

Answers for CF10 to issues identified by the FCPF Carbon Fund Participants regarding the Republic of Congo's ER-PIN submission

The Republic of the Congo: A unique case for the FCPF Carbon Fund

1. Continuous strong political will by the government on forest protection and sustainable forest management. For instance, RoC has signed a VPA with the EU in May 2010 and can demonstrate the synergies between FLEGT and REDD+ and the two largest concessions (2.5 million ha) in the country are FSC certified sustainable.
2. Active participation of civil society including indigenous peoples' organizations through the national platform CACO-REDD. In addition, RoC is the first African country that passed legislation to facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making: Law No. 5-2011 of 25 February 2011.
3. RoC provides a meaningful comparative model for a high forest low deforestation country with increasing pressure on forests which has skyrocketed since 2012 with the beginning of industrial scale oil palm concessions in Sangha and Likouala.
4. The ER-PIN builds on a well-established public-private partnership and, through the cooperation with the leading FSC certified logging concessionaire: CIB-OLAM and will demonstrate the transformation of the logging sector to a sustainable, climate and people friendly business (see OLAM Livelihood Charter).
5. Innovative approach to test biochar at large scale with logging waste; as carbon storage and also as soil amendment for enhanced yields.
6. The inclusion of both DRC and RoC in the Carbon Fund pipeline provides a strong case for the Congo Basin in terms of south-south learning and regional cooperation that can no be duplicated within the FCPF portfolio.

	Issue Identified by the CF 9 Participants
1	Review the approach to define the reference level and outline clearly the rationale for the country's 'high forest low deforestation' status. Clearly explain how reference level adjustments are calculated.
2	Strengthen information on the Safeguard Information System (SIS) and describe how the application of safeguards will be ensured and monitored.
3	Expand on how risks related to the ER Program (displacement, leakage) will be mitigated.
4	Advance REDD+ readiness preparation activities and national REDD+ strategy development.
5	Build broader support from key ministries beyond the Ministry of Forest, Economy and Sustainable Development (MEFDD) such as Ministries of Agriculture and Mining, including through the National REDD+ Committee (CONA-REDD). Elaborate on the consultation process, e.g., add information on the indigenous peoples' forum and CACO-REDD.
6	Describe the planned development of oil palm and food crops plantations under the Agriculture Sector Development Plan (PDSA). Describe precisely how non-carbon benefits will be achieved.

1. Review the approach to define the reference level and outline clearly the rationale for the country’s ‘high forest low deforestation’ status. Clearly explain how reference level adjustments are calculated.

Approach to the Reference Level

The RoC’s ER-PIN *Reference Level and Expected Emission Reductions* (Section 8.) has been updated to reflect the “updated REL” provided at CF 9. This version has been reviewed and updated again for further clarity in describing the approach used for the Congo’s preliminary REL.

Justification of High Forest Cover, Low Deforestation (HFLD) Status

A developing country with more than 50% forest cover and a deforestation rate below 0.22% per year is considered to fall into the High forest cover, low deforestation category as defined in 2007 by Gustavo et al. in *No Forest Left Behind*.

	Low Forest Cover (<50%)	High Forest Cover (>50%)
High Deforestation Rate (>0.22%/yr)	<p>Quadrant I</p> <p>e.g., Guatemala, Thailand, Madagascar</p> <p>High potential for RED credits</p> <p>High potential for reforestation payments under CDM</p> <p>Number of countries: 44</p> <p>Forest area: 28%</p> <p>Forest carbon (total): 22%</p> <p>Deforestation carbon (annual): 49%</p>	<p>Quadrant III</p> <p>e.g., Papua New Guinea, Brazil, Dem. Rep. of Congo</p> <p>High potential for RED credits</p> <p>Low potential for reforestation payments under CDM</p> <p>Number of countries: 10</p> <p>Forest area: 39%</p> <p>Forest carbon (total): 48%</p> <p>Deforestation carbon (annual): 47%</p>
Low Deforestation Rate (<0.22%/yr)	<p>Quadrant II</p> <p>e.g., Dominican Republic, Angola, Vietnam</p> <p>Low potential for RED credits</p> <p>High potential for reforestation payments under CDM</p> <p>Number of countries: 15</p> <p>Forest area: 20%</p> <p>Forest carbon (total): 12%</p> <p>Deforestation carbon (annual): 1%</p>	<p>Quadrant IV - HFLD Countries</p> <p>e.g., Suriname, Gabon, Belize</p> <p>Low potential for RED credits</p> <p>Low potential for reforestation payments under CDM</p> <p>Number of countries: 11</p> <p>Forest area: 13%</p> <p>Forest carbon (total): 18%</p> <p>Deforestation carbon (annual): 3%</p>

The Republic of the Congo is one of the most heavily forested nations on the African continent as dense forest covers over 21 million hectares or about 65 percent of the nation’s land mass.

Deforestation rates when measured historically are low. FAO statistics from the Global Forest Resource Assessment 2010 state that Congo had a deforestation rate of 0.07% between 2000-2005 and a deforestation rate of 0.08% between 2005-2010.

Reference Level Adjustments

The adjustment to the Congo ER-PIN preliminary REL was calculated by estimating emissions from known planned & unplanned deforestation activity. It did not include any of the same activity calculated in the historical REL component.

However, it should be noted that as the two main deforesting drivers/agents in Sangha and Likouala are the Sangha Palm Company and ATAMA palm oil plantation. In the 2000-2013 baseline, two years (2012 & 2013) of palm deforestation were averaged over 14 years. Using the historical REL as it is, will not reflect the massive emissions from Sangha Palm and ATAMA – now only accounted for in the Historical REL as 1.2 million tCO₂e (this is the 14 year average) instead of what is believed to be 8.4 million tCO₂e per year. T

Currently it is known that Sangha Palm is a 58,000 ha concession and that 27,000 ha are being cleared. It is also known that the forest structure that is being cleared is largely secondary forest (an emission factor of 118.6 tC/ha was used). For ATAMA there are 189,489 ha, of which it is assumed that at least 60%, or 113,693 ha, of primary forest will be cleared (an emission factor of 149.05 tC/ha was used). It is further assumed for the ER-PIN that all clearing will take place by 2020. This land clearing on such a massive scale will result in emissions in excess of 75 million tCO₂e by 2020 or from 2012-2020, an average of 8.4 million tCO₂e per year.



The deforestation of ATAMA and Sangha Palm were also set forth in the 2012 PSDA. Currently mechanized deforestation is occurring rapidly as the government is keen to use the oil palm as a biofuel. The above high resolution photograph was taken in May of 2013 on the western border of the ATAMA plantation in Sangha District, clearly showing very recent deforestation in the foreground and earlier land clearing in the background.

Excerpt from the Congo ER-PIN Section 8.: REL historical average calculations for Planned Deforestation from Sangha and ATAMA oil Palm (p. 44).

Historical Emissions from 2000-2013 and the annual average used for the REL

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average Annual Historical Emissions
Unplanned Deforestation (REL _{UPLDEF})	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051	2,100,051
Planned Degradation (REL _{PLDEG})	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791	2,851,791
Planned Deforestation (REL _{PLDEF}) Oil Palm	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,215,989	8,215,989	1,173,713
Planned Deforestation (REL _{PLDEF}) Roads	0	0	0	0	0	151,948	151,948	151,948	32,560
								Total	6,158,115

The deforesting activity that is used to estimate the REL Adjustment amount includes:

1. Known mining site that will be operational imminently (Congo Iron);
2. Macro agriculture zones in Sangha as set forth in the PSDA
3. Oil Palm planation in Sembe district as set forth in the PSDA
4. Expansion of subsistence agriculture (i.e. slash and burn) for maize & cassava as a result of population expansion

The following activity is also expected to impact emissions, but is more difficult to quantify:

- Expansion of the timber market in a post 2008 Crisis economy
- Degradation caused by fuelwood collection as population increases
- Impact of high number of refugees from bordering countries

They have not been included in the calculation for adjustment to the baseline at this time as the ER-PIN already is able to claim the maximum adjustment with the four deforesting activities mentioned above.

Planned Deforestation – Mining, Macro-Agriculture, Sembe Palm

The reference level adjustment is calculated by modeling the projected deforestation with the ER-PIN’s emission factors in proportion to the forest cover in each of the départements.

Deforestation was assumed to be completed by 2020 for the mining and by 2035 for oil palm and macro-agriculture.

It is estimated that between 2015 and 2035, the combined emissions from planned deforestation of the Congo Iron operations, the two macro-agriculture zones and Oil Palm Sembe will be 111 million t CO₂e, or an average of 5.57 million tCO₂e per annum.

Unplanned Deforestation - Expansion of subsistence agriculture Maize & Cassava

The adjustment is further calculated by estimating the population expansion between 2014 and 2020 in order to account for deforestation caused by expansion of subsistence slash and burn agriculture. The following assumptions are used to model the impact of increasing populations on deforestation trends:

- 177,140 additional persons, or an annual average of 29,523 persons between 2014-2020.
- Agriculture employs 40% of the workforce
- Families average 7 person and each family deforests 3 ha every 3 years

The result is that every year an additional 1,687 ha are deforested, and that this cumulatively amounts to 6.46 million tCO₂e emission between from 2014-2020, or 0.92 million tCO₂e per year.

Aggregation of Future Deforestation

The annual averages of unplanned (5.57 million tCO₂e) and planned deforestation (.92 million tCO₂e) are then combined to yield an annual upward adjustment of the REL by 6.49 million tCO₂e per year. In addition, as only 1.21 million tCO₂e was included in the Historical REL in relation to the ATAMA, Sangha Palm and road construction, the remainder annual 7.16 million tCO₂e can be applied to future planned deforestation, bearing in mind that this is not double counting, as these emissions have not been accounted for in the historical REL. This results in a combined upward adjustment of 13.65 million tCO₂e. As this amount far exceeds the 5.11 million tCO₂e allowed when calculating 0.1% of carbon stock, the final upward adjustment stood at 5,112,412 tCO₂e per year.

These points are set forth in the updated RoC ER-PIN dated 01 June 2014.

2. Strengthen information on the Safeguard Information System (SIS) and describe how the application of safeguards will be ensured and monitored.

The Safeguard Information System (SIS) will be informed by the SESA process that has just begun, the first in country mission will take place imminently.

RoC will develop standards, principles and criteria that will define what the social and environmental objectives will be and how they will be met; they will meet or exceed current FCPF requirements. In order to do this RoC will undertake, in coordination with the SESA processes (and outputs), an assessment of current safeguards and information systems within RoC in order to determine gaps between what already exists and what needs to be developed. Multi-stakeholder consultations will be held (again in conjunction with the SESA process) to assess risks and benefits of the ER-Program and help to develop the safeguards and the SIS.

The process would result in a definite national level approach, set forth in a strategic plan or

policy draft; it would include a governance system, i.e. a “safeguards working group or committee to oversee the ongoing work on safeguards, identification of the types of benefits and corresponding beneficiaries, identification of sharing mechanisms and benefit transfer modalities. It would of course also include an MRV system.

The SIS itself, would in any cases, develop either processes indicators (i.e. in order to determine if an output was achieved) or impact indicators (based on actual social and/or environmental impacts). The indicators will be the core of the monitoring system as they will be the basis with which to judge the success of the system.

Monitoring and Assessment

The monitoring system, through the establishment of standard operating procedures, will define what specific information is required (based on the activity), what methods will be used for information collection and analysis, and how any monitoring and assessment reports would be prepared, disseminated, reviewed and approved.

The monitoring reports will feed into an assessment process where the results of the monitoring will be measured over regular periods against the criteria’s and indicators in order to measure performance. Stakeholder reviews will be conducted of the draft assessment reports in order to enhance quality and credibility before validation by the safeguards workgroup or committee. The final assessment report will be made publicly available.

3. Expand on how risks related to the ER Program (displacement, leakage) will be mitigated.

Each Project Activity that has an identified risk of displacement will have at least one corresponding Risk Mitigation Approach/Activity. Appendix 10 of the ER-PIN – Displacement Assessment sets forth anticipated risks and mitigation approaches. Mitigation of the identified major risks related to the Primary Project Activities is expanded on below.

Cocoa - Avoiding deforestation as a result of Cocoa expansion (would apply to any agroforestry activity as well)

Mitigation Activity:

- Project participation registration and contracts with farmers to prevent deforestation – registration by farmers gives access to capacity building, access to inputs, training, etc.
- Registration will result in GPS referenced plantations for simplified monitoring
- Planting only on non-forest or already degraded forest
- Promotion of shade grown cocoa that needs 30% shade cover for optimal growth
- Traceability of the cocoa
- Integration of a climate or environmentally friendly certification for cocoa (.i.e fair trade, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance, etc)

Cocoa – Avoiding food security issues through the promotion of sedentary agriculture:

Mitigation activity:

- Biochar as a soil amendment to enhance yields
- Local agriculture extension services to increase local farmers capacity
- Registration of agriculture plots and enhancement of legal rights
- Introduction of additional low cost sustainable agriculture techniques (i.e.

composting)

Biochar - Avoiding displacement occurs due to intensification of charcoal production

Mitigation Activity:

- Introduction of alternative feed stocks to timber for biochar
- Professionalization of the charcoal industry through capacity enhancement and regulation
- Agro-forestry plantations for charcoal and biochar feedstock (i.e. biowaste, bamboo, etc)
- A simple traceability of charcoal would be included (if feasible)

SFM – Avoiding illegal harvesting and practices through continued strengthening of Forest Governance.

Mitigation Activity:

- Use of Forest Management Plan by all concessions
- Collection and Enforcement of forest taxes
- Verification & monitoring of forest management plans
- Additional incentives for creating protected areas within concessions
- Increasing the number of certified logging concessions
- REDD+ monitoring systems would integrate with MEFD’s monitoring of concessions

4. Advance REDD+ readiness preparation activities and national REDD+ strategy development.

Progress on Readiness: Milestones achieved until June 2014	Next steps : Milestones to be achieved in 2014 and 2015
Component 1 : Readiness Organization and Consultation	
1a National REDD+ Management Arrangements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National REDD+ Coordination (CN-REDD) is operational, technical experts (legal issues, communication, monitoring etc.) recruited, annual work plans. - REDD+ Focal Points in relevant ministries (agriculture, environment, mines, Energy, planning, land use, finance etc.) are designated and participate in REDD+ process (workshops etc.) - Civil society (pillar one) including indigenous peoples (pillar two) is organized in form of a single national platform: Consultation Framework for Congolese Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Organizations on REDD+ (CACO-REDD) with more than 100 member organizations - Private sector is organized in form of a common platform called “UNICONGO” - CN-REDD mobilized necessary funding: UN-REDD program with USD4 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presidential Decree on REDD+ institutions awaits approval by the Council of Ministers (July 2014) - Decree will formalize the National REDD+ Committee and the 12 Departmental REDD+ Committees - Subsequent to regional FCPF workshop on social inclusion in May 2014, junior expert already recruited to analyze experiences with FGRM in the forest sector

<p>formally launched which makes USD8 million in total now (USD3.4 million FCPF, USD0.6 million from Government) to progress on national strategy, implementation framework, MRV, SIS. CN-REDD is looking for additional USD 10 million to test strategic tools and give confidence to local stakeholders on concrete activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fiscal management of FCPF funds is transparently managed by Project Implementation Unit 	
1b Consultation, Participation and Outreach	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CN-REDD's Documentation Centre (Fonds Documentaire) available for public disclosure of key documents since January 2013 - CN-REDD has established regular consultations with CACO-REDD, e.g. monthly technical working meetings - CACO-REDD distributes information and submits views of its members to CN-REDD - Consultations with "UNICONGO" - REDD+ communication strategy and communication plan endorsed by all stakeholders and used by CN-REDD for systematic outreach - R-PP translated in local languages (Kituba, Lingala) to facilitate outreach - CN-REDD uses 3 main means to share information (all distributed free of charge): weekly update ("feuille de liaison") as launched at 3rd International Forum on Indigenous Peoples in Central Africa, brochures & CD-ROMs - Stakeholders participate in REDD+ process and contribute their views through a series of documented workshops, systematically organized through CAO-REDD - Lessons learned from PRSP and VPA/FLEGT consultations considered to ensure effective participation - Students educated on REDD+ through targeted training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular consultations with civil society, mainly organized through CACO-REDD, continue and will be documented (on average monthly consultations with around 50 participants, respectively)
Component 2 : REDD+ Strategy Preparation	
2a Assessment of Land Use, Land-Use Change drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft version of comprehensive study available covering the analysis and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study on drivers of deforestation finalized and endorsed (June 2014)

<p>assessment as well as prioritization of drivers of deforestation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - References for drivers study documented in the study - Legal study from previous project available with recommendations on legal requirements and harmonization of legal documents for VPA FLEGT, climate change, PES, biodiversity. - Sustainable forest management plans endorsed as management tools by Presidential Decree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forest Inventory cartography will be achieved in September 2014. This cartography will be the support for analyze and draft the land tenure clarification for December 2014 - CN-REDD coordinates with panel of ministerial REDD+ Focal Points and CACO-REDD to promote coherence between draft national strategy on sustainable development, draft study on drivers of deforestation and draft national REDD+ strategy (2 workshops with each Department until August 2014)
2b REDD+ Strategy Options	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert Panel to elaborate REDD+ strategy options established and working - Expert Panel uses draft study on drivers to identify REDD+ strategy options and prioritize them, draft available - Thematic and sectoral consultations to further develop the national REDD+ strategy are ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultations with REDD+ Focal Points in Ministries and National REDD+ Committee to align the REDD+ strategy with national policy framework - Draft National REDD+ strategy available by 15 September 2014 - National REDD+ strategy endorsed by all stakeholders in December 2014
2c Implementation Framework	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive study on REDD+ implementation framework started in April 2014 covering : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) financial and economic instruments, (ii) legal framework including carbon rights and REDD+ transactions, (iii) REDD+ benefit sharing, (iv) national REDD+ fund - Feasibility studies on REDD+ programs ongoing in the Departments of Sangha and Likouala - Project documents for REDD+ pilot projects endorsed - An international expert was hiring to support the design and validation advise on REDD+ pilot projects endorsed - Work on REDD+ registry and M&E – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results from study expected in November 2014 with recommendations on guidelines for implementation, legal framework and benefit sharing - Forest Code to be revised if necessary - Validation of REDD+ pilots projects will be done by July 2014, with the support of the international expert - Implementation of the registry database with FAO & OFAC (called : Système d'Information Forestier Développement Durable (SIFODD))
2d Social and Environmental Impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study on SESA started in May 2014 - CN-REDD established expert panel on safeguards and coordinates with CACO-REDD which established a working group to develop guidelines on environmental and social safeguards at national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultations with REDD+ Focal Points in concerned ministries ongoing (Mining, Transport, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Public Works, Environment) - Consultations with indigenous peoples ongoing through a dedicated panel from CACO-REDD with works permanently with

	<p>the SESA team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft ESFM by October 2014
Component 3 : Reference Emission Level / Reference Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of RL methodology ongoing - Expert team on RL established including researchers and academics - Draft RL called "Protocole technique pour l'élaboration du niveau de reference" in December 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft RL was submitted to the University Marien Ngouabi and a national network will contribute to it. Endorsement expected in March 2015.
Component 4: Monitoring System for Forests and Safeguards	
4a National Forest Monitoring System	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MRV action plan is finalized and endorsed by stakeholders - MRV team in the National Centre for Surveys and Forest and Fauna Resources Management (CNIAF) is established - CNIAF leads project on forest carbon stock assessment - National forest inventory is ongoing - Technical equipment is available - MRV team is trained on GIS and remote sensing (3 training session in 2013, 2 in Congo and 1 in Brazil) - Forest definition is endorsed by all stakeholders (March 2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary version of NFMS / MRV is available and endorsed (March 2015) - More MRV training, all in Congo (March 2014, May 2014, September 2014) - Consultations with stakeholders on MRV are ongoing
4b Information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study on methodology for information system for social and environmental safeguards ongoing as part of SESA study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cartography of multiple benefits ongoing with different stakeholders - Draft SIS expected in November 2014, endorsement in December 2014

5. Build broader support from key ministries beyond the Ministry of Forest, Economy and Sustainable Development (MEFDD) such as Ministries of Agriculture and Mining, including through the National REDD+ Committee (CONA-REDD).Elaborate on the consultation process, e.g., add information on the indigenous peoples' forum and CACO-REDD.

While waiting for the establishment of the REDD national Committee, a panel from CACO REDD/ CN –REDD and the different Ministries, represented by their focal points are meeting 4 times per year (via FCPF financing).

Participants are from:

- Presidency
- Focal points from involved REDD+ Ministries, including:
 - Agriculture
 - Mines,
 - Planning
 - Land use planning (Aménagement du territoire)

- Oil (hydrocarbures)
- Land tenure reform
- Energy
- Research
- Environment
- Forestry
- CACO REDD
- CN-REDD

It should also be noted that in March of 2014, the third Indigenous Peoples Forum was held in Impfando in the Republic of Congo, where indigenous representatives from Congo and the region were presented with a wide range of information on REDD+ and the ER-PIN proposal. This also included a specific consultation with indigenous people from Likouala and Sangha to present the ER-PIN concept and receive feedback.

6. Describe the planned development of oil palm and food crops plantations under the Agriculture Sector Development Plan (PDSA). Describe precisely how non-carbon benefits will be achieved.

The Republic of Congo will provide additional details at CF10 on this matter. CN-REDD and CIB-OLAM are having direct discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture about these issues and an update will be provided in Bonn at CF10.