

Independent Technical Review: Côte d'Ivoire R-PP document

UN-REDD PROGRAMME

Reviewer: Marie Calmel

Date: 5 July 2014



General comments to R-PP Document of Côte d'Ivoire:

The REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) of Côte d'Ivoire is a high quality document that shows a solid process of national deliberation and international review before its submission as well as a good understanding of the REDD+ process. UN-REDD procedures are followed and review criteria are met resulting in a key document that will serve as a good working basis for implantation phase to come.

A specific attention has been given to the involvement of all governmental institutions and other stakeholders and to participative methodologies to develop future activities and make decisions.

Components are more or less detailed but include preparatory works that give a good idea of the situation before REDD+ implementation and provide orientations for future development. This document would maybe benefit from more concision and from a better global coherence that is lacking a bit, giving the impression of too much complexity, a risk of less efficiency and of a need for coordination and optimization between REDD+ readiness activities.

Ivory Coast R-PP shows a lot of ambition for REDD+ as a mechanism to reverse a trend of relatively rapid deforestation while encouraging socio-economic development. To achieve this objective is might be recommendable to consider step-wise approach and further work on risks' avoidance (especially considering the post conflict and still unstable political situation). Activities should be designed in order to ensure that objectives can be partly reached even in a difficult political situation.

Assessing the draft R-PP against review criteria

1. Ownership of the Programme:

The R-PP formulation and submission process clearly shows the commitment of the government to engage in REDD+ readiness. Wide ownership that goes beyond the responsibility of a single ministry is ensured through an Interministerial Technical Committee (CTI). Co-funding from the government is mainly in-kind, though discussions are ongoing to determine whether the government could possibly allocate some financial resources needed for the R-PP implementation, to complement the contributions of international donors (see component 5). The amount of 100kUSD is mentioned, that would need to target specific activities. Beyond the institutional framework, it is the incorporation of REDD+ within existing policies and measures that will enable a broad ownership of the mechanism, including by other ministries.

Additional work will be needed to encourage ownership of the Programme by non-governmental stakeholders (local communities and indigenous people, private sector, etc.) Those organizations have been and will be consulted. The activities to be developed through the strategy should give special attention to the appropriation of the mechanism by local communities and indigenous people, as well as by the private sector. An important budget is scheduled (but mostly not covered) to develop pilot projects that might help to clarify this point.

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

2. Level of consultation, participation and engagement :

Strong efforts have been made for consultation. The R-PP applies a multi-partner approach and respects the principles of participation and collaboration between sectors. It is mentioned that more than 1500 participants have been involved so far in REDD+ awareness activities and the R-PP formulation process. National stakeholders provided an initial endorsement in October 2013 and then continued to improve the R-PP step by step based on international feedback.

The '*Communiqué final de validation du Plan de préparation à la REDD+ (R-PP) de la Côte d'Ivoire*', available for the 12th UN-REDD policy board meeting as a background document on the website, provides signed evidence that the R-PP has been reviewed and approved domestically with a high level of consultation, participation and engagement of various relevant stakeholders.

The R-PP mentions that a National Plan for Stakeholders Engagement will be developed in 2014. This plan should ensure continuous consultation but should also ensure participation and engagement of all stakeholders throughout the implementation of the R-PP. This will require a specific attention during activities' design phase.

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

3. Programme effectiveness and cost efficiency:

The R-PP includes quite detailed budget tables after each sub-component in the document, showing main and sub-activities with amount breakdowns for funding sources per year 2014-2017. The Executive Summary of UN-REDD support corresponds well with those budgets and are planned to be effective.

It will be important to adjust budgets to changing circumstances throughout the implementation process and to monitor expenditures to ensure continued cost efficiency.

This efficiency, as well as the Programme effectiveness will highly depend on the capacity to optimize activities implementation. While working further on each component details, it might also be important to look for more coherence and optimization of expenses and processes over all components and activities.

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

4. Management of risks and likelihood of success :

It seems that specific attention has been given to the synchronization of REDD+ with other development processes and initiatives, which is a key issue for the likelihood of success. Though, the huge ambition showed in the R-PP could be split into intermediate achievements (following a step-wise approach) in order to ensure the success of REDD+ implementation and its incorporation into national political orientations and the decision making process, as well as into local practices.

This last point seems especially important in the current post-conflict political context of Ivory Coast. While frequently mentioned in the R-PP, the risks due to political instability, to the decline of State authority on some sectors and to the need for national reconciliation are not addressed. When refining the REDD+ strategy and the Programme (e.g. the institutional framework) it will be very important to ensure that activities are designed and implemented in a way that will mitigate those risks.

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

5. Consistency with the UN-REDD Programme Strategy:

It seems that UN-REDD has been actively involved in the review and formulation of the R-PP. This should ensure consistency with UN-REDD Programme Strategy.

When looking at the activities to be funded by UN-REDD (, they are relevant with the six Work Areas of the UN-REDD Programme Strategy: MRV & Monitoring (see activities scheduled for UN-REDD on component 3 and 4A), National REDD+ Governance (see activities 1C/2C), Stakeholders engagement (1C), Multiple Benefits (4B), Transparent, equitable and accountable management (4B), Sector transformation (2B/2C).

The attention given to capacity building is also very consistent with the UN-REDD Strategy and should remain of high priority in the coming steps. Some attention could be given to adopt a step wise approach that would be more relevant with UN-REDD strategy.

Budget allocation among donors (including UN-REDD) and among UN-REDD agencies is consistent with the 2011-2015 strategy. It enables to build on UN-REDD agencies competencies and well distributed among those entities.

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

6. Compliance with UN-REDD Programme Rules of Procedure and Operational Guidance:

It seems that the R-PP followed the UN-REDD Programme Rules of Procedures and Operational Guidance.

Based on the R-PP, a Joint National Programme will have to be developed, which could give the opportunity to review, improve and better detail some of the activities to be supported by UN-REDD (example, component 4).

Reviewers judgment: The review criteria are met.

Assessing the draft R-PP by component

1. Component 1: Organize and consult :

The complex REDD+ institutional framework presented in the R-PP shows a strong willingness to ensure appropriateness of the REDD+ process by all Ivory Coast stakeholders, including the consideration of REDD+ in the decision making process. Côte d'Ivoire has already implemented several structures in parallel with the R-PP formulation process. The existence of a Decree (October 2012) endorsing the creation of REDD+ bodies (CN-REDD, SEP-REDD, ITC-REDD) is clearly a positive sign for REDD+ implementation in the country. Regional representatives and committees should ensure the dissemination of REDD+ knowledge, understanding and appropriateness over the all country, as well as the strong effort that has already been made and that is scheduled in the future for information sharing, capacity building and involvement of stakeholders.

Important attention is given to interministerial dialogue (especially with the ministry of agriculture, considering that conversion to crops is one of the main drivers of deforestation) and to encourage synergies with other initiatives, such as the FLEGT process - on which consultation is built, through the FLEGT dialogue platform.

Consultation process shows that stakeholders are expecting an effective participation in the REDD+ process, at all stages of development. This expectation should be addressed through the *Plan d'engagement des parties prenantes à la REDD+*. It seems important to highlight linkages between entities that are or should be part of the REDD+ institutional framework. Articulation of regional committee with national entities should be clarified, as well as way stakeholders will be incorporated in the institutional framework, avoiding the multiplication of entities.

Efficiency of the institutional framework will require a massive effort in terms of human resources (employment and capacity building). The scheduled budget to build capacity of REDD+ entities is not very clear while it will be core issue for the institutional framework efficiency. Implementation of such a complex organization will indeed be a huge challenge, especially in such a short period of time. It will be important to develop a clear and progressive plan (following the step-wise concept) to reach full efficiency of the foreseen REDD+ institutional framework. This progressive implementation could also be linked to the three phases of REDD+ implementation clarifying how the institutional framework might evolve (if any evolution is envisioned) depending on the REDD+ phases.

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

2. Component 2: Prepare the REDD-plus Strategy:

Based on a detailed and well presented analysis of deforestation and degradation drivers (despite the acknowledged uncertainty of data), six strategic options are envisioned for REDD+ development in Ivory Coast, as well as specific tools such as the National Fund for REDD+. Some options are sector or drivers oriented while others are targeting structural issues (e.g. land-use planning). Methodology and roadmap to reach a validated REDD+ strategy is clearly detailed, including the stakeholders to be involved in its establishment.

The strategy includes some policies and measures, some national scale activities (to be first implemented in priority areas) and pilot projects (for which a very important budget is scheduled).

It could be interesting to better detail the articulation between the national strategy and pilot projects and to pre-identify projects of high interest. Those projects seem especially important in the political context of Ivory Coast context where the MINEF itself recognize a drop of State authority on the field (p.85). A bottom-up approach could enable to test the liability of some of the strategic options, as well as to initiate a change in practices. It is also a good way to start involving the private sector. It can help to reach smaller but more immediate results that will feed the national strategy scheduled for 2017. The level of budget provided to pilot projects shows the interest of Ivory Coast for such project. Priority activities, their nature as well as the role and articulation of such projects with the national strategy need to be better explain in the coming months.

Beyond the policies and measures that are listed in the R-PP, a very special attention will have to be given to the synergies between REDD+ and existing political orientations, policies and measures in the country. That is especially important considering the objective of incorporating REDD+ in the development scheme.

It will be a priority as well to better clarify what will be done to avoid for the REDD+ strategy the failure that have been observed for previous policies and measures, due to a lack of coordination among governmental bodies. The proposed institutional framework (especially the organization of the CN-REDD) is a key point but might not be sufficient.

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

3. Component 3: Develop a National Forest Reference Emission Level and/or a Forest Reference Level :

The R-PP contains a technically robust plan for how the national Forest REL/RL will be developed. Some preparatory work has already been done and is presented in the R-PP, including a first inventory of existing data and missing data for the REL/RL formulation (annex 3.1), mapping of available institutional capacities and proposed organizational structure (table 15 and 16). With appropriate international technical support, national capacities will be built to enable the REL/RL development by domestic institutions, encouraging the national ownership. The REL/RL is scheduled for national validation in 2016.

It is recommendable to make a first submission to UNFCCC in that year and to then apply a step-wise approach for an improved submission some years later. Data on ecological and socio-economical impacts that will be collected through component 4b may be useful for regular future adjustment of the REL/RL.

The Executive Summary of planned support from UN-REDD to this component corresponds exactly with the activity list and amounts expected in the budget on page 208 of the R-PP. UN-REDD support to this component will be delivered by FAO starting in the second half of 2015.

It would be interesting to better detail (including in the institutional framework) the articulation between REL/RL development and other REDD+ activities, such as the analysis of drivers and agents of deforestation, and the assessment of activity data and emission factors.

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

4. Component 4: Design Systems for National Forest Monitoring and Information on Safeguards:

During the readiness phase of REDD+, a Tier 2 is envisioned for the NFMS, using a methodology that follows IPCC Guidance and that builds on other countries' experiences. The institutional framework for the NFMS should be clarified in the coming months, during the implementation phase of the R-PP. The integration and relevance of such an institutional framework within the global REDD+ one will be very important to ensure efficiency. Considering figures 1 (SEP-REDD organization), 3 (CN-REDD organization), 39 (NFMS institutional framework), 40 and 41 (SST architecture and institutional framework), it seems that there is opportunities to optimize efficiency in such organizations, especially during the readiness phase and in order to avoid slowness of too heavy organization systems.

While the general approach is presented, very few details are provided on methodological choices for the MRV system. It would be important in the coming phases to move from a general perspective to context-based considerations and to improve relevancy of the global schedule and budget for the NFMS (e.g. equipment expenses are scheduled before the establishment of a sampling plan for NFI, expenses for the data collection are very low (60kUSD), on activity data, it is not clear when and which data will be produced...).

On the National Forest Inventory, considering the cost of such campaign, it might be recommendable to expand its scope to multiple purposes, not only for carbon stocks and REDD+.

On the safeguards information system, few elements are provided such as the articulation with the SESA, some indicators that could be used and institutions that should be involved in the development of such a system. It could be recommended to consider a participative approach to develop such a SIS, its submission and validation by stakeholders (e.g. through the FLEGT-REDD+ platform?)

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

5. Component 5: Schedule and Budget :

On a general perspective, the schedule and budget are well detailed per component and distributed among donors, giving a good visibility on what will be funded by who. Budget is well distributed over components highlighting the importance of component 2 for example.

This information will certainly serve as a useful tool throughout the implementation process. As in all project management it must be expected that flexible adjustments will be needed. It might be important to review part of the budget and schedule in order to ensure efficiency of activities. This should be done when clarifying the plan for each component.

Optimization should be sought between components, when considering the institutional framework. It is important to ensure that all expenses are taken into consideration otherwise some activities might be hard to implement (for example, it might be hard to ensure a good participation and commitment of stakeholders to working groups without specific costs for it).

It would be good as well to clearly identify funding to be provided by the Ivory Coast government and to target it to specific activities.

Coordination of budget will be important considering the number of donors involved in the process. This should go through an optimized and coordinated financial reporting.

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

6. Component 6: Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework still has to be designed but criteria to be followed are identified and a logistical framework is provided and detailed per achievement.

The total budget allocated to Monitoring and Evaluation of the R-PP implementation is 105kUSD (20kUSD to develop a manual for monitoring and evaluation), 40kUSD for intermediate monitoring activities (8kUSD per semester) and 45kUSD for final evaluation. This budget, detailed in component 1a is different from the 60kUSD mentioned in the text of component 6 (30kUSD for FCPF evaluation).

All along the R-PP implementation, data will be collected. It could be recommended in the manual to be developed to clearly identify which indicator will be collected, when by who, in order to build on monitoring activities that are already scheduled and to link the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework with MRV and SESA activities for example.

Reviewers judgment: The component meets the standard.

Suggestions for improving the technical design of the R-PP Document of Côte d'Ivoire:

Recommendations have been provided in the per component analysis.