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Date submitted 18/04/2015

1. Practice area : UN-REDD	
2. Mission period (incl. of travel days) From 13/04/2015 to 18/04/2015	
3. Type of mission : Inception, follow up and additional scoping	4. Clients Ministry of Environment and Forests; UNDP Country Office
5. Purpose of mission Launching operational implementation of the targeted support	6. Documents, materials, resources TS document, ToRand list of participants inception workshop, ToR mission to pilot region, list of participant meeting of 17/04, presentation supports
7. Mission members M. Fabien Monteils, UN-REDD RTA Africa	8. Costs UNDP/REDD+ Global Budget

9. Brief summary of the mission

The RTA traveled between Nairobi and Addis Ababa on April the 13th, and back on the 18th. The mission consisted in (i) a workshop to launch the implementation of the targeted support, focused on evaluation of forest value and reform of the system of national accounting; (ii) various consultations to explore relevant issues; (iii) follow-up meetings with Ethiopian authorities and (iv) assessment and inception mission to the pilot region. The mission was actively facilitated by the UNDP team leader for environment, Ms. Sinkinesh Beyene, and the national climate change advisor, M. Ababu Anage.

Context : Ethiopia has been in the REDD+ process since 2008. The FCPF grant agreement entered effective implementation in June 2013. Ethiopia has received substantive money for REDD+ readiness and implementation so far, particularly US\$14M for readiness channeled by FCPF and Bio CF, US\$10M of direct support from Norway against readiness performance (roadmap up to 2020). A US\$10M institutional capacity building programme for the newly created Ministry of Environment and Forest has been approved by Norway and about US\$2,5M are flowing through the UNDP MPTF and CO, the rest being managed directly by the Climate Resilient GHreen Economy facility at the Ministry of Finance. The GoE is well engaged into a large FCPF CF project covering the province of Oromia (US\$50M of RBP expected), and has just been approved an additional US\$25M from Norway, through the WB, to invest in the Oromia region so to trigger results.

UN-REDD support has been tailored to GoE needs and circumstances under the shape of a targeted support with three major objectives:

- Deepen the understanding of strategic and institutional issues related to the REDD+ federal architecture: ICA and international visits
- Explore structural changes: strengthening the valuation of forests in national accounting
- Explore an alternate way to support readiness and transition towards implementation at a regional level

Key challenges/factors of success for the REDD+ readiness process to keep under close attention:

- Strong focus of the WB/FCPF on the FCPF CF Oromia programme, against GoE aspirations / no change has been noticed during the mission
- Lack of national capacities to absorb, digest and fully own the technical workflow supported by FCPF / the pace of delivery of large FCPF-supported studies as increased, the National Coordinator is willing to slow down to ensure robustness and ownership if he can get support from the UN-REDD programme (participation, technical in-depth, inter-sectoral dialogue, policy dialogue, coordination with regions)
- Touchy institutional relationship between the WB and UNDP / no news on this side, the WB didn't attend to the workshop
- Coordination of all REDD+ related workflows by the GoE, and other related initiatives (MEF institutional capacity building programme) / Some light complaints (REDD+ National Coordinator towards the State Minister's advisor; State Minister's advisor towards UNDP CO) that has been clarified and coordination seems strongly established now.
- Strong motive of the GoE to move towards investments, and risks of disruption from robust and credible holistic discourse and

political commitment that sustain REDD+ as part of the CRGE strategy so far / There is a clear request to UN-REDD to assist with securing this robustness, and need of proximity to ensure the process doesn't shift away from this purpose as it goes (cf. national strategy).

Mission objectives :

- Support the inception workshop of the targeted support, and actively contribute to the work on national accounting system
- Assess the relevance of Benishangul Gumuz as the pilot region for UN-REDD support and launch the support
- Support coordination and implementation of other TS works (ICA and learning exchanges)
- Provide general advise on the national process and explore further opportunities for cooperation

Meetings during the mission :

- Tuesday 14th:
 - o UNDP CO: Sinkinesh Beyene (team leader) & Ababu Anage (climate specialist): technical briefing and review the objectives of the mission, security clearance and briefing
 - o UNDP RSC: Robert Kelly (GEF advisor and UNDP global focal point for the GCF mitigation): debriefing on the process of UNDP accreditation to the GCF and plans for early funding requests in 2015
 - o MEF: Tefera Mengitsu (advisor to the State Minister and UN-REDD focal point) with Ababu Anage, Ivo Mulder (UNEP Nairobi), Robert Smith (international consultant on forest value and national accounting system) and Yoonhee Kim (UNEP outreach specialist based in Ethiopia): review of the work plan for forest valuation and national accounting, review of the agenda of the workshop, clarifications
- Wednesday 15th:
 - o Workshop on forest evaluation and national accounting system (cf. tor and list of participants): presentation of REDD+ and the UN-REDD programme, targeted support to Ethiopia and the objective related to better understanding the value of forests and upgrading the SNA accordingly; training and consultations on key scoping issues and the methodology
 - o Debriefing with UNEP and the GoE
 - o Coordination meeting on ICA with Danae Issa (UNDP/UN-REDD governance specialist), Tefera Mengitsu and Ababu Anage: touching base and fine tuning the work before kick off
- Thursday 16th:
 - o Dr Tadesse Woldemariam, Director of the Environment and Coffee Forest Forum: review of the relation between forests and coffee commodity in Ethiopia, and state of the coffee supply chain
 - o UNDP CO: Selamawit Alebachew (Trade team, coffee specialist): review of the relation between forests and coffee commodity in Ethiopia, and state of the coffee supply chain
 - o UNDP RSC: Alice Ruhweza (team leader GEF ecosystems and biodiversity): touching base and general information, confirming modalities of coordination
 - o Travel to Assosa, Benishangul-Gumuz: Tefera Mengitsu, Yitebitu Moges (REDD+ National Coordinator), Ababu Anage (the State Minister didn't join at last minute)
 - o Office of the President of the region: mission team + President of the Region and Heads of Bureaus in charge of agriculture, natural resources, forests and environment: introduction, review of the initiative and key aspects, discussion, declaration of interest and commitment
- Friday 17th:
 - o Office of the President of the region: broad meeting with 15 key players (REDD+ focal point for the region, Heads of Bureaus, technical experts, advisors) from the forest, natural resources and agriculture sector, as well as other sectors (energy, infrastructure...): introduction to REDD+, UN-REDD, support to Benishangul Gumuz, and discussions (stakes, objectives, inter-sectoral and policy-driven approach, activities, institutional arrangements...)
 - o Mission team: debriefing
 - o Field visit to bamboo plantations by individual farmers and communities, and transformation factory

Analysis :

- Pilot region:
 - o Benishangul Gumuz (BG) was the region ranking first from the technical assessment of opportunity run by the RTA. The GoE had confirmed it would be the priority region. The mission to Assosa, capital of BG, confirms the opportunity and feasibility of REDD+ support, and the selection of the region is officially confirmed as the UN-REDD pilot region in Ethiopia.
 - o The region is 50.00sq.km, with high forest cover (50%, dry woodland) but also large savanna space for activity expansion, with limited population (1 million, 19hab./sq.km) and low deforestation rate (0,13%/year)
 - o The President of the region was closely involved in the mission. He has close relationship with the REDD+ National Coordinator (joint learning visit to Indonesia in 2014), good general understanding of REDD+ and credible discourse

- and commitment to move ahead (former State Minister of Natural Resources (Min. of Agriculture) at the federal level)
 - REDD+ focal point: A focal point had been appointed by the President of the region for REDD+ as part of the deployment of REDD+ process in all regions. The person appointed is the President's advisor for economic and social affairs. He's close to the President for who he's been working for 12 years. He comes from forest/natural resources background and has a good understanding and motivation for REDD+ (to be checked further).
 - The quality of the discussion (as reported by the mission team, as it was mainly in Amharic) was apparently very high, with already clear understanding of stake, and a broad vision for REDD+ as a driver for policy reforms, intersectoral dialogue, and of course investments.
 - There are about 450 technical/development agents working on forestry in the regional public administration (3 technical experts in Assosa, then 1 or 2 agents at lower jurisdictional level for each Kabare and Waredas). They do forest protection, preventing illegal activities, nursery and planting... But lack means of work and training.
 - BG is one of the 4 regions that UNDP will directly support with the programme on institutional capacity building for MEF, so there could be money to redynamise the grid of capacities already in place.
 - Some areas of future REDD+ options have been explored superficially, but the major challenges relate to the agricultural expansion led by bamboo, sesame, cotton, gum arabica, encense and soy. There could be credible technical itineraries for expansion on savanna land rather than forest, and large reforestation potential. Fire is another challenge that could also be contained by improved technical itineraries, and also by buffer plantations for energy or building material (eucalyptus, bamboo) and agroforestry. The region has the capacity to "export" wood products from plantations to Addis Ababa, and so relieve some pressure from the demand side on natural forests in other parts of the country (already the case for bamboo furnitures, charcoal, and could be expanded...)
 - The President of the region has set large areas of the region to a "land bank" that is led by Addis to attract investors in coommercial agriculture. It would be worth reviewing if it encompasses woodland and how safeguards/incentives could drive this call for investment and agriculture development, and land use planning process in a REDD+ compliant way.
 - Weak point: not a key region for future UNDP/GEF6, and not relevant area for working on coffee supply chain
 - To move ahead the UN-REDD support: ToR for the recruitment of the programme manager are already published and will be closed in one week. ToR for the international expert will be published next week. Also, The MEF and UNDP will consolidate all the relevant information from various initiatives to propose HR dimensionning, institutional arrangements and a joint workplan for 2015 for the REDD+ process and Forestry sector in BG: existing capacities; UN-REDD support; UNDP-Norway capacity building support; and other support from FCPF national support (training...). A coordination at the level of the President's office will be promoted and probably agreed.
- Forest evaluation and reform of the system of national accounting (SNA)
- The quality oof the dialogue has been excellent. Participants were very responsive. In particular, the Director of the System of National Accounting (senior, very experimented) at the Ministry in charge of finance is highly interested and committed. He promotes a "global approach", i.e. the importance of working with the "inclusive wealth" picture in mind and not only focus on GDP.
 - UNEP has hired an impressive expert as international consultant, who's been leading Statistics Canada for more than a decade... There has been excellent contact between the consultant and national experts and decision makers.
 - It's been decided to focus this first work on the evaluation of forest market and non market goods and services (flow vs. stock) with the view of better valuating the forest as part of national GDP. However, after a first review of data availability and dynamics by the international consultant, a meeting will be organised with UNEP/UNDP, MEF and MoFED/Director of SNA in about 2 months to take stock of progress and anticipate expansion oof the collaboration (additional goods and services, notably beyond provision, inclusive wealth (stock) and sustainability, connection to decision making in the national budget and finance process, arrangements for sustained data collection and monitoring etc.
 - The SNA is a highly technical and normalised mecanism. It's usually reviewed every 5 years. In the case of Ethiopia, it will probably be upgraded within 18 too 24 month, so there is a perfect window of opportunity to anchor the current work in the next SNA and GDP.
 - The project offers a first opportunity too have thhe REDD+ process work with finance and statistic institutions, and this first opportunity of cooperation opens very interesting ways for future collaboration.
 - The Global Green Growth Institute (South Korea) has offered to join the project with additional US\$100K funding (matching current level of UNEP/UN-REDD engagement). GGGI seems reluctant to support the project through UNDP and might opt for another delivery approach, but it's been considered relevant and opportunistic to coordinate with them. Most importantly, the MEF (with MoFED) will ensure that UN-REDD is positionned as the lead technical partner of the work to ensure robust coordination (of resources, methodolgies etc.)
- GCF:
- UNDP has been selected among the first 7 entities to access GCF funding. The process until full accreditation should

take another few of months. UNDP will dialogue closely with the GCF to prepare submissions for this year. The accessible window is grant based up to 250M\$ programmes including co-financing. Modalities for fund implementation (result-based, PES...) are not determined. There might not be project preparation grant, and the modalities for cost recovery are unclear. It will be a learning-by-suggesting/discussing process. Decisions of the board on this first round of proposals will be expected around October, for up to US\$1 billion.

- UNDP has nominated focal points to coordinate relationship and submissions. Robert is in charge of the mitigation portfolio. He expects to push 7/8 programmes this year, among which 2 are expected to be REDD-related. Within UNDP/UN-REDD, Jyoti has been appointed to coordinate the work. One programme relates to transition to implementation in Colombia, the second would involve several countries on the relation between REDD+ and commodity (with GCP). In Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Ethiopia are envisaged. A first draft is expected from Jyoti next week.
- For the rest, regional services and CO are expected to wait for 2016.

- Commodities and GCP:

- National REDD+ authorities are enthusiastic about exploring the relation between coffee and deforestation. A joint GCP/UN-REDD cooperation in Ethiopia would be interesting to explore indeed, as coffee appears as a major driver of forest-related carbon emissions (apparently more through degradation than deforestation), and as solutions for mainstreaming REDD+ objectives into the coffee development plan seem possible.
- GCP already has an experience in country that would be valuable to build on, even though the national platform still needs to take off fully (currently transitioning from Trade to Agriculture leadership). They will have a new project manager soon on the spot to push this further.
- Regarding coffee, UN-REDD could partner with the GCP to take advantage of their national-level support, and work at a more regional level to pilot REDD+ compliant change in farming patterns. There seems to be a need to play at multiple levels to navigate a very complex social and cultural system with very high political and economic interests... The REDD+ National Coordinator is expected to explore and provide feedbacks on the feasibility to work in the SNNBP region on such issue (see the point on pilot regions below).
- Regarding Benishangul Gumuz, there is no coffee there but the REDD+ process will have to work with various commodities, notably bamboo, sesame, cotton, gum arabica and soy, and explore patterns to both avoid deforestation but also to enhance forest carbon stocks with these commercial commodities. Cooperation with GCP will be sought if possible...
- Funding modalities of such a collaboration would need to be clarified. Jyoti is working on a proposal to GCF (see above), and otherwise maybe some bridge-in funding from the UN-REDD programme could be discussed. A more detailed message will be sent to the GCP colleagues and to Jyoti to keep exploring potential collaboration, and guidance will be sought from Tim Clairs once the case has matured...

- National REDD+ strategy and other pilot regions

- The REDD+ National Coordinator has requested support from UN-REDD to help manage and ensure technical and political robustness of the REDD+ national process. Two issues are priority: the national strategy, and the other pilot regions.
- Regarding the national strategy, FCPF-funded consultants have formulated a draft national strategy. The work plan suggests the national strategy should be finalised in September. But the National Coordinator sees the risk of not having a really substantive and credible result. The RTA insisted on the following dimensions for a robust national strategy, that are apparently missing from current plans: robust and innovative/ambitious analyses and formulation of policies and measures, and notably policies; participation and consultations; cross-sectoral dialogue, policy dialogue, coordination with region-level strategy formulation process. The National Coordinator is ready to postpone the finalization of the strategy (for instance June next year) if he can get technical assistance from UN-REDD. It has been suggested that, as the international expert will work on coordination between BG REDD+ strategy formulation and the national level, he could play the role of technical advisor to the federal level process of strategy finalization. Money should be first provided by FCPF and an additional and targeted UN-REDD support might be necessary as part of a possible second phase of targeted support.
- Regarding the other pilot regions, the WB (through a "Bio-CF readiness" arrangement) has provided funding for in-depth readiness and transition towards implementation of three additional regions (Tigray, Amara, SNNBP; US\$3M each more or less). But the MEF seeks technical and policy assistance from the UN-REDD to guide the process in a way that is coherent with overall UNFCCC/UN-REDD support approach. It seems that the regions don't necessarily need to go towards subnational carbon accounting, carbon rights and transaction, and could be fully following a broader national approach, jointly with BG. Actually, it seems that the WB doesn't really care beyond the Oromia carbon fund project. If such a freedom is confirmed, the MEF would appreciate having an international technical advisor from UN-REDD positioned at the national level to assist specifically with the implementation of readiness and transition towards implementation in these three other regions. It's always "institutionally tricky" to deploy technical expertise to help a

partner implement its programme, but this would very certainly be of high value added for Ethiopia, and it could also position UN-REDD ideally for further investment arrangements and fund raising. Additionally NSSBP is, with Oromia, the second very relevant region to work on coffee as free deforestation commodity...

- The MEF has asked if the UN-REDD Programme could better think of a broader national programme to support Ethiopia. The RTA has suggested it wouldn't be ideal since it could be harshly questioned by Norway who already puts a lot of money in the process, and challenged by the WB. The tailor-made tactical approach through targeted support seems more adapted to the circumstances. Also, Ethiopia would then be competing with other African countries who have much lower financial support at this stage... Government reaffirmed they are sovereign and ready to step up to support larger support from UN-REDD against "institutional turf", but understands the "qualitative" arguments and agree not too push further at this stage.

- Others

- The recruitment of the national consultant for the ICA is soon to be completed. UNDP CO will involve Danae Issa in the selection process and ensure coordination and endorsement by the MEF. ToR and the actual methodological finalisation of the mission will also involve the National Coordination team to ensure full synergies with the REDD+ process. These coordination aspects on recruitment and methodology will be systematized and secured throughout the implementation of the targeted support.
- Regarding the ICA, it was reminded that Danae Issa will have a hands-on and substantive support to the work of the national consultant. She'll be offered a desk at UNDP CO to enhance proximity and daily coordination. She will also formulate the 4/5 key questions that the study will answer and make sure there is full understanding with the MEF and UNDP CO of the expectations of the project.
- The National Coordination is having issues with FAO implementation of the agreement and work supported by FCPF funding. The RTA has been asked to report to FAO Rome so to enhance reactivity from headquarter in assisting with operations and contractual arrangements.
- Regarding international visit, Tefera, Yitebitu and Ababu will coordinate to send the RTA a draft framework with (i) countries to visit; (ii) key topics to explore; (iii) participants profile to each visit; (iv) budget break-down (UNDP CO, FCPF, UN-REDD). This will then be finalised jointly and deployed, on the basis of framework ToR and methodology already approved.

9.b Results achieved (key outputs)

- The targeted support implementation is on good track, with the two major works officially launched with proper consultations and commitment from national and regional stakeholders and leaders
- The coordination of the project implementation is strengthened to allow smooth deployment, and opportunities for future and increased cooperation are identified and discussed

9.c Expected outcomes and impacts

The UNDP and overall UN-REDD programme efficiently fits into the REDD+ national process in Ethiopia, and is implemented in a coherent and synergetic way to support national ambitions. It delivers quickly and allows to experiment policy approach to REDD+ at the regional level in a way that is consistent with and support national REDD+ architecture and UNFCCC Warsaw framework.

10. Key counterparts
MEF, UNDP CO

11. Follow up action matrix

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
Finalise recruitment of the project manager and the international consultant (share link when published) for BG	Ababu, involving Fabien, Tefera and Yitebitu	May 15th
Formulate a consolidated proposal for HR dimension and institutional arrangements for REDD+ and forest service capacity building in BG	Tefera, Yitebitu, Ababu, BG focal point, with review with Fabien and BG officials	May 15th
ICA: formulate the 4/5 key questions and finalize	Danae, with review from Tefera, Yitebitu, Ababu and Fabien	May 4th
ICA: finalize recruitment	Ababu, with Danae	May 4th
Coordinate with FAO in Rome to address concerns expressed by the National Coordination	Fabien	April 24th
Prepare a comprehensive message to coordinate	Fabien, with Leif, Andrew, Jyoti and	April 21st

with GCP and UN-REDD and further explore cooperation potential between coffee or other commodities and REDD+ in Ethiopia	eventually Tim	
Forest evaluation: reconvene with MEF and MoFED to explore future steps and coordination	Ivo, with Ababu and Fabien	June 26th
Review the draft national strategy and provide comments	Fabien	May 1st
Framework plan to deploy international visits (countries, topics, participants, budget)	Tefera, Yitebitu and Ababu, with review and finalization with Fabien	May 15th
Formulate a concept note for the readiness and transition of the 3 Bio-CF-funded pilot regions, check the degree of freedom with carbon accounting prescriptions, and check interest with WB and Norway to have UN-REDD providing technical assistance to the deployment of these regional support	Yitebitu	May 15th
Carry out a "mid-term review" mission and draft a request for an additional targeted support, that could be matured and finalized around September	Fabien, with Tefera, Yitebitu, Ababu, UNEP and FAO	June 26th
12. Distribution list Tim Clairs, Elsie Attafuah, Josep Gari, Anne Martinussen, Ela Ionescu, Elspeth Alverson, Sinkinesh Beyene, Ababu Anage, Danae Issa, Ivo Mulder, Daniel Pouakouyou, Philippe Crete, Andrew Bovarnick, Alice Ruhweza, Robert Kelly		