

# World Bank - Grant Reporting and Monitoring (GRM) Report

Report to Donor

Ref. TF080617

Reporting Period: 07/10/2019 to 12/31/2021

Printed On:

Report Type: Completion

Report Status: Approved

Assignment:

## Grant Agreement for Gabon's Readiness Preparation Proposal - Readiness Fund of Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)

### FCPF - Forest Carbon Partnership Facility

Task Team Leader: Fisseha Tessema Abissa

Approving Manager: Sanjay Srivastava

Summary Information	
TF Status	CLSD
Recipient Country	Gabon
Executed By	Recipient
Managing Unit	SAWE4
Grant Start Date / End Date	7/10/2019 to 12/31/2021
Program Manager	Siet Meijer
Original Grant Amount	1,950,000
Grant Amount	1,950,000
Outstanding Commitments	0.00
Cumulative Disbursements	1,489,663
Disbursed 07/10/2019 to 12/30/2021	1,489,663
Donor	TF602001 - MULTIPLE DONORS

*This GRM report includes the following sections: Overview, Components, Outcome, Execution, Program(FCPFR), Completion, Disbursements, Procurement Plan, Procurement Actuals.*

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## OVERVIEW

### Overall Assessments and Ratings

#### Grant Objectives:

To improve estimates of emissions from the forestry sector and to design and validate with key stakeholders a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale.

#### Overall progress from 07/10/2019 to 12/31/2021 with regard to Achieving Grant Objectives:

##### Comment:

The Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux (ANPN), encountered multiple challenges in implementation, prominently the disruption in travel within Gabon (Libreville was quarantined), the difficulties of international travel and supply chain disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic that started in February 2020 and lasted until the end of the project. Furthermore, the crux of the activities depended on a firm contract with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) that was not signed until June 2020 (1 year into project implementation) and did not allow for enough time to complete all activities under this contract (combined with COVID delays and the replacement of ANPN Project Coordinator). The first disbursement was also very delayed (February 2020), months after project effectiveness. The initial closing date was December 2020, but this was extended until December 2021. A request for a second extension was made by the Government of Gabon, but this was not accepted by the World Bank.

At the Closing Date, the ANPN and TNC were able to deliver improved emission estimates from the forestry sector. This included: (a) The RIL-C (low impact logging for carbon mitigation) methodology was adopted by the Gabon FCPF Technical Committee in September 2020; (b) in December 2020, the methodology was translated into field training for 10 Gabonese specialists from various backgrounds, including national researchers and forest concession employees; and (c) ANPN and TNC implemented the methodology in 12 of the 15 planned forest concessions (the last 3 concession measurements were not completed due to delays in activities and project closure).

The project was not able to deliver a validated strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale due to the delay in delivering the results from emissions estimates. However, although the strategy was not delivered, all of the other studies deemed important for developing the strategy were delivered. These studies are: (a) options for certification of timber harvested from concessions using reduced impact logging-carbon (RIL-C) strategies; (b) examine the potential of reforestation, plantations, and stock enhancement programs; and (c) a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and Environment Management Framework for the anticipated content of Emission Reduction Forestry Strategy. Hence, there are all the components delivered for preparing a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at national scale, if Gabon wishes to proceed with this strategy all the background work has been completed.

#### Overall progress from 07/10/2019 to 12/31/2021 with regard to Implementation of Grant Financed Activities:

##### Comment:

- Finalization of relevant institutional arrangements (creation of PIU and governmental decree affirming such) (September 2019); appointment of all key team members (November 2019);
- Initiation of procurement plan (December 2019);
- Meetings of the Steering Committee (multiple times);
- Drafting and approval of annual budgeted workplan by the Steering Committee (January 2020);
- The PIU was trained by the Bank's safeguards specialists in the new Environmental and Social Framework (January 2020);
- Opening of the project Designated Account and first disbursement (February 2020);
- Drafting and revision of the Project Implementation Manual
- Termes of Reference drafted for: improved emissions accounting on forestry concessions; certification of timber harvested from concessions using reduced impact logging-carbon (RIL-C) strategies; reforestation strategy; an expert in RIL-C; Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA); external auditor;

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- Recruitment of an expert to train a national team to apply the methodology for the measurement of degradation in forest concessions (February 2020);
- Recruitment of an expert in RIL-C (May 2020);
- Recruitment of five national researchers to take emissions measurements (April 2020);
- Contract signed with TNC, the most significant consultancy in the project (June 2020).
- RIL-C methodology was adopted by the Gabon FCPF Technical Committee (September 2020);
- Field training for 10 Gabonese specialists in RIL-C methodology (December 2020);
- Field measurements of 12 randomly selected and representative Gabonese concessions (January 2021-December 2021).
- Delivery of final RIL-C carbon emissions report (December 2021).
- Study on options for certification of timber conducted and completed (March-September 2021).
- Examine the potential of reforestation, plantations, and stock enhancement programs (delivered December 2021).
- SESA and ESMF outlines delivered (March 2022).

As a result of the emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project incurred delays to routine planning and implementation, as well as several activities that had been envisioned before the outbreak. Key activities impacted by COVID-19 included: (i) permanent postponement of the project launch; (ii) multiple procurement activities, specifically those related to computer hardware and software, vehicles, and geolocation and other equipment needed for field measurements; (iii) the planning and deployment of field missions.

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## Grant follow-up and structure

### Description and context of Grant:

Although Gabon signed a R-PP formulation grant in 2009, it did not execute it. In 2017, Gabon reengaged with the FCPF and submitted a R-PP that it had developed with its own resources. The submission of the R-PP was accompanied by a request for a Readiness Preparation Grant, which was approved by the FCPF Participants Committee in 2017 subject to revisions to be made to the R-PP and which were finalized in 2018. In September 2017, the FCPF Participants Committee allocated US\$ 1.95 million to Gabon (Resolution PC24/2017/6.a) for the implementation of its REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP). The activities to be financed with support from the FCPF are fully integrated into the activities being financed concurrently by the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI).

In support of Outcome 3 of the Gabon-CAFI partnership, the Government of Gabon (GoG) requested support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to improve emissions estimates from the forestry sector and design a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale, including examining the potential for reforestation. More specifically, support was requested to: (1) improve knowledge and estimates of current emission levels from forest degradation in logging concessions; (2) define guidelines for improved forestry management, with an emphasis on reduced impact logging-carbon (RIL-C); (3) examine the potential of reforestation, plantations and stock enhancement programs; and (4) examine the potential of a national "label" program to incentivize operators to implement RIL-C, or other best practice forestry guidelines.

Component 1: Improved baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector. Based on an evaluation of various options and in collaboration with the Institute of Tropical Research, Gabon has selected a methodology to improve emissions calculations from forestry activities. The project will support the training of a team and the implementation at a national scale of the selected methodology (Activity 1.1). This will include the mobilization of a field inventory team, the funding of field inventory and data collection missions and the purchasing of field equipment and other goods to enable these missions. Moreover, the project will support the hiring of an international consultancy organization to accompany the national teams undertaking this activity, as well as activities 2.1-2.3 which are interrelated.

Component 2: Design of a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector. Data generated from activities under Component 1 will be used to identify emissions factors associated with specific aspects of logging operations (e.g. residual damage from felling, skid trails, road creation, wood transformation and wood waste management, etc.). Based on these calculations and further analytical work, emissions from the industry will be identified and the most effective and feasible technical and legal mechanisms to reduce these emissions will be defined in a national strategy to be validated by key stakeholders (Activity 2.1). These would comprise improved harvest practices that are known as Climate Effective Reduced Impact Logging, or RIL-C1. The strategy will integrate technological advancement options and inform decision-makers of any institutional and governance reforms that may be required to achieve emission reductions (for example, a revision to the forest code, better regulation of transformation activities, and so on).

**Expected follow up (if any):** Follow up Bank project/loan/credit/grant

Not defined at this time, but the World Bank Task Team is actively looking for opportunities to develop forestry and carbon crediting operations to follow-up the FCPF Readiness results.

### Comment on follow up:

N/A

### End Date of Last Site Visit: May 2-13, 2022

Due to pandemic travel restrictions, the World Bank team couldn't travel to Gabon from 2019 until the end of the project. Following closure of the project, the Task Team visited Gabon to discuss the final deliverables with ANPN and to assist in closing the project.

**Restructuring of Grant:** N/A

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<sup>1</sup> Research has shown that logging improvements can maintain timber production and reduce carbon emissions by 30-50%. Considering the need to balance human demand for timber products with climate change mitigation, RIL-C is a potential strategic conservation intervention in Gabon.

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## OUTCOME

### Comments on outcome achieved from 07/10/2019 to 12/31/2021

The main grant outcomes (improved emissions measurement & strategy validation) were designed to follow one another. The strategy development could not proceed without the forestry sector emissions data and the same consultant (TNC) was hired to deliver both outcomes sequentially. There was already a tight timeline to deliver this grant in about 2 years, which was made impossible with the delays previously described. Hence, all the outcomes of this grant were achieved, except for the emission reductions strategy for forestry. The concession emissions data was only made available at the close of the grant, leaving no time for strategy development.

There was supposed to be a SESA and safeguard instruments developed for the strategy, but with no strategy this could not be completed. However, the safeguard consultants were contracted so when it became clear that the strategy would not be available, they still proceeded to deliver a SESA and ESMF outline of the activities expected of any future emissions reduction strategy.

### Grant Outcome Indicators

Grant outcome indicators are listed below.

#### Methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation implemented

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: Yes. RIL-C methodology selected & validated, training in methodology delivered, and methodology for calculating emissions completed.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

#### National emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector designed and validated with all key stakeholders

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: No, was contingent upon the previous outcome being executed and field missions to obtain statistical data.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

#### Inventory team trained on methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: Yes, completed December 2020.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

#### Methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation implemented by inventory team in forestry concessions at national scale

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: Yes, completed for 12 out of the 15 randomly selected, representative concessions at national-scale.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

#### Strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations designed and validated with all keystakeholders

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: No, contingent upon the elaboration of the methodology and field collection of data, and this was only completed at the end of the grant.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

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### Potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs evaluated and integrated into the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: Yes, final report and workshop delivered in December 2021.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

### Strategy for certifying forestry concessions engaged in Gabon emissions reduction program with “Green Gabon” label designed and validated with all key stakeholders

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: Yes, final report was delivered by the close of the grant.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

### SESA conducted, and safeguards instruments developed and integrated into the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector

Baseline Value: No

Date: 09/01/2019

Progress to Date: No, could not complete because no strategy developed, but draft SESA and safeguard instruments were developed for activities anticipated to be in a future strategy.

Date: 12/31/2021

Target Value: Yes

Date: 12/31/2021

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## COMPONENTS/OUTPUTS

### Output and Implementation by Component (as of 12/31/2022)

#### Component 1: Improved baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector

Implementation Rating: Satisfactory

Status: Completed

Planned Output: (i) Implementation of a methodology to calculate emissions from degradation in forestry concessions at national scale

Actual Output: (i) Implementation of a methodology to calculate emissions from degradation in forestry concessions at national scale

#### Component 2: Design of a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector

Implementation Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

Status: Not Completed

Planned Output: (i) Design and validation of strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations; (ii) Evaluation of potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs, particularly in highly degraded forests as an additional means of reducing emissions from the forestry sector; (iii) Design and validation of a strategy for certifying forestry concessions reducing emissions; (iv) Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment and development of safeguards instruments; (v) Consultations with stakeholders

Actual Output: (ii) Evaluation of potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs, particularly in highly degraded forests as an additional means of reducing emissions from the forestry sector; (iii) Design and validation of a strategy for certifying forestry concessions reducing emissions; (iv) Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment and development of safeguards instruments, and (v) Consultations with stakeholders

#### Component 3: Project coordination

Implementation Rating: Unsatisfactory

Status: Completed

Planned Output: (i) Reinforcing capacity and training; (ii) Office supplies, materials and other goods; (iii) Financial audit and fees

Actual Output: (i) Reinforcing capacity and training in safeguards; (ii) Office supplies, materials and other goods; (iii) financial audits and fees.

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## Comment on planned and actual Output

### Comment on component implementation progress

As of the end of the Reporting Period (12/31/2021):

Under Component 1

- A. Development and comparison of improved methodologies: The RIL-C methodology was adopted by the FCPF Technical Committee in September 2020. With FCPF support, this methodology has been critically reviewed and adapted for deployment at the national level. A sampling protocol was adopted that subdivided the 831 total concessions based on several parameters (estimated forest carbon density, distance of concessions from towns, concession size, soil type, topography, etc.) and a portioning algorithm was used to determine which groups of concessions are like each other) and a portioning algorithm was used to determine which groups of concessions are similar to each other. Next, a random selection of 15 concessions was chosen for sampling that would be representative of the diversity of logging concessions in Gabon. Thus, this subcomponent provided a new and robust methodology for measuring carbon emissions from Gabonese industrial forestry.
- B. Training of national experts: In December 2020, the methodology was translated into field training for 10 Gabonese specialists from diverse backgrounds, including national researchers and forest concession employees. The training was conducted by a trainer from ANPN and a trainer from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (the consulting firm hired to implement the methodology). Thus, this subcomponent provided the national capacity needed to implement the carbon methodology in the 15 concessions.
- C. Methodology Implementation: ANPN and TNC have implemented the methodology in 12 of the 15 planned forest concessions. The last 3 concessions were not measured due to delays in activities and project closure.

Of the 12 concessions sampled, there was significant variation in carbon emissions from forestry operations. In summary, the two FSC-certified concessions had the lowest carbon emissions per hectare. In contrast, the concessions following CPAET standards had the highest emissions per hectare, largely due to the extensive woodlot infrastructure. Other concessions following CFAD standards could also have very high emissions per hectare due to the higher density of road construction. In addition, 2 of the 12 concessions (one CPAET and one CFAD) had very high emissions due to felling done with incorrect bucking-indicating that some concession employees simply do not have the same technical skills, regardless of certification or operating standards.

Thus, this study showed that some logging concessions have more than double the emissions per hectare than FSC-certified concessions. It showed that this is due in part to the design of the concessions' infrastructure and in part to the technical skills of the logging staff. If Gabon could have all its logging concessions FSC-certified, it would have a significant carbon benefit, given the scale involved (55% of the country's land area).

These results provide insight into the emissions resulting from different industrial logging techniques and align with the objectives of the CAFI program for SNORNF implementation. They meet the commitments to contribute to the completion of the National Land Allocation Plan (PNAT) and the Natural Resources and Forest Monitoring System (SNORNF). The data obtained will not only allow for the evaluation of the performance of logging techniques by forest concessionaires but will also allow for the establishment of a policy for the support and/or improvement of timber extraction operations; knowing that the application of improved logging methods contributes to the reduction of emissions due to forest degradation in forest concessions.

Under Component 2,

- A. Design and implement a strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations: The design and implementation of the strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations was one of the objectives of the NGO TNC's activity under the FCPF project. In addition to improving the development of the methodology for improving knowledge and estimates of the levels of emissions from forest degradation in logging concessions, These activities have not been completed.
- B. Assessment of the potential of reforestation and/or forest restoration programs, particularly in severely degraded forests, as an additional means of reducing emissions from the forestry sector: This study was conducted by a consortium composed of GFEC (Global Forest Environment Consulting - Gabon) and SODEFOR (Côte d'Ivoire).



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The consortium conducted a comprehensive analysis of Gabon's experience with forest plantations (particularly with the Okoumé species) and also identified the extent of land in Gabon that could benefit from reforestation and restoration. They identified 550,000 hectares (5,500 km<sup>2</sup>) of areas with reforestation potential: (a) 300,000 hectares of land in the savanna zone that could be converted to intensive silviculture plots; (b) 50,000 hectares of land deforested by oil and gold extraction; (c) 150,000 hectares of reforestation potential in industrial logging areas; and (d) 50,000 hectares of agroforestry potential in agricultural landscapes.

The study estimates that implementing reforestation throughout the identified area would cost approximately 152 billion CFA francs (\$282 million) per year for 10 years and create approximately 50,000 direct jobs. Reforestation would improve the sustainability of supply to the timber processing industry, which Gabon has invested heavily to ensure its long-term success. It would also avoid 224,745,881 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e over 25 years, which would represent 55% of Gabon's total emission reduction commitments under the NDC for the period 2010-2025. It therefore offers some potential for carbon funds.

- C. Design and implementation of a certification strategy for forest concessions involved in the beneficiary's emission reduction program under the "Green Gabon" label: The study related to the design of this strategy was carried out by the Consortium of firms TERE and CIBOLA PARTNERS. The study proposed a mechanism that would allow, on the one hand, to incite forest concessionaires to engage in forest management practices that allow the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and, on the other hand, to reward forest concessionaires who are already engaged in this type of practices. This mechanism can be based on the notion of carbon credits, in line with the sustainable development law and the climate law. It can also be based on other tools such as tax incentives or labelling.
- D. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment of the National Emission Reduction Strategy for the Forestry Sector and Development of Related Environmental and Social Management Instruments: In the initial design of this project, after the completion of the national emission reduction strategy for the forestry sector, a strategic environmental and social assessment was planned. Specifically, the assessment aimed to achieve three (3) objectives: to identify, evaluate and propose environmental and social management measures to be implemented to address the potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with the National Emissions Reduction Strategy for the forestry sector that will revolve around the RIL-C methodology.

When it became clear that the strategy would not be completed by the end of the project, the FCPF project nevertheless moved forward with the preparation of the environmental and social assessment of the environmental and social risks expected from the implementation of RIL-C forestry practices. The environmental and social assessment focused on the RIL-C methodology, which Gabon considers to be the strategic program it wishes to apply to all forest concessions to design the national strategy for reducing emissions from timber extraction operations. The objective is to identify the environmental and social impacts of applying this methodology and the risks associated with its generalization, and to develop an environmental and social management framework with safeguards that will consider Gabon's REDD+ safeguards and the World Bank's new environmental and social framework.

Thus, as Gabon moves forward with its forest sector carbon reduction strategy, it has all the necessary safeguards available, including a draft environmental and social management framework prepared under this project.

Under Component 3 the Project was able to finalize all necessary institutional arrangements and receive formal appointments for all key members of the PIU; this includes the opening of the project's Designated Account after a several month delay and its first disbursement, which did not occur until a full six months after project effectiveness. The project's high-level Steering Committee was able to meet several times and to provide strategic orientation to the project and to approve the annual budgeted work plan. The procurement plan was finalized and all of recruitments were completed.

However, there were additional issues with project management. The Project Coordinator was removed by ANPN in 2021 with less than 8 months remaining in the project. This impacted implementation as the replacement Project Coordinator almost immediately became ill and communication between the World Bank and ANPN team became very poor near the end of the project. Financial audits were also delivered very late (e.g., the 2020 audit wasn't approved until May 2022).

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## EXECUTION

### Bank project related to the grant

Project ID / Name: P167065 - Gabon FCPF REDD+ Readiness

Project Status: Lending

Global Focal Area: Climate change

Product Line:

### Implementing agency and contact details

Agency: Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux

Contact: M. Christian Tchémambela (Executive Secretary)

Address: Libreville, Gabon

Phone:

Email: tchemambela@gmail.com

## PROGRAM

### Program Specific Questions

**1. Describe progress in how the Grant activities are being coordinated with other REDD+-related initiatives, including those funded by others.**

In support of Outcome 3 of the Gabon-CAFI partnership, which is “Efforts to maintain carbon sequestration by forests, reduce emissions related to forest degradation and improve inclusive forest governance” the GoG requested support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to improve emissions estimates from the forestry sector and design a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale, including examining the potential for reforestation. The activities to be financed with support from the FCPF are fully integrated into the activities being financed by CAFI.

**2. Describe any important changes in the technical design or approach related to the Grant activities.**

No significant changes in the technical design have been made.

**3. Describe progress in addressing key capacity issues (implementation, technical, financial management, procurement) related to this Grant.**

The Bank has been providing continued guidance to improve financial management and procurement aspects. The PIU has undergone a training in implementation of safeguards under the new Environmental and Social Framework. The World Bank tried to further address capacity issues during implementation, but with no missions allowed during the implementation due to COVID, it was very challenging and not very successful.

**4. Describe progress in addressing social and environmental issues (including safeguards) related to the Grant. Is the SESA conducted in accordance with the Common Approach?**

The SESA was designed and conducted in accordance with the Common Approach, however there isn't a SESA of the strategy (doesn't exist).

**5. Is the ESMF prepared in accordance with the Common Approach?**

Similarly, the ESMF would have followed the common approach, but as the strategy was not delivered, the ESMF aspects were speculative in terms of what might eventually be in the strategy.

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## 6. Describe progress in stakeholder consultation, participation, disclosure of information, and the FGRM related to this Grant.

Stakeholder consultation and participation were stymied by the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis and did not take place as planned regarding strategy development and safeguard instrument preparation. However, there was stakeholders interviews and validation workshops for the development of the safeguard deliverables and studies (certification options; reforestation options). In particular, in developing the safeguard instruments, the project team visited 6 provinces in December 2021 and consulted with local officials, civil society (youth, women, forest communities) and private sector concessionaires.

## COMPLETION

### Overall Assessments and Lessons Learned

#### Main lessons learned:

The FCPF Grant revealed there is a significant difference in greenhouse gas emissions between forestry concessions using a robust, scientific methodology. In particular, FSC-certified concessions appear to have the lowest greenhouse gas emissions, which provides a solid foundation for mobilizing international carbon credits to support concessionaires in covering the increased operating costs associated with acquiring FSC certification.

Moreover, the FCPF Grant highlighted the high potential of forestry plantations to contribute to the wood processing industry and sequester more carbon dioxide, but also the significant investment costs and management capacity required. The FCPF Grant also highlighted the different certification options under the "Green Gabon" label.

Gabon is the first country in Africa to receive results-based REDD+ payments and has an operational REDD+ system. In June 2021, an initial payment of US\$17 million<sup>2</sup> (at US\$5 per ton) for emissions reduction in both 2016 and 2017 against annual emission level from 2006 to 2015.

However, this FCPF Grant has revealed that there is more opportunity for Gabon to receive higher REDD+ payments from its commercial forestry concessions, while also improving its commercial branding and increased supply of logs to the wood processing industry.

#### Overall outcome (and its Sustainability):

##### Comment:

Overall, the grant-financed studies were all completed, and all provided analysis on how to improve the financial, environmental, and social sustainability of forestry operations in Gabon. These reports provide a strong foundation for fairly rapidly designing a strategy to reduce emissions from the forestry sector and mobilize international carbon financing to help achieve forestry's industrial outcomes - if the Government decides to pursue these activities in the future (with or without World Bank assistance).

#### Bank Performance:

##### Comment:

The overall Bank Performance is Moderately Satisfactory, based on quality at entry and project supervision. Unfortunately, no supervision missions allowed for World Bank staff to meet with ANPN, and consultants in-person and virtual supervision had its limits to effectiveness - particularly with trouble-shooting operational or personnel issues. Obviously, the pandemic posed an exceptional set of circumstances, but it did highlight the need to have regular country visits in the future and/or preferably have a World Bank environment staff based in the Libreville Office that could follow-up with local counterparts.

### Additional Assessment

#### Development / strengthening of institutions:

##### Comment:

The ANPN, Gabonese research institutions and forest concessions all benefitted from training for the improved carbon emissions measuring and now have higher capacity in this aspect. The Government of Gabon have also been provided analysis in strengthening their institutions as it relates to plantation forestry and concession certifications.

<sup>2</sup> Eligible emissions reductions are 3.382MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq  
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## Mobilization of other resources:

### Comment:

This small grant was mobilized in support of the Gabon-CAFI partnership, which has mobilized just under \$200 million dollars for forest conservation in Gabon. This includes a \$150 million CAFI-Norway results-based payment scheme from 2016-2025 that started making annual payments in 2021.

## Knowledge exchange:

### Comment:

Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions and limited budget, Gabon did not get to benefit from knowledge sharing events.

## Client's policy / program implementation:

### Comment:

The Government of Gabon places a very high priority on building its industrial forestry industrial and on increasing its

## Efficiency :

### Comment:

Outcomes planned at the onset have been partially achieved, even given a one-year extension. However, the impact of the COVID pandemic disruption on operations should not be discounted. Thus, efficiency is rated moderately satisfactory.

## Replicability:

### Comment:

This grant consisted of 4 primary studies that all sought to ensure replicability in whatever activities or investments were proposed. The methodological process developed for measuring concession emissions is replicable and the capacity now exists to conduct another measurement without international support.

## Main recommendations to stakeholders:

REDD+ has been communicated globally as a mechanism which seeks to incentivize activities targeted at reducing emissions from the land-use sector. This line of communication has somewhat created high and often unrealistic expectations amongst some sections of stakeholder groups of huge financial inflow for REDD+ - particularly in Gabon. In order to ensure the effective management of these exaggerated and unrealistic expectations, deliberate efforts need to be made to emphasize the various co-benefits which will arise from REDD+ implementation, and that any payments for implementation of REDD+ will be performance-based and will consequently require continual support and commitment from all stakeholders.

Based on the achievements and lessons learned from implementation of this project, the following are recommended to stakeholders:

That awareness and sensitization for communities and policy makers is continued so as to consolidate gains made in nationally owning and championing of REDD+ implementation.

That FDA and partners strengthen coordination with the Ministry of Mines and Energy to reduce potential conflict during implementation of the REDD+ strategy in terms of comparative immediate economic benefits of carbon sequestration and mineral exploitation and with Ministry of Agriculture related to cash crop production

## Main recommendations to Bank Management:

The FCPF REDD+ methodology does not favor Gabon as a High Forest Cover, Low Deforestation (HFLD) country because REDD+ prioritizes jurisdictions with high deforestation rates and doesn't prioritize countries that have conserved their forests. Currently, the forests of Gabon annually absorb 1/3 of France's total emissions (equivalent of \$1 billion of carbon at \$10 per ton of carbon), and yet are only receiving \$17 million in REDD+ annual payments.

However, this FCPF Readiness Grant has indicated that there is the opportunity to increase the financial carbon credit flows to Gabon, while also supporting the forestry sector in reaching its 2022 target of 100% FSC certification (currently at 14% in April 2022).

## DISBURSEMENTS

### Disbursements Summary in USD

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Date From	Date To	Planned Cumulative	Planned Period	Actual Cumulative	Actual Period
7/1/2019	12/31/2019	0	0	0	0
1/1/2020	6/30/2020	0	0	684,764.74	684,764.74
7/1/2020	12/31/2020	0	0	744,549.62	59,784.88
1/1/2021	6/30/2021	0	0	751,591.46	7,041.84
7/1/2021	12/31/2021	0	0	1,098,603.73	347,012.27
1/1/2022	6/30/2022	0	0	1,489,663.25	391,059.52