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1. Practice area : UN-REDD	
2. Mission period (incl. of travel days) From : 31 August to 05 September 2015	
3. Type of mission : TS and ICA inception workshop and consultations in pilot region Benishangul-Gumuz, Asossa	4. Clients UNDP Ethiopia, Ministry of Environment
5. Purpose of mission Guidance of consultant for ICA implementation and conduct first consultations with KI's in pilot region BG/Asossa	6. Documents, materials, resources
7. Mission members Fabien Monteils, Marius Walter, Ababu Anage (UNDP ET), Tefera Mengistu (National UN-REDD Coordinator)	8. Costs

**9. Brief summary of the mission**  
The principal objective of the mission to Asossa, regional capital of Benishangul-Gumuz, was to provide guidance to the local team responsible for the rollout of the regional REDD+ readiness strategy. The UN-REDD TS supports the region in the development of a regional REDD+ readiness strategy and the analysis of institutional arrangements, decision-making processes and issues between national and regional level land-use planning, agriculture expansion and other REDD+ related aspects. My role was to provide technical input to the ICA implementation in the region which is in a critical phase and lead by Dr. Alemayhu Ayana (national ICA consultant). The inception workshop for the TS in the pilot region provided a platform for awareness raising for REDD+ and to present the UN-REDD targeted support components, the regional workplan and key activities.

A focus group discussion with 7 vice-administrators of the region has been held to collect information about decision making processes, key actors, and policy issues in the regional efforts on combating deforestation and forest degradation. The discussion mainly focused on issues and contradictions between national and regional decision making and policy processes at the subregional level (protection of forest land/NR vs. agricultural expansion).

A women's focus group was conducted by the NC and regional project coordinator, concrete input to the questionnaire and parameters was provided in advance.

**9.a Findings**

It was observed that the ambiguity of Ethiopian governance structures will be challenging for the implementation of the REDD+ process in the region, specifically with regards to institutional mandates, de facto devolution of decision making and competencies and contradictions in main policies implemented by the same institution (i.e. bureau of land administration and environmental protection).<sup>1</sup>

The ICA approach will be an adequate tool to uncover those ambiguities and put them into institutional context and key actors in the region. However, the local team expressed concerns that sensitive information might be problematic when it comes to the dissemination of the ICA report. The UN-REDD mission team clarified that the ICA is a mean to inform UNDP and UN-REDD regional and national teams about possible pitfalls and potential risks, and that it is important to inform decision makers early enough about key Government and political authorities to be involved in the process.

It was therefore agreed that the ICA report in the region should follow an issue-based approach, identifying cases, which

<sup>1</sup> i.e. The Growth and Transformation Plan period and target setting affects the localities, in order to achieve the national goal of increased annual production by 40% and agricultural land use by 20%, the target of expanding forest cover by 30% is a contradictory policy goal and an issue in the region while being implemented by the same bureau but two different departments.

can demonstrate where the problems are and how to avoid those in future planning/REDD+ implementation. The parameters for the regional ICA were proposed as follows:

- Regional horizontal coordination issues: who collaborates with whom on which issues?
- Vertical coordination and decision making processes (key actors and de-facto processes) whom to involve for the real decisions?
- Major policy and regulatory contradictions at the regional level
- Mapping on key stakeholders and advice on engagement (advocacy, awareness raising, active engagement empowerment)

*9.b Results achieved (key outputs)*

1. Participants of the regional inception workshop have understood and endorsed the ICA methodology and scope for the region.
2. Intensive discussions with the consultant and regional implementation team have refined the ICA focus in order to provide relevant information for regional implementation
3. The first draft ICA report for national consultations has been discussed intensively and comments provided to the NC

*9.c Expected outcomes and impacts*

The ICA will assist the regional team to understand the politics, possible pitfalls and risks of implementing REDD+ readiness in the region.

**11. Follow up action matrix**

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
Revised national zero draft ICA report submitted to UN-REDD regional team, Marius, UNDP ET and national Secretariat	National Consultant	16 September 2015
Consultations with Development partners and private sector to be conducted at national level	National Consultant	End September 2015
In-depth discussion with Ababu required on UNDP's interest in ICA findings	National Consultant	Asap after regional field work

**12. Distribution list:**

UN-REDD global: Tim Clairs, Tina Solvberg, Elsie Attafuah, Anne Martinussen, Ela Ionescu, Fabien Monteils  
 UNDP Ethiopia: Ababu Anage (UNDP ET), Tefera Mengistu (National UN-REDD Coordinator)