**Management Group (MG) of the UN-REDD Programme**

**Meeting Minutes of 13 November 2018 FINAL**

**16h00 Geneva/Rome**

**Attendance:**

MG members and alternates

FAO: Margo BuszkoBriggs, Tiina Vahanen

UNDP: Josep Garí

UNEP: Gabriel Labbate

Secretariat: Mario Boccucci, Mihaela Secrieru

1. **Update on Lower Mekong initiative**

*Decisions and Actions:*

1. FAO to amend the budget in the project proposal as discussed during the call, i.e. by moving the US$1.75M country-level management component from the standard to the scalable budget, and share back with the MG. *Done*
2. FAO to revise the project proposal integrating the proposed changes and share back with the MG, together with bullet points of changes made. MG to share individually with the respective regional teams.

*Additional elements of the discussion*

Agencies supported the submission to Norway of the draft proposal developed by the regional team (dated 1 November). FAO explained the two steps approach whereby the proposal is meant to inform NICFI and NORAD for a decision on the envelope, after which a full-fledged project document will be developed.

Agencies agreed on some changes to the proposal, including:

* Refine the preamble, including input submitted by UNDP.
* Make clearer the project would be implemented through UN-REDD, assuming it will be integrated in the new configuration of UN-REDD post-2020 (and adding a disclaimer on an alternative implementation arrangement to be identified in case UN-REDD does not continue beyond 2020);
* On the proposed Regional Steering Committee (RSC), include more explicit references on (i) IPs and CSOs participation, and (ii) linkages with the UN-REDD Executive Board;
* Add a chapeau to Outcome 2 to refer to a broader capacity to support strengthening of forest governance;
* Include a diplomatic stream under Outcome 4 pointing to reaching some kind of regional agreement (e.g. through a ministerial meeting or similar).

On the proposed output-based budget, agencies felt the total figure for the standard budget (USD30,2 M) was high and may exceed Norway’s intentions for this initiative. Moreover, it was noted that the distinctive rationale between the two budgets (standard and scalable) was unclear and the difference between the two figures was not substantial enough. The solution proposed by the FAO and supported by UNDP as a practical step in view of time constraints was to move the country-level management component (US$1.75M) from the standard to the scalable budget. UN Environment noted the peculiarity of the budget line under discussion (country-level management) and insisted that it was important to check back with the regional team before making this change. In any case, agencies agreed that once Norway confirms the scope and financial envelope, there will be a need to review and balance the budget as the current one is preliminary.

Other elements of the discussion included the suggestion to emphasize the engagement with China as a “special partner” and a critical factor for the transformations sought.