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FIRST EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

15-16 JUNE 2017

ROME, ITALY

### INFORMATION NOTE

#### BACKGROUND ON THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND AND THE UN-REDD PROGRAMME

##### 1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this 60-minute session is to scope options for the UN-REDD Programme to assist interested partner countries access the GCF's "**Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme**", a GCF funding window that supports REDD+ readiness (GCF Board decision in Annex I). The UN-REDD Programme welcomes the advice of the members of the Executive Board on this opportunity and how to harness it. Some key features would likely be: (i) UN-REDD to mobilise donor funding to cover for the technical assistance associated with this, so that beneficiary countries have full access to this GCF capacity funding; (ii) each participating country will have access to a suite of technical and capacity support and tools, guidance and other activities provided by the UN-REDD Programme and (iii) the UN-REDD Executive Board may also wish to recommend exploring feasibility of a framework agreement with the GCF Board to allow a for a programmatic approach.

##### 2. OVERVIEW

The UN-REDD Programme has supported 64 countries over the past nine years with capacity building and the development of nationally led REDD+ readiness actions and in particular, UN-REDD has focused its technical support and policy advice around the provisions of the Warsaw Framework (WFR) so they can access results-based payments (RBPs)<sup>1</sup>.

The UN-REDD Programme has over nine years of experience of providing impartial advice and technical support bringing to bear in its partnership the sum of the comparative advantage of three UN Agencies supporting countries with the advice and support that they need. It has also built a successful partnership with FCPF readiness window whereby the two have adopted common formats and processes (e.g. RPP) and UNDP and FAO are delivery partners. FAO, UNDP and UN Environment provide technical assistance to countries and are accredited entities to the GCF.

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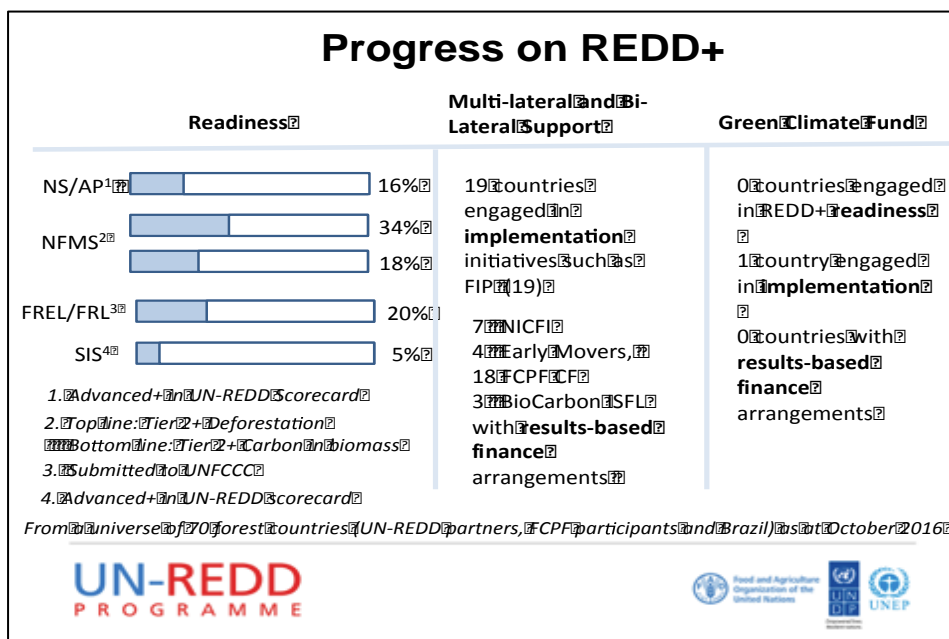
<sup>1</sup> The four actions required by the WFR to access RBPs are: National Strategies (NS) or Action Plans (AP), as well as associated investment frameworks (to ease shift to Phase 2); A national (or subnational as interim) Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) and/or Forest Reference Level (FRL); A robust and transparent National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) for the monitoring and reporting of the five REDD+ activities, including for measurement, reporting and verification results; and A Safeguard Information System (SIS).

Therefore, the value of knowledge the UN-REDD has developed over time could be harnessed to support countries in their efforts in accessing and implementing additional readiness activities through the GCF, and to increase South-South learning and sharing of experience. Using the opportunity of the on-going GCF consultations on REDD+ (described in Annex II), the UN-REDD Programme is proposing an approach, based on the proposal below, to support countries with on-going REDD+ readiness through the **GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme**.

### 3. UN-REDD PROGRAMME PROPOSED APPROACH

It is clear from the discussions in the UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance, the COP, the GCF Board and the NDCs submitted, forest financing is key to achieving mitigation targets and commitments made by many countries. The UNEP Emissions Gap report affirms that **forests can provide half of emission reductions consistent with 2°C limit up to 18.4 GtCO<sub>2</sub>y**. It is also clear that a large number of countries that require forest financing will not be able to immediately access REDD+ Phase II and III financing.

There is still much readiness work to be done (and an analysis on this is currently being carried out by UN-REDD). A rough estimate can be found in the Box below.



Therefore, the UN-REDD brand and its wealth of knowledge could be used for the three UN Agencies to have a consistent approach to their support to countries.

Currently countries can access USD1 million per year for readiness work. They may wish to use part or all of this money one year and in consecutive years towards REDD+ readiness. This may change in the future if the Board decides to approve support similar to the National Adaptation Plans funded through the GCF readiness support programme (a one-time access of up to USD3 Million).

The UN-REDD Agencies would therefore be able to assist the REDD+ Focal Points to respond to the necessary GCF requirements to access the ***GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme*** funds in order to receive support for implementing REDD+ readiness.

There are two types of support the Agencies can provide to countries: (a) access to the GCF readiness funds; and (b) technical support while implementing the REDD+ readiness programme.

Also, as countries may wish to access the GCF readiness funds through direct access, and since the resources for Agencies to support countries to access readiness funds will be covered through the UN-REDD Programme and not through GCF resources, Agencies can offer both, at no cost to either the GCF or the countries, access modalities – direct and through an international entity. The approach would be:

The UN-REDD Programme will need to raise additional finances from bi-lateral donors to assist countries with the tasks listed above. The Programme (and FCPF) has, to date, assisted 70 countries with their REDD+ readiness implementation. While great strides have been made by these countries in implementing the four readiness actions (REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan, NFMS, SIS and FREL), countries may still require resources to complete these actions or update what has been done, especially since their commitment to NDCs comes after, in most cases, the finalization of the REDD+ Strategies or Action Plans. Additional resources will need to be raised for technical support and also there will be a need to explore how technical support can be provided on a cost-recovery basis (both through direct and international access).

As stated above, the cost of the UN REDD Programme coordination structures would have to be funded through other sources but if such an approach is considered valuable, the chances of raising funding for the UN REDD Programme are also high. This would also be value add for countries requesting assistance through the UN-REDD Programme networks, as the cost of providing technical support would be through the Programme and not through the GCF Programme Support funds.

#### **4. SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Given the background presented, would the approach suggested be useful for countries wishing to access GCF readiness funds for REDD+ readiness? Is there a capacity gap that UN-REDD Agencies technical assistance and knowledge products are well placed to fill?
2. What advice would the Executive Board give to the UN-REDD Programme on the key actions that need to be undertaken for the UN-REDD Programme support countries to access GCF readiness funds?
3. What are the potential benefits and risks for the UN-REDD Programme to engage with the GCF and its REDD+ Champions (or Board members in the future) to raise awareness amongst the GCF universe on issues of concern, opportunities and requirements of the REDD+ countries?
4. How can the Executive Board be helpful in assisting the Un-REDD Programme in resource mobilization efforts for this new stream of work?

## Annex I

### GCF Board Decision related to REDD+ Readiness

The GCF Board, at its fourteenth meeting in October 2016, through decision B.14/02 (b) Support for REDD-plus recognized *“the need to complement other sources and types of finance, and that the GCF can support the development of national REDD-plus strategies or action plans and investment plans, including through the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, and that the fund can support the implementation of national REDD-plus strategies or action plans;”* and at the same time requested the secretariat to *“further guidance to support efforts by national designated authorities and focal points to engage with the GCF in early phases of REDD-plus using existing GCF modalities, tools and programmes”*.

Additionally, at its thirteenth meeting, the Board approved an indicative list of activities to be included in the readiness programme through Annex 32 of the document **Decisions of the Board – thirteenth meeting of the Board, 28-30 June 2016:** (a) *Establishing and strengthening national designated authorities or focal points* (b) *Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes* (c) *Support for accreditation and accredited direct access entities* (d) *Information sharing, experience exchange and learning* (e) *Formulation of national adaptation plans and/or other adaptation planning processes.*

## **Annex II**

### **GCF Board Decisions and Consultation Process**

The GCF Board requested the secretariat to develop tools, guidelines and methodologies for countries to access funding for the earlier phases of REDD+ using existing modalities. The secretariat, in response to the Board decision, set up a working group that is tasked to develop the request for proposal for operationalization of results-based payments and guidance for countries to engage with the GCF for early phases of REDD-plus. So far, the working group has been concentrated on developing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for RBPs and a progress report on their work was presented at the sixteenth meeting of the GCF Board in Samoa in December 2016. At the same time, the Board appointed two Champions for REDD+, one from the developing countries, Africa (DRC) and the other from developed countries (Canada) to lead the process for developing decisions for the Board to adopt in their July 2017 session.

These decisions will now be taken up at the eighteenth Board meeting in June 2017. The Champions with the secretariat hosted a workshop for experts in April 2017 on RBPs and guidance on earlier phases of REDD+ as well as launched a call for submission by Board members and stakeholders on their views regarding RBP operationalization.

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