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| logo_b | **United Nations Environment Programme****World Conservation Monitoring Centre** |

MISSION REPORT

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| **Distribution:**  | **Name of persons that undertook mission:** Blaise Bodin (BB), Brian O’Connor (BO) |
| CCB, Barney Dickson, Jon Hutton, Maxwell Gomera, Tim JohnsonUNEP: Daniel Pouakouyou, Julie Greenwalt, Thais Narciso, Tim Christophersen, Emelyne Cheney  | **Period (including travel days):** 14-25 july 2014 |
| **Projects:** 6400 RoC Mapping |
| **Institution(s) or Meeting(s) and Venue(s):** CN-REDD, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo* Meetings at the CN-REDD regarding the planning of the study
* Training session with 11 national technicians
* Miscellaneous meetings with agency colleagues and other organizations
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| **Main Person(s) contacted:** Georges Claver Boundzanga (National REDD+ Coordinator [GB]), Henriette Tsoh-Ikounga (World Bank safeguards expert [HTI]), Jean-Paul Bintoungui (REDD+ multiple benefits expert [JPB]), Hugues Gomat (CN-REDD expert), Dabney Matoko (MRV expert CN-REDD/CNIAF [DM]), Antoine Schmidt (EFI), Charlotte Jourdain (FAO).  |
| **File(s):** Workshop report  | **Objective(s):** 1. **Train CNIAF technicians on the use of spatial analysis for the mapping for relevant variables consideration of multiple benefits in REDD+ planning**
2. **Collect data at the national level where available from relevant national agencies and other organisations present in Brazzaville**
3. **Hold consultations with CACO-REDD (civil society REDD+ platform) and REDD+ focal points in sectoral ministries about the study**
4. **take stock of progress on national approach to safeguards and SIS**
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**Brief summary against objectives:**

1. Changes requested in the deliverable of the study and composition of the national team, as well as logistical hurdles, meant that the GIS session took place only on the second week over 4 days. Significant progress was nonetheless achieved with regards to the mapping of the national definition of forest, of “agro-climatic potential” and of “faunal potential”. In addition, a work plan was establish to enable continuation of work the national counterparts between work sessions.
2. GB insisted that the work session be split between a GIS team (led by BO) and a data collection team (led by BB). However with an attendance of 11, the GIS session could not be run by a single person, meaning that the data collection was mainly carried out by national counterparts. Few of the many institutions visited seemed to have relevant information for the study, with the exception of the National Programme for Aforestation and Reforestation.
3. Despite being included on the original agenda, it was decided to reserve further consultation for when preliminary results would be available (likely after the 2nd working session).
4. Exchanges with the National Safeguards expert (HTI) indicate that a clear process is in place for the development of national approach to safeguards. The consideration of safeguards in the mapping appears to be a sensitive topic (more details below). With regards to SIS, HTI stressed the need for financial support of an independent observatory of REDD+ safeguards, without which, the provision of accurate information would be compromised.

**Detailed summary:**

1st week: Discussion of the agenda of the work session

* The agenda suggested for this mission, in accordance with the conclusions of the previous mission, included a mix of bilateral meetings for data collection and GIS work sessions with the three GIS national experts appointed for the study. A revised agenda was sent by the national coordinator Georges Boudzanga (GB) on the Saturday prior to the start of the work session on Monday. The revised agenda did not include any GIS training but instead consisted of a series of consultations with various stakeholders on the objectives of the study. Preparations undertaken for that mission did not allow for the organization of such consultations, especially with regards to the financial aspects for organizing meetings for up to 61 participants.
* The first week of the mission consisted of a discussion on the work plan. Despite a previous request to follow the original terms of reference for the study (see mission report from opening workshop), the work plan was revised entirely to focus the mapping of multiple benefits on the “potential” of the national territory for different uses. The terms of reference also included an analysis of the results of the national forest inventory, however delays in its completion means that this data remains unavailable at the moment. The mapping of biodiversity and ecosystem services was seen as a secondary issue to be mapped only after this potential had been fully assessed. The work plan distinguishes between (i) ligneous and non-ligneous potential, (ii) soil and geological potential, (iii) agro-climatic potential and (iv) fauna and eco-tourism potential. These categories are somewhat of a departure from the original project scope, but they could inform integrated land-use planning beyond the sole remit REDD+ and therefore allow for wider cross-ministerial engagement.
* GB requested the production of maps at both the national and “départemental” scale so that they can feed into a land-planning exercise undertaken by the Ministry of Planning. Our suggestion to collaborate with this institution was rejected and it was preferred for this work to instead compete with the mapping initiative of the ministry of planning. This is reflective of what seems a general trend across ministries to compete rather than coordinate in the securing of land for their respective purposes.
* Safeguards and ecosystem services were described by the national coordinator as “negative” values that are very sensitive to map because they could potentially get in the way of investments into development projects, including those proposed by other funding partners. It was decided that the maps on the potential values would be produced in the first instance before safeguards can be considered.

2nd week: GIS work session and Data collection

* The GIS work session took place in the CNIAF offices and gathered 10 participants from CNIAF and one representative of civil society delegated by the CACO-REDD. Noticeably, the gender balance was almost even with 5 women. GIS capacity is good, with all participants having a basic command of ArcGIS functions and a few having great familiarity with the manipulation of geographical information. A discussion was first held on the sources of data to be used for the mapping of the four categories of potential. Under the first category, the main topic covered was the mapping of the newly revised forest code, which includes a physical definition of forest (>30% canopy cover; >0,5 ha; >3m height). A preliminary map of forest cover according to this definition was created through the combination of datasets on land cover and tree canopy cover. There were some ambiguous results however where forest land cover classes had tree canopy cover less than 30%. These areas need further verification by splitting them out into their component land cover classes. Further investigation is also needed before determining if the tree height can also be mapped through currently available datasets.

Other topics covered including the use of climatic information available on data portals such as WorldClim, used in combination with soil data to map the potential for different crops, and mapping of species richness and importance using IUCN ranges (both to be continued at the next session).

* A lot of data seems to already have been collected by JPB, but the result could not be shared with us until it has received “validation” from the national authorities. Further data collection was carried out by the National Expert on Multiple benefits during the work session. BB was able to join for a meeting with the National Programme on Reforestation and Aforestation, who have already designated areas for their actions in non-forested areas. It will be interesting to look at the compatibility of these plans to undertake mostly industrial plantations with the safeguards against conversion of natural forest, in the context of the new legal definition of forest which might encompass land previously considered as savannah.

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| **Follow up action:** | **Responsible** | **Time-frame (by)** |
| Send work plan to GIS national team with division of tasks until the next work session | BB | Done |
| Set dates and participants for the next work session in Cambridge and send invitation letters | BB, AH | Done |
| Investigate possibility of using tree height datasets | BO | 29/08 |
| Liaise with data collection team on progress and schedule of meetings with national institutions | BB | 20/08 |
| Follow up with HTI on draft of national safeguards and consultations | BB | 20/08 |

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| **Detailed report** [ ] encl. [] N/A. | **Documents** [ ] encl. [ ] list [ ] non | **Date 20/08/2014** |
| **Classification** [] restr. [] unrestr. | **Signature(s) staff member(s)** | **Signature(s) supervisor** |