

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



Independent Technical Review: [Honduras] R-PP document

UN-REDD PROGRAMME

Reviewer: José Carlos Fernández
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General comments to R-PP Document of Honduras (maximum 200 words):

The R-PP has matured to a high level through the long and thorough process of development and review. Honduras has to be commended for the effort made, which in this reviewer's opinion, should be endorsed. The review identifies that the R-PP has met the technical standards required. Some of the recommendations are relatively simple to address, such as the budgetary aspects, while others can be addressed during the implementation of the plan.

Changes in government can be a major challenge for any country and Honduras has demonstrated its national commitment to the REDD+ process, embedding REDD+ into the government vision.

Assessing the draft R-PP against review criteria

(Please refer to the TORs and supporting documents)

1. Ownership of the Programme (maximum 150 words):

The Program appears to be well positioned and enjoy good backing from the formal Policies and Plans, including in Goal 3.6 of the *Plan de Nación 2010-2022* and Objective 3 of the *Visión de País 2010-2038*. REDD+ is also framed within the National Climate Change Strategy, with five of its objectives corresponding to Forest and Biodiversity. These objectives are fully consistent with the implementation of the future REDD+ Strategy for Honduras. The National Forest Program (PRONAFOR) and institutional strategic plans related to the REDD+ Strategy, including the one for the Integrated Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Honduras.

The change in government during the elaboration of the R-PP has added complexity to the process, since it brought about a significant institutional reorganization. The text could benefit from further revisions to ensure that the description of the new organization is clearer. However, the overall assessment is that there is good backing for the REDD+ readiness process and the policy direction arising from the R-PP.

2. Level of consultation, participation and engagement (maximum 150 words):

The current proposal is the result of a substantive process since 2011. The evidence provided indicate that consultations have been transparent and have included a significant and increasing number of relevant stakeholders. While the initial design and operation are robust, the

The REDD+ Subcommittee has a broad participation base including private sector, academia, agroforestry cooperatives, indigenous groups, national and state governments and non-governmental organizations. Similarly, the composition of the MIACC provides for good representation of non-governmental entities.

The establishment of clear rules of procedure for the MIACC and the REDD+ Subcommittee will also contribute to the future stability of the process and enable the updating of relevant stakeholders.

The consultation and participation plan is adequately described and provides for intercultural means of communication. It is particularly relevant and appropriate the differentiated consultation proposed for indigenous peoples, afrohondurean communities, businesses and civil society. The list of workshops and meetings in sections 1b and 1c demonstrate a high degree of engagement and participation.

3. Programme effectiveness and cost efficiency (maximum 100 words):

The general approach presented seems well designed and likely to be effective. Cost effectiveness is more difficult to consider, particularly given the qualitative assessment of the drivers of forest carbon loss. Appropriate consideration of measures to address underlying causes and not just direct forest action are likely to produce cost-effective measures. Consideration of cross-sectoral policies is also likely to produce a cost effective mix of measures.

The measures provided for to ensure compliance with social safeguards are good in concept, however, as it is common in social processes, practical challenges lie ahead.

4. Management of risks and likelihood of success (maximum 150 words):

The proposed R-PP includes a good set of provisions that increase the likelihood of being successful. There are some risks that will have to be managed during implementation:

- One of them relates to the possibility that the institutional rearrangements leave functions or activities not fully internalized by MiAmbiente.
- Another risk relates to budgetary uncertainty. As stated in the text, there is no *a priori* budget for the local and regional participatory platforms. Their continuity would seem to depend on ensuring sufficient political relevance for this platforms.

5. Consistency with the UN-REDD Programme Strategy (maximum 150 words):

The Readiness Preparation Proposal is consistent with the UN-REDD Programme Strategy. Particularly, it builds on the early lessons gained during the design and implementation of the National and Global Programmes, such as:

- The process of developing a REDD+ strategy is as important as the end product- The proposal describes how the RPP will contribute significantly to the REDD+ Strategy.
- Component 1 in the proposal describes the cross-sectoral and interinstitutional coordination required for REDD+ readiness
- Honduras has worked in the development of a protocol to implement Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for REDD+ which has been improved over time and through the various iterations of the R-PP.
- The design of Honduras REDD+ Strategy is built through previous experience in the country.
- Relevant stakeholders have been engaged and participated actively in the R-PP construction, the proposal also identifies a plan so the participation continues through consultation and implementation phases.
- The proposal takes into account technical and institutional capacity building in order to create a critical mass of know-how.

6. Compliance with UN-REDD Programme Rules of Procedure and Operational Guidance (maximum 150 words):

The proposal complies with the UN-REDD Programme Rules of Procedure and Operational Guidance. Specifically:

- Public Disclosure (rule of procedure 4)- The proposal is publicly available at the UNREDD collaborative online-workspace.
- Country Validation of the Draft NJP (operational guidance 2.3)- The proposal has been consulted appropriately, it was validated by the REDD+ Sub-Committee and the **Junta Directiva de la Mesa Indígena y Afro-Hondureña de Cambio Climático** (MIACC). Evidence of such endorsement was annexed to the letter sent by Secretary José Antonio Galdames.
- Submission to Secretariat (operational guidance 2.4)- The proposal was submitted October 7th 2014 including: the executive summary, RPP, and validation letters.

Assessing the draft R-PP by component

(Please refer to the TORs and supporting documents)

1. Component 1: Organize and consult (maximum 300 words):

This component meets the requirements. There is evidence of a thorough consideration of the institutional arrangements for REDD+. Many of which have been consolidating through legal mechanisms (e.g. CICC, CTICC, REDD+ Sub-committee) and organized through Decrees, Rules of procedure and Manuals. Clarity in Rules can lead to better implementation and broader inclusion of relevant stakeholders.

Particularly significant is the new institutional arrangements brought about by the new government. The consolidation of SERNA and ICF under MiAmbiente can potentially contribute to better coordination and communication among them. The National Forest System, which will be important for the implementation of REDD+ is strengthened.

The division in Regions established in the National Plan 2010-2022 will strengthen the identification, communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders for REDD+ implementation. However, the description of the role of subnational governments in the institutional arrangements is still very limited.

With regards to consultation, the REDD+ Sub-Committee, since its inception in 2010, has successfully served its primary purpose as a communication, dialogue and capacity building platform, thereby contributing to a more robust R-PP. In addition the dialogue with the indigenous and Afro-Hondurean communities has been strengthened with the creation of the MIACC in 2011, which has, served as the link with the nine indigenous federations.

Capacity building needs have been identified and training is planned until 2016, with some important activities already carried out, such as dialogues on basic REDD+ concepts.

In the dispute resolution and the oversight of the consultation and participation mechanisms there is reference to an Observatory on Human Rights for the Indigenous and Afroamerican communities in Honduras (ODHPINH) but there is no reference to relevant connections for the rest of the population.

2. Component 2: Prepare the REDD-plus Strategy (maximum 300 words):

The R-PP meets the standard.

It qualitatively assesses the direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and degradation, identifying both drivers associated to the forest sectors and others that originate in other sectors and non-forest policies. In this sense, the proposed additional work to better characterize the drivers is appropriate.

The proposal shows the linkages between FLEGT and REDD+ preparation, including the relevance of the monitoring system, how the dispute resolution mechanism will support FLEGT negotiations, and the assessment of the legal framework. However, this is presented in general terms and still needs to be further elaborated to be operational.

The general guidelines for the development of the REDD+ Strategy are adequate. Figure 9 includes a broad set of direct and underlying drivers of forest loss and forest degradation, however, in the

identification of policies and strategies to be strengthened, there is a limited elaboration of the non-forest policy instruments associated with underlying drivers components to be addressed. This is an aspect to be expanded during implementation of the plan.

This version includes reference to a Registry. A series of objectives for it are mentioned, where it would be useful to include avoiding double counting. Despite this reference, the development of the Registry is not included in the budget. It is recommended that some budget be provided to further advance in the definition of the scope of the Registry.

3. Component 3: Develop a National Forest Reference Emission Level and/or a Forest Reference Level (maximum 200 words):

The component fulfills the standards required. The advances on emission factors for forests based on ground data and the activity data using high resolution sensors in Honduras are commendable and will undoubtedly contribute to better assessment of the performance of REDD+ interventions.

A subnational approach is proposed as an interim measure towards a national approach. The stepwise approach proposed is solid and shows clarity in each step proposed. First, the reference level will include deforestation and enhancement of carbon stocks, and later on degradation and sustainable management of forest will be included. The revised text indicates that reference levels have already been developed for 55% of the territory, but the rest of the text still refer to the future development of the reference levels.

There is evidence of the use of both remote sensing and ground data for the preparation of the Reference Levels. The historical period used (2000-2010) is reasonable but somewhat limited to capture the long term dynamics for the projections up to 2040. The plans to update the reference levels every two years, i.e. biannually[sic], seem overly ambitious. The biennial updating could be appropriate for monitoring but for updating of the reference level, a less frequent updating would be adequate. No reference is made on the availability of ancillary information (social or economic) that may be also used for the construction of projected reference levels.

4. Component 4: Design Systems for National Forest Monitoring and Information on Safeguards (maximum 300 words):

The proposed National Forest Monitoring and Information on Safeguards meet the requirements. There have been significant improvements from previous versions, particularly:

- Transparency has been enhanced significantly with the 2014 publication of the Forest and Land Use Cover Map of Honduras (Mapa Forestal y Cobertura de la Tierra de Honduras). This high resolution map provides relevant actors a tool to locate and quantify forest types and will facilitate the planning process in the country. Besides, the Geo Portal also demonstrates the commitment of the Honduras Government to transparency and accountability.
- The R-PP already incorporates the financing that the country will receive from the MOSEF project, funded by the EU and which will finance the forest inventory and significantly contribute to improve and update the emission factors.

The outstanding challenges ahead include the effectiveness of the institutional arrangements to generate and share the necessary information. In a context of new institutional arrangements, this

ability is hard to assess upfront and it is something to consider throughout implementation to amend as needed.

The proposal includes elements for the initial design of an information platform on impacts, governance and safeguards. While meeting the requirements at this high level, it would be useful to initiate work to define further this component during implementation. It does not contain details on the information on governance that will be considered. In addition, development of this component could benefit from considering the underlying relationships among social, economic and environmental processes as a basis to develop the key indicators to track.

5. Component 5: Schedule and Budget (maximum 300 words):

Financing priorities are still missing and some concepts are still not included in the budget.

Component 6 is entirely missing from the budget structure and it is recommended that it be included. As indicated before, it would also be useful to include some budget for the registry.

In terms of the classification of some budget items, it is recommended that SESA and ESMF costs be moved to section 2d.

There is significant detail in the schedule, not just for resources provided by the FCPF or UNREDD but also from other sources. The description in the section, however, does not allow us to assess whether other sources of funding are already secured.

6. Component 6: Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (maximum 300 words):

There is high detail in the monitoring and evaluation framework and this allows for high detail in the tracking of progress in activities. However, it may be useful to consider a simplified framework complemented with consideration program objectives. This would enable better assessing performance and effectiveness.

In line with what has been done for other components, like the GeoPortal, it may be useful to consider ways to make the progress indicators also publicly accessible.

Suggestions for improving the technical design of the R-PP Document of Honduras (maximum 400 words):

In considering the following recommendations, it should be noted that the reviewer did not have the set of annexes available for review. As a result, I could not verify if some of the recommendations may already be addressed there.

- Changes in administration have resulted in changes in institutional arrangements that are described in the R-PP but not adequately reflected in all sections. It may be useful to update the text to refer to MiAmbiente and its Offices rather than SERNA. The documents keeps making reference to ICF and SERNA.
- Figure 19 must be updated to include MiAmbiente
- I recommend considering a study on the legal attributions and arrangements for the various institutions involved in the monitoring system to ensure clarity.
- It would be useful to describe in greater detail some of the inputs that would go into the construction of reference levels.
- Page 183 refers to the use of VCS as a starting point for reference levels. It would be useful to include the methodology used in an annex.
- Add reference to the way in which uncertainty would be analyzed.