

# Executive Summary of Honduras UN-REDD National Programme

## **Context:**

The Republic of Honduras has a forest area of 5,398 million hectares (ha), equivalent to 48% of its national territory. Due to its irregular topography, Honduras is a country suited for forestland, with 490,705ha under control and an annual allowable cut of 920,308 m<sup>3</sup>. However, the country faces a serious problem of deforestation and degradation of its forests. Studies on forest evaluation carried out by FAO and COHDEFOR (2005) estimate that between 46,000 and 67,000ha are lost each year due to the advance of the agricultural land and illegal logging, especially in broadleaf forests.

There are seven indigenous peoples and two Afro-Honduran peoples that together represent around 7% of the national population, according to data from a population and housing census conducted in 2001 - or 20% according to a self-census study in 2007<sup>1</sup>. It is estimated that 70% of the broadleaf forests of the country are in territories belonging to indigenous peoples, which makes these fundamental actors in the process of elaborating a National REDD+ Strategy and its implementation.

## **Challenges and progress**

The biggest challenges that the forest sector faces are the high rate of deforestation, fires that affect more than 65,000ha yearly, the incidence of plagues and diseases, the inequitable distribution of productive land that causes migratory flows to attractive forest areas for the apparent fertility of their soil ruining and degrading forest ecosystems, causing logging and illegal exploitation of forests that exceed 60% of the legal utilization, conflicts of land tenure and a strong deterioration and degradation of forest areas.

On top of this, the forest sector has not been used to achieve its effective contribution to economic and social development of the country. Among other things, this is because rural communities have limited access to the economic benefits of the forests and do not participate in the effective decision making, there is legal insecurity, lack of information on the productive capacity of forests, inefficiencies in the administrative processes of technical and legal nature and environmental goods, while services are not accounted and are given low value. The low capacity of the forest sector management has been directed mainly to the utilization of timber resources, with scarce budgetary assignation and confrontation with the sector's politics that facilitate the development of others activities like mountain coffee, African palm tree and extractive industry.

In this context and recognising the concern of losing forest in the country, Honduras has elaborated a five year plan to face this challenge. The plan has been designed for an amount of US\$ 8,659,600.00 and for 2017 it is looking to have: (1) a participation

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<sup>1</sup> Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF), "*Niñez Indígena y Afrohondureña en la República de Honduras*", Tegucigalpa, 2012, pg. 31

and consultation structure implemented at national level; (2) access to detailed and trustworthy information of the condition of forests and territories identified for future REDD+ projects; (3) an established reference level; and (4) a designed National Monitoring System.

From around 2010 the Government of Honduras started working to prepare this proposal, in the context of the R-PP document (*Readiness Preparation Proposal*) for the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). In March 2013, the R-PP of Honduras was endorsed in the fourteenth meeting of the Committee of Participants. Later, the country started the process to develop and sign a grant agreement in the context of FCPF (May 2014) for an amount of US\$ 3,800.000.00, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These funds are employed to contribute with the preparation phase of Honduras for REDD+ with the support of UNDP as an implementation partner.

Furthermore, for the past three years, the country has received support from other donors and cooperation programmes like PRORENA from GIZ, the Regional Programme REDD-CCAD/CIZ, the USAID PROPARQUE project and RainForest Alliance to prepare for REDD+. This support has allowed significant progress on information regarding the forest sector (a preliminary diagnosis of deforestation drivers in Honduras, a baseline of emissions for deforestation covering 55% of the country's area, 2010 reference level and a 2014 forest map) that served as a base for future decision making. Moreover, GIZ and USAID have promised resources to support Honduras in the development of a Safeguard Information System (SIS), and IUCN and UNDP continue their support to the indigenous national agenda. UN-REDD National Programme (UN-REDD NP) has defined the support activities taking into account the activities of other donors and the government in order to look for complementarities and synergies.

### **Preparation process and National Programme consultation**

Within the design of the proposal of R-PP, from early 2012 to mid-2013, a political dialogue took place in Honduras between the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (CONPAH) and four government ministries: The Natural Resources and Environment Secretariat (SERNA), the National Institute of Conservation and Forest Development, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF), the Secretariat of State on Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans (SEDINAFROH) and the Agricultural National Institute (INA). This highly participatory political dialogue process, which was generated around the discussions about the conformation of a REDD+ platform for indigenous peoples and Afro-Hondurans (PIAH), was also supported and welcomed by the civil society, donors and academia, represented under the REDD+ subcommittee. This subcommittee is an instance that is part of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change (CICC) and it is composed by more than 50 civil society organisations, international cooperation, academia and departments of the State. This inter-institutional and multisectoral process was the foundation for the signature of fifteen points in an agreement between the government and CONPAH. This agreement constitutes the basis for the full and effective participation of the PIAH in the national REDD+ process. The creation of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Board for Climate Change (MIACC) was one of the results of this agreement and at present constitutes the instance of REDD+ national process for the PIAH and other processes related to climate change.

The activities developed until now in the UN-REDD NP framework have used these participatory platforms as a base. Future activities will join this national process respecting and strengthening the communication channels established, as well as making use of the platforms already created to ensure the full and effective participation of all the stakeholders, also contributing to their strengthening.

### **Management and implementation arrangements of REDD+ process in Honduras and institutional context**

The REDD+ process in the country started in 2009 during the previous government administration. In this context, the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA) was the guiding institution on Climate Change issues, while the National Institute of Conservation and Forest Development, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF), with the status of Ministry, had the operation role in REDD+ issues. The two identities lead the process in the CICC context, under the guidance of the National Directorate of Climate Change (DNCC) from SERNA and the Department for Climate Change and Forests from ICF.

At present, with the new Governments administration that began in January 2014, SERNA passed by decree PCM-001-2014 to become the Secretariat of State in the Departments of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mines (MiAmbiente) integrated to the Sector Cabinet of Economic Development. In this new administration, the ICF was joined to MiAmbiente with a Direction status but operating under its own legislative framework. The DNCC took a more central role as the National Office for Climate Change in MiAmbiente at a political level with guiding functions. The REDD+ subcommittee, under CICC, and MIACC continue to be platforms for full and effective participation of the stakeholders in the REDD+ process.

The project "*Support to Reduce Carbon Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) Readiness Preparation in Honduras*" (from now on called UNDP-FCPF project) implemented by UNDP with funds from FCPF has the national execution modality. MiAmbiente is the implementation partner and CONPAH is responsible of the execution of funds and activities through an agreement with UNDP. The implementation of the project and therefore of the elaboration of the National REDD+ Strategy is given through an executive unit with a programmatic view from MiAmbiente. The executive unit of the UN-REDD NP activities will also be the executive and coordination unit of the activities under FCPF.

In the UN-REDD NP the implementation modality for the activities led by UNDP, which is the leading agency of this program, will be of national execution in accordance with the modality used in the UNDP-FCPF project. The implementation modality for the activities led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will be a combination of national execution with MiAmbiente and direct technical support. For the activities led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the execution modality will be of technical support during the first year, while for the following years of execution of the program, the possibility of a combination of national execution and technical support will be assessed.

The UN-REDD NP of Honduras will be implemented in coordination with the national activities related with forest management, like activities of other programmes of international cooperation. Currently, the programmes, international cooperation

projects and entities with open dialogue processes that are already taking place are: the UNDP-FCPF project, the USAID Regional Programme, AVA FLEGT, MOSEF (EU) to support forest inventory, IUCN, REDD-CCAD/GIZ Regional Programme, CLIFOR (GIZ), and the EU budget support programme to the forest sector.

### **Results of the UN-REDD National Programme from Honduras**

Taking into account the country's progresses and challenges in the forest and climate change issues, and considering the comparative advantages of the United Nations organisations that compose the UN-REDD NP, it has been defined that its support will focus on two results. These two results are consistent with the UNDP-FCPF project, itself derived from the R-PP, and are also consistent with the decisions adopted by the UNFCCC on REDD+, in particular with the Cancun and Warsaw decisions (articulated in four requirements: National REDD+ Strategy, a national level of reference of forest emissions and/or a national forest level, a National System for Forest Monitoring, a system to provide information on how safeguards are being addressed and respected). Furthermore, these activities have been defined according to the progress presented by the country in specific areas with the support from other partners, as well as the national commitments to develop other readiness activities for REDD+.

*1. National Strategy to Reduce Deforestation, in the REDD+ context, validated by key stakeholders*

This result will be based in three fundamental groups of activities. First, the UN-REDD NP will support the strengthening of existing platforms for the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders. Contrary to the UNDP-FCPF Project, the UN-REDD NP will focus in meeting the need to reach a broader number of stakeholders (potentially from the private sector, non-indigenous forest dependent communities, coffee farmers and cattle growers, amongst others) and maximise the spaces for coordinating actions at a local and regional level.

Second, the political dialogue process between PIAH and the government and the mechanisms to ensure the full and effective participation for a successful implementation of the programme will continue to be strongly supported. To achieve this, the need to support capacity building through consultation workshops, as well as supporting the development of a communication and outreach participatory strategy that ensures that all the stakeholders have access to the information at all levels has been identified, facilitating the intercultural and interinstitutional dialogue. Another action supported by the UN-REDD NP as part of the political dialogue between the Government and the PIAH, is the consultation of the draft legislation for FPIC. This action is one of the fifteen points of the agreement that the Government of Honduras reached with CONPAH, along the process of political dialogue from 2012-2013, and a commitment that should be addressed to comply with the indigenous population's agenda in the national REDD+ process.

Last, the UN-REDD NP will support through this component the development of technical input for the development of a National REDD+ Strategy, in addition to the input generated by the UNDP-FCPF project. These inputs include a study of opportunity costs, implementation and transaction and an analysis of REDD+ potential benefits that as a whole can inform on the discussion process and definition of the REDD+ National Strategy.

2. *An enabling framework to implement the National REDD+ Strategy to reduce deforestation in the context of REDD+, under the pertinent international benchmarks*

The activities supported by UN-REDD NP in this result are related to three elements. Firstly, it is planned to complement the design of financial arrangements, with the development for activities related to a financial strategy for REDD+.

Another group of activities are related to the technical support for establishing the reference level of forest emissions that Honduras has been developing through ICF (including the data update for 2017), as well as the establishment of National Forest Monitoring Systems (including their link to the Greenhouse Gas Inventory) and of a protocol for the monitoring of the degradation and a pilot field study. It is also planned to strengthen the forest monitoring capacities in Government technical groups as well as in the indigenous councils.

Finally, the UN-REDD NP will support the development of SIS, including the identification of the institution and the necessary arrangements to comply with the REDD+ safeguards.

#### **Estimated Budget for the UN-REDD National Programme of Honduras**

<b>Result</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>USD</b>
1. National Strategy to Reduce Deforestation, in the REDD+ context, validated by key stakeholders	FAO	0
	UNDP	1,498,500
	UNEP	430,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,928,500</i>
2. An enabling framework to implement the National Strategy to reduce deforestation, in the context of REDD+, under the pertinent international benchmarks	FAO	880,000
	UNDP	70,000
	UNEP	245,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,195,00</i>
3. Costs of the Operating Unit of the Programme and of monitoring and evaluation	Shared cost (3 agencies)	250,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,373,500</b>
	Indirect costs	236,145
	<b>Programme TOTAL</b>	<b>3,609,645</b>