

Supplement to Expression of Interest in Joining the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)

December 6, 2011

Guidelines:

1. The information requested in this form is to follow up on your expression of interest in the FCPF and assess your country's interest in relation to the importance of REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries) for the country. The governing body of the FCPF, the Participants Committee (PC), requested the Facility Management Team to solicit additional information from countries having expressed interest in the FCPF, propose criteria and a process for the possible selection of more countries into the FCPF, and analyze the cost implications of such a selection, given that the participation of new countries is subject to available resources (see paragraph 11 of Resolution PC/10/2011/1 available at <http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Oct2011/Final%20PC10%20Resolution%201%20-%20strategic%20direction.pdf>).
2. Please keep the length of your response to 5 pages, as this is not meant to be a national Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP).
3. Please forward the completed form to the FCPF Facility Management Team by email at fcpfsecretariat@worldbank.org no later than January 31, 2012.
4. Additional information about the FCPF is available at <http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/>.

1. General information

Country submitting the form: Belize

Date submitted: January 30, 2012

Name of submitting person and institution: Beverly D. Castillo, Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

Title: Chief Executive Officer

Address: Zenia Street, Cohune Walk, Belmopan

Telephone: +501-822-0444

Email: ceo@mnrei.gov.bz

Website:

2. Background

2.1 In what capacity would your country participate in the FCPF? Choose one of the five categories of participation below and briefly explain. Participation in the FCPF could be in different capacities, ranging from no support to full support and to be determined by PC subject to available resources, as listed below:

- i. Observer to the FCPF: The intended purpose is to draw upon the experiences of other FCPF REDD Country Participants. No financial support to attend FCPF meetings and/or for REDD+ readiness is provided.

2.2 Should your country preference be category (iii) or (iv) above, have you already identified or had discussion with a potential Delivery Partner for channeling FCPF resources and providing REDD+ readiness Services? If so, which one (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Inter-American Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme or World Bank)?

N/A

2.3 Does the World Bank have an active portfolio on forests and natural resource management in your country? If so, briefly explain.

The World Bank recently completed a Country Partnership Strategy (FY12-FY15) that would support the Government's efforts to adopt a sustainable natural resourced based economic model while enhancing the country's resilience to climate change; this strategy seeks to expand national strategies and initiatives to ensure that Belize positions itself on the global stage as a responsible steward of its natural resources.

2.4 Have you received, or are you expecting to receive in the near future, technical or financial support for REDD+ from the UN-REDD Programme or any other multilateral or bilateral assistance program for REDD+? If yes, provide the details and also mention for what areas of REDD+ Readiness would you request the FCPF support?

Belize has not requested assistance via the UN-REDD Programme; however, it is in process of preparing the RPP for submission to that UN-REDD Programme via the United Nations Development Programme in Belize. However, the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) is sponsoring the preparation of our R-PP under a regional (Central America) REDD+ program but funding is still limited under this program and FCPF support is necessary for the design of the MRV system, the implementation of pilot projects, and the bolstering of forest administration and management, particularly in order to meet capacity deficits when it comes to carbon accounting, remote sensing for monitoring, legislative reviews and the creation of appropriate legal mechanisms, and enforcement of these new as well as existing forest conservation laws.

3. REDD+ and National Development

(Please answer each question in ½ page maximum. If accepted into the FCPF, under categories (iii) or (iv) above in 2.1, the country will be expected to provide further information and analysis in the Readiness Preparation Proposal).

3.1 How important are forests in your country, including for poverty reduction, the well-being of forest-dependent Indigenous Peoples and other forest dwellers, and biological diversity? Please use quantitative data, if available.

Belize is in an important position to contribute to the FCPF goals through the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Belize has a forest cover estimated at 63% of its total land mass. In addition, 26.2% of the national territory (including land and marine) is under protected area status. It is estimated that half of the 330,000 Belizeans live in rural communities and surrounding forested and protected areas.

Belize's forests are utilized by local communities to supplement their protein intake via bushmeat consumption and by indigenous groups for cultural and medicinal purposes. Recently, Belize has undertaken to become signatory to the Nagoya Protocol under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. Further to this, Belize has commenced its implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas via its National Protected Areas System Policy and Plan. The recently completed Economic Assessment of the Maya Mountain Massif and Maya Mountain Corridor project concluded that carbon storage in this area alone was valued between \$US 9-165 net present value discounted over a 30-year period. Similarly, the timber value in the MMM/MMMC was valued between \$US31-416 million (Hammond et al. 2011).

3.2 What are the current situation and trends in deforestation and forest degradation? What are the main causes of deforestation and forest degradation?

The historic rate of deforestation is estimated at some 10,000 ha per year over the last 30 years (1980-2010) or roughly 0.06%. The main causes of deforestation are agricultural expansion (sugar cane, citrus, and bananas) into forested lands and land conversion for other uses. Illegal squatting and logging contribute significantly to forest degradation as well as trans-boundary illegal activities which include logging, Xate extraction, agricultural expansion and settlements.

3.3 Does your country currently have a forest monitoring system, including estimates of greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation?

No, there is no comprehensive monitoring system but we have undertaken some (potentially significant) piecemeal work on monitoring forest dynamics that could feed into such a system. For instance we have established a 30 plot network of permanent sample plots that are currently undergoing re-measurement and we have extensive remotely sensed information on forest cover change over the past 30 years.

3.4 What is the current thinking on what would be needed to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in your country (e.g., potential programs, policies, capacity building, etc.)?

A strong monitoring system to account for changes and target responses to drivers on a progressive basis will be needed; training in Remote Sensing, carbon trade, carbon stock taking, climate change, participatory governance will be needed to improve and bolster existing capacities. On a macro level, the socio-economic situation will have to be increased to as to reduce the level of poverty and unemployment. Similarly, a nationally led sensitizing campaign highlighting the importance of forests to livelihoods, sustainable development and climate change is also necessary.

3.5 What are the key potential challenges for REDD+ in your country (e.g., lack of financing, lack of technical capacity, governance issues)?

Monies for the implementation of the programs and policies that would reduce deforestation; technical capacity of participating organizations and stakeholder communities will also be a limiting factor.

- 3.6 How does REDD+ fit in your country's national low-carbon development strategy/plan, if any, or in the strategy/plan for the forest and other relevant sectors (e.g., agriculture, water, energy, transportation)?

REDD+ can be a great opportunity for supplementing the large investments the Government of Belize makes on a yearly basis in forest conservation. Currently, 36% of forested lands are protected under national legislation and this incurs millions of dollars in administrative costs. It would be strategically beneficially to incorporate a performance based REDD+ scheme into our forest conservation program.

- 3.7 Please briefly describe the envisaged national management arrangements for REDD+, explaining at what level of government REDD+ would be steered.

REDD+ would be governed a Technical Expert Group (TEG) on Forests and Climate that reports to the Belize National Climate Change Commission that is chaired by the CEO in the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment. The TEG will provide policy direction to Forest Department and other relevant government agencies working on land use, land use change and forestry and climate change issues. The TEG will be composed of government agencies, industry partners, community forest groups and appropriate NGOs who will advise and liaise with other stakeholders in the forestry sector.

- 3.8 Please briefly describe the proposed consultations that would be conducted to design the REDD+ strategy.

Consultations will be multi-level and cross-sectoral, involving not only forest stakeholders but stakeholders from linked sectors (such as agriculture, economic development, tourism, national emergency response agencies). Individual sectors will be consulted first for unique perspective on issues and then a comprehensive all inclusive consultation will be done to hash out conflicting issues and settle on workable compromises. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has a proven and effective mechanism in place, National Resource and Environmental Policy System (NREPS) to ensure consultations across government, civil society and community-based organizations.