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Proposal for NP pipeline development

UN-REDD PROGRAMME TWELFTH
POLICY BOARD MEETING

7-9 July 2014

Lima, Peru

Background

The UN-REDD Programme was initiated in 2008 with 9 pilot countries. As of PB2 a steady stream of requests has come through for additional countries to join the Programme, resulting in 53 partner countries as of June 2014.

To date, the National Programme (NP) modality has benefited 18 countries, with a total of 53 countries have indicating interest to receive support through this modality upon joining the Programme¹. Donor countries have also signaled both trust and interest in the Programme's approach; committing additional resources, responding to country demand and dedicating a proportion of their contributions to normative and methodological work.

Recognizing the need to respond to requests and expectations of countries joining the Programme in a systematic and fair manner, during its fifth meeting (PB5), the Policy Board (PB) established a working group (WG)². The ranking of countries as decided by the WG is referred to as the *pipeline*.

The WG was tasked by the PB to:

1. Define criteria to prioritize countries for new NPs.
2. Rank the countries according to the criteria (i.e. create a pipeline) and invite these countries to present potential new NPs to the PB.

The criteria approved by the PB³ are:

1. Contribution of UN-REDD to the national readiness process:

The UN-REDD Programme seeks to maximize the impact of its interventions by fulfilling country REDD+ readiness needs, emphasizing countries that either have not yet received support for REDD+ readiness or those where there are opportunities to add value and maximize coordination with other REDD+ bilateral and multilateral initiatives (as reported on the Interim REDD+ Partnership database or subsequently to the UNFCCC).

2. Effective engagement of UN agencies at a country level:

In order to quickly respond to country needs, the capacity of FAO, UNDP and UNEP to effectively engage and support the implementation of NPs needs to be taken into account. The participating UN agencies conduct an assessment of relevant factors, including:

- Existing engagement in the national readiness process, forestry sector, climate change and/or other relevant initiatives,
- UNDAF and Country Programme priorities, contribution of core funding and capacity of local offices,
- Past experience of local offices in managing similar initiatives, pipeline of related projects, and opportunities to co-finance through the Global Programme.

WORKING GROUP COMPOSITION :

- UN-REDD Programme Countries
– Zambia*
- Donor Countries
– Denmark
- Civil Society
– AFCG UT'Z CHE' (CSO-Developing Countries)
- Indigenous Peoples
– CAOI (IP Latin America)
- UN Agencies
– UNDP

* N.B. In addition to Zambia, Argentina and Colombia were WG partner countries.

¹ http://www.un-redd.org/Partner_Countries/tabid/102663/Default.aspx

² PB5 Session IV decisions on prioritizing funding for countries

³ Intersessional decision 10, 1 July 2011

3. REDD+ potential:

The UN-REDD Programme is committed to make a contribution to global climate change mitigation through REDD+. The REDD+ potential of countries is therefore an important consideration and will be assessed using data on forest percentage of land area, annual change rate, and potential importance of forests to the poor.

Current status

Following the approval of the criteria and establishment of the working group, the ranking exercise was undertaken twice, resulting in the invitation of;

- (i) Guatemala, Republic of Congo and Sri Lanka in a first wave,
- (ii) Colombia in a second wave,
- (iii) Argentina, Cote d'Ivoire and Bangladesh in a third wave,
- (iv) Honduras, Uganda and Mongolia⁴ in a fourth.

The last ranking exercise, undertaken in November 2012, had identified the latest 6 countries to be invited for submission of NPs. At the time of conducting the exercise, the UN-REDD Programme incorporated a total of 30 partner countries without NPs. Today the Programme includes 53 Partner countries, of which 18 in total have received support through the NP modality, and an additional 5 in the process of submission. This brings the number of countries without a National Programme and not yet invited to submit a NP to the Policy Board to 30.

A combination of lessons learnt from the pipeline and global changes in circumstances in readiness support can form the basis for the PB decision on NPs. These influential factors include;

- The pipelining exercise assumes that all countries having joined the Programme are interested and want to receive support through the NP modality,
- The NP modality was designed at a time when international initiatives supporting readiness were limited to the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF,
- As indicated in the Programme mid-term evaluation, the contribution – particularly financial – of countries receiving support through the NP modality is not always explicitly expressed nor demonstrated during implementation. The political place of REDD+ in the national development process has been repeatedly identified as a critical bottleneck in NP reports and evaluations, indicating the need for more country buy-in,
- 22 new countries have joined the Programme since the last ranking exercise necessitating a new ranking, should the usual modality be applied for generating the pipeline.
- With the current finances and timeframe for the UN-REDD Programme, which assumes that PB14 would be the final chance for approving National Programmes, the UN-REDD Programme is in a position to support at least 5 new countries. Based on experience, the ranking exercise would require 3 months for completion, and therefore a new pipeline could only be established by October 2014. Previous experience indicates that if an October 2014 pipeline were to be achieved, it would be necessary to initiate preparation of R-PPs and NPs as early as August 2014.

⁴ See intersessional decision 23, May 23rd 2013

Proposed approach

Taking into considerations the points mentioned above, and in order to start accommodating for a potentially larger and more diverse number of requests from partner countries, an alternative approach addressing some of the lessons learned and maintaining the PB working group's involvement in the pipelining process is proposed herewith. Such an approach could be taken through the following methodology:

1. Substitute the grading of criteria by PB WG with Expression of Interest open to partner countries that have not received support through the NP modality.
2. Request interested countries to submit EOI in the form of a concise document including the following aspects:
 - The vision of REDD+ for the country
 - Current status of implementation of readiness (through national and international resources)
 - Self-assessed absorptive capacity
 - Self-assessed estimated timeline for submission of the NP, taking into consideration the bi-annual rhythm of PB meetings
 - Funding needs to support the readiness process
 - Proposed niche for the UN-REDD Programme support in country
3. Maintain PB Working Group with a modified mandate to assess Expressions of Interest.

Requested decision

1. Secretariat issues invitations of Expression Of Interest (EOI) to countries for receiving support through the NP modality.
2. Existing PB WG to be reactivated, with a mandate to review EOIs and delegated authority by the PB to select new countries for NP modality support.
3. On behalf of the PB WG, Secretariat communicates the outcome of the selection process to the PB for invitation of top ranking countries. .

Contingent on fund availability, the agencies will work with the selected countries to initiate the preparation and submission of NPs as early as PB13.