

INFO BRIEF

NIGERIA REDD+ STRATEGY



Key Messages

- Nigeria has developed a framework National REDD+ Strategy and a Cross River State Sub-National Strategy and is now poised for implementation of REDD+.
- Solutions to address deforestation and forest degradation go beyond the forestry sector, requiring coordinated and harmonized actions across all relevant sectors with a strong emphasis on integrated land use planning. Mainstreaming of REDD+ into key national policy and legal processes is important due to the cross-sectoral nature of REDD+.
- REDD+ is prioritized as part of National development processes and green growth development pathways including the implementation of the NDC and the SDGs.
- Government ownership and leadership of the Strategy development process with consistent and wide stakeholder participation has been key in delivering REDD+ readiness.
- Mobilization of financing and provision of fiscal incentives and incentives for community-based initiatives, will be part in the full implementation of REDD+ and the realization of results-based payments.
- Nigeria will look to building strategic partnerships at all levels, including with the international community, private sector and civil society to optimize and aggregate the full potential of opportunities for REDD+ during implementation.
- Strengthening institutional arrangements at the Federal and State Government levels to include adequate staffing, capacity building and assignment of clear roles and responsibilities will continue.

Introduction

Deforestation and forest degradation contribute approximately 15-17% of all greenhouse gas emissions at global level. Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) to contribute to climate mitigation. Nigeria began its REDD+ journey in 2009 to deliver carbon emission reductions and social, economic and environmental sustainability objectives.

Forests plays an important role in the Nigerian economy in the provision of goods and ecosystems services, and contributes to the sustainability of the environment. The sector offers opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and poverty

eradication in the country, particularly in rural areas where most of the people live. Forestry products contribute between about 0.41 percent to the total Gross Domestic Product at 2013 basic price (FRN, 2014), or 2.4% as reported in Nigeria's Country Report for Nigeria for the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) Report (2015).

In addition to the national benefits, rural populations, and particularly in Cross River State, rely directly on forests, through small-scale agriculture, hunting and gathering, and by harvesting forest products such as fruits, wild vegetables, snails, honey and medicinal plants. Fuelwood accounts for over 50% of overall energy consumption in the country and is the dominant source of energy in the domestic sector (FGN, 2015).

THE CHALLENGE

Nigeria's forests cover almost 7 million hectares or 6% of the land and are critical for the economy and livelihoods. Cross River State (CRS) which has more than 50% of Nigeria's remaining tropical forests was chosen as a pilot state for REDD+. Rapid forest loss over the past few decades due to small-scale and commercial agricultural extensification, unregulated and unmanaged cutting of timber and wood fuels extraction (firewood and charcoal). Mining and infrastructure development are also causes of deforestation. The current annual national deforestation rate, estimated at 3.7%, is one of the highest in the world. Nigeria's most recent National Communication¹ notes that the land-use change and forestry sector is a high net source of GHG emissions in Nigeria, accounting for 40% of the country's total GHG emissions in the year 2000, mainly due to losses of forest and other woody biomass stocks.

The effects of forest loss are widespread and pervasive. They result in the disruption and loss of livelihoods and sustainable economic opportunities, release of greenhouse gas emissions and human wildlife conflict. Forest loss also affects a range of ecosystem services, biodiversity and habitats, and increases soil erosion and reduces agricultural productivity. Cross River State has in recent years experienced heavy sedimentation loads in water bodies due to soil erosion because of forest cover loss in its catchment.

OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

NATIONAL REDD+ FRAMEWORK STRATEGY

A national REDD+ framework strategy, as a precursor to a national strategy has been developed to guide the expansion of REDD+ across Nigeria as a Federal country, particularly with States like Ondo and Nasarawa that are implementing their REDD+ readiness processes. Box 1 indicates the broad objectives for the **National REDD+ Framework Strategy**.

Box 1: Objectives of the National REDD+ Framework Strategy

- a. sets out the overall policy framework and vision for REDD+ in Nigeria
- b. provides guidance to content and process of Strategy development
- c. maps out progress made on the Warsaw Framework pillars
- d. provides information for replication of the experiences and results from Cross River State (CRS) across Nigeria's 35 other states
- e. step-by step guidance to States willing to implement REDD+. It highlights data and reporting requirements at both national and state levels.
- f. Enables Nigeria's communications to the UNFCCC on its NDC and REDD+ activities.

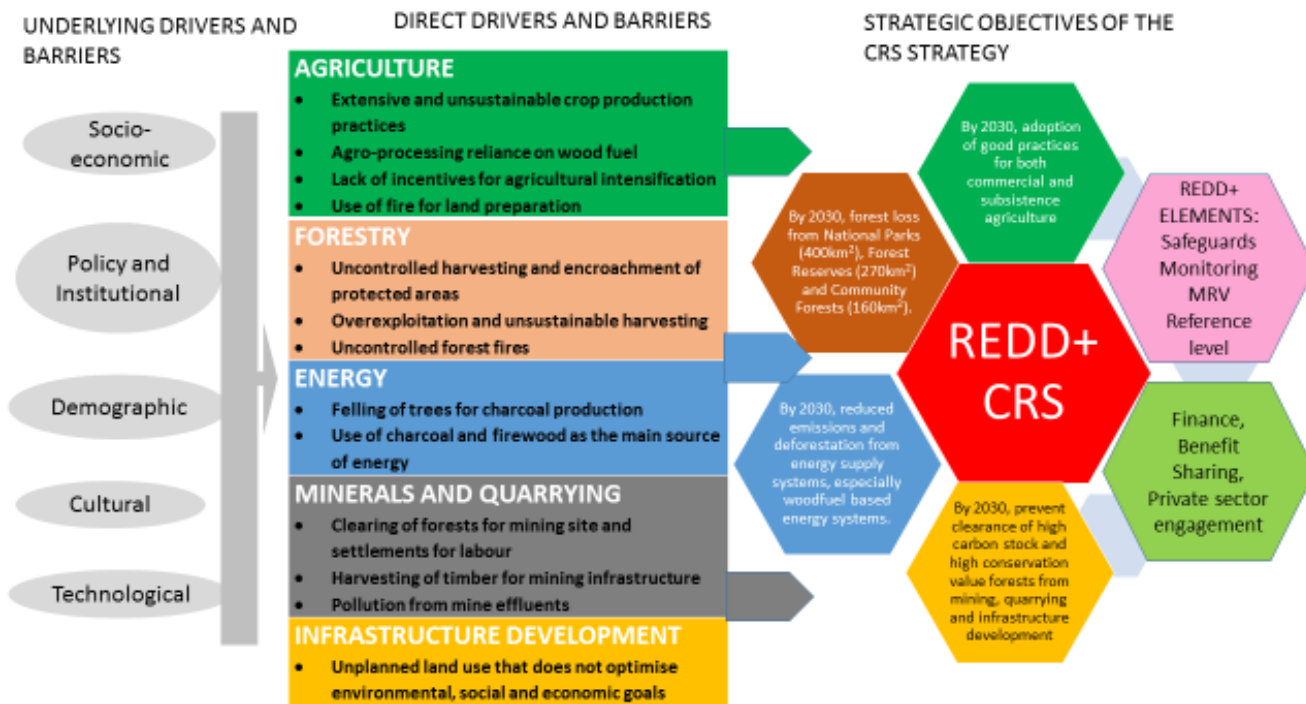
THE CROSS-RIVER STATE'S REDD+ STRATEGY

As a pilot, CRS's REDD+ Strategy is intended to inform the national strategy and serve as a model for other states – a platform for learning and structural planning for REDD+ preparedness and implementation in other parts of Nigeria. The CRS Strategy was informed by analytical studies and assessments and developed through an iterative participatory process involving all key stakeholders: Government agencies; private sector, civil society organizations; community-based organizations; local communities; research and academic institutions; and media houses.

The Cross-River State Strategy went through a process of analysing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and the barriers to sustainable management of forests to understand what would be the appropriate framework for REDD+ strategic options. It encompasses an integrated approach to addressing these drivers and barriers, and provides policies and measures to be undertaken in key sectors such as agriculture, energy and land use planning more broadly. Spatial modelling and analysis with the purpose of linking the drivers of economic behaviour, as it relates to deforestation, to the benefits of forest ecosystem services, informed the policies and measures relevant for REDD+ implementation. Figure 1 gives a synopsis of the elements of the Strategy. It includes cross thematic issues such as gender, incentives, financing, benefit sharing, knowledge management, civil society and private sector engagement.

¹ <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/nganc2.pdf>

Figure 1. Elements of the CRS Strategy



In addition, provisions for safeguards, monitoring, reporting and verification and a CRS forest monitoring system, designed to fit into a subsequent national monitoring system, are central part of the Strategy and are steps towards fulfilling the four components of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. The model for collecting and harmonizing sub-national information into a national data base to enable REDD+ reporting at the national level is already in place. Nigeria is preparing to submit its sub-national Forest Reference Emission Level shortly.

REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION

REDD+ will be implemented at the State level across all agro-ecological zones (AEZ) of CRS. The landscape approach at AEZ level allows for an integrated approach in planning and implementation necessitating all relevant sectors to achieve the Strategy’s goals. Nested within the AEZs are protected forest areas, open areas, national parks and game sanctuaries, major wetlands and rivers, agricultural and mining activities, infrastructure developments, human settlements, private developers, traditional authorities and at jurisdictional level –

State and Local Government Area Authorities, hence, the need to take a cross sectoral approach to addressing deforestation and forest degradation.

To implement REDD+, the Strategy calls for the following at the **Federal level:**

- ✚ Review the National Forest Policy of 2006 to further align with Nigeria’s goals for REDD+;
- ✚ Enact the National Forestry Bill; and
- ✚ Strengthen the institutional capacity of REDD+ Secretariat to effectively address its increasing responsibilities.

At the **Cross-River State Level:**

- ✚ Review the policy on Forest Moratorium to support Sustainable Management of Forests;
- ✚ Develop an investment and implementation framework for the CRS Strategy;
- ✚ Strengthen institutional arrangement to include the provision of adequate staffing, capacity building and assignment of clear roles and responsibilities to Ministries, Departments and Agencies and key actors.

FINANCING AND INVESTMENTS FOR CRS REDD+ STRATEGY

CRS has identified strategic investment opportunities for REDD+ Implementation across various sectors and themes, including reducing deforestation along agriculture commodity value chains, improving forest governance, and strengthening community forest management, amongst others. In addition, financing the CRS REDD+ Strategy will require multiple sources including domestic, bilateral, multilateral, private and innovative funding sources, including through the Green Climate Fund. The Strategy explores domestic financing options such as:

- Exploring increased State (and Federal) budgetary allocations to the sectors for REDD+ implementation;
- Realizing a Forest Trust Fund and Forest Reserve Fund at CRS level which will require invoking the provisions and pertinent clauses within the CRS Forestry Commission Law (2010). The law has not been implemented in many respects;

- Creation of a special window for REDD+ financing under the existing Ecological Fund which will require a decision at Federal level;
- Create an enabling environment (incentive mechanisms) for private sector investment in REDD+ activities;
- Put in place a fund management arrangements to channel, manage and coordinate financing for REDD+ implementation and results based payments.

To complement this, Nigeria looks forward to building strategic partnerships to leverage additional investment

NEXT STEPS AND THE WAY FORWARD

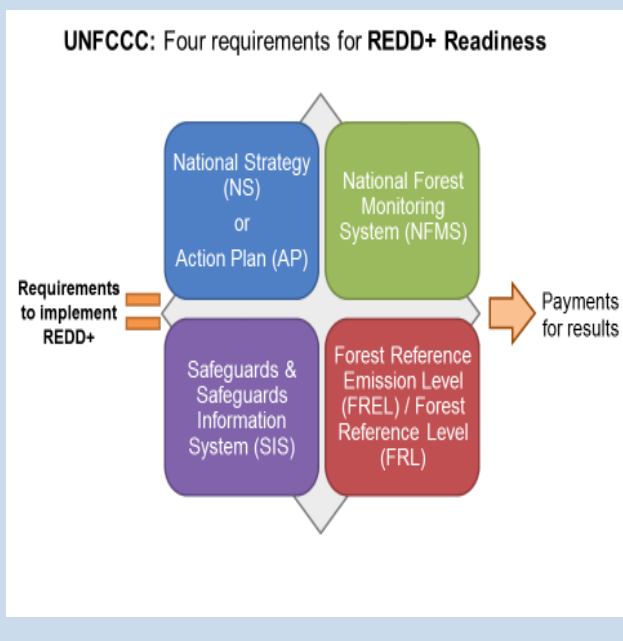
- Continuing high level national dialogue to support REDD+.
- Finalisation of the Warsaw Framework Pillars at the National level (see Box 2).
- Mobilization of strategic partnerships for potential support for the REDD+ strategy. Develop proposals and concept notes for resource mobilization and investments in REDD+.

Nigeria is currently poised to transition from REDD+ readiness to implementation and would require support from the international community.



Box 2

The Federal Government of Nigeria is committed to ensuring sustainability within the country's overarching green growth framework. A target to increase forest cover from currently 6% to 10% by 2020 has been set. The cross-cutting nature of interventions required to address deforestation and forest degradation and barriers to sustainable management of forests to effectively implement REDD+, will require high-level government support and institutional reforms. In line with this, the Nigeria Government will provide domestic financing to the implementation of REDD+ as well as support towards the advancement of the Four Warsaw framework elements which are illustrated with the diagram below:



UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

Acknowledgements: UNDP/UN-REDD and REDD+ Nigeria