

TAP Review of the Readiness Package submitted by Togo

Independent TAP Expert Review on the Self-assessment Process of Togo's R-Package

November 2021

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1. Objectives

This report has two objectives:

- To provide an independent technical review of the REDD+ Readiness Package (R-Package) elaborated by the Togolese Republic (hereafter: Togo) and of the Self-Assessment Process that Togo conducted to develop its R-package
- To inform the FCPF Participants' Committee decision regarding endorsement of the R-Package

2. Methodological approach

This chapter presents the scope of the work performed for the TAP review, as per the Terms of Reference provided by the World Bank:

- Desk review of Togo's R-Package report, based on the guidelines provided in the R-Package Assessment Framework, and of the key documents underpinning the R-Package report (National REDD strategy, Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment, Environmental and Social Management Framework, Forest reference levels and Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System, among others)
- Desk review of Togo's documentation regarding the self-assessment process, including stakeholder involvement
- Provision of targeted feedback and recommendations for moving forward with REDD+ Readiness

The TAP assessment reviewed the R-Package provided in French in September 2021, which includes the following elements:

- i. A summary of the REDD+ readiness preparation process
- ii. A report of the national multi-stakeholder self-assessment process
- iii. The results of the national multi-stakeholder assessment; and
- iv. References to the key supporting documents for each of the nine REDD+ Readiness sub-components

The TAP assessment is presented in three parts:

- Review of Togo's self-assessment process and documentation, as contained in Togo's R-Package (Chapter 3.a)
- Review of Togo's progress on REDD+ readiness, based on the R-Package submitted as well as the supporting documentation referenced in the R-Package, for each of the REDD+ Readiness sub-components (Chapter 3.b)
- Summary Assessment and Recommendations (Chapter 4)

3. TAP Review

Togo submitted the French version of the REDD+ Readiness Package (R-Package) report, which was prepared according to FCPF's 2013 Readiness Assessment Framework, to the FCPF in September 2021. The R-Package was translated into English by the FCPF in October 2021. The main body of the R-Package report provides a summary of the REDD+ Readiness process, and of the country's progress with reference to the four REDD+ Readiness components.

a. Review of Self-assessment process and documentation

Background

This section reviews the process that Togo followed to conduct its multi-stakeholder self-assessment. The TAP review is based on the description of the self-assessment process contained in the R-Package report, and on supporting documents referenced there. The review takes into account the documentation prepared for the assessment, the process for selecting and involving stakeholders, and for reflecting their opinions in the R-Package report.

Prior to reporting the results of the TAP review, it is important to recognize that Togo has engaged in numerous multi-stakeholder consultations on different REDD+ components and sub-components since 2015, and that it is impossible to do full justice to this extended process in the frame of the R-Package report. As the R-Package report notes on page 72, since the start of the readiness process a total of 8,688 people have been reached by awareness-raising, training and consultation activities.

Process and methodology

The multistakeholder Self-assessment process followed the recommendations of the Guide to the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework, concerning the selection of participants, preparation of the event, facilitation of the assessment process, synthesis and dissemination of results, and validation.

The multi-stakeholder self-assessment, which took place from January to August 2021, included the following steps: (i) Preparation of the draft R-Package (henceforth "version 0"), which was made available to the stakeholders participating in the self-assessment workshops; (ii) Organization of six regional self-assessment workshops; (iii) Organization of national self-assessment workshop; (iv) Preparation of version 1 of the R-Package; (v) Validation of version 1 of the R-Package by the National REDD+ Committee; (vi) Production of the final R-Package report, taking into account comments and guidance received from the National REDD+ Committee; and (vii) Transmission of the final R-Package report to the FCPF.

The six regional workshops were held in May 2021 in the Savannahs, Kara, Central, Plateaux Est, Plateaux West and Maritime Regions. They mobilized a total of 570 participants, out of 592 invited – the 96.3% participation rate clearly demonstrating the interests of the stakeholders in making their views heard. The rate of women's participation was modest at 17.2%. The two-day workshops were organized to allow five categories of stakeholders each to provide their separate inputs: three on day one including (i) administrative, municipal and local authorities; (ii) private sector actors; (iii)

media professionals; and another two on day two including (iv) actors of the decentralized government services; and (v) actors from civil society organizations.

Finally, a national two-day workshop was organized to complete the self-assessment process, involving 74 participants (56 men and 18 women). During this workshop, the participants (i) identified and analyzed strengths and weaknesses for each of the 34 criteria of FCPF's REDD+ Readiness Assessment Framework; (ii) proposed activities to consolidate the strengths and remedy the weaknesses identified, and propose the next steps; and (iii) analyzed progress made with REDD+ Readiness since the mid-term review in 2017, using the color scores (red, orange, yellow, green) provided in FCPF's Readiness Assessment Framework.¹

The national workshop involved eight categories of stakeholders, as follows: (i) members of thematic groups from key sector ministries involved in the REDD+ process; (ii) heads of civil society organizations' platforms; (iii) heads of private sector organizations' platforms; (iv) platform managers of women's organizations; (v) officials of the national body representing producer organizations; (vi) heads of umbrella organizations of disabled people; (vii) representatives of research institutions; and (viii) people responsible for other ongoing development projects of the Ministry in charge of the environment.

The workshop methodology consisted of a presentation on progress achieved for each component, sub-component and criterion. Participants were asked to express their perception on progress to date, and to validate the rating of each subcomponent and criterion according to the traffic light indicators (red, orange, yellow, green) provided in the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework.

Results

Togo has made impressive progress since the mid-term review in 2017. Out of the 34 criteria of the FCPF's Readiness Assessment Framework, 21 now have a very satisfactory level of progress (**GREEN**), against 3 criteria in 2017; 10 have a satisfactory level of progress (**YELLOW**) compared to 5 in 2017; and 3 criteria have a level of progress requiring improvement (**ORANGE**) against 14 in 2017. Finally, zero criteria are scored as demonstrating no progress (**RED**) against 12 in 2017.

Overall, the self-assessment showed that 91% of the indicators were found to have achieved significant progress (**GREEN**) or have progressed well but require further development (**YELLOW**), against 24% in 2017. In addition, progress has been homogenous across the REDD+ Readiness components, with the partial exception of sub-component 4b, Information systems on multiple benefits, governance, safeguards, which still has two out of three criteria scoring **ORANGE**.

- **TAP assessment.** *The participatory Self-assessment process in Togo followed the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework Guidelines. The R-Package Report includes information on the Self-assessment process as well as its results. The Self-Assessment process was elaborate, including six regional workshops as well as a national workshop, mobilizing a total of 644 people from diverse stakeholder groups. The 96.2% average response rate for the seven workshop invitations demonstrate the high levels of stakeholder interest in REDD+ in the*

¹ The original explanations for the color scores in the Readiness Assessment Framework are as follows: (i) GREEN, Considerable progress made; (ii) YELLOW, Progress but needs to be developed further; (iii) ORANGE, Further development required; (iv) RED, No progress shown as yet. While these are slightly different from the explanations used in the Togo R-Package, the terms used are equivalent and there is no risk of confusion. Therefore, and for ease of reference, the TAP reviewer has used the R-Package explanations of the color scores in the current report.

country. The R-Package report did not permit an assessment of whether there were major differences in perception on REDD+ Readiness between stakeholder groups.

b. Review of Progress on REDD+ Readiness

This section assesses the progress on REDD+ Readiness for each of the four Readiness components: (i) Readiness arrangements and organization; (ii) National REDD+ Strategy Preparation; (iii) Reference Emissions Level; and (iv) Monitoring systems and Safeguards, and the nine sub-components. The assessment is based on the criteria that Togo used for its self-assessment, which follow the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework guidelines. The TAP assessment discusses both the strengths and weaknesses of each Readiness component and sub-component.

The current TAP review is based on the REDD+ Readiness Package (R-Package) document prepared for FCPF by Togo and on the supporting documents referenced in the R-Package, which are available from Togo's REDD+ website <https://reddtogo.tg/>.

It is important to note that the national political and institutional context for Togo's REDD+ Readiness process has remained remarkably stable over time. Technical and Financial Partners have provided consistent support since 2014, when the first German-funded ProREDD+ project, managed by the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ), was approved. From 2015 to 2019, the first FCPF grant of USD 3.8 million enabled the country to make progress with REDD+ Readiness components 1 and 2. The German contribution, which was renewed for three years in 2017, mainly supported the national forest inventory, laying the groundwork for Readiness components 3 and 4. An additional FCPF grant for USD 2.9 million was approved in 2019, enabling further progress on all four Readiness components. The REDD+ Readiness process received additional support from: (i) the Togolese government (USD 410,000 2015-2021); (ii) the World Bank funded Integrated Disaster and Land Management Project (PGICT, USD 137,000 2017-2019); (iii) the Project to Strengthen Participation of Civil Society and Local Communities in Forest Protection in Togo financed by the civil society capacity-building fund of the FCPF received via the intermediary organizations, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA, USD 70,000 2015-2019); and (iv) the EU/UN-REDD+ contribution for the Support Program for the Fight Against Climate Change (PALCC), helping to build capacity of the different REDD+ actors throughout the process.

Component 1: Readiness, Organization and Consultation

Sub-Component 1a: National REDD+ Management Arrangements (Criteria 1-6)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and their effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Accountability and Transparency (Criterion 1: **GREEN**); Operating Mandate and Budget (Criterion 2, **YELLOW**); Multi-sector coordination mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration (Criterion 3: **YELLOW**) Technical supervision capacity and Fund management capacity (Criterion 4-5: **GREEN**)

Decree No. 2016-007/PR of January 25th, 2016 established three REDD+ management bodies in Togo: the National REDD+ Committee (CN-REDD+); the National REDD+ Working Group (NWG REDD+) and the National REDD+ Coordination, each with clearly described composition, responsibilities and modus operandi.

The National REDD+ Committee (CN-REDD+) is a decision-making body made up of 35 members, including representative of State institutions (13 Ministries and senior figures), civil society organizations, traditional chiefdoms and research institutions. CN-REDD+ is chaired by the Minister of the Environment and Forest Resources (MERF), who reports to the Prime Minister. The Minister of MERF is assisted by the first vice-president, the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development (MAEDR) and a second vice-president, the Minister in charge of Mines and Energy. The CN-REDD+ helped to mobilize national resources for the REDD+ Readiness process and approved the national REDD+ strategy and implementation action plan, safeguard instruments and carbon governance support tools, among others. The CN-REDD+ also constituted a REDD+ Steering Committee (REDD+ SC) to advise on any subject before it.

The National REDD+ Working Group (NWG REDD+) is a technical body that supports both the above-mentioned CN-REDD+ and the National REDD+ Coordination described below. NWG REDD+ consists of a multidisciplinary team whose members come from 13 institutions, including government bodies, civil society organizations, and technical and financial partners (TFP). Its roles and responsibilities included the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the REDD+ process. The NWG REDD+ participated in the design of M&E tools, including the results framework, budget and analytical plan. Individual members of the NWG REDD+ were also involved, according to their respective areas of expertise, by the National REDD+ Coordination in a number of key technical tasks, including: (i) development of TOR for studies; (ii) evaluation of offers and methodological notes of consultants; and (iii) development and validation of key REDD+ instruments (REDD+ strategy and action plan, environmental and social safeguard instruments, forest reference level (FRL), and National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS).

The National REDD+ Coordination ensures the day-to-day management of the Readiness process, under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources (MERF). It is led by a national coordinator and comprises seven units: (i) the programme support unit; (ii) the administrative and financial unit; (iii) the information, education and communication (IEC) unit; (iv) the M&E unit; (v) the measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) unit; (vi) the legal affairs unit, also responsible for the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA); and (vii) the procurement unit. The National Coordination holds weekly meetings and is supported by an International Technical Assistant who undertakes regular missions to Togo.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that national REDD+ institutions and management arrangements have operated in an open, accountable and transparent manner. This was achieved through: (i) clear mandates and responsibilities for all institutions created to run and oversee the REDD+ Readiness process, established by Government Decree in 2016; and (ii) structuring and/or strengthening of the platforms of civil society organizations, who reinforced transparency as independent observers of the process. Mandates of the various REDD+ institutions have been mutually supportive, and budget has been adequate for implementing planned REDD+ activities so far, with the exception of proposed REDD+ pilot projects, which have remained unfunded. One important institutional constraint has been the difficulties in convening the National REDD+ Committee (CN REDD+), which has held only four of its twelve scheduled supervision meetings, due to clashes between the schedules of its Ministerial members. To circumvent this problem, CN-REDD+

created a Steering Committee (SC), but this never got off the ground as certain Ministries failed to name a representative for the SC.

By far the main challenge, however, is the mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the REDD+ strategy, and the establishment of a financing mechanism for REDD+ management going forward.

Cross-sectoral coordination has been promoted by the representation of all relevant sector Ministries in the REDD+ Readiness process. Already, the Readiness process has made it possible to initiate several sectoral reforms inspired by REDD+ considerations. Further reforms and their implementation, however, will rely on establishment and capacity building of Municipal Committees for Sustainable Development (CCDD) and the full operationalization of the National Committee for Sustainable Development (CNDD).

Fund management has improved considerably since weaknesses in the manual of procedures, which led to shortcomings identified in 2017-2018, were corrected in 2019. Since then, periodic audits carried out according to the procedures of the World Bank and the Government have had satisfactory results.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made much progress under this sub-component, through support from the FCPF and other Technical and Financial Partners. An institutional challenge has been the challenge of convening the National REDD+ Committee (CN-REDD+), which oversees the REDD+ process, and which has held only four out of twelve scheduled meetings.² Ways to improve the functioning of this Committee are under consideration, including the possibility of changing the institutional anchoring of the REDD+ process. The main challenge under this sub-component has been the mobilization of funding for REDD+ strategy implementation and the identification of a long-term funding mechanism for REDD+ management and oversight. As a result, proposed REDD+ pilot projects have remained unfunded. A donor roundtable will be convened in late 2021 to address this problem. Concur with the ratings.*

Feedback and grievance redress mechanism (criterion 6: **YELLOW**)

Togo completed two iterations of the Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) to receive and address grievances on REDD+: a simplified one for the REDD+ preparation phase, and the full GRM for the REDD+ implementation phase.³ The following key elements are defined in the GRM: (i) the scope of action of a complaint; (ii) validation of a complaint; (iii) relevant stakeholders; (iv) the appropriate level and body for handling a complaint; (v) the functioning of the grievance redress bodies; and (vi) the different stages of complaint management. The GRM is currently active at three levels: prefectural, regional and national.

After the validation of the final version of the simplified GRM, the REDD+ National Coordination organized a capacity building workshop in October 2019, which was followed by prefectural

² This does not appear, however, to have impeded Togo's progress with developing and validating the main REDD+ instruments, hence the GREEN score for criterion 4, which the TAP review concurs with.

³ The documents governing these GRMs are available on <https://www.reddtogo.tg/index.php/ressources/sauvegardes/documents-de-sauvegardes-environnementales-et-sociales/summary/12-dses/109-mecanisme-de-gestion-des-plaintes-simplifie> and <https://www.reddtogo.tg/index.php/ressources/sauvegardes/documents-de-sauvegardes-environnementales-et-sociales/summary/12-dses/110-mecanisme-de-gestion-des-plaintes>, respectively

workshops in each of the 39 Prefectures to disseminate the GRM. In addition, programs to explain the GRM were hosted on local radio stations. Since 2020, the REDD+ National Coordination has been carrying out monitoring missions to examine the procedures used for handling grievances, the nature of the grievances, the difficulties encountered in their resolution and the solutions proposed.

Self-assessment. The GRM proposed for the REDD+ implementation phase is coherent, transparent and impartial and has a clear mandate. It is articulated at local, regional and national level to enable stakeholders at all levels to provide feedback. Going forward, the GRM will have to be disseminated more widely at the grassroots level, and stakeholder capacity needs to be built for its implementation. In the medium term, new bodies will need to be established to manage complaints at municipal level.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made significant progress in establishing a simplified GRM for the REDD+ preparation phase, and a full GRM for the REDD+ implementation phase. Further dissemination and capacity building activities will be required to ensure the GRM for REDD+ implementation will be fully functional, as noted by the self-assessment. Concur with the rating.*

Sub-component 1b: Consultation, participation and outreach (Criteria 7-10)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework reviews how consultations with key stakeholders are performed to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Participation and engagement of key stakeholders, Consultation process (criteria 7-8: **GREEN**)
Togo's Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) included a consultation and participation plan. In 2016, this plan was completed by the development of a national REDD+ communication strategy. Key considerations in this strategy were stakeholder concerns about the possible negative effects of REDD+ and public scepticism about the ability of the REDD+ mechanism to deliver concrete benefits.

Between 2016 and 2020, a total of 78 stakeholder information and awareness-raising workshops were organized, reaching 2,922 people (2,488 men and 434 women). Many of these workshops targeted specific stakeholder groups, including public officials, members of district-level sustainable development commissions, civil society organizations, women, young people, journalists and media professionals, producer organizations, economic actors in the wood sector, nursery operators, people with disabilities, customary leaders and local elected officials. In addition, several TV and radio shows were broadcast to raise the awareness of the general public about REDD+ and climate change. As a result of these awareness-raising activities, existing platforms were strengthened and new platforms created for a variety of stakeholder groups, including civil society organizations, women's organizations, private and community forest owners, agricultural producer organizations, youth organizations, customary leaders and disabled people's organizations. These strengthened platforms have in turn contributed to further awareness raising about REDD+ and related activities of interest to their members, mobilized additional support to carry out these activities and participated actively in the REDD+ Readiness process by providing key inputs for thematic studies, the national REDD+ strategy and action plan, the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), the Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM), the benefit sharing mechanism (BSM), the Forest Reference Level (FRL), the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), and the current self-assessment of the R-Package, among others.

The process for the development of the national REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan was particularly participatory. A provisional version of the strategy drafted by the National REDD+ Coordination was presented for discussion during a 5-day retreat which brought together all the members of the thematic groups, representatives of the civil society and private sector platforms as well as the focal points of related international environmental conventions to which Togo is a party. The revised version resulting from the retreat was then submitted to a series of multi-stakeholder workshops held from June 18th to July 8th 2018 at local, regional and national levels for validation, which brought together 1,954 people (1,734 men and 220 women). The validated version of the strategy (“version 1”) was then presented to the National REDD+ Committee. This version 1 of the strategy was then used as the basis for the SESA, which was developed through consultations in prefectural (36), regional (6) and national (1) workshops, mobilizing 1,891 participants (1,680 men and 211 women) between October 9th and 18th, 2018. The results of these consultations concerning REDD+ impacts and safeguard measures were then integrated in version 2 of the strategy, and an action plan and budget for implementing the strategy were added. Version 2 of the strategy, together with the action plan, were then the subject of renewed regional (5) and national (1) workshops, mobilizing a total of 570 participants (498 men and 72 women) for consultation and validation.

Separate consultations were held on the various REDD+ analytical studies carried out, including on the contribution of the forest sector to the national economy, drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and the legal and political framework governing forests, among others. A participatory and transparent approach has been adopted for all consultations, with stakeholders self-selecting their representatives. Consultations were carried out in the form of meetings, focus groups and workshops, enabling all participants to express themselves. Relevant documents were distributed and explained to the participants, and meeting reports issued.

Self-assessment. Togo engaged in a sustained effort to consult the different REDD+ stakeholder groups described above, over an extended period of time (2014-2021). Information and awareness-raising activities tailored to different stakeholder groups, in line with the 2016 REDD+ communication strategy (which was updated in 2020) were effective in mobilizing stakeholders not only to participate in events but also to provide concrete inputs for key REDD+ Readiness elements. Particular attention was paid to the mobilization of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups through appropriate participatory mechanisms. All the deliverables and documents produced as part of the REDD+ Readiness process were discussed and validated with the stakeholders, and published on the website of the National REDD+ Coordination. The process for the development of the national REDD+ strategy and action plan was linked with the development of the SESA and was highly participatory. Gender aspects were taken into account through the systematic mobilization of women’s organizations.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo invested considerable energy and resources in its REDD+ stakeholder consultations and outreach, targeting different stakeholder groups with tailored messages and events. Stakeholder groups that were mobilized – including people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups – provided inputs that strengthened key elements of REDD+ Readiness, including the National REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan and the SESA among others. In the opinion of the TAP reviewer, the process for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan was a model for effective stakeholder participation. Concur with the ratings.*

Information sharing and accessibility of information; Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes (Criteria 9 and 10: **GREEN**)

Togo's 2016 national REDD+ Communication Strategy, which was updated in July 2020, stressed the importance of tailoring communications to different stakeholder groups, to enable them to understand the objectives and modalities of the REDD+ process and contribute effectively.⁴ All REDD+ related issues linked to people's daily lives such as agriculture, vegetation fires, reforestation were addressed to enable people to perceive the links with climate change and participate effectively. A variety of communication tools and media were used, paying particular attention to reaching out to REDD+ stakeholders without an internet connection. Tools and media used included leaflets, posters, brochures, articles in paper and on-line newspapers, electronic bulletins, 101 different radio programs that were broadcast repeatedly in five local languages (Ewe, Kabye, Tem, Moba and Ifè) and French, and sketches on REDD+ produced in local languages and performed during activities in the regions. Radio and newspapers also produced 120 event reports throughout the country. The national REDD+ website, reddtogo.tg, served as a clearing-house for all the documents generated.

Separate information campaigns were created for the National Forest Inventory (IFN), the Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) and the SESA.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the national REDD+ management institutions have ensured the timely and transparent disclosure of information, in a manner appropriate to the local cultural contexts. The involvement and commitment of media professionals, through partnership contracts with local radio stations, have made it possible to relay information to local communities. Results of consultations are disclosed through approved consultation reports, which are posted on the National REDD+ Coordination website and taken into account in the formulation of the national REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan, SESA and other key readiness elements. Results of consultations are also shared and discussed through thematic group meetings and REDD+ civil society platforms. Increased efforts have been made to ensure rapid dissemination of reports to all invited parties and to establish communication and feedback mechanisms at the local level. The latter consist of printing the reports and distributing them to stakeholders (few of whom have access to the internet), encouraging them to transmit their contributions and comments to the National REDD+ Coordination before or during the validation sessions.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made tremendous efforts to share information with all REDD+ stakeholders, in a format and language that is understandable to these stakeholders – including local communities in rural areas. Particular efforts have been made to simplify complex REDD+ concepts and procedures to enable local stakeholders to understand how REDD+ relates to their livelihoods and to climate change. The printing and distribution of consultation meeting reports to rural stakeholders provides a valuable feedback mechanism to enable people without internet connections to provide inputs to the REDD+ strategy and other key readiness elements. The recent update of the 2016 national REDD+ Communication Strategy provides further evidence of Togo's firm commitment in this area. Concur with the ratings.*

⁴ The updated communication strategy (in French) can be accessed through <https://www.reddtogo.tg/index.php/ressources/documents-strategiques/send/10-documents-strategiques/131-strategie-de-communication-actualisee>

Component 2: REDD+ Strategy Preparation

Sub-component 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Land-use change drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance (criteria 11-15)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework focuses on how the REDD+ strategy preparation process integrated the causal relationships between the economic, legal and policy context of the country on the one hand, and the associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation on the other.

Assessment and analysis, Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement, Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities, (criteria 11-13: GREEN)

In order to broaden knowledge on direct and indirect causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Togo, nine thematic studies were carried out with FCPF financing, including studies on the interaction of key sectors (including agriculture, energy) with forests and on appropriate areas for REDD+ interventions; analysis of the legal and regulatory framework vis-à-vis forests and REDD+; analysis of land use and future strategic options for land use planning; analyses of specific options to reduce forest-related emissions in different sectors; and a historical analysis of changes in forest cover between the 1976-85 and 2013-2014 periods. The analysis of spatial imagery (including aerial photographs, satellite and radar imagery) showed that the direct causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Togo are: (i) agricultural development, responsible for 52%; (ii) wood harvesting and conversion to grassland for livestock raising, responsible for 42%; and (iii) urban development, responsible for 8%.

A number of barriers to enhancing forest carbon stocks were also identified, including legal/institutional (land tenure), political (poor forest sector governance), demographic (rapid population growth and resulting land scarcity⁵) and cultural (customs and practices), which are discussed further under sub-component 2.b below. The process of identifying and prioritizing direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and related REDD+ strategy options, was carried out in an iterative manner, based on the results of thematic studies and consultations with stakeholders.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the combination of the above-mentioned thematic studies and the historical analysis of spatial data provided a good understanding of direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and assisted Togo in prioritizing the key drivers to be addressed by the programmes and policies included in the REDD+ strategy. The drivers and related REDD+ strategic options were defined and prioritized in an iterative manner, based on clear criteria and in consultation with REDD+ stakeholders. Next steps identified in this area include refining the SWOT analysis of REDD+ strategy options with a view to ensuring effectiveness of future REDD+ activities, and the periodic review and update of the SWOT analysis to stay aligned with the evolving country context.

- **TAP assessment.** *The analysis of deforestation and forest degradation was done using a robust methodology, combining satellite imagery with higher-resolution datasets in order to*

⁵ The issue of land scarcity is classified as a “natural” barrier in the Readiness package, however it is more commonly portrayed as a result of (rural) population growth.

quantify direct drivers of deforestation and forest degradation – a challenging task in Togo’s sub-humid and dry forest context – and prioritize both direct and indirect drivers. Major barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement were also clearly identified. The process for identifying and prioritizing key drivers and related REDD+ strategy options was made more robust by regular stakeholder consultation, on the results of initial thematic studies as well as on REDD+ strategy options. The notion of regularly reviewing and updating the analysis of REDD+ strategy option is a welcome one – especially in the light of experience with the rapid evolution and change of deforestation drivers that have been witnessed in many countries recently. Concur with the ratings.

Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance (criterion 14: **YELLOW**)

Togo has made significant progress with the development of action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure and governance. The National Development Plan (PND) is aligned with REDD+, including measures to combat deforestation and promote sustainable management of natural resources. The REDD+ strategy options take into account natural resource rights, land tenure and governance, and implications for forest-related laws and policies. The new Land Law promulgated in 2018 has already been aligned with the REDD+ strategy. A detailed action plan to address resource use and management rights with a budget of about 88 million FCFA (about USD 140,000) is included in the R-Package.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that rights-related policies and measures are defined and budgeted in the action plan for the implementation of the national REDD+ strategy, clearly distinguishing short, medium and long-term measures relating to the use of titles, to land regimes and titles, rights to natural resources, livelihoods and governance in priority regions associated with specific REDD+ activities. The next step identified is the mobilization of resources for the implementation of related policies and measures.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo is well-advanced with respect to the identification of natural resource rights related issues and reforms needed – for example, the country’s Land Law has already been revised. The action plan it has established for addressing natural resource related rights, including a detailed budget, constitutes an example for other countries engaged in REDD+ Readiness to follow, with detailed measures and a timeline for their implementation. While it is true that the financial resources for the implementation of this action plan still need to be mobilized, the TAP reviewer considers that a **GREEN** rating would more adequately reflect progress to date for this criterion than the **YELLOW** rating contained in the self-assessment.*

Implications for forest law and policy (criterion 15: **GREEN**)

Togo’s national REDD+ strategy will have a number of major implications for the improvement of forest laws and policies, some of which have already been set in motion: (i) the revision of the forest law to integrate the REDD+ dimension is underway; (ii) the development of a legal decree to regulate strategic environmental and social assessments (SESA); (iii) the identified need for a legal text to regulate carbon governance and rights; and (iv) the identified need for an improvement in forest governance, through the strengthening of forest resource management institutions and through better collaboration among concerned stakeholders.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that Togo had made significant progress with this criterion. Next steps identified include the finalization of the various legal texts currently under revision, and implementation of the recommendations of the thematic study on the legal framework governing forests.

- **TAP assessment.** *The analysis of the legal framework for REDD+ implementation in Togo identified the shortcomings of the existing legal texts and the improvements that need to be made. Some key legal texts, such as the Forest Law, are already being revised. Concur with the rating.*

Sub-component 2b. REDD+ Strategy Options (criteria 16-18)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework focuses on the adequacy of selected REDD+ strategy options vis-à-vis identified drivers, and their implementability.

Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options, Feasibility assessment (criteria 16-17: GREEN)

In the absence of data on the GHG emissions reductions that could be generated by different REDD+ interventions, prioritization of REDD+ strategy options was done on the basis of expert opinion about the most promising ways to address the direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and stakeholder consultations on the strategy options identified. Stakeholders applied the following criteria to evaluate the different REDD+ strategy options: (i) ability to address the root causes of deforestation and forest degradation; (ii) alignment with national sustainable development priorities; (iii) responsiveness to the needs and vulnerabilities of local communities. The consultation process on the national REDD+ strategy, which was discussed in detail under criteria 7-8 above, was highly participatory and transparent. The concurrent elaboration of the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and the REDD+ strategy⁶ enabled Togo to take into account the negative impacts that could reduce the feasibility of the different REDD+ strategy options that had been identified, and reformulate the latter to address these impacts

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the process for selecting and prioritizing REDD+ strategy options had been transparent and participatory. The emissions reduction potential of the different interventions was ranked on the basis of expert opinion, which was then used as an input to the participatory process for prioritizing REDD+ strategy options, through local, regional and national consultation and validation workshops. The assessment of the REDD+ strategy options for potential impacts on the environment and on humans at local, regional and national levels confirmed the feasibility of the strategy options.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made considerable progress with selecting and prioritizing REDD+ strategy options. No formal cost-benefit analysis of REDD+ strategy options was carried out, but the SESA process, which was highly participatory, allowed them to be refined, and their feasibility confirmed. Concur with the ratings.*

⁶ The SESA, which is discussed in more detail under sub-component 2d, was elaborated on the basis of version 1 of the National REDD+ Strategy, and was then used in the revision of the latter.

Implications of strategy options criterion 18: YELLOW

The identification of REDD+ strategy options was done on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of different sectors on deforestation and forest degradation, involving all relevant sector agencies. Many of the latter already integrate some of the dimensions of REDD+ into their policies, e.g., agroforestry as part of agricultural sector policy; the green spaces policy as part of urban planning and the creation of the Togolese agency for electrification and renewable energies in the energy sector. There also a number of policies outside the forest sector that still need to be better aligned with the REDD+ strategy. These include the development of agricultural growth poles and the management of livestock and transhumance. Concrete measures to bring about such alignment have been included in the National REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan and have been discussed and validated in the National REDD+ Committee.

Self-assessment. The REDD+ strategy options have been defined in consultation with all the sectors concerned, and many sectors have included some dimensions of REDD+ in their policies. The REDD+ strategy options have also been included in the National Development Plan (PND) of Togo. The integration of REDD+ in various policy processes are facilitated by the National REDD+ Committee, supported by the National REDD+ Coordination and the REDD+ thematic groups set up in key sector ministries. Next steps identified include the strengthening of the REDD+ thematic groups to further improve integration of REDD+ strategy options in future development and climate change policies and programs, and the improvement of the monitoring system for the better integration of the REDD+ dimension in sector policies and programs.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made considerable progress in identifying cross-sectoral policy impacts on forests, and in developing REDD+ strategy options to address these cross-sectoral impacts, in collaboration with government agencies from other sectors. It has also identified agricultural and livestock policies that still need to be better aligned with the National REDD+ Strategy. The mechanisms for cross-sectoral collaboration on REDD+, and for monitoring the impacts of cross-sectoral policies on forests still need further strengthening. Concur with the rating.*

Sub-component 2c. Implementation framework (criteria 19-22)

This part of the assessment framework focuses on the structural legal, policy and institutional measures taken to facilitate implementation of the REDD+ strategy.

Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations, Guidelines for implementation, Benefit sharing mechanism (criteria 19-21: YELLOW)

In Togo as in other countries, REDD+ is a multi-sectoral effort that requires cross-sectoral coordination and specific legal and institutional arrangements to ensure that the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and the barriers for more sustainable land use, are fully and effectively addressed. A number of new laws have been adopted, or are in the process of being adopted, in support of REDD+ implementation in Togo, both in the forest sector and in other relevant sectors. These include, among others: (i) the new Land Law, promulgated in 2018, which clarifies land titles and simplifies the procedures obtaining them, safeguards women's right of access to land, and strengthens the powers of customary authorities; (ii) the revision of the Forest Law to integrate the REDD+ dimension (in progress); (iii) the elaboration of a decree governing SESA (in progress); and (iv) the planned elaboration of a legal text on carbon governance. Key elements of the REDD+ implementation framework have been finalized enabling Togo to define carbon rights, required benefit sharing mechanisms (BSM), grievance and redress mechanisms and REDD+

financing modalities. A manual for the approval of REDD+ investments is being prepared for finalization by late 2021. This manual will define the principles and criteria for the approval of REDD+ investments, including management approaches and registration modalities. The Benefit Sharing Mechanism was developed through broad consultations, in a participatory and inclusive manner. The legal and institutional options for the BSM were adopted by the Government in the Council of Ministers. The BSM will be formalized through a legal instrument, currently under preparation, which also regulates overall carbon governance. Togo has retained the Ministry of Economy and Finance as the institution responsible for the distribution of REDD+ benefits, receipt of payments and management of funds.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that a number of new legal instruments intended to improve sector policy alignment with REDD+ have been adopted, or are currently under revision. The essential elements of the REDD+ implementation framework, including the Benefit Sharing Mechanism (BSM), Grievance and Redress Mechanism and Environmental and Social Management Plan, have been finalized. The manual for the approval of REDD+ investments is expected to be finalized shortly. Next steps identified include the development and adoption of legal texts to strengthen the REDD+ dimension in all sectors affecting forests, the adoption of the legal instrument regulating carbon governance and formalizing the BSM, and the continuing dissemination of the BSM to REDD+ stakeholders.

- **TAP assessment.** *As noted by the self-assessment, Togo has made considerable progress in establishing the legal and institutional arrangements and guidelines for REDD+ implementation, but still has some work to do, including among others: formal adoption of the new Forest Law, the SESA decree, and the legal instrument for carbon governance, which is necessary to formalize the BSM. Concur with the ratings.*

National REDD+ registry and system monitoring REDD+ activities (criterion 22: **ORANGE**)

The national REDD+ registry does not yet exist, but a study for its design is underway. The following activities have been completed: (i) stakeholder consultations have been held and information collected; (ii) the framework for developing the project approval procedure has been established; (iii) the scope of the information system on safeguards and multiple benefits (SIS) has been established and the main links with the registry identified and specified; (iv) the scope of the national REDD+ registry has been established and its institutional anchoring clarified; and (v) possibilities for the accommodation of the SIS in the registry are being explored.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that there is no geo-referenced information or a national registry bringing together all the relevant information as yet. The national REDD+ registry is under development, however, and some elements have already been established, such as the functional and technical specifications. Next steps identified include the finalization of the national REDD+ registry and its operationalization.

- **TAP assessment.** *Some progress has been made on the national REDD+ registry, including on the functional and technical specifications, as noted by the self-assessment. The notion of linking the national REDD+ registry and the SIS is interesting. Concur with the rating.*

Analysis of social and environmental safeguards issues, REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts, Environmental and Social Management Framework (criteria 23-25: **GREEN**)

The SESA process for identifying and analyzing the potential environmental and social impacts of REDD+ implementation in Togo, and for developing remedial measures (for the negative impacts) and amplifying measures (for the positive impacts) has been carefully articulated and implemented. The stakeholder consultations were supervised by the National Environmental Management Agency (ANGE) to ensure that the process took place in accordance with applicable national regulations. The National REDD+ Coordination made funding available to each Prefectural Sustainable Development Committee (CPDD) to hold two meetings, one to disseminate and discuss version 1 of the National REDD+ strategy and the second to discuss in detail the potential environmental and social impacts of the REDD+ strategy options contained in this version.⁷ The 1,478 local stakeholders that participated in these meetings came from a wide range of government agencies and civil society, including village development committees, women's and youth organizations. They identified the following environmental and social risks to be avoided and mitigated: (i) desecration of cultural and heritage sites; (ii) land use conflicts, among communities, or between arable farmers and livestock keepers; (iii) water, soil and air pollution due to the excessive and irrational use of pesticides and other farm inputs; (iv) proliferation of disease due to pollutants; (v) expropriation and loss of cultivable land; (vi) displacement of populations; and (vii) reluctance of populations to change behavior, practices and adopt new technologies. Six consultation workshops with similarly broad multi-stakeholder participation, including private sector organizations, were subsequently held at regional level, and one at national level, who validated the environmental and social issues defined locally, and who confirmed that the positive impacts of REDD+ largely outweighed the negative ones, once key mitigating measures had been incorporated into the revised National REDD+ Strategy options. The concurrent development of the SESA and the National REDD+ Strategy allowed for stakeholder concerns to be fully integrated into the various REDD+ Strategy options. In addition, the information generated by the SESA process contributed directly to the prioritization of REDD+ Strategy options, in terms of their potential impact and feasibility.

The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) was designed to enable the assessment and mitigation of potential negative effects on the environment and society, as well as the optimization of carbon and non-carbon benefits, REDD+ projects and activities. The ESMF includes the environmental and social management framework plan (PCGES), the environmental management and monitoring plan (PGSE), the capacity building plan (CBP) and the cultural heritage management framework (CGPC). Other safeguards instruments developed include the Pest Management Plan (PMP), the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) and the Process Framework (PF).

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that environmental and social issues related to REDD+ implementation in Togo have been comprehensively analyzed and mitigation measures discussed through the SESA process, which included broad multi-stakeholder consultation at local, regional and national level. Social and environmental issues raised by stakeholders were incorporated in version 2 of the National REDD+ Strategy and used to prioritize individual REDD+ Strategy options. The ESMF was developed on the basis of the SESA, in a participatory and inclusive manner. Next steps identified include continued dissemination of safeguard instruments, in

⁷ The first meeting was organized in all 36 "Préfectures" nationwide, the second in 35 out of 36 "Préfectures".

combination with stakeholder capacity building, and the adoption of the SESA decree. Significant progress had been made. Outstanding work on the SIS and SOI is anticipated for early 2021.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has invested considerable effort in engaging a broad range of stakeholders at local, regional and national level in the SESA process to identify potential social and environmental impacts of implementing REDD+ Strategy Options, and to suggest ways to avoid or mitigate the negative impacts, as well as amplify the positive ones. Environmental and social issues raised by stakeholders have been fully incorporated in the National REDD+ Strategy and in the ESMF and related safeguard instruments. Concur with the ratings.*

Component 3: Reference Emissions Level/Reference Level (criteria 26-28)

Demonstration of methodology; Use of historical data, adjusted for national circumstances; Technical feasibility of the methodological approach and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines (criteria 26-28: **GREEN**)

Togo submitted its first Forest Reference Level (FRL) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in January 2020.⁸ The process for developing the FRL took place in three stages: (i) strengthening the technical capacities of national teams; (ii) development and validation of the methodology; and (iii) calculation of greenhouse gas emissions and removals to produce the FRL. A revised version of the FRL⁹ was submitted in August 2020, following technical assessment by UNFCCC experts. The technical evaluation of Togo's FRL showed that it meets UNFCCC requirements.¹⁰ The FRL also meets the requirements of the methodological framework on the FCPF. The FRL methodology will be improved as more precise input data becomes available. The information used to define the FRL was estimated using IPCC Tier 3 guidelines and methods. Therefore, the FRL methodology is deemed transparent, complete, consistent and accurate.

Under Togo's Forest Law, as summarized in its FRL submission, the definition of forest is as follows: "An area of more than 0.5 hectares with trees reaching a height of more than 5 metres and a tree cover of more than 10%, or with trees capable of reaching these thresholds in the locality concerned." In elaborating Togo's Forest Reference Level (FRL), however, it became clear that it was impossible to reliably distinguish forests with low tree cover, between 10 and 30%, from non-forest on the basis of the Landsat satellite imagery available for the 2003-2018 reference period. Therefore, it was decided to sub-divide forests in two sub-categories for the purpose of developing the FRL: (i) forests with a crown cover of more than 30%; and (ii) woodlands with a crown cover of between 10 and 30%, both with a minimum area of 0.5 ha and a tree height of more than 5 m.¹¹

⁸ Togo's January 2020 submission of the first FRL (in French) is available at https://redd.unfccc.int/files/nrf_togo_06_1_20_.pdf

⁹ The August 2020 version of Togo's FRL (in French) is available at <https://www.reddtogo.tg/index.php/ressources/mrv/send/17-mrv/188-niveau-de-reference-pour-les-forets-nrf-du-togo>

¹⁰ The TAP reviewer was unable to confirm the assertions made on this topic in Togo's R-Package. Neither the technical review of the January 2020 FRL, nor the August 2020 FRL or any subsequent comments from UNFCCC experts appear to be available on the UNFCCC website.

¹¹ This paragraph is not based on the R-Package text, but on the above-mentioned FRL submission. It is included here because it provides important context for the description of future improvements of the FRL proposed in the R-Package.

The FRL, which is based on historical data for the 2003–2018 period¹², without any adjustment, is evaluated at 729,590 tCO₂e per year, with a margin of error of plus/minus 135,625 tCO₂e/year.¹³ This figure is much lower than the 17,098,024 tCO₂e of forest and land use change emissions estimated for the year 2013, included in the First National Greenhouse Gas Inventory report (GHGI) submitted to UNFCCC in 2017. The large discrepancy is adequately explained by: (i) inclusion of all vegetation with tree cover over 10% in GHGI, whereas for the FRL, only vegetation with more than 30% tree cover was included, in line with Togo’s official forest definition submitted to the UNFCCC; (ii) activity data for GHGI are based on rough estimates, whereas FRL data are based on satellite imagery and the recent forest inventory; (iii) emission factors used for GHGI are IPCC defaults, whereas FRL estimates use Tier 3 coefficients based on Togo’s recent national forest inventory, and take into account biomass remaining after deforestation.¹⁴

The carbon pools covered by the FRL are above-ground biomass, below-ground biomass and deadwood. The only greenhouse gas considered in the construction of the FRL is carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted by deforestation and emissions removed by reforestation. Greenhouse gas emissions related to wildfire, such as CO₂, methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) are not taken into account due to a lack of data. Emissions from forest degradation and removals from conservation of forest carbon stocks and sustainable forest management have not been taken into account either but will be included in subsequent FRLs.

Self-assessment. Togo used historical data, without any adjustment, based on the 2003–2018 period, for which nationwide satellite imagery was available. Data used are reliable and verifiable and cover the entire national territory. A step-by-step approach has been chosen, excluding those emissions reductions/removals for which reliable data could not be sourced. The methodology chosen has been sufficiently documented, proven and accepted nationally and internationally. The information presented in the FRL is consistent with guidance provided by the UNFCCC, and in line with the most recent IPCC guidelines and directives. For future FRLs, Togo will use high-resolution imagery (e.g., Sentinel 2, RapidEye) to cover greenhouse gas emissions from woodlands with 10–30% canopy cover, from forest degradation and vegetation fires and emissions removals through sustainable forest management. The acquisition and use of higher resolution imagery will also enable Togo to improve the assessment of land use change. Finally, the emissions/removals from the soil and litter carbon pools may also be covered in future assessments.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo’s Forest Reference Level (FRL) is measured using IPCC Tier 3 (highest technical standard) methods, but for the moment, excludes many greenhouse gas emissions/removals activities and a few carbon pools for lack of sufficient data. While this is acceptable under the step-by-step approach to improve FRLs progressively, which is allowed under UNFCCC rules, it also carries some risks. The current exclusion of emissions/removals from degradation and restoration, from vegetation fires, and from woodlands with 10–30% tree cover could significantly alter the FRL. These exclusions may also create a risk of “leakage” of emissions reductions, e.g., if conversion to farmland were shifted from forests with higher than 30% tree cover to woodlands with 10–30% tree cover. Therefore, inclusion of these excluded activities and woodland category (and to a lesser extent carbon pools) in subsequent FRLs, as planned by Togo, is highly desirable. According to the R-Package, the*

¹² The 2003–2018 historical reference period was selected on the basis of the availability of satellite images for the entire territory for these dates.

¹³ The FRL methodology is explained in the detail in the manual developed for the National Forest Monitoring System (in French), available on <https://ogardi.github.io/SNSF-Togo/>

¹⁴ Again, this information is summarized from Togo’s FRL submission, for the reasons stated in footnote 11.

soundness of Togo's FRL was confirmed by the independent technical assessment carried out for UNFCCC in June 2020. The TAP reviewer was unable to confirm this assertion independently, as neither the independent technical review of Togo's January 2020 FRL, nor the August 2020 FRL submission or any subsequent comments from UNFCCC experts appear to be available on the UNFCCC website.¹⁵ With this caveat, concur with the ratings.

Component 4. Monitoring systems for Forests, and Safeguards

Sub-component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System (criteria 29-31)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring systems.

Documentation of monitoring approach, Demonstration of early system implementation, (criteria 29-30: **GREEN**)

The objective of Togo's National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) is to regularly assess the state of the forests and their evolution nationwide. The NFMS combines data collected in the field with data from satellite imagery to enable such assessment. It has three main pillars: (i) The National Forest Inventory (NFI), which was first carried out in 2015-2016, and is now being repeated, using the same field plots – and which has been instrumental in generating Tier 3 estimates for Emission Factors; (ii) Togo's Satellite Land Monitoring System (SLMS), which allows the results of the NFI to be extrapolated to the whole country and the generation of detailed Activity Data; and (iii) The FRL, combined with the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of changes in forest carbon pools in Togo. MRV has used the carbon pool data from the 2016 NFI in combination with the forest area change data from the SLMS to quantify carbon emissions due to deforestation and carbon removals from reforestation over the 2003-2018 period. The monitoring approach follows the technical guidance provided by UN REDD (2013) and by the Global Forest Observation Initiative (2020).¹⁶ Sources of uncertainty in both activity data and emission factors have been quantified at around 14% both, leading to an overall uncertainty for the FRL of 21%. The submission of the first FRL to the UNFCCC in January 2020, and the submission of a revised FRL in August 2020, provides a proof of concept for the NFMS. Transparency of the NFMS will be improved in the near future by the deployment of Togo's SLMS on the FAO regional forest monitoring portal, using the SEPAL tool, and through the use of FAO's land cover classification system (LCCS/LCML).

Regarding carbon leakage, it is postulated that since the monitoring is carried out at the national level, possible leaks within the country do not influence the national emissions.¹⁷ As the drivers of land use change mainly consist of domestic demand for agricultural products and timber, a shift in activities and emissions to neighbouring countries is considered unlikely. In addition, these countries (Benin, Burkina Faso and Ghana) are themselves engaged in REDD+. A variety of institutions have

¹⁵ As noted above, the August 2020 version of the FRL is available on the REDD+ Togo website.

¹⁶ See <https://www.unredd.net/documents/global-programme-191/mrv-and-monitoring-296/10305-national-forest-monitoring-systems-monitoring-and-measurement-reporting-and-verification-m-mrv-in-the-context-of-redd-activities-10305.html?path=global-programme-191/mrv-and-monitoring-296> and <https://www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/pubs/61714>, respectively.

¹⁷ The TAP reviewer does not agree with this assertion. As discussed in the TAP assessment of criteria 26-28, there is a real risk of leakage, in case activities that generate emissions would shift from areas and pools that are included and measured under the current FRL, to areas and pools that have been excluded. Togo, however, aims to integrate the currently excluded areas and pools in the next version of the FRL, which would solve this problem.

been involved in developing the NFMs and in producing the FRL, but civil society has not been involved yet. Once the NFMS is fully operational, Togo will try to engage the local communities in the monitoring of forest resources, especially in those areas where REDD+ activities are planned.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that Togo's National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) was designed on the basis of accepted international guidelines and nationally approved. The monitoring method combines the use of remote sensing and field data, and the sources of uncertainty have been identified and quantified. The production of the first national Forest Reference Level (FRL), which was submitted to UNFCCC in 2020, has provided a "proof of concept" for the NFMS. The three pillars of the NFMS described above ensure that the system will be able to quantify the evolution of carbon emissions and removals in relation to the FRL. The institutional capacities of the national data generating agencies that make up the national forest monitoring group have also been strengthened, but the institutionalization of the NFMS has not yet been completed. Furthermore, the NFMS is not yet able to identify and assess the displacement of emissions ("leakage"). Next steps identified include the deployment of Togo's SLMS on the FAO regional forest monitoring portal, using the SEPAL tool, which will help improve transparency of the NFMS; the finalization of the second National Forest Inventory (NFI); the updating of the FRL; the completion of the mechanism for assessing leakage; and the integration of the NFMS in the forthcoming National REDD+ Registry.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo's National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) was designed on the basis of accepted international guidelines and has been nationally approved. The capacities of Togolese institutions contributing to the NFMS was strengthened, and the generation of the first FRL in 2020 provided the "proof of concept" for the effectiveness of the NFMS. The NFMS has not yet been institutionalized, but Togo intends to remedy this by integrating the NFMS in the National REDD+ Registry, which is currently being prepared. As noted under the TAP assessment of criteria 26-28, there is a real risk of carbon leakage in Togo because of the current exclusion of certain emissions generating activities (and to a lesser extent carbon pools) from the first FRL. Including these excluded activities and pools in the next FRLs, as Togo has planned, will minimize the risk of leakage going forward. Concur with the ratings.*

Institutional arrangements and capacities (criterion 31: YELLOW)

The NFMS institutional set-up consists of existing institutions in the different sectoral ministries concerned, with the roles and responsibilities of each of these institutions defined according to their technical skills and sector attributions. The MRV Unit of the National REDD+ Coordination, which is housed at the Forestry Development Agency (ODEF) is responsible for coordinating all the organizations supplying data for the NFMS and for facilitating communications on Togo's FRL. The FRL/MRV Working Group and the national forest monitoring team are responsible for the development of the monitoring methodology, including technical decisions and choices regarding the data, the results and the assessment methods to be adopted for FRL and MRV. The Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources (MERF), by way of its Department of the Environment (DE) is responsible for Greenhouse Gas Inventories for all sectors, and for ensuring the consistency of GHGI data for AFOLU sectors with the FRL in its reporting to the UNFCCC. The main organizations supplying data include the Department of Studies and Planning (DEP), the Cartography and Remote Sensing Division (DCT) and the Forest Resources Department (DRF) of the ODEF, the National Environmental Management Agency (ANGE). Additional data are provided by the General Directorate of Energy of the Ministry of Mines and Energy (DGE/MME), the Directorate of Agricultural Statistics, Informatics and Documentation (DCID) and the Togolese Institute for Agronomic Research (ITRA), the National Institute of Statistics and Economic and Demographic

Studies (INSEED), and by various universities. Quality assurance and control will be carried out independently by the Laboratory of Plant Biology and Ecology (LBEV) and the Forest Research Laboratory (LRF) of the University of Lomé – who will also evaluate new methods and data sources – as well as the General Directorate of Cartography (DCG),

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the mandates for the different tasks associated with forest monitoring – processing of satellite data, forest inventory, dissemination of information – are clearly defined. Transparent mechanisms for the public dissemination of forest and emissions data, however, are not yet in place. Resource requirements for the operation of the NFMS have been partially defined. Next steps identified include the continued capacity building of the institutions involved in the NFMS; the design and operationalization of a geo-portal to ensure dissemination of forest monitoring data to the general public; mobilization of financial resources and the institutionalization of the NFMS.

- **TAP assessment.** *Togo has made considerable progress in developing its National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). Institutional mandates have been clarified and capacities strengthened, and a mechanism for independent quality control has been elaborated. The main outstanding item is the mobilization of financial resources for the continued operation of the NFMS, and the institutional integration in the National REDD+ Registry, still to be established. Concur with the rating.*

Sub-component 4b: Information systems for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards (criteria 32-34)

This part of the Readiness Assessment Framework focuses on how data on other aspects of REDD+ implementation are collected and shared.

Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects and social and environmental aspects (criterion 32: **YELLOW**)

The relevant non-carbon aspects and social and environmental safeguard issues of REDD+ preparations were identified through the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), which was conducted in a highly participatory manner. The thematic study on carbon governance and the possibilities of benefit sharing also considered social and environmental benefits of REDD+ activities other than carbon. During the consultations on the SESA, various recommendations for capacity building on this theme were also received. The findings of the SESA and the thematic study with regards to non-carbon aspects were integrated in the respective safeguard instruments.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the non-carbon aspects and the relevant social and environmental issues related to REDD+ had been identified through the SESA and integrated in the required safeguard instruments. In addition, capacity building recommendations have been made. Next steps identified include: continued dissemination of the Benefit Sharing Mechanism (BSM) and the safeguard instruments, as well as stakeholder capacity building on these topics.

- **TAP assessment.** *The self-assessment concluded that meaningful progress has been made on this criterion but did not go into much detail on which non-carbon aspects were deemed most important. It would seem that some REDD+ activities have important social benefits (for example, better respiratory health of women through the use of improved stoves) and that such benefits would offer scope for additional stakeholder and resource mobilization.*

This could be usefully explored as REDD+ moves towards implementation in Togo. Concur with the rating.

Monitoring, reporting and information sharing, Institutional arrangements and capacities (criteria 33-34: **ORANGE**)

A Multiple Benefits and Safeguards Information System (SIS) is being developed with the support of a consultant. The state of progress is as follows: (i) stakeholder consultations have been carried out and information is being collected; (ii) the scope of the SIS has been determined and the main linkages identified and specified; and (iii) the possibilities for local hosting of the SIS are being explored. The institutional mandates related to the collection and dissemination of information on Multiple Benefits and Safeguards have not yet been identified. In the interim, different parts of the National REDD+ Coordination are taking on some of these tasks.

Self-assessment. The self-assessment concluded that the Multiple Benefits and Safeguards Information System (SIS) is currently in the initial stages of development. Next steps identified include the finalization and operationalization of the SIS, including the clarification of institutional mandates for collecting and disseminating related information.

- **TAP assessment.** *It is clear from the self-assessment that the SIS is still in the early stages of development. One positive element is that, as for other elements of REDD+ Readiness such as the National REDD+ Strategy and the SESA, Togo has adopted a participatory approach for SIS development, involving multiple stakeholders in a carefully considered process. Concur with the ratings.*

4. Summary assessment and recommendations

a. Overall REDD+ Readiness progress

Based on the documents provided, the TAP reviewer concludes that Togo's REDD+ Readiness Package demonstrates the country's firm commitment to REDD+ and paints an accurate and honest picture of its readiness work, including many strengths and a few areas for improvement.

Togo has been engaged in REDD+ readiness for over six years and is eager to move towards implementation. The REDD+ Strategy Options are well-aligned with the main direct and indirect drivers of forest-based Greenhouse Gas emissions.

b. Self-assessment process

Togo has executed the Self-assessment process in accordance with the FCPF Readiness Assessment Framework, from January until August 2021. The extended time frame allowed significant time for the participation of multiple stakeholder groups at both regional (6 workshops) and national level (1

workshop), with a total of 644 participants, thus ensuring a broadly based assessment of progress made with REDD+ Readiness.

The consultation process was well-structured, with good-quality stakeholder inputs as a result. A draft REDD+ Readiness Package was made available to all participants in the Self-assessment workshops. Workshops were held over two days, to enable structured, separate interactions to be held with different stakeholder groups. Participants were encouraged to analyse progress made with different REDD+ Readiness elements, and to identify strengths to be capitalized and weak points to be remedied.

c. Overall assessment and recommendations

Togo has made significant progress in REDD+ Readiness. For 31 out of the total of 34 criteria assessed, the country had either achieved significant progress (**GREEN** score, 21 criteria) or progressed well but require further development (**YELLOW** score, 10 criteria).

Togo's progress since the Mid-Term Review was carried out in 2017 has been considerable. Then, only 8 criteria had **GREEN** or **YELLOW** scores, against 31 now. The remaining 3 criteria have an **ORANGE** score, meaning there are no criteria for which no progress has been made. The iterative process that Togo used for developing the REDD+ strategy options on the one hand and the SESA on the other is an excellent practice that allows key stakeholders to help identify potential social and environmental risks early on and to influence the framing of the REDD+ strategy options in a timely manner.

The main elements of REDD+ Readiness that still need to be completed are: (i) the National REDD+ Registry (which will also be the institutional anchor for the National Forest Monitoring System) and (ii) the Multiple Benefits and Safeguards Information System (SIS). The functioning of the National REDD+ Committee will need to be improved and some legal instruments still need to be adopted, including the revised Forest Law, the SESA decree, and the Act for the creation of the National REDD+ Registry. In addition, the Forest Reference Level (FRL) would benefit from inclusion of additional sources of emissions, such as loss of woodlands with 10-30% tree cover, and forest degradation – as Togo plans to do in subsequent versions of the FRL.

Despite the considerable REDD+ Readiness progress made, the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis carried out by the National REDD+ Coordination as part of the self-assessment highlighted some important weaknesses and threats, including technical/logistical capacity challenges; the lack of sustainable and predictable funding; poor law enforcement; anarchic exploitation of forests, including reserves; and lack of broader political support (beyond the environmental sector). The same analysis, however, also revealed some major strengths and opportunities that should allow REDD+ to progress further, including: a cohesive and experienced, multi-disciplinary national REDD+ coordination team; good financial accounting and management skills; strong partnerships with the private sector and civil society; good alignment between the national REDD+ strategy and other key government documents, such as the National Development Plan and the NDC, among others.

5. References and background documents

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