

**Dominican Republic**  
**Summary**  
**Emission Reductions Program Idea Note (ER-PIN)**  
FCPF Carbon Fund 13

*October 2015, Brussels*

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**Contributions to Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Communities and Carbon Enhancements**

The Climate Change Directorate of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, in collaboration with the Directorate of Social Participation and the Forest Monitoring Unit, held multiple meetings and carried out three stakeholder workshops in order to prepare the DR Emission Reductions Program Idea Note (ER-PIN).

The DR's ER Program will be carried out on a national scale and will focus its initial activities on six priority areas. The ER Program has the objective of reducing emissions by up to 15,6 M tCO<sub>2</sub>, of which it is offering 7,4 M to the Carbon Fund for the 2018 to 2023 period.

It is expected that the ER-Program, in addition to contributing to the country averting emissions and removing carbon, will contribute to the sustainable livelihoods of rural communities, improve the conservation of protected areas and enhance water provision services. Special attention will be given to work carried out in the regions bordering Haiti, where a bi-national program to promote reforestation and conservation activities is underway.

**A. Proposed program activities**

The emission reductions and carbon removals generated by the ER-PIN will be the result of the strengthening of national conservation, restoration and agricultural policies and programs. The following four themes and their respective activities will be the focus of the ER-PIN:

**1. Address the expansion of the agricultural frontier due to slash and burn agriculture and extensive livestock farming:** The DR plans to strengthen a mix of policies, laws and programs such as the Strategy for the Sustainable Management of Soil, the Law on Border Development, the National program for Forest Protection, National Reforestation Plans, the National System of Protected Areas, and the existing work plans of the coffee and cocoa producers. Some of the field activities that the above initiatives are expected to support and build upon include:

- Strengthening public and private forestry sector organizations
- Promoting the legal and institutional strengthening of the forestry sector
- The establishment of a national surveillance, monitoring and control system for forests and fire management
- Expansion and improvement of the surveillance system to include silvopastoral technologies and programs
- The transfer of technology in forestry and agroforestry sectors

**2. Reduce forest degradation caused by weak forest management and the illegal extraction of timber:** This will be achieved by strengthening the National Sustainable Forest Management Program, the National System of Protected Areas, and the Environmental Protection Program. The main activities covered under this theme include:

- Upgrading Forestry Regulations (eg. forest management and forest permits)
- Training Ministry of Environment officials to enforce environmental legislation
- Expansion of the PES program to other regions
- Strengthening of forestry production programs for renewable energy
- Strengthening of surveillance in the border region
- Support sustainable charcoal production and marketing programs

- Capacity strengthening to improve the monitoring of protected forests as well as transparent monitoring mechanisms
  - Updating and reformulating logging permits
3. **Forest fire management:** the National Fire Management Program is the main instrument that the DR possesses for fire control. Under the ER Program, this program shall be strengthened through the following activities: supporting local fire fighting units, training and equipping local brigades, and the encouragement of in-depth studies that aim to determine the specific causes of forest fires as well as assess their resulting damages and economic impacts.
  4. **Increase Carbon Stocks:** Reforestation will be an important pillar of the ER program not only due to its immediate carbon benefits, but also because it can contribute to the improvement of local livelihoods and biodiversity. Strengthening current national reforestation plans such as Quisqueya Verde, Frontera Verde, ENDA Dominicana is one of the key strategies that will be implemented in order to increase carbon stocks.

## **B. Operational and financial stability**

The Dominican Republic's ER Program will be led by the Ministry of Environment, which will coordinate its actions through the Directorate of Climate Change. Deputy ministers and internal bodies will design, prepare, and implement both the REDD+ Strategy and the ER Program. These institutions possess technical platforms, personnel and budgets, which although limited, have helped to reduce deforestation and increase forest coverage in the country for the last few decades. The institutional arrangements proposed by the Ministry of Environment for the REDD+ Strategy include the establishment of a management structure composed by a Steering Committee (CA-REDD+) – the body's highest authority – a REDD+ Technical Advisory Committee (CTA -REDD+) and a REDD+ Technical Unit for Readiness Project Management (UTG-REDD+). The REDD+ Steering Committee will be institutionalized and operational in early 2016.

## **C. Forest Monitoring System**

The DR has taken several preliminary steps in the establishment of an MRV system and a National Forest Monitoring System as part of its preparation plan for REDD+. The Environmental Information Directorate (DIARENA), which carries out the mapping of forests and land use coverage, together with the Forest Monitoring Unit, which is responsible for measuring and monitoring emissions related to forests, constitute the institutional platform through which monitoring activities will be implemented. Monitoring will be performed through periodic measurements (every 2 years) that will include the development of maps that indicate forest coverage changes throughout the duration of the implementation of the ER Program.

It has also been proposed that the MRV system for the DR is designed in a manner that will permit the monitoring of GHG emissions related to deforestation and forest degradation. The MRV system will thus also include an evaluation of forest health, water regulation and biodiversity, and the sustainable management of timber and NTFP. During the REDD+ Strategy preparatory process and the ER Program implementation, the potential for local community participation in the monitoring activities will be considered based on the experience of local and international NGOs in the country.

## **D. SESA and ESMF**

In addition, the DR has recently developed the SESA work program, which seeks to involve all interested stakeholders, particularly farmers, peasants, rural communities, and civil society groups that have greater difficulty participating in consultation processes.

The SESA objectives are as follows:

- Generate technical information on social and environmental benefits and risks using stakeholder feedback, paying special attention to women and vulnerable groups. This will provide the basis for public policy recommendations under the REDD+ Strategy.
- Create a two-way feedback loop during the implementation of the REDD+ Strategy, identifying interest groups in the stakeholder map.

- Involve farmers and local communities in the SESA process in order to gather their inputs on the different projects and activities.

### **E. Feedback and grievance redress mechanisms (FGRM)**

The DR already has a FGRM within the Ministry of Environment, however this existing FGRM's role during the ER-Program implementation will be just to receive and gather complaints, should they arise. A multi-stakeholder group will handle the information management, analysis and resolution of the complaints. Other stakeholders such as farmers and private sector actors will be informed about the mechanism, which is to be finalized in the second semester of 2016.

### **F. Land tenure rights**

In order to address conflicts related to land tenure, the laws that regulate land ownership will be analyzed during the design of the ER Program, using an internal report prepared by the REDD / CCAD-GIZ Program on Land Tenure and Carbon Property in DR as a starting point. The range of land and resource tenure rights, categories of rights holders, and ambiguities surrounding the legal status of areas subject to significant conflicts or disputes in the DR will be included in this analysis.

### **G. Benefit Sharing**

The DR will initiate the REDD+ benefit sharing system once the preparation phase of the REDD+ Strategy has begun at the end of 2015. The objectives of the benefit-sharing system will be defined taking the variety of values and stakeholders associated with forests into account. Benefits for stakeholders include: improving the results of economic and social development, supporting sustainable livelihoods, improving forest cover, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, generating income, recognition of rights, the implementation of sustainable forest management, and support for biodiversity and conservation. The REDD+ benefit-sharing scheme is expected to be ready in the first semester of 2018.

### **H. Diversity and learning value**

The ER-Program incorporates innovative decision-making mechanisms at the national level with regards to the involvement of the private sector value chains; chiefly those associated with the cocoa, coffee and livestock sectors. These mechanisms will contribute to the improvement of the existing reforestation programs and projects.

In terms of generating lessons learned for the international community, the bi-national policies and programs focused on strengthening livelihoods in the border region between the DR and Haiti provides a valuable example of bilateral cooperation that could be implemented in other regions of the world.