of Ghana's ER Program - *Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program* – the REDD+ Secretariat is engaged in the NRWG process to assess cocoa and other major drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to develop mitigation options.

*Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/ barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement*

Ghana's R-PP envisaged that REDD+ components of a National Strategy for Ghana will fall into two broad and overlapping thematic areas: (A) Timber policy and supply; and (B) Wider aspects of forest policy including agro-forestry and other carbon conserving activities. Within these themes were identified 13 indicative candidate strategy options (or components), which were also associated with 4 challenges / immediate drivers of deforestation (Table 2a of the R-PP).

<b>Challenge/ Immediate driver</b>	<b>Indicative Candidate Strategy Options</b>
Gaps in Forest Policy and Policy Realization	Improve the Quality of Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue and Decision Making
	Clarify rights regime
	Improved FLEGT
	Address unsustainable timber harvesting
	Address local market supply
Demographic Pressures	Mitigate effects of agricultural expansion (particularly cocoa in the HFZ)
	Strengthen local decentralized management of natural resources
	Improve sustainability of fuel wood use
	Improve the quality of fire-affected forests and rangelands
Economic Forces	Address local market demand
	Expansion of agroforestry, tree crops, biofuels and agro-industries
	Improve regulation of mining activities to reduce forest degradation; support current initiatives under NREG to better regulate mining
Natural Causes	Implement actions to address acts of God (wind and natural fire events, floods, pests and diseases)

In order to prioritize candidate strategy options, which would prioritize the drivers / barriers as a result, PwC developed a multiple criteria assessment with 6 key criteria – Social (including gender and youth), Environmental, Economic, Legal, Policy and Regulatory, Political, and Institutional. In assigning an initial ranking of High, Medium or Low they are taking into account what may be considered urgent, a 'must have' and what is a 'would like to have'. They are also seeking to align these criteria with the work and findings from the related consultancies on SESA, Benefit Sharing and the MRV. The preliminary prioritization is presented in PwC's Inception Report.

#### *Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities*



The R-PP (in Table 2a) identified links between key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement activities, and indicative REDD+ activities. A more detailed assessment of the links and barriers will come from the work of PwC in the development of the National REDD+ strategy, which is due to be completed (after multi-stakeholder consultations on a draft) by September 2014.

Ghana's recently submitted ER-PIN also demonstrates the understanding of systematic links between a key driver (the uncontrolled expansion of agriculture at the expense of forests) and a REDD+ activity (reducing the effects of cocoa in the High Forest Zone). Building off of the main drivers identified in Ghana's R-PP, a group of technical experts from the forestry and cocoa sectors conducted a detailed assessment of the main drivers, agents, and causes of deforestation and degradation within the proposed ER Program area. Further identification of actions to address additional drivers and barriers will arise out of the completion of Ghana's national REDD+ strategy and development of the ER Program. The overlap of these two activities represents a valuable opportunity to ground-truth and improves the quality of the REDD+ strategy.

#### *Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance*

There are a number of complementary action plans being implemented in Ghana to address natural resource rights, land tenure and governance. Everyone consulted for this evaluation recognized that any effective REDD+ strategy would require, in due course, a reform of the tree tenure regime as it relates to incentives for maintaining and enhancing off-reserve tree stock. Ghana's R-PP identified tree and land tenure as a policy driver that has contributed to an increasing trend in deforestation and forest degradation and therefore merits urgent review. A second phase of Ghana's Natural Resources and Environmental Governance programme (NREG), supported by the World Bank, is already working on tenure reform and the FIP will begin piloting new policies as part of its project activities.

The objective of the NREG programme is to address governance issues related to the management of natural resources and environment with the overall objective of ensuring sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, increasing revenues and improving environmental protection. The second phase of the Natural Resources and Environment Governance Program (aims at supporting the national program of governance reform in the forestry and mining sectors as well as environmental management and climate change. One of the main activities of the programme is the implementation of the VPA.

The NREG technical assistance (NREG TA) is, designed to help Government formulate policies and develop concrete ways in which policies could be more broadly adopted. The development objective of the TA operation is to increase the knowledge base and to strengthen capacities at Government and local levels to support policy reforms under NREG program. The aim of the NREG TA in the

Forestry Sector is to finance studies and consultations in support of policy reforms and capacity building activities in the forestry sector in various themes, including tree tenure regime. There is a widespread consensus that the existing tree tenure system is among the most important policy drivers behind the deforestation rates in Ghana.

In 2013, the NREG TA published terms of reference for a study to assess the design of tree tenure & benefit sharing arrangements in Ghana. These terms of reference acknowledge: *"If sustainable management of private and communal forests is a desired social goal, then incremental changes in tenure features (transferability, comprehensiveness, economic compensation, and duration) would facilitate its achievement."* Though significant consultation has already been conducted on this specific issue over the past few years (including for the preparation of the R-PP), there is no consensus on the most appropriate tree tenure arrangements to address the deforestation issues or on the reforms needed. To address that challenge, the NREG TA is assisting the Government to (i) further hold consultation on tree tenure arrangements and (ii) design, under a participatory approach, tree tenure pilots to be implemented at local level. The design and/or lessons learned from these pilots should be integrated into the FIP projects. The REDD+ Secretariat and the pilot project steering committee should investigate whether there are funds available under the NREG TA to support relevant REDD+ pilot projects.

This plan of action builds on many years of research and analysis of natural resource rights, land tenure, governance issues in Ghana and represents a new phase of work that will provide practical, field-tested input into the development and implementation of a national REDD+ strategy and subnational actions. Given the number of processes addressing these issues, the integration of lessons learned and feedback from stakeholder consultations will require concerted effort in coordination in the development of the national REDD+ strategy. Funding and institutional arrangements (including coordination and stakeholder participation through the NREG CCT+, the NRWG and its Policy Sub-WG) are in place to ensure that appropriate action can be taken over the short- to long-term, subject to high-level political will. While some Ministers may already be convinced of the need to reform legislation, decentralization of management responsibility or control is a challenge and a risk for Ghana's political leaders. Support of traditional authorities, civil society, communities, industry (particularly cocoa sector) and key government departments will be critical in enabling and effecting necessary legislative reforms.

On the issue of land and carbon rights, under the NREG TA, a second *National Expert Consultation on Allocation of Terrestrial Carbon Rights* is planned. The consultations will focus on the implications of current land and tree tenure arrangements for the allocation of carbon rights, and will advise on any changes to legislation that are likely to be required to operationalize carbon rights. It will also consider the risks in the current tenure context that would arise from any innovations in carbon rights, and ways to mitigate those risks. At the time of writing, the dates for the consultations and timetable for reporting had not been set.

### *Implications for forest law and policy*

As described above, the current assessment of land use, land-use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance identifies implications for forest law and policy in the long-term. While a range of potential reforms and policy options have also been identified, the studies and pilot projects currently in progress (particularly those under the NREG TA and FIP) will feed into the development and implementation of the national REDD+ strategy through the existing institutional arrangements for REDD+.

## **2b. REDD+ Strategy Options**

### *Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options*

The process of selecting the “indicative candidate components” of a REDD+ strategy (described above) was part of the transparent and participatory process of formulating Ghana’s R-PP (see page 24 of the revised R-PP, December 2010). The prioritization and refinement of REDD+ strategy options being undertaken by the consulting team, PwC, is employing a multiple criteria assessment model described in PwC’s Inception Report and summarized above, based on the candidate options identified in the R-PP and incorporating relevant input from the consulting team conducting the SESA (SAL Consult Ltd). The Inception Report outlines the process timeline to develop and determine the top three options, with the submission of a Draft Strategy Options Report and Activity Management Framework to the REDD+ Secretariat for review and feedback. This will be followed by a multi-stakeholder workshop prior to the presentation of draft report with a recommendation for Ghana’s national REDD+ strategy.

Emissions reduction / carbon sequestration potential is not one of the criteria in the multiple criteria assessment but should contribute to the ability to monitor, measure, verify and report on the environmental criteria. In implementing their workplan, PwC has met on several occasions with the consulting team working on the RL/MRV system (InduforOy) in order to coordinate work where possible and integrate relevant findings. It is expected, particularly given Ghana’s intention to enter into an ER Program Agreement with the Carbon Fund, that the cost-benefit analyses of different proposed REDD+ Strategy options will include an estimate of the value of their ER potential.

To ensure a transparent and participatory process, the organization of the multi-stakeholder workshop should follow Consultation, Participation and Information Plan (CPI Plan) prepared by the Consultation and Participation (C&P) sub-working group. The CPI Plan identifies six target audiences: the media, civil society, opinion makers, forest populations, local communities, the State and the private sector.

Given the importance of the national REDD+ strategy in setting the course of investment in, and implementation of, REDD+ activities in Ghana, it is very important that the full range of stakeholders are well equipped to fully participate in the strategy selection process. This will require timely sharing of information and, potentially, additional outreach by the REDD+ Secretariat prior to the multi-stakeholder workshop.

### *Feasibility assessment*

At the time of writing, the results of the SESA (being undertaken by SAL Consult Limited) and the assessment and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options (being undertaken by PwC) were not available. However, based on the Terms of Reference for the consultancies, their Inception Reports and interviews with the consulting teams, the author is confident that the recommended REDD+ strategy options will have been assessed and prioritized for their social, environmental and political feasibility, risks and opportunities, and analysis of costs and benefits.

### *Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies*

In the development of a national REDD+ strategy for Ghana, PwC has begun with a multiple criteria assessment of the 13 REDD+ candidate strategy options identified in the R-PP. Assessment of the options against several of the criteria, in particular *legal, policy and regulatory*, should identify any inconsistencies with existing policies or programs in other sectors.

An assessment of existing legal and policy instruments was conducted in the formulation of the R-PP and recent changes (e.g. 2012 Forest and Wildlife Policy, Climate Change Policy, Environment Policy) have been identified in PwC's Inception Report. PwC recognizes that the options recommended must "[r]espond to existing legal and policy framework and its challenges, ... as well as being set within the existing sector and broader national development context. On a national level the Options should be in line with, and enhance, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA)." Any further policy developments will be captured through the defined process of stakeholder consultations, particularly through close engagement with the Forest Commission and the MLNR, directly and/or through the Policy sub-working group of the NRWG.

In February 2014, inconsistencies were discovered in the initial candidate strategies that were forming the basis of work for the SESA and REDD+ Strategy. The REDD+ Secretariat quickly convened a meeting of the consulting teams to resolve these inconsistencies and also to review and agree on revised timelines to ensure coordinated delivery of reports and completion before the expiry of the FCPF Grant.

## 2c. Implementation framework

### *Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations*

The recent adoption of the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy (2012) was a critical step in integrating the objectives of REDD+ into the mandate of the Forest Commission and establishing the basis for changing management practices on the ground, including REDD+ activities. The new policy represents a paradigm shift from what was essentially a timber management policy to one of conservation, acknowledging the multiple values and multiple-use of Ghana's forests.

To help translate the new Forest and Wildlife Policy into ground level actions, the Forest Commission plans to publish policy briefs and investing in the training and capacity building of front line staff. Concurrently, the branches of the Forest Commission (including the Climate Change Unit) will be working to mainstream the new policy directions into their annual workplans. Given the relatively recent adoption of the new policy, evidence of its implementation is limited except for the progress of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) programme and its Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) and REDD+ readiness.

Under the FLEGT/VPA with the European Commission, the Government of Ghana has committed to ensure that all timber exported from Ghana to Europe is of legal origin. In March 2014, in collaboration with the Ghana Forestry Commission, Tropenbos International piloted a prototype Wood Tracking System for the domestic timber production and trade. In addition, the FAO (under the UN-REDD Programme) and the Ghana Forestry Commission have signed a Letter of Agreement for provision of "Strengthening information- and knowledge-sharing between REDD+ and FLEGT VPA processes in Ghana". In preparation for, and implementation of, the FCPF REDD+ Readiness grant, the national REDD+ Secretariat has been actively involved in all tasks so as to ensure that there is no duplication with ongoing work and that results from these programs are leveraged as Ghana develops its National REDD+ strategy.

### *Guidelines for implementation*

Much of the work on the implementation framework, as described in the R-PP, had not begun by April 2014. Through interviews with the REDD+ Secretariat and a review of their workplan for 2014, the following activities under this component are scheduled to be completed by September 2014:

- a. Recruitment of individual consultant to identify barriers in promoting private sector, governance and community interactions
- b. Recruitment of individual consultant to develop sector operational guidelines and standards for sub-national and national REDD+ programmes



- c. Recruitment of Consultant to prepare modalities for Challenge Fund (Research Fund) to be established under oversight of FORIG
- d. Develop operational modalities for national carbon accounting registries
- e. Formulation of modalities for REDD+ pilots and stakeholder validation workshop
- f. Training for REDD pilot proponents on carbon market standards and training plan for key staff

A process for the selection and oversight of pilot projects, including a steering committee, was launched in early 2012 but encountered problems relating to the lack of clarity in the call for proposals regarding eligible project types and a lack of funding to support their implementation. On the issue of funding, it has received some attention only recently through the interest of SECO in providing financial support for five pilot projects in off-reserve areas. Given the late start of these pilots within the readiness timeframe, there is a risk that the generation of results and lessons learned might arrive after some of the elements of the national REDD+ institutions and policies have been implemented.

#### *Benefit sharing mechanism*

The consulting team at FORIG has submitted a first draft of their proposal for a benefit-sharing mechanism to the REDD+ Secretariat for review in April 2014. It is too early to comment on details of the proposal as it is pending review by the NRWG/REDD+ Secretariat prior to the organization of two national stakeholder workshops. The consultants were tasked to propose guidance for setting up a national architecture on benefit sharing that can be adopted to support REDD+ implementation process in Ghana. The architecture is expected to include a suite of options for benefit sharing appropriate to a range of circumstances. After the national stakeholder workshops there will need to be a process for determining the appropriate system for the program. Presumably such a process will involve a recommendation by from the NRWG to the TCC+, as it will need to consider planned changes to tree tenure and other legislation and policy based on the national REDD+ strategy. The selection of a benefit sharing mechanism is recognized as a very sensitive issue due to current expectations and the risk of negative reaction of stakeholders. Therefore the quality and coverage of the consultation process will be very important, particularly as there will be little experience from pilot projects or FIP projects by the time a decision (at least a preliminary one) is needed. An added difficulty is the risk of further raising expectations through the development of a benefit sharing system but without an actual program in place to deliver benefits. The ERP under the FCPF Carbon Fund may help in providing a more practical example, but it too will suffer from an uncertain future until the design is completed and accepted by the Carbon Fund and an actual ERPA is signed (at the end of 2015, at the earliest).

An administrative delay at the beginning of the contracting process and the need to move forward the final submission deadline required a reduction in the coverage of the field study.

*The objective of the field study was to determine options of equitable benefit sharing schemes, safeguards to prevent elite capture, identify potential inter/intra community conflicts and resolution mechanisms. In all, 125 respondents were involved in the study spanning six communities namely, Adonikrom and New Yakasi in the Awowin District, with the rest, Amuni, Kamaso, Akyekyewere and Mumuni in the WassaAmenfi District. Five focus group discussions were conducted. These communities were selected based on their extensive experience in REDD+ discourse and pilot activities.<sup>1</sup>*

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

#### **National REDD+ registry and system monitoring REDD+ activities**

In January 2012, the REDD+ Secretariat created a technical working group to advise on the development of a national REDD+ registry. This working group developed a draft concept note about REDD+ registries and used that as the basis for a set of recommendations to guide the REDD+ Secretariat and NRWG on the development of a registry for Ghana. This process resulted in the publication of the document, “*Ghana’s REDD+ Registry: Pathways to Development*”, which explains the concept of a REDD+ registry and outlines the major decision points in its development.

The current FCPF Readiness Grant will not cover the cost to develop a national REDD+ information system or registry and tracking system for ER units. As no other funding has been secured, Ghana will likely seek the Participant Committee’s approval of an additional/supplemental grant from the FCPF Readiness Fund.

## **2d. Social and environmental impacts**

### **Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues**

Following the R-PP, the SESA sub-working group assisted the REDD+ Secretariat in developing the terms of reference for a consulting contract to conduct a SESA and produce an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the implementation of a REDD+ strategy in Ghana.

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<sup>1</sup>Dumenu et al., April 2014, *Draft Report: Benefit Sharing Mechanism for REDD+ Implementation in Ghana*; CSIR-FORIG

As stated in the R-PP and terms of reference, the overall objective of the SESA is to ensure that strategic environmental and social assessment principles are applied to integrate environmental and social considerations into Ghana's REDD+ readiness process in a manner consistent with Ghana's environmental laws and regulations and the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies. The SESA contributes to the REDD+ Readiness process in Ghana in two main ways. First, it helps to refine the REDD+ strategy options by assessing how REDD+ strategy options address environmental and social priorities associated with current patterns of land use and forest management. Gaps identified through this assessment would lead to adjustments in the REDD+ strategy options to close the gaps. Second, the SESA would produce an ESMF that will outline the procedures to be followed for managing potential environmental and social impacts of specific policies, actions and projects during the implementation of the REDD+ strategy that is finally selected.

Administrative delays resulted in a late start on the SESA and necessitated the revision of the original timeline from 18 months to 12 months. As a result, the consultation process had to be scaled down to fit within the new timeframe. Other efficiencies were found by taking advantage of the consultations and assessments that were carried out in the development of the R-PP. The SESA for Ghana's FIP projects is being conducted in parallel with the SESA for the FCPF Readiness activities, given the obvious overlaps and value of taking advantage of the synergies.

#### *REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts*

The use of SESA results and the identification of social and environmental impacts used for prioritizing and designing REDD+ strategy options, while planned and discussed in joint meetings of the respective consulting teams, had not been documented at the time of writing.

#### *Environmental and Social Management Framework*

The ESMF is not yet in place. It will be designed and provided as one of the deliverables of the consulting contract for the SESA. Implementation of the ESMF will be the responsibility of the REDD+ Secretariat.

### **Component 3: Reference Emissions Level / Reference Level**

#### *Demonstration of methodology*

In 2013, the REDD+ Secretariat and the REL/MRV Sub-WG prepared the terms of reference for the Development of a national Reference Emissions Level (REL) and a

Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) System for Ghana. A contract was subsequently awarded to the consulting team of Indufor Oy, Forest Consult and Geo-Info Systems Developers (GISD). Due to administrative delays the work started several months later than originally planned. However, a clear and robust work plan was presented to the REDD+ Secretariat in February 2014 and good progress has been made in its implementation to-date. The development of Ghana's ER-PIN, while not part of the contract, did benefit from input from the REL/MRV consulting team and, in turn, helped to identify important gaps and inform potential solutions for the national REL and MRV system.

At the end of the readiness phase, the institutional arrangements for the ongoing operation of Ghana's MRV system and updating of its REL will need to be in place. The REDD+ Secretariat has indicated that the Forestry Commission would maintain the responsibility and make arrangements with Forest Consult and/or GISD (which is an arm of the Forestry Commission) to continue to carry out the technical operations. This will have budget implications for the Forestry Commission, including consideration of an MRV expert to be based with the REDD+ Secretariat (at least for the next 2 years) to manage the MRV arrangements and REL issues, including technical assessments and coordination with the National GHG Inventory team at the EPA.

#### *Use of historical data, and adjusted for national circumstances*

The REL is still under development but at this stage it is based on 3 sets of satellite imagery of land cover: 1990, 2000 and 2010. Three points with ten-year intervals produces a trend line but the significance of that trend is difficult to determine without additional time-slices (i.e. to show whether those points were anomalies within the 20 year time span). Selecting and incorporating additional datasets for intervening years would require additional time and resources.

At the R-PP formulation stage, it was expected that the wall-to-wall maps produced from the JICA-funded Forest Preservation Program would be of sufficient quality and readily applicable to for the REL and MRV system. However, while the field biomass components of the mapping is excellent, the a full re-analysis of the raw data may be necessary due to lingering questions on categorization of land uses and classification of forests. Such a re-analysis may improve the chances of differentiating between different cocoa/tree cover types. Additional funding would be needed for this work. The alternative is to find alternative data sources to improve the quality of the REL and MRV system, which is likely to come at a cost. These costs will have to be born at some point as the Forest Commission has indicated that it intends to follow a 'step-wise' approach to improving the quality and policy-relevance of the REL and MRV system.

### *Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines*

There is insufficient documentation on Ghana's REL/RL available at this time. The terms of reference for the REL/MRV contract are explicit in requiring the REL/RL to be consistent with UNFCCC guidance and IPCC guidance and guidelines. The Inception Report from the consulting team (February 2014) contains the team's workplan, which includes the production of REL workshop report in March/April. In interviews with members of the consulting team, they demonstrated a very high degree of technical competency and knowledge of UNFCCC REDD+ framework of decisions.

## **Component 4: Forest and safeguard monitoring systems**

### **4a. National forest monitoring system**

#### *Documentation of monitoring approach*

The overall objective of this Component is to develop a monitoring, measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system that allows for transparent accounting of emissions and removals of CO<sub>2</sub> through time that can be compared against the projected reference scenario. The outcome of this component will be a functional system capable of MRV of the performance of REDD+ interventions in Ghana. As noted under Component 3, the consulting contract for the MRV system also includes the development of the national REL.

The consultants have been able to take advantage of a lot of work that had already been done in Ghana, including the existing technical capacity of Ghanaian institutions, and the MRV system is on course to be completed by October 2014. The system structure is modular and will have a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), based on IPCC Guidelines and related UNFCCC REDD+ decisions and guidance, for the acquisition and use of relevant data in estimating emissions and removals. SOPs are being developed for every component of the system and once completed can be assessed for their technical feasibility and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines. The SOPs are also designed to accommodate changes in data sources. Approximately 6 out of 13 SOPs have been completed to-date, with the remainder due to be completed within the revised contract timelines.

An important source of uncertainty is the classification of cocoa landscapes, particularly the differentiation of forests from high- to medium-shade cocoa systems. Given the importance of the cocoa sector as a driver of deforestation and forest degradation, in order to support the assessment of REDD+ strategy options a research project could be targeted to address this gap in the ability monitor change



in the cocoa-forest landscape, including through improved mapping of cocoa farms. The focus of the Terms of Reference of the REL and MRV contract is on forest land but the view emerging from stakeholder engagement is that all lands need to be covered by an integrated system.

### *Demonstration of early system implementation*

The REDD+ strategy has not yet been determined but the monitoring and MRV system will have the capacity to monitor deforestation and afforestation based on available data sources. It will also have the capacity to monitor and measure forest degradation if suitable activity data exists. Through coordination with PwC, as well as in the development of the ER-PIN, the difficulties of monitoring changes in the cocoa forest landscape were highlighted.

An SOP is being developed for projects and programs based on the Voluntary Carbon Standard – Jurisdictional Nested REDD (VCS-JNR) methodology, allowing integration with the national REL and MRV system. The R-PP had envisioned the testing of the system in pilot projects but that has not yet occurred due to the delays in initiating/financing the pilot projects. The pilot projects to be supported by SECO and the FIP projects, in addition to the development of the ‘Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program’, will serve as the first tests of the system, assuming that they do not establish, for their own purposes, incompatible monitoring and MRV systems. This highlights the current capacity limitations of the REDD+ Secretariat, to understand and foresee the technical needs related to REL and MRV system implementation and to have sufficient time and resources to supervise others in performing specific tasks, particularly when those involved are not working together in a central location (i.e. Kumasi vs. Accra) and are responsible for a range of other tasks.

The REDD+ Secretariat has encouraged the close collaboration among the consulting teams, facilitating meetings and the sharing of information and coordination of scheduling. InduforOy found that there were significant numbers of Forestry Commission and other agency staff trained in GIS, Remote Sensing and Carbon Calculation. The Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) in Kumasi, under the Forest Commission, has the GIS/Remote Sensing capability, including hardware and software necessary to operate the MRV system.

The involvement of key stakeholders in the operation of the national forest monitoring system is unclear at this point. The National Forest Forum has some capacity to collect relevant data and review reports and the Forestry Commission has been looking at the potential for CREMAs to play a stronger role, also in monitoring under the VPA.

### *Institutional arrangements and capacities*

The Forestry Commission already has a clear mandate to perform tasks related to forest monitoring. A MoU between the Forestry Commission and the EPA has been established to ensure that forest sector information is fed into the processes for National Communications, National GHG Inventory Reports and Biennial Update Reports submitted to the UNFCCC. The MRV consulting team has coordinated with the EPA to ensure that a common database will be used for REDD+ and for National Communication. It is only the accounting that will be different, as the National GHG Inventory Report will derive estimates for AFOLU using the IPCC 2006 Guidelines.

For the operation of the monitoring system over the longer term, the current capacity is strong and is being further developed through the REL & MRV system design process with Forest Consult and RMSC staff. However, in addition to securing core budget support for the monitoring and MRV system, the Forestry Commission will need to consider organization of resources (including the role of consultants) to meet the needs over the long term. It is not clear that the importance and resource implications of sustaining the system in the long term are yet appreciated at higher levels in the government.

#### **4b. Information system for co-benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards**

##### ***Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues***

The R-PP had budgeted for training workshops on biodiversity indicators, for Forestry Commission staff and relevant stakeholders. The intent is to eventually expand the MRV system, following a step-wise approach, to monitor biodiversity indicators. The training workshops are scheduled to begin in May 2014.

##### ***Monitoring, reporting and information sharing***

Stakeholder and broader public consultation processes are built into the methodologies for conducting the SESA and preparing the ESMF and benefit sharing mechanism. The institutional arrangements for information sharing, communications and participation have been described under Component 1.

It has been noted that the capacity of the EPA to monitor environmental safeguards at the district and local level is very limited. Currently, the approach is limited to the scope of major projects, where each project has their own EPA-monitoring component built-in – essentially a self-policing approach. The tools are there (legislation and institution) but enforcement is weak. To improve the quality of safeguards monitoring, this approach will need to be re-evaluated and it is expected that the ESMF will present a more effective approach that considers the range of local, regional and national circumstances in Ghana. It is expected that

improvements will need to include better collaboration among central authorities (e.g. EPA, MLNR, Mineral Commission, Water Resource Commission and Forestry Commission) in addition to supported/resourced decentralization of monitoring and enforcement.



(Photos: Kakum National Park, Ghana; Peter J Graham, 2014)

## **Annex 1: Terms of Reference and Scope of Work**

### **ToR for Independent Mid-Term Evaluation of REDD+ Readiness preparation progress in Ghana**

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#### **BACKGROUND**

Ghana has embarked on preparations for full participation in the evolving international mechanism for reducing emissions of the greenhouse gas GHG emissions from Deforestation and Degradation of forests (REDD +) since the signing of the Grant Agreement in October 2011. The REDD process is being coordinated by the Forestry Commission, with the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholder institutions and groups. Funding for this process is mainly provided by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank, with additional financial and technical support from some bilateral partners.

Based on Ghana's REDD Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) which was submitted for assessment and subsequently approved by the FCPF Participants Committee (PC) at its 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, held in March 2010 in Gabon, the REDD activities are structured into 4 main components:

- 1) Organization and Consultation;
- 2) Preparation of the REDD-plus Strategy;
- 3) Develop a Reference Scenario; and,
- 4) Design a Monitoring System

In October 2011, Ghana signed Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement. After two (2) years, Ghana has now reached a point where it is preparing for mid –term review of its Readiness Preparations. In accordance with its reporting obligations under the FCPF, the Government will prepare a mid-term progress report for submission to the FCPF [in May 2014] presenting the current status of the national preparatory process for REDD to the Participants Committee of the FCPF, with a view to requesting additional funding of up to \$5million for the continued implementation of its Readiness preparation activities.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this consultancy is to carry out an independent mid-term evaluation of Ghana's national REDD + Readiness preparations. The evaluation is expected to report on the overall national REDD+

Readiness process highlighting the Readiness components that were supported with FCPF financing.

#### SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will evaluate and provide an overview of Ghana's progress to date in implementing the four main components of the R-PP and their respective sub-components:

1. Readiness Organization and Consultation
  - 1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements
  - 1b. Consultation, Participation, and Outreach
2. REDD+ Strategy Preparation
  - 2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance
  - 2b. REDD+ Strategy Options
  - 2c. Implementation Framework
  - 2d. Social and Environmental Impacts
3. Reference Emissions Levels/Reference Levels
4. Monitoring Systems for Forests, and Safeguards
  - 4a. National Forest Monitoring System
  - 4b. Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards

For each component and subcomponent, the evaluation shall:

- (v) Assess progress achieved to date (outputs and outcomes);
- (vi) Identify key strengths and areas requiring further work;
- (vii) Identify additional actions that may assist Ghana to achieve the objectives contained in its R-PP
- (viii) Identify other information, as relevant, such as significant readiness work in progress or major constraints that could hinder progress.

In addition, the evaluation should consider:

- (vi) Progress achieved in activities funded by the FCPF Readiness Preparation Grant, and identify any delays in the implementation of these activities, the causes for any delays and proposed actions to address the causes of the delays;



- (vii) Overall sufficiency of available finances and plans to source resources for the overall Readiness preparation activities, including funds pledged by other development partners;
- (viii) Compliance with SESA; and
- (ix) The degree of national ownership of and participation of stakeholders in the REDD+ Readiness Process.
- (x) Synergies with other projects / programs in the country, particularly the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), FLEGT and VPA.

The Evaluation should draw on relevant materials prepared during the Readiness process, including Ghana's R-PP and R-PP Assessment Note, annual and semi-annual progress reports to the FCPF, information generated through Ghana's monitoring and evaluation system (per component 6 in the R-PP),

It is expected that the consultant will apply a range of appropriate evaluation techniques (e.g., focus groups, interviews, triangulation of information, analysis of technical quantitative and qualitative, etc.), which will include in-country consultations.

The consultant will need to work closely with the National REDD Secretariat and other key stakeholder groups and institutions including representatives of civil society and the private sector.

## DELIVERABLES

The Consultant is expected to produce:

- An inception report detailing the methodology to be followed and the schedule of work, by mid-March 2014;
- A draft evaluation report to be shared with stakeholders for feedback, by end of April 2014;
- A final evaluation report, by early May 2014.
- Make a presentation at the Participants Committee meeting of the FCPF in June 2014, subject to Ghana's decision to present its mid-term progress report at the PC meeting in June 2014

## DURATION

The task shall be completed within 45 days, with a period of at least a

week in country.

#### PROFILE OF CONSULTANT

- International Experience of at least 8 years with independent assessments, particularly in the forestry sector and or management of natural resources;
- Knowledge of the national context in GHANA;
- Knowledge of REDD + and climate change;
- Strong technical report writing skills;
- Experience in evaluation of strategies / preparation of public policy, in addition to experience with evaluation at the project level would be an asset.

#### ANNEXES

- Ghana's R-PP
- R-PP Assessment Note
- Process for Submitting and Reviewing Mid-Term Progress Reports and Requests for Additional Funding by Participating REDD+ Countries.
- FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework

P.S: Inception reports (or other documents if available) from readiness work in progress will be made available at the time of start of consultancy.

## Annex 2: Working Group Members and Consultants

### NATIONAL REDD+ WORKING GROUP (NRWG) MEMBERS

Name	Organisation
Prof. Bruce Banoeng-Yakubo	Chief Director- MLNR
Mr. J.G.K. Owusu	Forestry Consultant - Chairman
Mrs. Gifty M. Biyira	MLNR
Mr. Musa Abu-Juam	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources - Member
Mr. Alex Dadzie	Ghana Timber association
Mr. Robert Bamfo	Forestry Commission (REDD+ Secretariat) – Member
Mr. Emmanuel Afreh	Mineral Commission - Member
Mr. Joseph Osiakwan	MLNR - Member
Mrs. Irene Messiba	MLGRD - Member
Mr. K.A. Tabi	MEST - Member
Mr. Eric Ofori Nyarko	Ministry of Energy
Mr. Delali Nutsukpo	MoFA - Member
Nana Frimpong Anokye Ababio	National House of Chiefs
Naa Robert Loggah	National Forest Forum
Mr. K.S. Nketiah	Tropenbos International- Ghana
Dr. Ernest Foli	FORIG
Mr. C.K. Nateg	Forestry Commission
Mr. Saeed Abdul- Razak	Civic Response
Mr. Franklin Ashiadey	MoFEP
Mr. K.Y. Oppong Boadi	EPA

### MEMBERS OF THE SUB-WORKING GROUPS

#### 1. Policy and Legislation Review

Name	Organization
Mr. Samuel Afari Dartey	Chief Executive -Forestry Commission
Mr. David Guba Kpelle	Wildlife Division - Member
Mr. Musa Abu-Juam	Technical Director-Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources - Member
Mr. J.K. Owusu	Forestry Consultant
Mr. Robert Bamfo	REDD+ Secretariat – Member/Secretary
Mr. Emmanuel Afreh	Mineral Commission - Member
Mr. Joseph Osiakwan	MLNR - Member
Mrs. Irene Messiba	MLGRD - Member

Mr. K.A. Tabi	MEST - Member
Mr. Delali Nutsukpo	MoFA - Member
Mr. Raphael Yeboah	Forestry Commission – Member
Dr. Ben Donkor	Forestry Commission – Member
Nana Adu Nsiah	Forestry Commission – Member
Franklin Ashiadey	MOFEP
Oppon Sasu	Forestry Commission – Member

## 2. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA)

Name	Organization
Ms. Christine Asare	EPA - Chair
Mr. David Guba Kpelle	Cntr. For Human and Env. Security - Member
Mr. Sulemana Adamu	REDD+ Secretariat – Member/Secretary
Mr. Emmanuel Afreh	Mineral Commission – Member
Mr. K.S. Nketiah	TBI - Member
Mr. R.K. Bamfo	REDD+ Secretariat - Member

## 3. National REDD+ Consultations

Name	Organization
Mr. Alex Asare	RMSC (FC)
Mr. Wale Adeleke	IUCN
Mr. Sulemana Adamu	REDD+ Secretariat – Member/Secretary
Mr. K.S. Nketiah	TBI – Member – Chairman
Mr. Razak	Civic Response - Member
Mr. E.E.K. Acquah-Moses	Ghana Timber Millers Org. - Member
Nana Frimpong Anokye	National House of Chiefs – Member
Mr. Naa Robert Loggah	National Forest Forum - Member
Ms. Roselyn Adjei	REDD+ Secretariat - Member
Mr Joseph Osiakwan	MLNR
Mr. K .A Tabi	MEST

## 4. REDD+ Pilot Projects

Name	Organization
Mr. Yaw Kwakye	REDD+ Secretariat – Member/Secretary
Mr. Raphael Yeboah	Forest Services Division
Mr. Robert Bamfo	REDD+ Secretariat – Chairman
Dr. Ernest Foli	FORIG - Member
Mr. Cletus Nateg	Wildlife Division (FC) - Member
Mr. Joseph Osiakwan	MLNR – Member
Mr. Delali Nutsukpo	MoFA – Member
Mr. Vincent Antwi	Ghana Meteorological Agency – Member

Mr. Alex Dadzie	Ghana Timber Association – Member
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#### 5. Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV)/REL System

Name	Organization
Dr. Stephen Adu-Bredu	FORIG - Member
Mr. Kofi Affum-Baffoe	RMSC (FC) - Secretary
Mr. Foster Mensah	CERGIS - Member
Mr. Daniel Benefoh	EPA - Member
Mr. Yakubu Muhammed	RMSC (FC) - Member
Dr. Ernest Foli	FORIG – Chairman - Member
Mr. Robert Bamfo	REDD+ Secretariat – Member
Cletus K. Nateg	Wildlife Division - Member
Yaw Kwakye	REDD+ Secretariat – Member
Mr. Gene Birikorang	Hamilton Resources/Consulting – Chairman
Mr. Augustine Arthur	Forestry Commission -Member
Cudjoe Awudi	Co-opted
Winston asante	Co-opted

#### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (logical frameworks)

Name	Organization
Mr. Oppon Sasu	Forestry Commission - Chairman
Mr. David Guba Kpelle	NLBI/FC - Member
Mr. Joseph Adu Mintah	Forestry Commission - Member
Mr. Sulemana Adamu	REDD+ Secretariat – Secretary
Mr. Cletus Nateg	Wildlife Division (FC) – Member
Franklin Ashiadey	MoFEP -Member
Mathew Tawiah Ababio	MLNR
Dr Mark Dadebo	FC

#### REDD+ CONSULTANTS and Others

Name and organization	Subject
Dr. Peter Moore, Indufor Oy	MRV/REL
Dr. Carly Green	MRV/REL
Susanne Bouma, PwC Ghana	REDD+ Strategy
Seth A. Larmie, SAL Consult	SESA
Dr. Kwame Agyemang, CSIR-FORIG	Benefit Sharing, REDD+ pilot projects
Y.B. Osafo, Y.B. Osafo Legal Services	Dispute Resolution
Ama Kudom-Agyemang	REDD+ Communications
Wale Adeleke, IUCN	Benefit Sharing
John Mason, NCRC	REDD+ Carbon Mapping & Capacity Building
Seth Adjei-Boye, SWISS Embassy	SECO Support for REDD+ pilots projects



