National REDD+ Strategy Investment Plan for the Republic of Congo 2018-2025 (Version 5)

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ACRONYMS

AAC	Annual allowable cut
ACFAP	Congolese Agency for Wildlife and Protected Areas (*Agence Congolaise de la Faune et des Aires Protégées)*
AFD	French Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement*)
AFODEK	Agroforests for Kipushi's Development (*Agroforêts pour le développement de Kipushi*)
AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use
APOI	Africa Palm Oil Initiative
BDEAC	Central African Development Bank (*Banque de Développement des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale)*
CACO-REDD	Congolese Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples REDD+ Concertation Platform (*Cadre de Concertation des Organisations de la société civile et des populations autochtones pour la REDD+)*
CAFEC	Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation Project
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CAR	Central African Republic
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CBA	Cost-benefit analysis
CDMC	Community Development Management Committees
CIB	*Congolaise Industrielle des Bois*
CN REDD	REDD National Coordination body (*Coordination Nationale REDD*)
CNIAF	National Centre for Surveys and Forest and Fauna Resource Management *(Centre national d'inventaire et d'aménagement des Ressources Forestières et Fauniques*)
CODEPA REDD	REDD Departmental Committee (*Comité Départemental REDD*)
COMIFAC	Central African Forest Commission *(Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale*)
CONA-REDD	REDD National Committee (*Comité National REDD)*
COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CVPFNL	Valorisation center for Non-Timber Forest Products (*Centre de Valorisation des Produits Forestiers Non-Ligneux)*
DFID	Department for International Development
DGM	Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
DGMTWG	CONGO-DGM Technical working group
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSCERP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (*Document de stratégie pour la croissance, l'emploi et la réduction de la pauvreté*)
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOM	Congolese Household Survey (*Enquête Congolaise auprès des Ménages*)
EFC	*Eucalyptus et Fibres du Congo*
ER-Program	Emission Reduction Program
ERPA	Emissions Reduction Purchase Agreement
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework

EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FEVAC	Fund for the Green Economy in Central Africa (*Fonds de l'économie verte en Afrique Centrale)*
FFEM	French Global Environment Facility (*Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial)*
FINFORTROP	Financing for Congo Basin's Humid Tropical Forests *(Financement des initiatives en faveur de la gestion durable des forêts tropicales humides)*
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
FREL	Forest Reference Emission Level
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCS	High Carbon Stock
HCV	High Conservation Value
HDI	Human Development Index
IDA	International Development Association
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IP	Indigenous peoples
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPLC	Indigenous peoples and local communities
IPSRP	Integrated Public Sector Reform Project
KfW	*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*
LDF	Local Development Fund
LULUCF	Land use, land-use change and forestry
MAEP	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries *(Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'élevage et de la pêche)*
MATDGGT	Ministry of Territorial Development and Major Works Delegation (*Ministère de l'Aménagement du territoire et de la Délégation Générale des Grands Travaux*)
MDB	Multilateral Development Banks
MFE	Ministry of Forest Economy
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism (*Mécanisme de recours et gestion des plaintes)*
MRV	Measurement, reporting and verification
MUCODEC	Congolese Savings and Credit Mutuals *(Mutuelles congolaises d'épargne et de crédit)*
NDP	National Development Plan
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring Systems

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NICFI	Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative
NICT	New Information and Communication Technologies
PNAT	National Land Use Plan (*Plan National d'Affectation des terres*)
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
OFAC	Observatory for the Forests of Central Africa *(Observatoire des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale)*
OFI	Ouesso's Forest Industry
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PA	Protected Area
PDAC	Commercial Agriculture Development Support Project (*Projet d'Appui au Développement de l'Agriculture Commerciale)*
PADEF	Agricultural Value Chains Development Program (*Programme d'Appui au Développement des Filières Agricoles)*
PAGEF	Sustainable Forest Management Support Project *(Projet d'appui à la gestion durable des forêts)*
PAGICOF	Investment Climate and Forest Governance Support Project *(Projet d'appui au climat des investissements et à la gouvernance sectorielle forêt/bois)*
PDRAP	Agricultural Development and Rural Roads Rehabilitation Project *(Projet de Développement Agricole et de Réhabilitation des Pistes rurales)*
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
PFDE	Forestry and Economic Diversification Project (*Projet Forêt et Diversification Economique)*
PGDF	Sustainable Forest Management Platform *(Plateforme pour la Gestion Durable des Forêts)*
PPECF	Program for the Promotion of Certified Forest Operations *(Program de Promotion de l´Exploitation Certifiée des Forêts)*
PPFNC	North Congo Forest Landscapes *(Paysages Forestiers du Nord Congo)*
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PROFADELL	Local Development Project surrounding the Lésio-Louna Gorilla Natural Reserve *(Projet en Faveur du Développement Local en Périphérie de la Réserve Naturelle de Gorilles de Lésio-Louna)*
ProNAR	National Program of Afforestation and Reforestation *(Programme National d'Afforestation et de Reboisement)*
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, together with conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
REDD+ PCIV	REDD+ Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers
RENAPAC	National Network of Indigenous Populations in the Republic of Congo (*Réseau National des Populations Autochtones du Congo)*
RGPH	General Population and Housing Census *(Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat)*
RIL	Reduced Impact logging
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
SCAEMPS	Strengthening Central Africa Environmental Management and Policy Support
SDAT	Departmental Land-Use Planning (*Schéma Départemental d'Aménagement du Territoire*)

SDC	Community Development Series (*Séries de Développement Communautaire*)
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SMP	Simple Management Plan
SNAT	National Territorial Development Plan (*Schéma National d'Aménagement du Territoire*)
SNR	Reforestation service of Congolese forest department (*Service National de Reboisement*)
SO	Sub-Option
SYNA-MNV	National System to Measure, Report and Verify (*Système National de Mesure, Notification, Vérification)*
TEREA	*Terre, Environnement, Aménagement*
ToC	Theory of Change
TRIDOM	Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkébé
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAT	Value Added Taxes
VLC	Verification of Legal Compliance
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Summary of the National REDD+ Strategy Investment Plan

1. Country/Region	Republic of Congo	
2. FIP Funding Request (in USD million)	Grant: 6 M USD	Loan: 18 M USD
3. National FIP Focal Point	Grégoire Nkéoua, FIP / CAFI Focal Point nkeouag@gmail.com	
4. National Implementing Agency	MEF	
5. MDB	World Bank et African Development Bank (AfDB)	
6. MDB FIP Focal Points	World Bank: Julian Lee	African Development Bank: Laouali Garba

7. Description of the Investment Plan

a. Key challenges related to REDD+ implementation

Located at the heart of the Congo Basin, Republic of Congo possesses a vast forest area. Evaluated at 22,334,000 ha (FAO, 2015), it accounts for 65.4% of land surface, in addition to about 59,000 ha of planted forests. Although the net rate of change in forest cover remain low with a gross annual deforestation rate of 0.047% (BRLi, 2014), GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are the main source of national emissions, reaching 19.2 $MtCO_2e$/year in 2015, according to the Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL).

At present, the primary drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are as follows:

- Shifting subsistence agriculture, which occupies 81% of cultivated land, produces 98% of the country's food, but is generally of low productivity.
- Forestry, both industrial and artisanal, contributes significantly to emissions from degradation due to the substantial size of the country's forests, in spite of sustainable forest management policies.
- Fuelwood production, which provides some 90% of the country's energy needs, drives forest degradation primarily in the supply basins of urban centers. Transformation and utilization of these resources are generally inefficient.
- Road and urban infrastructure, which have expanded into forest areas.

Moreover, the FREL projects that, if the development of the industrial agriculture and mining sectors is not achieved in a sustainable manner, emissions will reach 35.5 $MtCO_2e$ by 2020.

- Industrial agriculture has primarily been concentrated in the oil palm sector, in which concessions have been attributed in the past, but that have not yet entered into significant production.
- Mining, which has mostly been dormant while metals and minerals prices are globally depressed. Numerous exploration permits have been allocated in forest areas, where the primary risks relate to mine site and infrastructure development, as well as population influx.

Republic of Congo also faces the following underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation:

- Weak governance due to weak institutional capacity, particularly in terms of control of the sectors influencing deforestation.
- Weak intersectoral coordination and lack of land use planning, leading to overlapping and incompatible land uses.
- Poverty and lack of financing and access for economic and technological alternatives.
- Population growth of 2.6%, leading to an increase in domestic demand for agricultural land, fuelwood and infrastructure.

Since 2008, the Republic of Congo has engaged in the process of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, together with conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon

stocks (REDD+) to (i) help mitigate climate change, (ii) preserve its forest ecosystems, (iii) reduce poverty and (iv) provide the foundations for the emergence of a future green economy and the country's sustainable development in 2025.

By addressing the historical and future causes of deforestation and forest degradation, the National REDD+ Strategy presents an ambitious strategy that aims to (i) establish a multisectoral action framework that will align and influence sectoral policies and strategies, (ii) harmonize action programs and (iii) align the action programs' budget with the Republic of Congo's development priorities beyond the forest sector.

In addition, the Republic of Congo proposed an ambitious target in its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) submitted at COP 21 in Paris to reduce national emissions by 48% mainly through the implementation of the REDD+ mechanism compared to the trend scenario (uncontrolled). However, it should be noted that the INDC was produced before the Forest Reference Emission Level and the latter is not included in the estimates proposed. A review of the INDC will be conducted in the fourth quarter of 2017.

b. Areas of Intervention of the National REDD+ Strategy Investment Plan

The Investment Plan aims to centralize, channel and coordinate international, national, public and private funds to support the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy. This involves structuring a programmatic framework to accommodate both sector-based and enabling REDD+ related investments.

The National REDD+ National Strategy is based on:

- A cross-cutting lever focused mainly on improving governance and putting in place appropriate policies and measures. This lever is an indispensable enabling support that directly targets the indirect causes of deforestation and forest degradation;
- Programmatic or sectoral levers (forest, agriculture, mining and energy) for the implementation of activities that will reduce emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and maintain/increase forest carbon stocks and sustainable forest management.

The areas of intervention of the National REDD+ Strategy are:

- ✓ **Strategic Option 1:** Strengthen governance and sustainable financing
- ✓ **Strategic Option 2:** Sustainable development and management of forest resources
- ✓ **Strategic Option 3:** Improve agricultural systems
- ✓ **Strategic Option 4:** Rationalise production and use of fuelwood and promote other clean energy sources
- ✓ **Strategic Option 5:** Develop a green mining sector

The Investment Plan is the reference framework for actions implemented over the 2018-2025 period and for emission reductions linked to deforestation, forest degradation and carbon stock increase throughout the national territory. It identifies ongoing activities as well as a portfolio of complementary and diversified activities to support the implementation of the National Strategy.

These activities will be financed through existing bilateral and multilateral funding (AFD, EU, IDA-WB, GEF, etc.), and proposed for funding from climate funds including the Forest Investment Program (FIP), the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other multilateral, bilateral donors and private sector sources.

The Investment Plan identifies 5 enabling programs and 6 geographically integrated programs for the 2018-2025 period. By creating the necessary regulatory, technical and capacity frameworks, enabling programs will provide favourable conditions for forest preservation and the emergence of a green economy. Deforestation drivers in priority ecosystems will directly be addressed by geographically integrated programs.

	Alignment with National REDD+ Strategy

Program	Geographical area	SO1 : Governance	S02 : Forest resource management	SO3 : Sustainable agriculture	SO4 : Sustainable energy	SO5 : Green mines
Enabling programs						
Land-Use planning	National	✓				
Governance support	National	✓	✓			
Green Mines	National					✓
Green industrial agriculture	National			✓		
Green infrastructure	National	✓				
Geographically integrated programs						
Sangha-Likouala ER-Program	Sangha, Likouala	✓	✓	✓		✓
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments	Pool, Plateaux			✓	✓	
Sustainable management of Mayombe forest ecosystems and of coastal ecosystems	Kouilou	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Forestry and agro-forestry plantations and sustainable forest management in the Niari valley	Niari		✓	✓	✓	
Sustainable management of the Chaillu forest tract	Lékoumou, Bouenza		✓	✓		
Community agroforestry in Congolese Cuvette	Cuvette, Cuvette Ouest		✓	✓		

Enabling programs

There are 5 enabling programs that include land use planning, support for forest governance, green development of the mining and agro-industrial sectors, and support for reasoned development of infrastructure to minimize impacts on forest resources.

- The **land use planning** program is national in scope. It aims to implement the spatial planning policy effectively in order to: (i) promote and secure REDD+ investments through sustainable multi-sectoral spatial planning and thus alleviate conflicts of land use and induce effective cross-sectoral coordination across the country and (ii) include targets to reduce GHG emissions due to deforestation, forest degradation and increase carbon stocks in the spatial planning process. This program aims to implement the (i) National Land Use Plan (PNAT), which seeks to offer concrete solutions to avoid disputes over land allocation and use and to implement the (ii) National territorial planning scheme (SNAT) and Departmental Schemes (SDAT) together, as they will enable land use and spatial planning whilst ensuring cross-sectoral policy coherence.

The purpose of these schemes is to reduce the impact on above/below ground biomass and soil carbon stocks, including the peatland complex located in the Cuvette and Likouala departments.

- **Governance support**: This program provides institutional support to integrate REDD+ principles into key policies and regulations as well as to implement and diffuse them. In addition, the program offers to strengthen the forestry administration's capacities to ensure its ability to control industrial and artisanal exploitation especially in the context of the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT-VPA).
- **Green mines**: This program aims to develop and implement a low impact mining standard and to develop a national program to offset the impacts of the development of industrial and semi-industrial mines.
- **Green industrial agriculture**: The Republic of Congo subscribed to the Africa Palm Oil Initiative in 2016. To achieve the objectives set by APOI, a program to support the development of a sustainable palm oil sector is proposed.
- **Green infrastructure**: Infrastructure will already be integrated into the planning process. However, the Government also intends to develop standards for sustainable infrastructure development. Support will be provided for the design, implementation and monitoring of these standards.

Geographically integrated programs

6 priority ecosystems concerned by deforestation have been identified. To mitigate the main drivers of deforestation in each of these zones and to steer some of the economic activity towards savannah areas, geographically integrated programs have been created to offer investments in the field and meet the needs of all the departments in the Republic of Congo. These projects involve activities related to (i) sustainable forest management in concessions and protected areas, (ii) agroforestry plantations, sustainable fuelwood sourcing and use and reforestation of degraded areas, (iii) support the artisanal mining sector and (iv) stakeholder capacity building. Each program component has been identified and quantified to respond to the local context and the specific needs of the program intervention areas. The priority ecosystems identified are:

1) The forest tract in the **Sangha and the Likouala** departments, which are covered by the Emission Reduction Program (ER-Program). The ER-Program aims to implement REDD+ as a model for sustainable development in the Sangha and Likouala departments covering 12.4 million ha of which 11.7 million ha of forest. With 52% of the national forest area, it is an ambitious programme and will be among the first in Africa to pilot REDD+ on a large scale with the aim of reducing emissions by 30,950,138 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2e) over an eight-year period (2017-2024). To achieve these results, the ER-Program will gather many upstream funding sources and results-based payments together, including the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Carbon Fund.
2) The savannah areas and gallery forests the **Pool and the Plateaux** department.
3) The savannah areas and gallery forests in the **Cuvette Ouest and the Cuvette** department.
4) The coastal forests, mangroves and the **Mayombe** forest tract, mainly in the Kouilou department.
5) The savannah in the **Niari valley**, in the Niari department.
6) The **Chaillu** forest tract, in the Bouenza and Lékoumou departments.

Projects proposed for the FIP funding

The Investment Plan serves both the overall planning of REDD+ investments and to raise funds from the FIP. With that in mind, two projects are proposed for FIP financing. These projects / programs aim to implement direct REDD+ activities to benefit communities through the development of agroforestry plantations, subsistence and commercial agriculture and fuelwood plantations in degraded and non- forest areas:

1) The Agroforestry Project in Northern Congo in degraded or non-forested areas will develop cocoa, fruit trees and subsistence crops in agroforestry plantations as part of the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program, which is one of the geographically integrated programs identified.

2) The Agroforestry and Fuelwood Community Program in the Pool and Plateaux Departments will develop fuelwood and subsistence crops in agroforestry plantations in the South (Pool, Plateaux) to meet Brazzaville's energy needs. It will also promote more efficient use of fuelwood through the dissemination of improved cook stoves and improved carbonisation techniques.

Interventions will cover the entire product value chains from production of seeds and seedlings to processing and marketing of agricultural and energy products (firewood and charcoal). Through the development of forest and agroforestry plantations, these innovative projects aim to: (i) improve the population's income whilst preserving natural resources and enable households to access funding by preserving part of their production area, and (ii) develop an innovative value chain of the fuelwood sector to supply Brazzaville's urban basin. The FIP projects have been designed to leverage co-financing from other sources, but to also be independent of co-financing if need be.

c. Expected outcomes from the implementation of the Investment Plan

The overall transformative impact expected from the Investment Plan is emissions reduction from deforestation and forest degradation and the increase in carbon stocks as well as the development of co-benefits such as poverty reduction, improving the population's living conditions, preserving biodiversity and improving the resilience of forest ecosystems.

To achieve this, the Investment Plan will:

- Improve governance and secure/sustain financing (by strengthening regional planning and harmonizing sectoral policies/regulations)
- Support sustainable forest management (in forest concessions, protected areas and plantations)
- Improve agricultural production while minimizing impacts on forests (by improving productivity, capacity building of small-scale producers, developing agroforestry systems and agribusiness in degraded or non-degraded forest areas, etc.)
- Ensure sustainable production of fuelwood and develop other renewable energy sources
- Ensure that the mining sector's development is compatible with the country's forest ecosystem conservation goals.

8. Expected key results from the implementation of the Investment Plan	
Result	**Success indicator**
RESULTS	
Result 1: Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions due to deforestation and forest degradation and increased carbon stocks	
GHG emission reduction and increased carbon stocks	Amount of GHG emissions in AFOLU sector / amount of GHG emissions of the reference scenario Net and gross deforestation and degradation rates
Result 2 : Development co-benefits	
Poverty reduction and livelihood improvement	Evolution of household monetary and non-monetary income (food security, health, etc.) (Indigenous peoples include)
Biodiversity is preserved and the resilience of forest ecosystems is increased	Evolution of forest cover, rehabilitated areas, protected areas, managed protected areas, managed forest concessions and certified forest concessions surface areas.
OUTCOMES	
OUTCOME 1: Governance is strengthened, sustainable funding is secured and transparency is improved	Evolution of the number of revised legislative and regulatory texts taking REDD+ into account Existence of a PNAT Existence of a revised national territorial development Plan (SNAT) Existence of procedures for land use conflict resolution

	Territorial coverage of customary land use rights recognition certificates
OUTCOME 2: Forest ecosystems are managed sustainably and plantations areas increased	Land area / total area of forest concessions Certified area / total area of forest concessions Logging damage factor evolution in forest concessions Wood product material yield evolution Surface area / total area of PA Evolution of the quantity of NTFPs commercialised on markets Evolution of the planted area
OUTCOME 3: Agricultural production is improved while minimizing negative impacts on the environment	Evolution of yield per hectare and agricultural product Improved agricultural area / total agricultural area Evolution of the deforestation rate in connection with unplanned and planned agriculture Evolution of the number of agricultural workers organized in associations Evolution of the number of microcredits granted to the agricultural sector Agro-industrial surface developed on savannah / total developed area
OUTCOME 4: Fuelwood is produced sustainably and demand is reduced through improved energy efficiency and clean energy substitution	Evolution in charcoal production generated with improved techniques Number of improved cook stoves used in households Evolution of planted areas for energy use GW / year from renewable sources
OUTCOME 5: Mining is developed while minimizing negative impacts on the environment	Number of mining operations agreements having (i) compensation measures related to deforestation (ii) reduced impacts measures / Number of agreements Number of established and functional LDFs / Number of mines in operation Number of formal small-scale mining workers / number of small-scale mining workers

9. Financing plan for REDD+ identified programs for the 2018-2025 period (M USD[1])

Programs	FIP		CAFI	FVC	Existing and/or expected funding	Additional funding to be mobilized
	Grant	Loan				
Enabling programs						
Land Use planning	-	-	20	4	EFI (*to be determined*)	N/A
Governance support	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green mines	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green agro-industry	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green infrastructure	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Geographically integrated programs						
Sangha-Likouala ER-Program	4	12	**	*To be determined*	GEF (UNDP) TRIDOM 2 (3) GEF (WB) PFDE (5,1) AFD projet cacao (6,6) AFD PPFNC (9) FIP DGM (*to be determined*)	WB-PDAC (*To be determined*)[2]

[1] The amounts in euro were converted into USD using a 1.2 exchange rate (rate observed on 19/09/2017)

[2] Although PDAC plans to mobilize USD 100 million for its implementation, it is considered "to be mobilized" for the implementation of the programmes because the allocations will be made through calls for projects.

					DFID/EU FLEGT support (*to be determined*) WB PRISP (1,5) Private sector (29,5) FCPF – Carbon Fund (*to be determined*)	
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments	2	6	-	*To be determined*	AFDB (7) AFD (*to be determined*) EU (*to be determined*) FIP-DGM (*to be determined*)	WB-PDAC (*to be determined*)
Sustainable management of Mayombe forest ecosystems and of coastal ecosystems	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Forestry and agro-forestry plantations and sustainable forest management in the Niari valley	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Sustainable management of the Chaillu forest tract	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Community agroforestry in Congolese Cuvette	-	-	-	*To be determined*		

10. Provisional calendar

Programs co-financed by FIP	**FIP approval**	**Approval by the MDB management board**	**Project start**
Agroforestry planting support project in Northern Congo (part of Sangha-Likouala ER-Program)	December 2017	March 2018	October 2018
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments	December 2017	March 2018	October 2018

11. Link with the FCPF and UN-REDD program

The Republic of Congo has been involved in the REDD+ process since 2008 and has benefited from the support of the FCPF readiness fund and the UN-REDD program.

This support enabled the elaboration of (i) the analysis of deforestation and forest degradation drivers, (ii) the FREL, (iii) the National REDD+ Strategy, the associated cost-benefit analysis and identification of potential sources of funding, (iv) the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and its environmental and social management frameworks, (v) the REDD+ Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers (PCIVs), which jointly form the basis of this Investment Plan.

FCPF funding has also led to the development of the Sangha/Likouala ER-Program in which the community project for agroforestry development is being proposed. The FCPF Carbon Fund Participants provisionally approved the ER-Program in June 2017.

The Republic of Congo is at a crossroads between (i) the REDD+ preparation phase (phase 1), which is nearing completion and has helped to build the methodological and strategic foundation of the national REDD+ mechanism, and (ii) the investment phase (phase 2) which should allow the country to implement the strategic options outlined in the National REDD+ Strategy.

12. Other partners involved in the conception and implementation of the Investment Plan
Technical and financial partners involved in the preparation of the REDD+ National Investment Plan (particularly during joint missions and in bilateral exchanges) include: EU, FAO, UNDP, AFD, CAFI representatives, WRI, WWF and WCS.
13. Consultations with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
Local communities and indigenous peoples were involved throughout the process especially in departmental consultations. At national level, consultations took place with the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Concertation Platform on REDD+ (CACO-REDD+), which is composed of platforms, networks, NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations legally recognized in the Republic of Congo. It comprises two components: a civil society organization (CSO) component and an indigenous peoples' component. In parallel and in coordination with the development of the IP, preparations for the Dedicated Grant Mechanism advanced, and a National Steering Committee was nominated under the leadership of a temporary civil society and indigenous people's working group.
14. Private sector involvement
UNICONGO, the loggers' trade union, was the main interlocutor in consultations at a central level. Many representatives of the private sector were also consulted in departmental workshops.

Section 1: Description of the national and sectoral context

1. Economic and social context in the Republic of Congo

The Republic of Congo is 342,000 km^2 (34.2 million ha) in size, and straddles the equator at the heart of Congo Basin, the second largest forest area in the world. The general population and housing census (RGPH 2007) estimated the Congolese population at 3,697,490 inhabitants in 2007, with 50.7% of women and 49.3% of men. It was estimated at 4,277,646 inhabitants at the end of 2014, according to the predictions of the National Statistics Institute. With 12 departments, the Republic of Congo is a strongly urbanised but sparsely populated country (see figure 1): its rural space is one of the least dense in Africa, with 12.8 inhabitants per km^2 (World Bank, 2017).

The Congolese population is mostly young (close to 74% of the population is under 35 years old) and is concentrated in the two main urban centres of the country (with 58% of the population in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire). The annual population growth rate is 2.6% (United Nations Population Division, 2017); and life expectancy at birth improved between 1980 and 2014, growing from 56.1 years to 63.2 years. The Republic of Congo is considered as one of the countries with the highest proportion of children in full-time education in the Central Africa sub-region. The gross school enrolment rates are 89% for the primary cycle, 64.9% for middle schools and 32% for senior schools. However, the quality of education and the adequacy of vocational training remains problematic (UNDP, 2015).

The country has been scarred by years of intermittent armed conflict, which affected the process of social and economic development. During the last 10 years, the Republic of Congo has gradually recovered from the effects of the war, thanks to peace-building and the oil boom.

The Congolese economy has remained on a trajectory of strong growth for almost a decade (on average 5%); this growth however is strongly dependent on oil which accounted for 65% of the GDP until 2014, 75% of state revenue and 80% of exports (UNDP, 2015), and is now seeing a sharp decline linked to the fall of oil prices. The GDP growth rate is estimated at around 3.5% over the 2015-2017 reference period (World Bank 2017). Moreover, the business climate has remained disadvantageous for the development of the private sector: The Republic of Congo ranks 185th out of 189 countries in the 2014 World Bank *Doing Business* table.

Globally, the strong dependence on oil halted the development of other lines of business, such as agriculture and forestry (9% of GDP in 2016, World Bank 2017). Despite its small participation to the GDP, the forestry sector is of particular economic and social importance: creation of 7,400 direct jobs and 14,800 indirect jobs (MEFDDE, 2017b), establishment of economic and social structures (rehabilitation of departmental and national roads, schools, sanitary structures, drinking water, etc.).

In addition, the recorded growth has not had the same effects across all segments of the population; close to half of the population lives under the poverty line. The poor productivity outside the oil sector and the low development of the private sector have not allowed for a sufficient reduction of poverty levels, which remain high especially in rural areas (69.5%, compared to 40.5% at the national level). In this context, the evolution of Human Development Index has been slower than the indicators of economic growth: 0.591, placing the country in the 136th out of 188 countries in 2014 (UNDP, 2015).

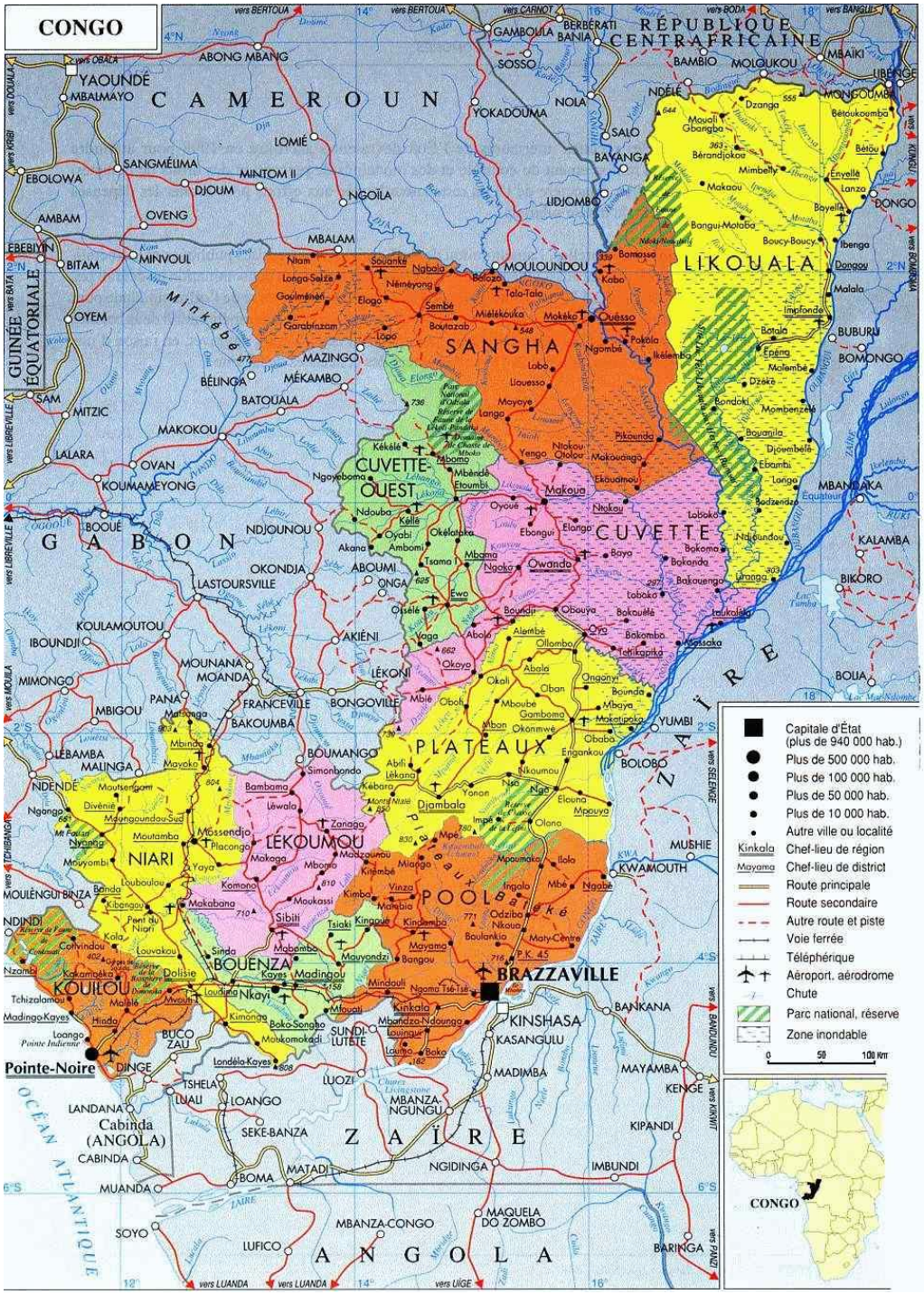


Figure 1: Administrative Map of the Republic of Congo (source: Ministry of Territorial Development and Major Works Delegation website[3])

Although almost two thirds of the population live in the country's five main towns, it remains largely dependent on forests for its vital needs (food, energy, pharmacopeia, etc.) (Tchatchou et al, 2015). The population of the Republic of Congo is amongst the most vulnerable, insofar as it disposes of a limited

[3] www.grandstravaux.org

adaptation margin due to poverty and shortcomings in education. Forest ecosystems are essential – at varying but significant levels – for the entirety of the population, and are vital for indigenous people, in terms of food and socio-cultural subsistence, as well as monetary economy. The continuation ecosystem services is crucial for future development, limiting the impact of climate change and offering adaptation possibilities to a part of these rural populations.

According to the general census of the population of 2007 (RGPH 2007), the number of indigenous inhabitants is 43,378, accounting for 1.2% of the population (CN REDD, 2017b). This population is mostly located in rural forest areas (in the counties of Likouala, Lékoumou and Sangha). This population contains a range of ethnic minority groups in Congo, and their way of life (social, economic and cultural) is directly tied to the preservation of forest ecosystems.

The Republic of Congo has made a commitment to diversify its economy, with a view on sustainable growth. It should be noted that, at this time, the economic growth of the Republic of Congo remains far below the 8.5% necessary to achieve the objectives fixed for 2025 as part of the 2012-2016 National Development Plan (NDP).

Economic diversification is expected to be carried by the forestry, agricultural, agro-industrial, mining and tourism sectors, which have great potential for development. Indeed, despite important oil deposits, the country also possesses vast non-cultivated arable lands which make up for around a third of its total surface area, as well as abundant mining resources such as iron, gold, potash, etc. (World Bank, 2017). Although encouraging efforts have been made in terms of sustainable forest management, the development of mining and industrial agriculture represents a real danger for the preservation of forest ecosystems if not done in a reasonable and sustainable way.

2. State and governance of forest resources and woodlands

Located at the heart of the Congo Basin, the Republic of Congo possesses a vast forest area, evaluated at 22,334,000 ha (FAO, 2015), accounting for 65.4% of land surface. The country also has about 59,000 ha of planted forests (CNIAF, 2016). Continuous savannahs, found in the centre and south-east sections of the country, cover a surface area of 11,793,218 ha, accounting for 34.5% of the national territory (EDF, 2015).

Congo's forests are subdivided into 3 large tracts: North Congo, Mayombe ct, and Chaillu tracts. The North Congo tract (close to 14 million ha) makes up almost three quarters of forest surface area, as shown on the following map. The centre of the country is dominated by smaller forest tracts.

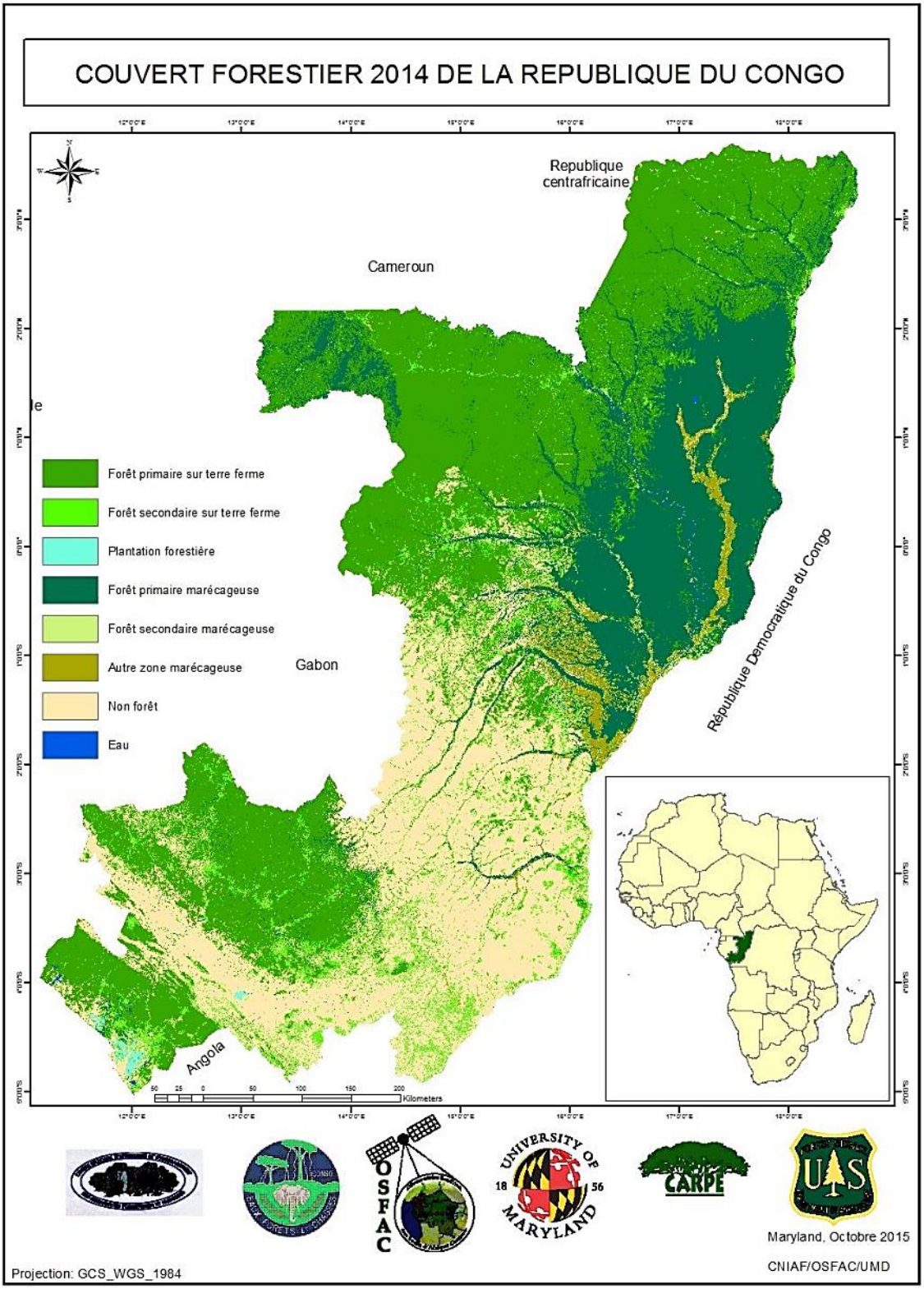


Figure 2: Map of forest cover in the Republic of Congo in 2014 (CNIAF, 2015)

Congolese forests are home to an abundant biodiversity. The currently measured floral diversity of Congo groups just over 5,100 species, but this number could reach 6,000 to 6,500. This wealth of flora is linked to its position at the junction of the domains of low Guinea in the north and of Congo in the south. There are also around 200 mammal species (including large populations of emblematic species such as the lowland gorilla, the forest elephant, the chimpanzee, the bongo, etc.), 676 bird species, 151 reptile species, 74 amphibian species and 355 fish species (OFAC, 2015).

Straddling the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the northern part of the Republic of Congo (Cuvette and Likouala), the Cuvette Centrale peatlands are the second largest subterranean carbon stock in the world with, on average, 2,186 tC/ha (Dargie et al, 2017). This region is for the most part sparsely populated and very isolated.

The Republic of Congo adopted in 2000 a sustainable forest management policy based on sustainable timber production and the conservation of forest ecosystems, in particular of biodiversity. As a result, out of the 22,334,000 ha of natural forests, 12,7% (3 991,418 ha) are dedicated to the 17 protected areas (MEFDDE, 2017b), and close to 60% (13,338,216 ha) are used for commercial logging. The sustainable forest management program, launched in 2001, has allowed for the elaboration of management plans in 18 forest concessions covering 6,989,477 ha (52% of the total forest concession surface area). In addition, management plans are currently under development in 10 forest concessions, for a total area of 3,041,146 ha (22.5%). This process was most recently supported through the Sustainable Forest Management Project (*Projet d'appui à la mise en œuvre de la gestion durable des forêts du Congo, PAGEF*) with the support of the French Development Agency in the south of the country. A new project to develop simplified management plans in the small forest concessions of the south is in the planning stages with the support of the European Union. The Ministry of Forest Economy's objective is for all attributed forest concessions to have management plans by 2025.

In addition, four Congolese forest concessions covering 2,478,942 ha are FSC certified and one forest concession of 583,000 ha is VLC certified, which accounts for 50% of certified surface area in Congo Basin.

To improve forest governance, the Republic of Congo in 2010 became the first African country to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union, as part of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process. To implement the VPA, the Government created the Forest Legality and Tracability Cell under the supervision of the Inspectorate General of Forest Economy. Its mission is to issue FLEGT permits for exported wood. A legality verification system has been put into place, and the software is currently being installed in the data centre of the Ministry of Finance and Budget. An independent observation project is also under implementation with support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Forestry plantations in the Republic of Congo are handled by the National Reforestation Service (SNR) and the National Program of Afforestation and Reforestation (ProNAR), as well as certain private operators, such as the industrial eucalyptus plantations (EFC) in the Kouilou region. In 2014, they were estimated at 59,100 ha, or 0.17% of national coverage (Louzinga, 2017). They are concentrated in the south of the country, mainly in Kouilou (at the periphery of Pointe-Noire), Bouenza, Niari and Pool departments. The following table shows their distribution by department.

Table 1 : Distribution of forestry plantations by administrative department (source : CNIAF, 2016)

Department	Forestry plantations (2014)
Niari	454 ha
Pool	794 ha
Bouenza	6 698 ha
Kouilou	51 154 ha
Total	**59 100 ha**

In Republic of Congo, land-use planning is carried out on the basis of spatial planning of development, the underlying regulatory framework for which has been developed in a coordinated and inclusive manner under the leadership of the ministry in charge of spatial planning. Forest resources in Congo are managed at the institutional level by the Ministry of Forest Economy (MEF), which has 12 departmental directorates at the local level. Other ministries in charge of other natural resources such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP), the ministry in charge of mines, in charge of hydrocarbons, etc. also have a direct impact on the management of forest resources.

3. Changes in forest cover

The deforestation rate in Republic of Congo is low at 0.077% (gross rate) and 0.047% (net rate[4]) per year over the 2000-2010 period (BRLi, 2014). The country is classified as a "low deforestation and forest degradation rate" and "high forest cover" country. The table below shows the changes in forest cover between 2000 and 2010 in Republic of Congo and in each department.

Table 2: Trends in gross and net deforestation rates between 2000 and 2010 (source : BRLi, 2014)

Department	Forest area (ha)	% forest cover	Gross deforestation rate (%) 2000-2010	Gross reforestation rate (%) 2000-2010	Net deforestation rate (%) 2000-2010
Departments with dense forests, with a mostly closed canopy					
Likouala	6 270 801	95%	0.33	0.22	0.11
Sangha	5 356 800	96%	0.18	0.24	-0.06
Lékoumou	1 954 611	93%	1.23	0.36	0.87
Departments with dense and open forests, with a mostly open canopy					
Cuvette	2 858 324	59%	0.30	0.15	0.15
Cuvette Ouest	1 991 987	75%	0.59	0.29	0.30
Niari	2 100 140	81%	2.13	0.22	1.91
Kouilou	1 183 020	87%	2.72	0.33	2.39
Departments with almost no dense forests					
Bouenza	209 286	17%	3.18	0.14	3.05
Pool	414 751	12%	3.82	1.81	2.02
Plateaux	815 102	21%	2.02	0.63	1.39
Congo Total	**22 741 271**	**66%**	**0.77**	**0.30**	**0.47**
Annual Total	-	-	**0.077**	**0.03**	**0.047**

[4] Net deforestation equals gross deforestation minus reforestation over the same time period.

For the most recent periods, forest cover losses were estimated at 295,957 ha between 2000 and 2014, with an average of 21,140 ha/year and a loss rate of 0.062% as shown in the map below. The annual estimate of this loss has shown a high annual variability (CNIAF, 2015).

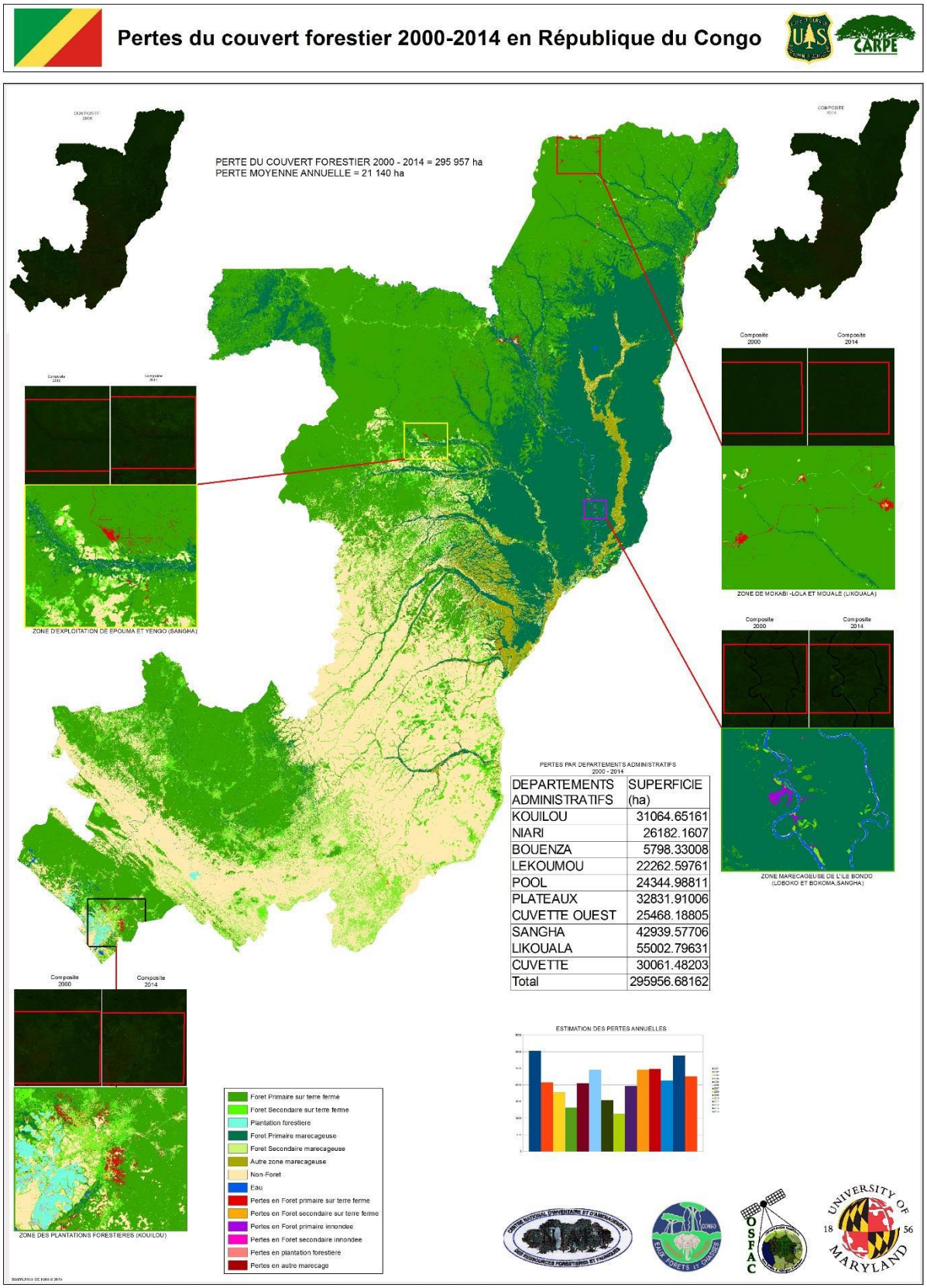


Figure 2 : Forest cover losses between 2000 and 2014 (source : CNIAF, 2015)

4. Description of greenhouse gas emission sources

In the Republic of Congo's Second National Communication on Greenhouse Gas (GHG)[5] of 2009, the country estimated its GHG emissions outside the forest sector at 2 $MtCO_2$/year (MEFDDE 2009) revised to 5 $MtCO_2$/year for the year 2015 as part of its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) (Government of Congo, 2015). In accordance with the *2006 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), these emissions come from the following emission sectors: energy, waste, industrial processes and product use.

In 2017, the Government of Congo validated its Forest Resource Emission Level (FREL) with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which estimates emissions from the forestry sector at 19.2 $MtCO_2$/year in 2015, making it the country's largest emission sector. Taking into account the expected future emissions for the 2015-2020 period (especially from the development of the mining and agro-industrial sector), annual emissions have been reassessed at 35.5 $MtCO_2$/year (MEFDDE, 2017c).

Table 3: The Republic of Congo's 2000-2020 FREL (MEFDDE, 2017c)

	Source	Annual GHG Emissions ($MtCO_2$/year)
Historic emissions (2000-2012 average)	Unplanned forest degradation	0.3
	Planned forest degradation	12.9
	Planned deforestation	-
	Unplanned deforestation	6
	TOTAL HISTORIC	**19.2**
Adjustment (2015-2020)	Future degradation	2.7
	Future deforestation	13.6
	TOTAL ADJUSTMENT	**16.3**
FREL (2015-2020)		**35.5**

These estimates consider emissions related to deforestation (forest to non-forest status) and those related to planned and unplanned degradation (without land-use change), where forest is defined as "an area covering a minimum area of 0.5 ha with trees with a minimum height of 3 meters and a minimum tree crown cover of 30%". This definition excludes agricultural activities, including oil palm plantations (MEFDDE, 2016).

[5] The main GHGs taken into account under the UNFCCC are carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O) and industrial GHGs such as: hydrochlorofluorocarbons (e.g. HCFCs -22), chlorofluorocarbons (CFC); tetrafluoromethane (CF4); sulphur hexafluoride (SF6).

5. Historical and future drivers of deforestation and forest degradation

Two types of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation can be distinguished: drivers that have a direct impact on forest cover and indirect or underlying drivers that contribute to the expansion of direct drivers. In 2014, the Republic of Congo conducted a study that identified the various drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, which were subsequently quantified under the national FREL.

The following anthropogenic activities have been identified as the main direct drivers of deforestation and forest degradation:

- Shifting agriculture;
- Industrial agriculture;
- Fuelwood production;
- Commercial and illegal logging;
- Mining development;
- Road and urban infrastructure;

Indirect (or underlying) drivers include (CN REDD, 2017a):

- Weak governance due to weak institutional capacity, particularly in terms of control of the sectors influencing deforestation;
- Weak intersectoral coordination and lack of land use planning, leading to overlapping and incompatible land uses (see Section 3, Chapter 1.2);
- Poverty and lack of financing and access for economic and technological alternatives. According to 40.9% of the population lives below the national poverty line and 69.5% in rural areas (World Bank 2017, see Section 1, Chapter 1).
- Population growth of 2.6%, leading to an increase in domestic demand for agricultural land, fuelwood and infrastructure.

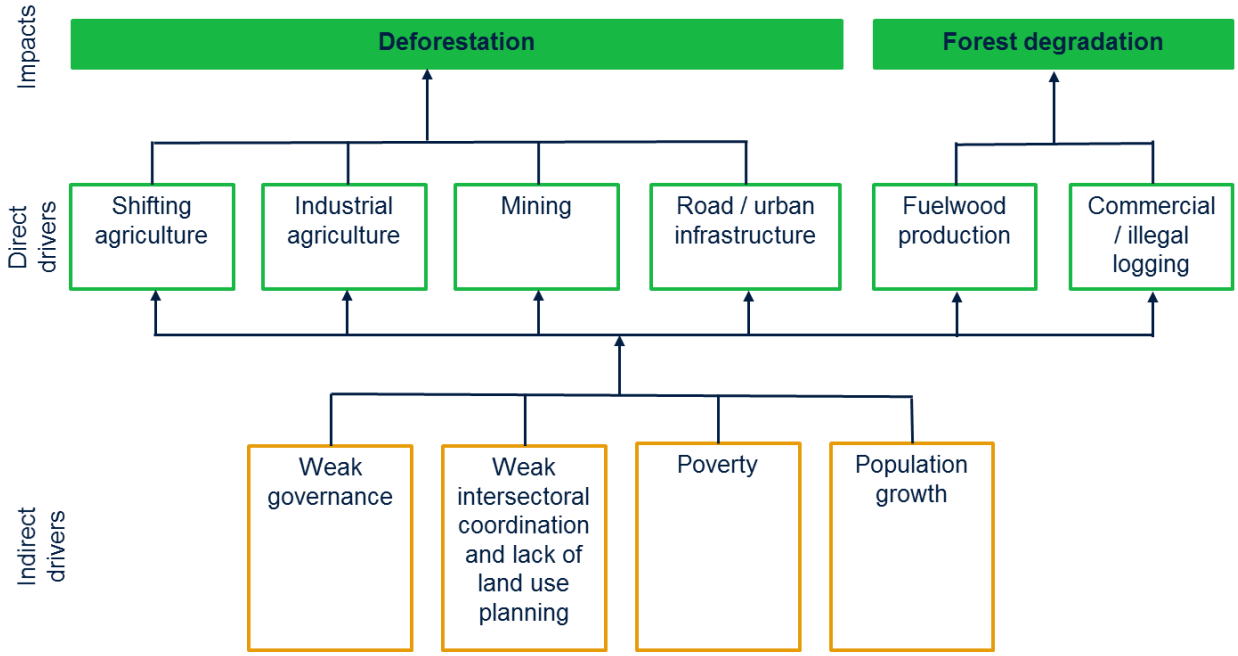


Figure 3 : Main direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation (source : CN REDD, 2017a)

5.1 Drivers of deforestation

5.1.1 Shifting agriculture

Subsistence farming using rudimentary means is characterised by low productivity and represents approximately 81% of cultivated land and 98% of national food production (BRLi, 2014). Smallholder farmers engage in traditional agriculture on a maximum of 2 to 3 ha where land is cultivated for a 2-year period and left to lie fallow for 7 to 10 years, which allows the forest to replenish. However, for several years now, the average fallow time has been shortened because of pressure on fertile land due to the increase in agricultural households.

Production occurs in both forest and savanna but in most forest villages, the forest is converted for the fertility of the land and for fear of the cost of renting fallow land (BRLi, 2014). Slash-and-burn agriculture in forest areas has been identified as the main historic cause for deforestation in the Republic of Congo. As part of FREL, the country's estimated annual emissions were of 6 $MtCO_2$ over the 2000-2012 period (CN REDD, 2016).

It should be noted that public investment expenditure for agriculture is still low compared to national needs and international standards (less than 5.5% annual average investment expenditure over the 2008-2010 period according to BRLi, 2014). The Government has declared its determination to revive the agricultural sector and make it one of the engines of the transformation of the economy for increased and distributive growth. Mechanization and improvement in quality and quantity of technical support to producers and the supply of inputs will contribute to the modernization of small-scale agriculture (BRLi, 2014). If the revitalization and support to the agricultural sector is not properly managed as to minimize impacts on forest cover, it will also contribute to increasing sector's emissions in the future.

5.1.2 Industrial agriculture

Up to the 1980s, industrial agriculture was dominated by state farms extending over almost 200,000 ha, until they ceased their activities. After 1980, the surface area did not change for nearly 30 years. Between 2009 and 2014, about 500,000 ha of new agro-industrial concessions were issued (palm oil, coffee, cocoa, rubber) (CN REDD, 2017a).

Several concessions have started or are about to begin their activities. These are primarily the following (CN REDD, 2016):

- ATAMA PLANTATION has already launched its activities for the establishment of 180,000 ha of palm oil plantations in the forest areas of the Sangha and the Cuvette. Having planted only 626 ha, operational constraints suggest that this target area is unlikely to be reached due to a suspension of Atama's license. However, the concession will be preserved and could be reallocated for similar activities.
- ECO-OIL ENERGIE has a 50,000 ha concession for palm oil plantation in Sangha (40,000 ha), in Cuvette-Ouest (5,000 ha) and in Cuvette (5,000 ha). At this stage, the company has rehabilitated 5,000 ha in Sangha in Mokéko. It intends to pursue its activities on 45,000 ha, in accordance with Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) principles in the savanna zone, particularly in Kimongou in the Niari and in Mbé in the Pool.
- LEXUS AGRI has a 50,000 ha concession in Lékoumou department, mainly in forest areas which are intended for palm oil and rubber plantations.

To consolidate its commitment to promote the sustainable development of its palm oil sector, the Government, which signed the Marrakesh Declaration, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 of the Africa Palm Oil Initiative in Brasilia on March 21, 2017. As a result, a focal point was appointed and a workshop was held in Brazzaville on August 22-23, 2017 to increase involvement in the TFA-APOI 2020 process and to define national principles for the sustainable development of the palm oil sector in the Republic of Congo.

Nevertheless, according to the FREL, the development of industrial agriculture could become the leading cause of national deforestation in the future with 12.7 MtCO2/year over the 2016-2020 period (CN REDD, 2016).

5.1.3 Mining

Congo's mining sector is still underdeveloped. However, in recent years, companies' applications for research permits have boomed (mostly in forest areas), with approximately 100 licenses issued in 2005 (CN REDD, 2017a). In 2016, according to the Directorate General for Geology, 27 of the allocated mining permits cover a 1.7 million ha area in forest zones (CN REDD, 2017a). Impacts on forest degradation and deforestation are not directly visible at the industrial mine level yet, as most mines are still at the early phases of exploration or awaiting production. However, semi-industrial mining is booming. It concerns medium-sized deposits, which need almost no large equipment for their development and therefore have a relatively low investment cost. Artisanal mining crafts for gold, diamond and building materials exploitation have also been identified as a driver of deforestation. At national level, around 5,484 artisans are engaged in mining crafts and frequently operate in forest areas. However, the emission impact of the sector has not been quantified. A main contributor to deforestation of mining developments is the population influx during the construction and operation phases.

According to the FREL, the development of the mining sector could become the third leading cause of deforestation at national level with 0.9 MtCO2/year over the 2016-2020 period (CN REDD, 2016).

5.1.4 Road and urban infrastructure

The installation of various infrastructure facilities (roads, dams, transmission lines, etc.) also results in forest area loss.

For most of the mining projects in Congo, the main challenge remains the remoteness of the seaport and the lack of adequate infrastructure (transport, energy, etc.). Most industrial and semi-industrial mining projects are not simple mining projects but rather integrated projects, which are much more complex than the development of just the mine site.

In terms of energy, Congo's current production capacity is 600 mega Watt (mW). When all mining projects will operate at full capacity, they will require at least 500 mW which represents more than 80% of Congo's current electricity production.

To transport mining production, railway tracks will have to be rehabilitated or new ones created, pipelines and infrastructure will need to be constructed to move products (mineral port of Pointe-Noire). Various options are being examined prioritizing public-private partnerships (PPPs) without excluding purely private programs.

At the exception of emissions arising from infrastructure development in the various permits (forestry, etc.) for which emissions have been recorded in emissions from planned degradation (see below) or planned deforestation due to mines/industrial agriculture (see above), emissions from this sector have not been taken into account in FREL. This can be reviewed as part of FREL's five-year review.

5.2 Drivers of forest degradation

5.2.1 Forestry

The exploitation of forest resources is a phenomenon that occurs both in commercial logging concessions and in ordinary areas with artisanal operators. According to the FREL (CN REDD, 2016), due to the extent of timber concessions, planned timber exploitation is the main cause of forest degradation in the Republic of Congo. Its emissions were estimated at 12.9 MtCO2/year over the historical 2000-2012 period and 19.1 MtCO2/year over the 2015-2020 period (due to the granting of new concessions). This value should be put into perspective as the country has undertaken significant efforts since the 2000s in terms of sustainable management and support for the implementation of low-impact logging techniques. Of the 22.3 million ha of Congo's natural forests, 60% have been allocated by the State in the form of forestry concessions, 44% have a sustainable management plan, and 23% have an independent international eco-certification.

There is also small-scale exploitation of timber, which accounts for 30% of total national production. The trend is to keep over-exploiting the most accessible areas, exceeding regeneration rates and thus degrading forests near densely populated areas (Louzinga, 2017). However, emissions for this activity have not been estimated under FREL.

5.2.2 Fuelwood production

Natural forests are generally overexploited to supply urban markets with fuelwood and charcoal. Traditional energy sources, such as fuelwood and charcoal, continue to play a central role in the supply of domestic energy. Satisfying fuelwood needs is one of the main causes of deforestation and degradation in and around large agglomerations, particularly in small forest tracts, gallery forests and peri-urban forests (Louzinga 2017). Charcoal use keeps increasing, leading to exploitation of increasingly remote forest areas, which in turn increases transport costs. Given the extremely low conversion yields (fluctuating around 15%), the substitution of fuelwood by charcoal leads to a substantial increase in the gathering of fuelwood (Louzinga 2017). The negative impacts of domestic fuelwood supply are mainly related to charcoal produced for urban markets, whereas the collection of fuelwood in rural areas only has negligible effects on the forests concerned. Most charcoal production comes from fallow land cleared for slash and burn agriculture but a significant part comes from clearcutting natural forests (Louzinga 2017).

According to the FREL (CN REDD, 2016), the exploitation of fuelwood was responsible for 0.3 MtCO2/year of estimated emissions over the historical 2000-2012 period. This is a conservative estimate because, to avoid double counting of emissions, harvesting from forest areas where slash-and-burn agriculture is carried out was not taken into account.

Section 2: Identification of opportunities for greenhouse gas abatement

1. The vision of the Republic of Congo

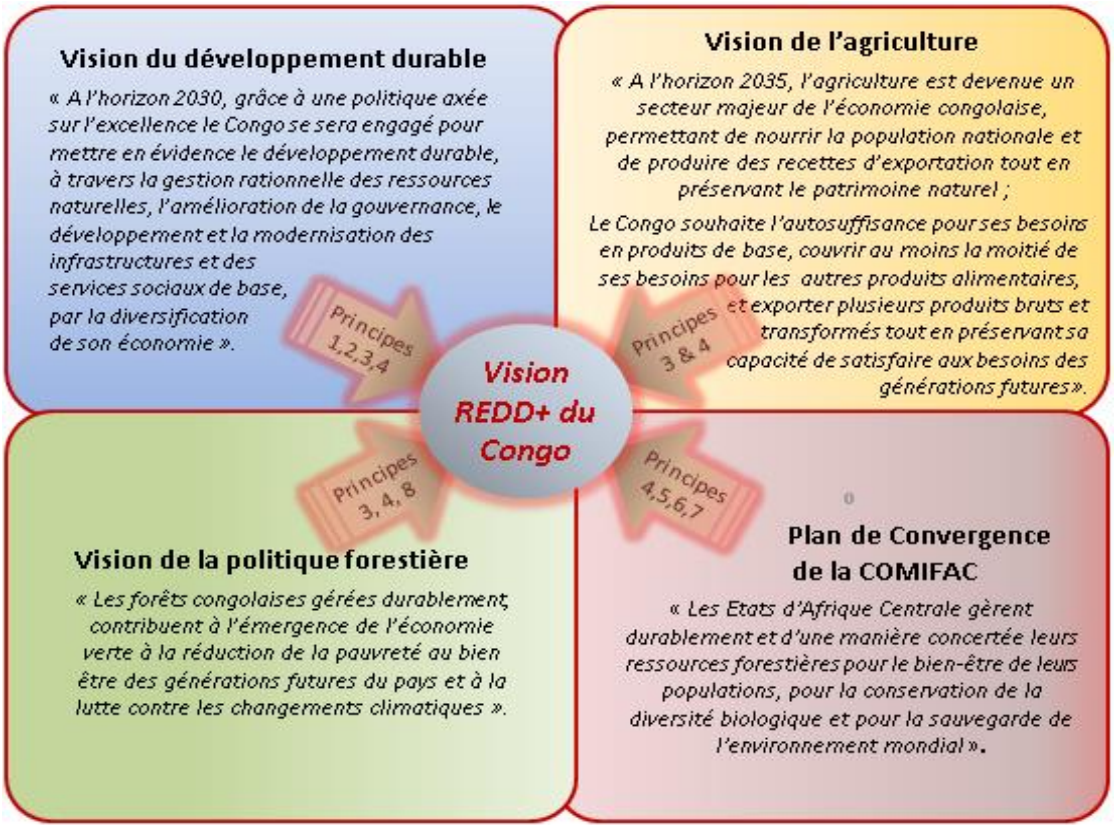
Republic of Congo's vision is that, by 2030, the sectors involved in REDD+ contribute significantly to economic diversification and growth and the fight against poverty in Republic of Congo by instituting practices allowing for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems. The country's REDD+ efforts contribute to the fight against climate change for the good of the national and international communities.

To systematically and effectively address the direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, Republic of Congo has developed a multisectoral approach to REDD+ that encompasses all relevant fields of development.

This approach is structured into three phases:

- In the short-term (2017-2019): Consolidate the institutional infrastructure required to operationalize REDD+ at scale, and launch the first REDD+ projects.
- In the medium-term (2017-2022): Operationalize the institutional infrastructure to support REDD+ initiatives and generate measurable emission reductions from the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation.
- In the long-term (2017-2030): Sustainably reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation through appropriate policies and investments to support ecosystem and economic functions of forests, and scale up REDD+ initiatives.

The Congolese REDD+ vision is consistent with national sectoral visions regarding sustainable development, agriculture and forests. The government has as its objectives (i) the establishment of a framework of multisector actions which will align with and influence sectoral politics and strategies, (ii) the harmonisation of action programs, and (iii) the alignment of budgets for action programs and priorities for the development of the Republic of Congo.



Basic principles of the REDD+ National Strategy of the Republic of the Congo

Principle 1: Conform to democratic governing norms, in particular those contained in national commitments and multilateral agreements

Principle 2: Respect and protect the rights of stakeholders, following international obligations

Principle 3: Promote and strengthen sustainable means of support and the reduction of poverty

Principle 4: Contribute to a politic of sustainable development, low-carbon, resilient to the climate, and in line with national development strategies, national programmes concerning forests, and commitments made as part of international conventions and agreements

Principle 5: Make sustainable use of forests a high political priority for the REDD+

Principle 6: Maintain and improve the multiple functions of the forest, to ensure advantages such as the biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services

Principle 7: Avoid or minimise the negative effects on services provided by non-forestry ecosystems and biodiversity.

Principle 8: Promote incentive measures for those contributing to the achievement of REDD+ objectives

Figure 4: The vision of the National REDD+ strategy (CNREDD, 2017a)

2. REDD+ National Strategy options and sub-options

Republic of Congo considers REDD+ as a tool allowing full participation in the fight against climate change, while contributing to the achievement of the country's own sustainable development objectives through a green economy. To reach these, Republic of Congo has developed a strategy based on:

- A cross-cutting lever principally aimed at the improvement of governing systems and the establishment of appropriate measures and policies. This lever is a crucial support which directly targets the indirect causes of deforestation and the degradation of forests;
- Levers relating to programs or sectors (forests, agricultures, mines and energy) for the establishment of activities which will allow the:
    - Reduction of emissions from deforestation,
    - Reduction of emissions from the degradation of forests,
    - Conservation of forest carbon stock,
    - Sustainable management of forests,
    - Increase of forest carbon stocks.

The different intervention pillars are developed according to strategic options, which are themselves detailed as strategic sub-options, with details on the nature of the activities to be undertaken. These options will be concrete answers allowing an efficient fight against the different causes of deforestation and the degradation of forests.

The different strategic options are formulated as following:

- ✓ **Strategic option 1:** Strengthening of governance and sustainable financing
- ✓ **Strategic option 2:** Sustainable management and valorisation of forest resources
- ✓ **Strategic option 3:** Improvement of agricultural systems
- ✓ **Strategic option 4:** Rationalisation of the production and use of wood-energy and promotion of other clean energy sources
- ✓ **Strategic option 5:** Development of a green mining sector

The table below outlines the REDD+ options and sub-options identified:

Table 4: Description of options and sub-options for the National REDD+ Strategy

Options and sub-options for the National REDD+ Strategy	REDD+ activity categories	Objectives
OPTION 1: Strengthening of governing systems and establishment of sustainable financing mechanisms		
SO 1.1 Strengthening governance	Enabling	Strengthen natural resource governance of through the integration of REDD+ principles in policies and regulation
SO 1.2 Strengthening intersectoral coordination through the development and establishment of a national integrated land use planning system	Enabling / Reduction of deforestation	Implement an integrated land-use planning process and prevent land use conflicts
SO 1.3 Improve land property management	Enabling	Strengthen property rights for local communities and indigenous populations and facilitate access to land for investors
SO 1.4 Establishment of sustainable finance mechanisms	Enabling	Develop sustainable finance mechanisms and PES to sustainably manage forests
OPTION 2: Sustainable management and valorisation of forest resources		
SO 2.1 Sustainable forest management	Reduction of forest degradation / Sustainable forest management	Implement sustainable management plans and certification for all logging concessions
SO 2.2 Capacity building of the forest administration and other stakeholders (including the artisanal sector)	Reduction of degradation and conservation of carbon stocks	Build the administration's capacity to ensure control missions and the repression of illegal activities in forest areas are conducted effectively
SO 2.3 Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	Conservation of carbon stocks / Sustainable forest management	Promote conservation of biodiversity
SO 2.4 Promotion and valorisation of NTFP	Conservation of carbon stocks	Valorise/conserve forest ecosystems through the development of revenue-generating activities with NTFP
SO 2.5 Increase forest carbon stocks	Increasing carbon stocks	Develop forestry and agroforestry plantations
OPTION 3: Improvement of agricultural systems		
SO 3.1: Improvement of farming conditions and agricultural productivity	Reduction of deforestation	Increase agricultural production to improve food safety and rural revenues, while minimising the effects on forest areas
SO 3.2 Development of industrial agriculture	Reduction of deforestation	Promote agroindustrial development that balances socio-economic benefits and effects on forests

SO 3.3 Support agricultural research and extension	Reduction of deforestation	Develop and implement sustainable and innovative practices
OPTION 4: Rationalisation of the production and use of wood-energy		
SO 4.1 Strengthen sustainable fuelwood production	Reduction of degradation	Reduce pressure on forests near urban centres and increase carbon stocks in plantations
SO 4.2 Improve transformation and use of fuelwood and charcoal	Reduction of the degradation and conservation of carbon stocks	Improve energy efficiency to reduce fuelwood needs
SO 4.3 Utilization of woody biomass for energy production	Reduction of degradation	Promote the use of wood waste to reduce the demand for unsustainable wood-energy
SO 4.4 Development and promotion of clean energy	Reduction of degradation	Promote clean energy sources to reduce the demand for unsustainable wood-energy
OPTION 5: Development of a mining sector which contributes to economic development while minimising the impact on forest areas		
SO 5.1 Joint declaration on the adoption of REDD+ principles by the mining sector and national standards for industrial and semi-industrial mining operations	Conservation of carbon stocks	Create a common and documented referential to harmonize sustainable mining activities integrating REDD+ principles
SO 5.2 Support the implementation of reduced impact mining	Reduction of deforestation/degradation	Generalize the implementation of reduced impact practices for industrial and semi-industrial mining activities
SO 5.3 Support the implementation of a national offset system	Reduction of deforestation	Generalize the implementation of reduced impact practices for industrial and semi industrial mining activities
SO 5.4 Professionalization of the artisanal mining sector	Reduction of deforestation/degradation	Guide the development of the artisanal mining sector to minimise effects on forest areas

Section 3: Framework of implementation of the REDD+ process

1. Political and regulatory framework

1.1 Republic of Congo's political commitment

Republic of Congo has been involved in REDD+ since 2008. REDD+ has been considered in the Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (DSCERP), the 2012-2016 National Development Plan (NDP), which in its fifth pillar recognizes both the importance of REDD+ in combating climate change and the importance of environmental protection in all sectors that affect forest cover. This integrated approach gives REDD+ a multi-sectoral policy foothold. Since then the country has engaged in the preparation of REDD+ implementation (with the support of FCPF and UN-REDD), and in the REDD+ investment phase with the ER-Program in Northern Congo. With Decree 2015-260 on the creation, organization and operation of REDD+ managing bodies, the government created an institutional basis for the implementation of the REDD+ process.

The National REDD+ Strategy has been developed in line with national and sectoral development policies to promote sustainable development and a green economy for the country's emergence in 2025 (see Section 2). The Strategy is consistent with the many environmental conventions ratified by the country.

Considering its participation in the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC, ratified by the country on April 21, 2017 for entry into force on May 21, 2017, Republic of Congo submitted an ambitious Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), which provides respectively for a 48% and 55% reduction in domestic emissions, compared to the uncontrolled development (or trend) scenario, in 2025 and 2035. In the first version of the INDC, it should be noted that emissions from land-use changes have not been quantified, the FREL having been finalized at a later date. A draft revision of the INDC is planned for the last quarter of 2017.

To reach its emission reduction targets, the Republic of Congo has set itself two result guidelines in direct connection with the National REDD+ Strategy (Government of Congo, 2015):

- Mitigate GHG emissions from the energy sector by controlling energy consumption while making greater use of renewable energies and fighting against deforestation and forest degradation (REDD);
- Maintain and strengthen the forest carbon sequestration potential through better management of the forest sector and reforestation.

The National REDD+ Strategy, an indispensable tool for the implementation of the second axis of the INDC, aligns itself with and derives its substance from the following reference documents:

- The Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (DSCERP), the 2012-2016 National Development Plan[6] (NDP), which in its fifth Pillar recognizes both the importance of REDD+ in combating climate change and the importance of environmental protection in all sectors that affect forest cover. This integrated approach gives REDD+ a multi-sectoral policy foothold. The next NDP is currently being developed and will also take REDD+ into account.

[6] National Development Plan (2012-2016), Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (DSCERP), Book 1, P.50, Republic of the Congo, MEPATI, 2012

- The Emerging Congo Strategic Plan "Path of the future,"[7] which focuses on economic diversification, promotes the sustainable use of natural resources and leaves room for sustainable forest management practices and the promotion of climate finance to support this approach.
- The COMIFAC 2014-2025 Convergence Plan, through priority axis 4 on fighting the effects of climate change and desertification, highlights efforts to combat deforestation and forest degradation; it is essentially about "developing and implementing measures to mitigate the effects of climate change".
- The forest policy (2014-2025), which aims to ensure that "Congolese forests contribute to the emergence of the green economy, to poverty reduction, to the well-being of the country's present and future generations and help fight against climate change, if managed sustainably. " (Also see Section 1.2 on the state and governance of forest resources for the Government's commitments and achievements in the sustainable forest management arena.)
- The Republic of Congo's National Strategy for Sustainable Development,[8] validated in September 2014, which designates REDD+ as a key tool for nature protection and conservation.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol and other multilateral environmental agreements. Amongst other actions, the Government prepared, in a participatory manner, a National Plan of action for the Environment (PNAE, 1996 revised in January 2016) 9, which played a central role in accessing the country's vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.
- The Marrakech Declaration on Sustainable Development of the Palm Oil sector in Africa, signed by the Republic of Congo in 2016. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Tropical Forest Alliance Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) on March 21, 2017, which led to the development of national principles for the sustainable development of the palm oil sector during a first workshop in August 2017.

It should be noted that the Government is currently updating its NDP for the 2018-2022 period. This document is expected to be published in November 2017. The Government is aware that this document is an opportunity to lay a firm foundation for the creation of a green economy and for REDD+. With that in mind, the Government is harmonising the NDP with the visions and activities of the National REDD+ Strategy and this Investment Plan.

1.2 Regulatory framework

To ensure the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy and its Investment Plan, it is essential that the regulatory framework is conducive to proposed REDD+ investments. Congo's forests are a resource which is subject to multiple pressures by actors whose activities are overseen by different ministries. In this regard, public authorities have regulated these interventions according to their field of competence by a series of legal texts. The analysis of the legal framework for forest resource management and REDD+ highlights several strengths, but significant weaknesses also need to be addressed.

[7] Infra, NDP (2012-2016)

8 Ministry of Forest Economy, Sustainable Development and the Environment, January 2015, National Strategy for Sustainable Development, unpublished.

[9] Revised PNAE (2016), Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Republic of the Congo, Vol 1, 2 and 3, Brazzaville, January 2016

Table 5 : Regulatory framework, strengths and weaknesses of forest management in the Republic of Congo

Legal basis	Noteworthy implementing acts	Assets / Strengths for the implementation of the REDD+ process	Deficiencies
2015 Constitution	All laws derive from it	• Sovereign guarantee: inalienable sovereignty over all natural treasures and national resources • Guarantee of private land tenure rights • Rights guarantee for Indigenous Peoples (IP) • IP use rights and benefit sharing are acknowledged	-
REDD+			
Decree 2015-260 of February 27, 2015 on the creation, organization and operation of REDD+ managing bodies in the Republic of Congo	-	• On the creation, organization and operation of REDD+ managing bodies for the implementation of the REDD+ process at national and departmental level	Failure to take certain departmental directorates at CODEPA level into account, in particular the mining and spatial planning departmental directorates
Spatial planning			
Law No. 43-2014 of October 10, 2014 on spatial planning and territorial development orientations	Decrees on the creation of consultative bodies on spatial planning policy were published	• Sets the sustainable management of natural resources principle (Article 36) • Requires a specific land management plan, agreed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, for the use of any natural resources including forests (Article 37) • Provides for a harmonious development of occupation and land use, prevention of conflicts between different types of concessionaires (logging and mining, in particular between authorized customary users of forest resources and between all forest resource users) • Offers to establish strategic orientations for zoning, land conversion, infrastructure planning and to mitigate deforestation and depletion of forest resources in the long run	The need to develop a PNAT is not specified in the Act and has not yet been developed. The revision of the SNAT 2005 still needs to be carried out.
Land			
Law No. 17-2000 of December 30, 2000	Many decrees were elaborated	• Defines the key elements of land ownership and in rem rights (real rights) • Defines the State domain concept	-

Law No. 27/81 of August 27, 1981 Land Laws 9-2004 to 13-2004 Law No. 25-2008 of September 22, 2008 on the agro-land regime		• Is a framework law and defines the general conditions of legislation and regulations relating to specific land and land use, including forest legislation (Article 13) • Acknowledges individual or collective customary land rights (Article 31) • Acknowledges private law on land for land tenure security	
Management of forest resources and the environment			
Law No. 16-2000 of November 20, 2000, on the Forest Code of the Republic of Congo	-	• Establishes the sustainable management principle with the creation of different series of land uses • Sets the sustainable exploitation principle based on rotation cuts • Provides for the principle of State support for the development of forest plantations • Sets the principle of biodiversity conservation • Provides for local communities and indigenous peoples involvement in sustainable forest management • Provides for the recognition of private rights to forests	The revised law has been developed but has not yet been adopted. The same applies to the implementing decrees
Law No. 003/91 of April 23, 1991 on environmental protection	Decree 2009-415 concerning the scope of application of the conditions to conduct impact assessments	• Strengthens (i) wild fauna and flora, marine and river resources protection and preservation; (ii) the management, maintenance, restoration and protection or conservation of natural resources as well as cultural, natural and historical heritage; (iii) prevention and fight against damage to the environment, human health and property • The associated decree requires the implementation of an environmental impact assessment for all development projects	Insufficient implementing legislation
Revised Law No. 4-2005 of April 11, 2005 on the Mining Code	-	• Includes provisions for the restoration of areas degraded by mining and / or compensation for impacts on forest ecosystems • Requires that the operators of mines in operation contribute to the Local Development Fund ("*Local Development Fund*")	Mining Code revision process not finalized Mining agreements have the force of law and therefore will not be subject to the revised mining code
Law No. 24-94 of August 23, 2004,	-	• Measures relating to discipline, safety and protection of the environment in hydrocarbon research, exploration, storage and transport activities	-

establishing the Code of Hydrocarbons			
Wildlife and protected area management			
Law No. 37-2008 of November 28, 2008 on Wildlife and Protected Areas	Creation of Congolese Agency for Wildlife and Protected Areas (ACFAP)	• Provides a specific protection status for designated species and protection areas • Sets principles for the management and conservation of forest ecosystems that are rich in biodiversity or that harbour endemic or threatened species • Frees protected areas from logging and mining • Practically all protected areas are carbon sequestration areas due to their location in forest areas	The implementing decrees still need to be finalized. Therefore, protected areas continue to operate on the basis of the specific decrees which created each of them and determined their type and status Conflicts of attribution between the ACFAP and the DFAP (Protected Area and Wildlife Direction under the MEF) remain
Recognition of Indigenous Peoples rights and implications in natural resource management			
Law n ° 05-2011 of February 25, 2011 on the Promotion and Protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights	-	• Guarantees the establishment of IP consultation before considering any measure and / or project that affects them (Article 3) • Guarantees cultural rights and a collective and individual right to property (Article 31) • Guarantees the delimitation of land on the basis of the customary right of land occupation (Article 32) • Guarantees a right to income from the exploitation and use of their lands and natural resources (Article 41) • Their commitment and / or commitment to their land requires their free, informed and prior consent (FPIC) • The IPs concerned have a right to income and profits from REDD+ commitment	Absence of implementing legislation, particularly on the modalities and level of IPLC participation, and more broadly civil society, in the forest resource management and forest classification process.

The legal framework, made up of laws on land use planning, forest and environmental management and other sectors that have an impact on forest ecosystems, is an asset for the implementation of the REDD+ process.

Despite the existence of these fundamental legal texts, several constraints are noted. Among the most important are:

- The Republic of Congo does not have a National Land Use Plan (PNAT) yet. Many land use conflicts have not yet been resolved;
- The 2005 national land use planning scheme (SNAT) is not currently applied and is poorly adapted to national development needs;
- There are still dualities between customary land tenure and modern land tenure;
- The adoption processes of the new forest and mining codes and, moreover, implementing decrees have not yet been completed (new codes are expected in 2017/2018);
- Provisions concerning the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy or the legal status of carbon are not defined in Law 16-2000 (note that the new Forest Code and its application texts should fill this gap)
- Even though they have a major impact on the forest, agricultural sector interventions are not governed by any law (note that a new agricultural law is expected to be adopted in 2017/2018);
- Implementing legislation of Law 37-2008 of November 28, 2008 on wildlife and protected areas has not yet been published. As a result, protected areas continue to operate on the basis of the specific decrees establishing each of them and setting their type and status;
- All the implementing legislation of Law 003-91 of April 23, 1991 has not yet been published;
- Implementing legislation of the Indigenous Peoples Act has not been produced and therefore the rules for participation in natural resource management have not yet been defined.

These deficiencies were identified during the conception of the National REDD+ Strategy, which took them into account in the activities to be implemented in its first strategic option on strengthening governance (see Section 2).

1.3 Ongoing policy and regulatory measures

The Government has set itself a political objective to improve spatial planning through the publication of Law No. 43-2014 of October 10, 2014. Since then, the Government has established a roadmap for the implementation of spatial planning. In addition, to ensure optimal management and implementation of spatial planning activities, the Government adopted decrees creating four consultative bodies to serve as a framework for the orientation of the spatial planning policy and arbitrations to manage conflicting overlays in land management:

- Placed under the authority of the President of the Republic, the National Planning and Development Council is the supreme decision-making body. It lays down general guidelines for the formulation and implementation of the spatial planning policy by the State and local authorities and deliberates on the opinions of the Interministerial Committee for Planning and Development (Decree No. 2017-226 of July 7, 2017 determining the composition, organization and operation of the National Planning and Development Council);

- Placed under the authority of the Prime Minister, the Interministerial Committee for Spatial Planning and Development is the intermediate body for consultation. It acts as an interface between the national and local level (Decree No. 2017-227 of July 7, 2017 determining the composition, organization and operation of the Interministerial Regional Planning and Development Committee);
- Placed under the authority of the Prefects, the Departmental Spatial Planning Commissions represents the local level of consultation for the elaboration of the Departmental Spatial Planning Schemes (Decree No. 2017-228 of July 7, 2017 fixing the composition, organization and operation of the Regional Commission for Spatial Planning);
- Placed under the authority of the Prefects, the Municipal Spatial Planning Committees represent the local level of consultation for the elaboration of Municipal Spatial Planning Plans (Decree No. 2017-229 of July 7, 2017 fixing composition, organization and operation of the Municipal Spatial Planning Commission).

The MAEP has stated its political intent to redirect agriculture from forest areas to savannah areas, especially in the agro-industrial sector. With this in mind, the Republic of Congo signed the Marrakech Declaration. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Tropical Forest Alliance Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) on March 21, 2017, which led to the development of national principles for the sustainable development of the palm oil sector during a first workshop in August 2017. This process continues with the support of TFA, WWF, and WRI. The Government is also developing its agricultural law, one of its objectives is to guide agricultural development outside forests. To minimize the impact of the expansion of the palm oil sector on the forest, the country relies, among other things, on an analytical work carried out in collaboration with CIRAD and WWF which identified national non-forest areas conducive to the development of the sector (CIRAD & WWF, 2016).

In addition, the Republic of Congo is taking policy steps to implement the REDD+ process. These measures are the subject of a governance matrix, which serves as a joint monitoring tool for the Government and the World Bank, presented in the table below.

Table 6 : Ongoing policy measures in support of REDD+

1.	Following the decision of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the overlapping of uses in natural ecosystems, publish the decree cancelling the mining permits straddling the Odzala-Kokoua National Park (issued in July 2017)
2.	Analyze the mining concessions granted in 2016 in the Sangha, Likouala and Cuvette Ouest overlapping with forest preservation concessions
3.	Organize further meetings of the National Land Use Planning Council and the Interdepartmental Committee on Overlapping Uses in Natural Ecosystems as required (the first meeting of the Interministerial Committee was held in June 2017)
4.	Create a CONA-REDD ministerial chamber chaired by the Prime Minister (ongoing)
5.	Include REDD+ provisions in the forest code and / or its implementing legislation (ongoing)
6.	Include specifications for forest carbon conservation for agricultural activities in forest areas in the agriculture law (ongoing)
7.	Organize at least one workshop and prepare a draft of national principles for the sustainable production of palm oil through the African Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) (done in August 2017)

8. Finalize the national principles for the sustainable production of palm oil and formalize them (expected in early 2018)

2. REDD+ Multisectoral Institutional Arrangements

In line with the country's ambitions and commitments in terms of development and contribution to the fight against climate change, the National REDD+ Strategy has been structured to promote intersectoral coordination that goes beyond the forest sector. Indeed, although the MEF is in charge of forest resources and the National REDD+ Strategy, to ensure its effective implementation it is essential that the mechanism is coordinated at the highest level and leads to interministerial consultations if sectoral policy and / or regulation is likely to have an impact on forests.

To this end, in 2015, the Republic of Congo set up a multi-actor institutional governance system through decree 2015-260 of February 27, 2015 establishing, organizing, allocating and operating the bodies responsible for managing the implementation of the REDD+ process at different scales. The following are concerned:

- The National REDD+ Committee (CONA-REDD), policy and decision-making body for the REDD+ process, composed of members from the MEF, the Ministries of Planning, Agriculture and Livestock, the Environment and Tourism, Mines and Geology, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, Land Affairs, Finance, Scientific Research, Energy and Hydrocarbons, Health, civil society, indigenous peoples and the private sector. It is placed under the authority of the Head of State.
- The National REDD+ Coordination (CN-REDD), a technical body implementing the process under the supervision of the MEF;
- Departmental REDD+ Committees (CODEPA-REDD) composed of department representatives, central ministries' departmental directorates, as well as indigenous and local populations. They play an important role in coordinating and disseminating information at the departmental level.

Beyond Decree 2015-260, other structures have also been set up to participate in the REDD+ process:

- At national level, the REDD+ consultation platform for Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (CACO-REDD+). CACO-REDD+ is made up of platforms, networks, NGOs and organization of indigenous populations recognized according to the legal provisions and in force in the Republic of Congo. It comprises two components: a civil society organization (CSO) component and an indigenous peoples' component (IPO). Member organizations work in the following areas: environmental protection and biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, promotion and development of the green economy, human rights, promotion and defence of indigenous peoples' rights, governance and transparency;
- Decentralized Cells of the CN-REDD accompany CODEPAs, prefectures and local councils in this effort to consult, inform and educate of as many people as possible.

At the local level, Local Development Funds (LDFs) will also administer carbon-related royalties generated by ER-Programs and destined to communities, according to the benefit-sharing plan (MEFDDE, 2017a). It will also be the case for the Community Development Management Committees (CDMCs), which constitute a local governance structure under Congolese law. Organized at village or neighbourhood level, they are in charge of the development and implementation of simplified management plans in the Community Development Areas of Forest Concessions (MEFDDE, 2017a).

3. National System for Measurement, reporting and verification (SYNA-MRV)

The Republic of Congo monitors its forests and its emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) through various tools and processes. With its two national communications to the UNFCCC including a national GHG inventory, Congo aspires to launch the process to develop its third national communication.

Since 2012, the National Center for Forest Inventory and Management (CNIAF) has been supported by FAO (through the UN-REDD Program) and the World Bank (through the FCPF Readiness Program) to develop a National System of Measurement (M), Notification (N) and Verification (V), or SYNA-MNV. The SYNA-MNV of the Republic of Congo is used to evaluate national performance in terms of reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation throughout the National Forest Domain (NFD), according to FREL. The SYNA-MNV is built around two functions, namely 1) forest monitoring and 2) Measurement, Notification and Verification (MNV).

To feed into the SYNA-MNV monitoring function, the country launched its first national forest inventory (NFI) in 2010, the fieldwork was completed in 2015. Biophysical and socioeconomic data were collected on the national territory except from a large marshy zone in the North East. UN-REDD support for the NFI strengthened national capacities to process and analyze NFI data, finalize data processing and analysis and develop draft versions of result reports. Forest resources assessment included not only trees in forests but also trees outside forests and helped generate data on areas, numbers of trees larger than 10 centimetres, commercial timber, above-ground and below-ground biomass, use and users of forest resources. Analysis of the IFN data is still ongoing, but preliminary results have enabled the country to develop specific emission factors for different forest strata. The results will be presented in the course of 2017. As a result of lack of means and due to access difficulties, Congo has not been able to inventory its important areas of peatlands and flooded forests. For its forestry concessions, the country relies on annual management plans and annual cuts (AAC) to determine the quantities of timber extracted, enabling it to estimate emissions from forest degradation. Given the importance of this REDD+ activity, the country wishes to improve the accounting for emissions from degradation using spatially explicit methods and is currently exploring various mapping options that need to be made operational.

With the support of various initiatives, including the UN-REDD Program, the FCPF and the CBFP, Congo has made significant progress in the development of its SYNA-MNV, REDD+ activity emissions and LULUCF activities monitoring. The country has carried out a detailed GIS analysis of its forest cover to update its deforestation and degradation statistics covering the 2000-2012 period. The years 2013/2014 were covered in collaboration with the University of Maryland and work is under way within the CNIAF's geomatics unit to update this analysis for the 2015/2016 period, thanks to FAO support and the UN-REDD Program using an editing platform called Terra-Mayombe adapted from the tools developed by the Brazilian Space Agency.

The Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHG-I) capacity for the agricultural and LULUCF sectors was developed to prepare the country for the third national communication and for the first updated biennial UNFCCC report. For the sake of transparency and to make key data of its SYNA-MNV available, Congo has also

developed a web portal of National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS). Capacity building of the local team managing this portal has been ensured, but remains to be consolidated and maintained.

These various works enabled the Republic of Congo to develop and submit its FREL to the UNFCCC in 2016, confirming the country's status as a REDD+ leader in Africa.

However, the progress made by Congo on the SYNA-MNV mainly depends on the contribution of external projects, and more resources are needed to sustain it. The CNIAF teams responsible for monitoring the forest, doing inventories and monitoring the forest cover extent by satellite have limited financial resources and require more training to fully operationalize the SYNA-MNV without external support. A clearer and more consistent operational mandate must be given to these teams to ensure their sustainability. In addition, the forest inventory must be supplemented by the inventory of Congo's peatlands and flooded forests, which will provide important information on their carbon stocks, their emissions and their many environmental benefits. The permanent plots identified in the first national inventory must therefore be remeasured to monitor the evolution of the country's carbon stocks. Finally, the third national communication and associated GHG inventory must be developed rapidly to enable the country to submit its first updated biennial report, which will include a REDD+ technical annex. This crucial step will enable Congo to notify the results of its REDD+ activities and, at a later stage, to request performance-based payments from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Ultimately, SYNA-MNV will be Congo's main tool to regularly monitor and evaluate the performance of mitigation measures in the forest and land-use sector.

4. REDD+ safeguards

It's in the context of the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) process, which was carried out in an iterative manner with the finalization of SN REDD, with the participation of the civil society and other stakeholders, and in compliance with Decree No. 2009-415 of November 20, 2009, that the environmental and social safeguarding instruments in accordance with the World Bank's operational policies were developed, namely:

- The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF),
- The Pest Management Framework,
- The Physical Cultural Heritage Management Framework,
- The Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework,
- The Process Framework for remedial action in case of restricted access to natural resources, and
- The Involuntary Resettlement Policy Framework.

The ESMF and the associated frameworks define guidelines to be adopted to ensure environmental and social impact management and risks during the implementation of REDD+. These instruments also set the guidelines for specific studies to be carried out, compensation to be provided in the event of involuntary resettlement of populations, procedures to manage conflicts, measures to be taken in the event of restricted access to natural resources, management measures for the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and monitoring and evaluation of mitigation measures. This is necessary to verify the proper implementation of mitigation measures.

In addition, based on the guarantees of the Cancun Agreements, the Republic of Congo has defined its Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers (REDD+ PCIV) at national level to take into account REDD+

social and environmental aspects. These REDD+ PCIVs are consistent with the World Bank's operational policies and FSC principles and indicators.

The REDD+ PCIV have been developed in a participatory manner through capacity-building activities and country-wide consultations in local languages with representatives of local communities and indigenous peoples, civil society, departmental authorities and the private sector.

The REDD+ PCIV were an important reference document throughout the SESA process and is referenced in the ESMF. The REDD+ PCIV will be formalized within the Republic of Congo's REDD+ legal framework so that any REDD+ project or program will respect them. Formalization will take place within the framework of the revised Forest Code and its implementing legislation.

The SESA also provides principles and guidelines for the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The development of formal procedures of the GRM is under way but the following principles have already been defined:

- Any person, organization or institution will be able to make a complaint;
- Accessibility to the GRM must be guaranteed, even in rural areas. Stakeholders can communicate their complaints through multiple channels (i.e. telephone (with the establishment of a free number), letter, email, website, meetings, etc.);
- The proponent of a REDD+ project will first be called upon to respond to the complaint in accordance with service standards;
- The issuance of a complaint will automatically inform the authorities in charge of REDD+, and will also involve project implementers or implementing agencies;
- The CODEPAs (in charge of arbitrating potential conflicts between the parties involved in the process at the departmental level under decree 2015-260) will act as mediators if need be, CONA-REDD (in charge of arbitrating potential conflicts between national stakeholders in the REDD+ process in accordance with Decree 2015-260) and the courts will only intervene if the lower court cannot resolve the conflict;
- A permanent platform for collecting advice on activities, operations and program management will be put in place to prevent the proliferation of complaints that may be based on incomplete, incorrect or missing information;
- A mechanism will be put in place to monitor the outcome of complaint handling.

The Sangha-Likouala ER-Program will be the first program to implement the new national guidelines. It is within this framework that the GRM will be initially implemented and tested. To be operational and viable, it will ensure the operationality of mapping and sharing plans for existing non-carbon benefits and co-benefits.

The effective implementation of the GRM under the ER-Program will be the ER-Program Management Unit and the Government Implementing Agencies' (ie CODEPA) responsibility while carrying out consultation and capacity building activities. The national REDD+ registry will provide a transparent platform for recording and monitoring complaints.

Section 4: Expected co-benefits from investments

1. Co-benefits

With its interventions in the areas of forestry, land and energy use to reduce deforestation, degradation of forests and increase carbon stocks, the Investment Plan aims to reduce national GHG emissions. Given the transformational change needed to achieve a sustainable management of forestry ecosystems and the inherent links between forests, biodiversity and communities, the investments will also produce important social and ecological advantages. For many stakeholders, these co-benefits are the most tangible and represent the value of forestry ecosystems. Among these co-benefits, one may cite:

- Social co-benefits which improve the socio-economic conditions in rural and urban environments, notably through the creation of jobs, more stable household incomes, improved food security, and access to more efficient domestic energy sources. This better security (for finances, accommodation and nutrition) should allow families, women and youth to better access health and education services.
- Environmental co-benefits such as the conservation of biodiversity and natural habitats, the preservation of soil and water quality, as well as improved resilience of ecological systems to climate change.

The table below presents a non-exhaustive list of benefits expected from the implementation of the REDD+ National Strategy Investment Plan, grouped by National Strategy strategic sub-option:

Table 7: Main co-benefits expected from the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy

Strategic sub-options	Co-benefits
SO1: Strengthening of governance and sustainable financing	
SO1.1 Strengthening governance	Strengthening of trust in the State Clarification and optimisation of the reciprocal roles of all resource managing stakeholders: civil society, local public administration services, private sector Strengthening of the participation of different stakeholders in the decision-making process Increase of state budgetary resources (through taxation)
SO1.2 Strengthening intersectoral coordination through the development and implementation of a national land use plan	Improvement of the business climate Improvement of economic attractiveness of the territory Preservation of the cultural and religious heritage (sacred sites, …) Improvement of biodiversity conservation
SO1.3 Improvement of property management	Development of individual and collective initiatives (revenue-generating activities) Better citizen integration and socio-economic emancipation of indigenous populations Improvement of access conditions for bank loans
SO1.4 Implementation of sustainable finance mechanisms	Change of mentality and adoption of a long-term vision
SO2: Sustainable management and valorisation of forest resources	
SO2.1 Sustainable forest management	Combined multi-stakeholder management of resources favourable to sustainable development Biodiversity preservation

	Reduced impacts on ecosystems Continuation of forest ecosystems services
SO2.2 Capacity building of the forest administration	Improved forest governance Improvement of economic attractiveness and competitiveness for investments in the forestry sector
SO2.3 Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity	Reduction of the fragmentation of natural habitats by ensuring an ecological continuum favourable to the maintenance of biodiversity Maintenance of indigenous populations' cultural heritage Soil conservation and improvement of soil quality and water protection Increased resilience to climate change of ecological systems
SO2.4 Promotion and valorisation of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)	Food security of local communities and indigenous populations dependent on forest ecosystems Diversification of domestic cash economies Development of new activity sectors Creation of direct and indirect jobs
SO2.5 Increase forest carbon stock	Improvement of revenues for local communities and indigenous populations Livelihood improvement Diversification of the national economy Soil and biodiversity preservation Increased resilience to climate change of ecological systems
SO3: Improvement of agricultural systems	
SO3.1 Improvement of farming conditions and agricultural productivity	Revenue increase for small producers Improvement of food security and of the well-being of the population (health, living conditions) Increase of time available for activities outside the agricultural sector (education, culture) Reduction of the arduousness of work (loads, distances) with a strong gender dimension Development of the local economy Strengthening of social equality from an economic point of view Reduction of rural exodus Development of the local economy
SO3.2 Development of Industrial agriculture	Creation of direct jobs Indirect socio-economic benefits at the local level (services, infrastructure) and the national level (increased tax receipts)
SO3.3 Strengthening of agricultural research and extension	Diversification of agricultural strategies and technical itineraries such as alternatives for food and monetary security
SO4: Rationalisation of the production and use of wood-energy and promotion of other clean energy sources	
SO4.1 Strengthen sustainable fuelwood production	Creation of jobs (activities with a high intensity of labour) Improvement of household revenue in supply areas Reduction of the arduousness of work (loads, distances) with a strong gender dimension
SO4.2 Improve transformation techniques and use of fuelwood and charcoal.	Reduction of household spending on energy consumption Reduction of time invested in firewood collection and transformation to charcoal Improvement of sanitary conditions related to cooking with wood/charcoal and fumes
SO4.3 Utilization of woody biomass for energy production	Energy self-sufficiency for industries and access to electricity for rural populations (cogeneration) Lowering of energy access costs

SO4.4 Development and incentives for use of clean energies	Improvement of sanitary conditions related to cooking with wood/charcoal and fumes
SO5: Development of a mining sector which contributes to economic development with a minimal impact on forests	
SO5.1 Adoption of a joint declaration on REDD+ principles by the mining sector and national standards for mining operations	Improved appropriation by civil society bodies of positive perspectives in the sector for local populations Improved attractiveness of investments in the sector
SO5.2 Support the implementation of reduced impact mining	Reduce impacts on ecosystems Continuation of forest ecosystems services Facilitation of investments, notably through the access conditions to capital (ease of bank loans, IFC concessionary loans, …) Improved living conditions for surrounding communities
SO5.3 Support the implementation of a national offset system	Facilitation of investments, notably through the access conditions to capital (ease of bank loans, IFC concessionary loans, …) Biodiversity conservation Improvement of living conditions for local populations Improvement of the co-management of rural spaces
SO5.4 Professionalisation of the artisanal mining sector	Diversification of revenue streams Improved land access Improved health conditions for artisans

Section 5: Collaboration between MDBs and other partners

The Republic of Congo has benefited from support from the FCPF REDD+ readiness funds with a contribution of 8,6 million USD for its REDD+ preparation process and, between 2012 and 2016, received 4 million USD from the UN-REDD program.

As part of phase 2 of the REDD+ process, the coordination of REDD+ donors is a government priority. The present Investment Plan is maps and directs all currently available and developing support systems. The Investment Plan, therefore, provides a coordination tool in itself, as desired by the Government, to support the raising of additional funds to finance the National REDD+ Strategy.

The CONA-REDD is the authority in charge of directing and decision-making within the REDD+ process. The Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Economy, Industrial Development and Public Spending, the Ministry of Planning, Statistics and Regional Integration as well as the Ministry of Budget and Finances, are all responsible for the coordination for the country's development agenda. The latter two institutions play an active role in building relations with development partners.

Donors are organised in a thematic coordination work group, the "Environment and sustainable development group", coordinated by UNDP. It brings together all active funders in the main sectors affected by the REDD+, including the World Bank, FAO, the European Union, the French Development Agency, the French Embassy, the US Embassy, and the United States Forest Service.

The World Bank, the lead MDB for the FIP, and the AFDB joined forces to support the government in the development of this Investment Plan. That being said, several partners have been involved in the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy. The REDD+ process, in particular the Investment Plan development process, has strengthened donor coordination. The Government has regularly involved development partners in this process, including during the scoping and joint missions, and through bilateral exchanges.

The culmination of this process has led to the elaboration of this integrated Investment Plan, which acts as a reference point for the mobilisation of REDD+ investments. The Investment Plan highlights the Government's priorities to implement its National REDD+ Strategy and aligns available and expected funding sources, in order to respond to the needs outlined by the government in its National REDD+ Strategy for the 2018-2025 period.

1. Partners and sources of funding mobilized for the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy for the 2018-2025 period

The table below presents the main projects and development partners which contribute to the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy over the 2018-2025 period in the Republic of Congo.

Table 8: Overview of the main projects aligned with the National REDD+ Strategy implemented and planned in the Republic of Congo

Activity sector (SN REDD+)	Project	Period	Intervention zone	Amount of funds[10]	Financial partners	Objectives
National projects						
O1. Governance O2. Management of forest resources	Forestry and Economic Diversification Project (PFDE)[11]	2013-2021	National	32,6 million USD over the 2013-2017 period	IDA-WB	Build the capacities of the forestry administration, of local communities and of indigenous populations in terms of governance, forest management and biodiversity conservation
				6,5 million USD over the 2018-2021 period	GEF (WB management)	
O1. Governance O2. Management of forest resources	Investment Climate and Forest Governance Support Project (PACIGOF) [12]	2017-2022	National	45,41 million USD (24,943 billion CFA francs, 38 million €)	AFDB	Support a strong and inclusive growth through the improvement of the investment climate and the diversification of Congo's economy (supporting small to medium enterprises, promoting investment and supporting the management of the forest/wood sector)
O1. Governance	Integrated Public-Sector Reform Project (IPSRP)	2017-2022	National	40 million USD	IDA-WB	Support the government in the mobilisation of domestic revenue, the rationalisation and management of public spending and the improvement of public administration and control system management.
O2. Management of forest resources	Support project for the implementation of the VPA-FLEGT[13]	2015-2018	National	6,57 million USD (5,5 million €)	DFID (AFD management)	Support the government, the private sector and the civil society in the implementation of the VPA FLEGT

[10] Converted to USD at the exchange rate of 24 September 2017.
[11] http://www.mefdd.cg/projets/description-detaillee-des-projets/pfde-projet-foret-et-diversification-economique/
[12] http://www.adiac-congo.com/content/diversification-de-leconomie-le-pacigof-un-nouveau-plan-pour-redynamiser-la-croissance
[13] http://www.apvflegtcongo.info/index.php/actualite/117-projet-appui-a-la-mise-en-oeuvre-de-l-apv-flegt-en-republique-du-congo-signature-du-contrat-entre-le-mefdd-et-le-consortium-frmi-atibt-pour-la-fourniture-de-l-assistance-technique-principale

O2. Management of forest resources	Support project for forestry governance	2018-2025	National	10,28 million USD (8,6 million €)	EU (11th EDF)	Continuously support the implementation of the VPA FLEGT
O2. Management of forest resources	North Congo Forest Landscapes Project (PPFNC)	2018-2022	Sangha, Likouala	8,96 million USD (7,5 million €)	AFD/FFEM	Conserve biodiversity (protected areas and concessions), improve the functioning of local development funds (including cocoa plantations), support forest planning in undeveloped concessions.
O3. Agriculture	Support the revival of the agricultural sector	2018-2022	Sangha, Likouala, periphery of Brazzaville	5,98 million USD (5 million €, support for the revival of the cocoa industry in the North Congo) and 3,59 million USD (3 million €, support for market gardening around Brazzaville)	AFD	Support the revival of the cocoa industry as part of the ER-Program in Sangha and Likouala and, around Brazzaville, the development of market gardening
O3. Agriculture	Support project for the Agricultural Value Chains Development Program (PADEF)	2013-2018	National (10 counties)	17,35 million USD	IFAD	Improve food security and agricultural revenues for small producers and family businesses
O3. Agriculture	Commercial Agriculture Development Support Project (PDAC)	2018-2022	National	100 million USD	IDA-WB + partners/ funding amounts to be confirmed (Kuwaiti funds, OPEC)	Develop agricultural industries, access to markets for small producers, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

O5. Mines (artisan)	Support for the sustainable development of small-scale mining [14]	2013-2018	National	2,4 million USD mobilized	UNDP	Formalise and support the artisanal mining sector to ensure its environmental sustainability
O1 - O5. Cross-sectoral	Support project for the diversification of the economy (PADE)	Phase I: 2011-2017 Phase II (under discussion)	National	10 million USD for phase I	IDA-WB	Promote private investments in value chains outside oil and support the competitivity of Small to Medium Enterprises
Regional projects which benefit the Republic of Congo						
O1. Governance O2. Management of forest resources	Citizen Voices for Change - CV4C [15]	2017-2021	Regional (Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Gabon, CAR, DRC)	8,84 million USD (7,4 million €)	EU	Support sustainable forest management, and strengthen contributions from non-state stakeholders, community organisations, indigenous populations and the civil society towards the improvement of forest management (independent observation)
O1. Governance O2. Management of forest resources	Financing for Congo Basin's Humid Tropical Forests (FINFORTROP)[16]	Beginning 2016	Regional (Congo Basin)	3,23 million USD (2,7 million €)	AFD/FFEM	Promote access to loans for forestry sector businesses which are committed to sustainable management practices
O2. Management of forest resources	Program for the Promotion of Certified Forest Operations (PPECF)[17]	Phase I : 2012 – 2016 Phase II (under discussion)	Regional (COMIFAC zone)	8,37 million USD (7,5 million € for Phase I – Phase II: to be determined)	KfW	Support the government and the private sector in the certifying of sustainable management and legality

[14] http://open.undp.org/#project/00045154
[15] http://www.environews-rdc.org/2017/04/27/foret-lunion-europeenne-lance-le-projet-citizen-voices-for-chage-cv4c/
[16] https://cg.ambafrance.org/Signature-d-une-convention-d-appui
[17] http://www.ppecf-comifac.com/

O1. Governance O2. Management of forest resources	*Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment* (*CARPE*) phase III. Strengthening Central Africa Environmental Management and Policy Support (SCAEMPS)[18]	2014-2019	Republic of Congo and DRC	5 Million USD	USAID	Support political reforms (spatial planning) and reporting on forest cover and biodiversity
O2. Management of forest resources	*CARPE* phase III. Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation Project (CAFEC) [19]	2014-2018	Sangha Trinational, Léconi-Batéké-Léfini landscapes and the Télé Lake/Tumba Lake in Congo and DRC	Between 9,5 and 11,2 million USD.	USAID/NICFI as well as additional funding (unknown amount) from WCS and WWF	Improve the sustainable management of protected areas and landscapes
O2. Management of forest resources	Management support for the Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkébé (TRIDOM 2)	2017-2022 (phase 2)	TRIDOM Zone (Cameroon, Congo and Gabon)	3 million USD (GEF) and 8,37 million USD (7 million €, EU)	GEF-UNDP EU	Support the transnational management of protected areas
O4. Sustainable energy (wood energy)	Support for emerging economic cooker industries (FC2E) [20]	2015-2018	Republic of Congo, Chad and Comoros	2,15 million USD (1,8 million €)	AFD	Support the production and distribution of improved woodstoves in Brazzaville implemented by Initiative Développement

[18] http://carpe.umd.edu/Documents/2015/SCAEMPS_CARPE_website_update_Jan2015.pdf
[19] http://rainforestparksandpeople.org/fr/2017/03/23/lac_tele-description/
[20] www.pamiga.org/pdf/pdf-para372-pamiga-1429885222.pdf

2. Prospective partners and sources of funding for the implementation of SN REDD over the 2018-2025 period

To add to support from partners towards the development and implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy over the 2018-2025 period, the Government, in collaboration with financial partners, has identified additional sources of funding. These include (but are not limited to) the CAFI, the FIP and the GCF.

2.1 The Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)

The CAFI, officially launched in September 2015, is a multi-stakeholder trust fund hosted by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office of UNDP and destined to support the funding of sustainable management and forest conservation in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo. The Republic of Congo signed the CAFI Joint Declaration in 2015.

The trust fund is implemented through participating UN organisations, the World Bank, and international development agencies. To gain access to this fund, countries must submit a national investment framework, a letter of intent and the program documents. Republic of Congo, received a preparatory grant of 620 000 USD to support, amongst other things, the development of the present Investment Plan.

2.2 The Forest Investment Program (FIP)

The Forest Investment Program (FIP) is one of three Climate Investment Funds. It aims to fund new approaches to the battle against climate change with transformation and scaling potential. In March 2015, the Republic of Congo submitted an expression of interest to the FIP with a view to support the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program and a renewable wood-energy supply project in the Pool and Plateaux departments. The FIP reserved an indicative amount of 24 million USD, 18 million of which would be in the form of concessionary rate loans, and 6 million of which would be a grant. Republic of Congo benefited from a preparatory subvention of 250 000 USD to support the development of the present Investment Plan.

2.3 The Green Climate Fund (GCF)

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a funding mechanism dedicated to funding climate change mitigation and adaptation. In the area of mitigation, the GCF supports, amongst others, initiatives for the sustainable management of lands and forests. The Republic of Congo has obtained a preparatory subvention of 300 000 USD to operationalise its national structure for the GCF, and will benefit from a second subvention in order to finalise its readiness phase.

Within this framework, the GCF focal point is working with FAO and AFD to submit a first mitigation project for the implementation of the Republic of Congo's INDC in the LULUCF sector (2018-2025). In parallel to this, a project appeal was launched with the aim to suggest other projects and programs to the GCF in the areas of mitigation and adaptation. The GCF Focal Point has already received 8 project proposals from international organisations, including UNDP, local NGOs and governmental institutions. Included amongst these are projects for the improvement of energy efficiency, electricity production and distribution, drinking water distribution, etc.

The program for the implementation of Congo's INDC in the LULUCF sector (2018-2025)

Developed by the Government of Congo in partnership with FAO and AFD, this program aims to propel Congo's transition process towards low carbon emission and the resilient development of the LULUCF sector, while contributing to REDD+ efforts to access results-based payments. The project, currently at the concept note stage, relies on a series of enabling and structuring interventions at the national level, and a series of "on-site" interventions based on the National REDD+ Strategy. It is being developed in full coordination with the Investment Plan, in close collaboration with the Republic of Congo's development partners, with the aim to create pertinent and efficient synergies with other REDD+ initiatives.

Its currently identified components, potential partners and implementation agencies are presented in the table below:

Table 9: Description of components, potential partners and implementation agency considered for the INDC implementation in the Republic of Congo in the land-use and forest sector

No.	Component	Expected results	Potential partners	Implementation agency
1	Spatial planning and strengthening of property rights	The National Territorial Development Plan (SNAT) is updated, the National Land Use Plan (PNAT) is created and implemented, the property supported actions framework is secured, the capacities of the Ministry of Property Affairs and the Public Domain are strengthened	CAFI, EFI, WRI	MATDGGT
2	Afforestation, reforestation and agroforestry	National efforts for afforestation, reforestation and agroforestry are supported by the strengthened operational means and management capacities of the responsible national entities, and 20,000-30,000 ha are reforested and/or restored	AFD, FIP / AFDB, AFDB	MEF (ProNAR)
3	Sustainable management and conservation of forest areas	1) The new forestry code is disseminated and its implementation is supported by the strengthening of the capacities of governmental structures, 2) Institutional capacities are strengthened for the monitoring of the implementation of forest spatial planning and legal frameworks, 3) The independent forestry certification and Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) are continued, 4) The capacities and operational means of the ACFAP are strengthened in order to better manage protected areas	DFID/EU (VPA FLEGT), AFDB (PACIGOF), AFD (PPFNC), WB-IDA (PFDE)	MEF
4	Reduction of agricultural pressure	1) Approximately 5,000 ha of climate-intelligent sustainable agricultural and pastoral systems are developed, tested and adopted in deforestation hotspots dominated by slash-and-burn farming, 2) technical and operational capacities of the MAEP are strengthened, 3) Alternative economic activities are developed in deforestation hotspots, 4) the regulatory framework and operational capacities are	FIP/WB, AFD, PDAC/WB	MAEP in collaboration with the MEF

		strengthened for the development of the cocoa and coffee agro-industrial sectors		
5	Valorisation of timber and non-timber forest products	For 4 industries (wood-energy, softwood lumber, agricultural products, NTFP): 1) The organisation of producer consolidations is strengthened, 2) management and business capacities of these producer groups are strengthened, 3) Access to funding is accentuated, 4) The offering of national financial institution loans for the forestry sector is increased, and 5) The transformation of products of these sectors is increased	FIB/AFDB, PFDE/MFE, AFDB, AFD	MEF in collaboration with the MAEP

The total amount necessary for the implementation of these activities is currently estimated at 90 million USD, 60 million in the form of grants and 30 million in the form of loans and securities over the 2018-2025 period. The submission of this project proposal is planned for late 2017/early 2018.

To raise more private national capital for key initiatives, innovative financial tools which go beyond isolated development projects will be developed through a mixed funding approach combining subsidies, low interest rate loans and bank securities, as well as private national investments. This will stimulate the rise of private Congolese entrepreneurship and the commitment of national financial institutions towards green investments. To spur community initiatives and develop small-scale entrepreneurship, a vast rural micro-credit program will be supported by the MUCODEC network, local credit unions whose reach in rural areas is wide and recognized.

Section 6: Identification of the REDD+ programs to implement over the 2018-2025 period

The Republic of Congo is at a crossroads, between (i) the REDD+ preparation phase (phase 1) which is now reaching its conclusion and allowed the establishment of a methodical and strategic basis for the REDD+ mechanism, evidenced in the National REDD+ strategy, and (ii) the investment phase (phase 2) which must allow the country to implement strategic options such as those planned in the National REDD+ Strategy. To allow this transition from theory to practice, the country has made a commitment to raise financing in a structured and efficient manner.

This is purpose of the present Investment plan, which proposes an ambitious but realistic vision for the reduction of pressures on forest areas in the Republic of Congo over the 2018-2025 period. The Investment Plan does not pretend to take into account all activities defined in the National REDD+ Strategy. The implementation of this strategy will take place progressively through successive investment plans. The current plan will be updated after the experience of the first 3 years of implementation. This approach will allow a leveraging of lessons learned from the first programs, and an evaluation of scaling and replication potential. This approach also takes into account the country's capacity for absorption and implementation.

The Investment Plan aims to centralise, channel and coordinate national, international, public and private funding, destined to support the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy. This will entail structuring a programmatic framework to plan and implement REDD+ activities, including both enabling measures (e.g. institutional and legal reforms to be led in the natural resources sector) and physical investments. The plan therefore (i) prioritizes activities, (ii) identifies opportunities for collaboration and synergies between diverse initiatives, and (iii) identifies any unmet needs.

1. Theory of change

The theory of change describes the steps necessary to reach the country's ultimate objective: a low carbon development resilient to climate change. Starting at the root of the problem, namely the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, it then identifies means of action (outputs) to remedy these causes. These results will generate outcomes which will lead to impacts, which will contribute to the final objective of the National REDD+ Strategy. This theory is summed up in the figure below, and is based on the analysis of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation (see Section 1.5):

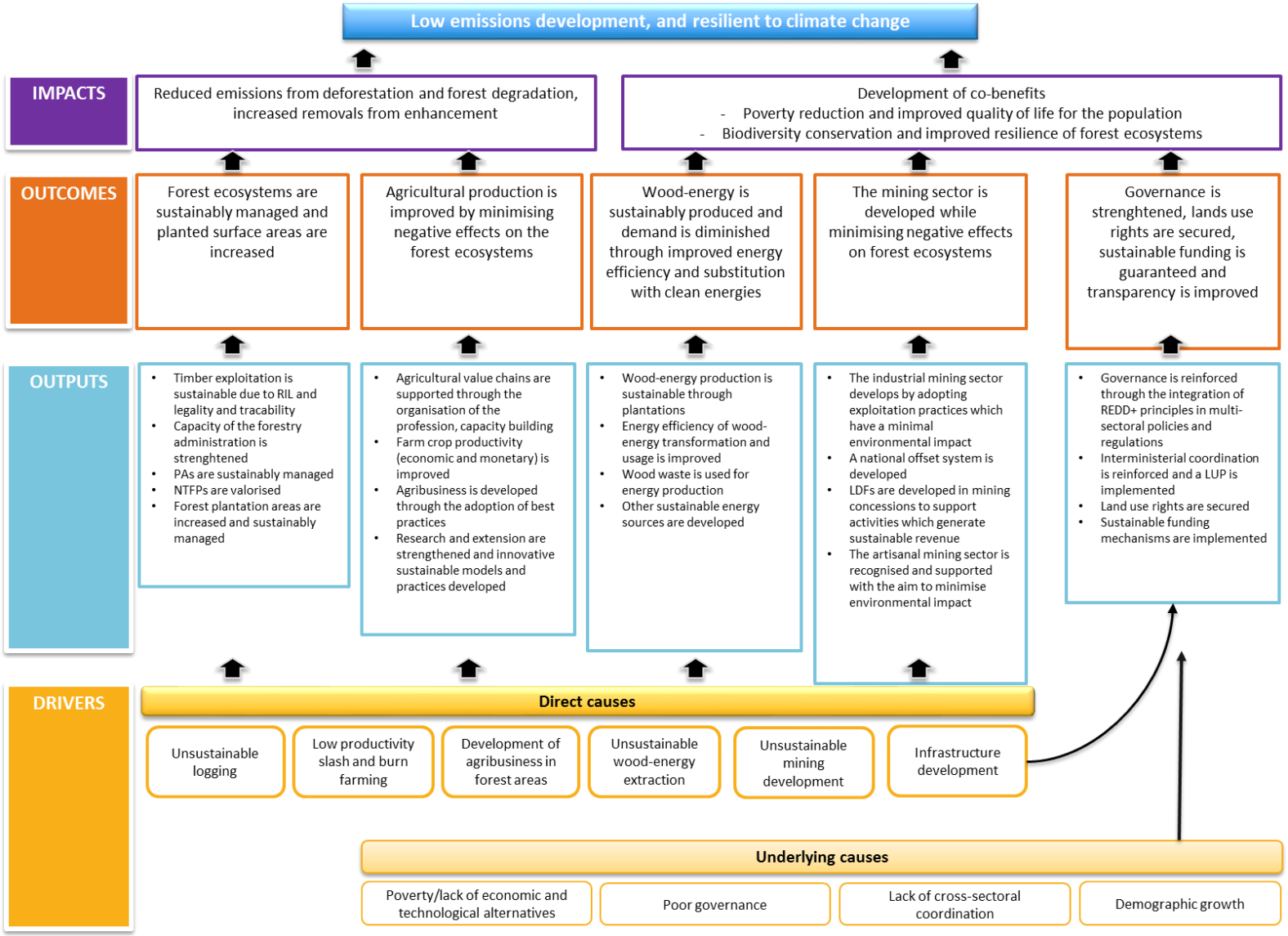


Figure 5: Theory of change of the Republic of Congo's National REDD+ Strategy

This theory of change relies on the following approach:

As already mentioned, for the Republic of Congo, the REDD+ agenda is simultaneously a means of economic diversification and growth, of poverty reduction, and of fighting against climate change. As such, REDD+ offers an important opportunity to stimulate the creation of a green economy. Due to the cross-sectoral nature of pressures on the forest, the solutions provided necessarily involve several economic sectors.

The Investment Plan suggest two approaches to address the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation, while simultaneously promoting economic growth: 1) Enabling programs which will act as a foundation in terms of governance, knowledge, and capacity, both in specific sectors and at a cross-sectional level. These programs mainly address the underlying drivers of deforestation and will be implemented centrally. 2) Geographically integrated programs, which promote sectoral but integrated investments in order to address against the direct drivers of deforestation and create tangible benefits for stakeholders. The implementation of these programs is supported by the enabling programs. Of a decentralised nature, these will focus on priority ecosystems, as identified by the Republic of Congo as part of consultation during the preparation of the Investment Plan. Their implementation necessarily implies the involvement of the country's decentralised structures. Each geographically integrated project will address land tenure security in its approach.

For the purpose of the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy, the Republic of Congo has identified a portfolio of 5 enabling programs and 6 geographically integrated programs for the 2018-2025 period. The program types are complementary and cover the 5 Strategic Options identified in the National REDD+ Strategy.

Table 10: Implementation programs for the National REDD+ Strategy for the 2018-2025 period

Program	**Geographic zone**	**Alignment with the National REDD+ Strategy**				
		SO1: Governance	SO2: Sustainable management of forest resources	SO3: Sustainable agriculture	SO4: Sustainable energy	SO5: Green mining
Enabling programs						
Land Use planning	National	✓				
Governance support	National	✓	✓			
Green mining	National					✓
Green industrial agriculture	National			✓		
Green infrastructures	National	✓				
Geographically integrated programs						
Sangha-Likouala ER-Program	Sangha, Likouala	✓	✓	✓		✓
Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the counties of Pool and of the Plateaux	Pool, Plateaux			✓	✓	
Sustainable management of forest ecosystems in	Kouilou	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Mayombe and coastal ecosystems						
Forestry and agroforestry plantations and sustainable forest management in the Niari valley	Niari		✓	✓	✓	
Sustainable management of the Chaillu Mountains	Lékoumou, Bouenza		✓	✓		
Community agroforestry in the Congolese Cuvette	Cuvette, Cuvette Ouest		✓	✓		

It should be noted that the different programs identified in the Investment Plan are at different stages of development and implementation. Indeed, the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program is the most advanced as has been outlined in an Emission Reductions Program Document which was preliminarily approved by the Carbon Fund of the FCPF.

Two projects that are integrated into geographically integrated programs are being submitted for funding to the FIP: 1) The development of agroforestry in the Community Development Zones (SDC) as part of the ER-Program area. 2) The "Community and fuelwood agroforestry in Pool and of the Plateaux" project. These projects are presented in Section 6.4 below, and concept notes are included in Appendix 1.

The "Land Use Planning" program was the subject of a multi-stakeholder dialogue begun in 2015 after the adoption of law 43-2014. This allowed the definition of an initial roadmap which itself was used to formulate the program proposal in Appendix 1 of this Investment Plan.

The geographically integrated programs have been identified with a participatory approach during consultations undertaken in the departments and at the national level upon the examination of the present Investment Plan.

2. Enabling programs

2.1 Land use planning

The government's goal is to implement its spatial planning policy to:

(i) Organise the use of its land in an efficient way, with the aim to optimise the use of resources;

(ii) Promote and secure REDD+ investments through the implementation of concrete solutions to land allocation, land use conflicts, and effective cross-sectoral coordination across the national territory;

(iii) Include the objectives of GHG emission reduction (linked to deforestation and forest degradation) and of carbon stock increase in the integrated spatial planning process. This process:

- will include from its inception the conservation/increase of forest cover and of carbon stocks, biodiversity preservation, and social inclusion (in particular for vulnerable groups), to direct the development of projects (in particular those relating to mining, agroindustry,

etc.). This activity will be subject to the definition of specific measures for High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) zones;
- will allow a coordination of interventions in terms of infrastructures (in particular for energy and transport) in the different sectors (mining, energy, commercial timber exploitation, etc.) in order to pool investments and resources, thereby minimising the impact on land use and forest cover.

This program builds on essential achievements for its future success and replication. Indeed, Republic of Congo has begun the implementation of a regulatory framework to guarantee the efficiency of this mechanism, with law n°43-2014 for approaches to spatial planning and development. This law dedicates the principle of interdepartmental concertation and cross-sectoral coordination for the efficient and harmonious allocation of the country's spaces, materialised in a SDAT. Following the adoption of this law, Republic of Congo prepared decrees establishing of four process management bodies, namely the National Commission, the National Council, the Interdepartmental Committee, and the Departmental Commissions (see Chapter 3).

The MATDGGT has already benefited from the support of the World Bank and WRI for undertaking an initial situational analysis of existing planning efforts and available land distribution capacities (forestry, mining and agriculture sectors), and has established a roadmap.[21] This roadmap was validated during a workshop in Brazzaville in June 2016, following a series of multi-stakeholder exchanges in 2015 between participants from the MATDGGT, sectoral ministries and the civil society.

In keeping with the MATDGGT roadmap and the National REDD+ Strategy, the National land-use planning program will allow the development and implementation of (i) the National Land Use Plan (PNAT), which aims to implement concrete solutions to mitigate conflicts linked to the overlaying of allocations and usage rights and (ii) the National Territorial Development Scheme (SNAT) and related Departmental Schemes (SDAT), which will allow for spatial land use planning while guaranteeing the coherence of sectoral policies, with the aim of minimizing impact on forest stock and subterranean carbon stocks, including those in the peatland complex of the Cuvette region.

To reach this aim, 2 components will be necessary:

1. Support and capacity building of national institutions in the elaboration of the PNAT, SNAT and territory management code (implementation measure of the SNAT which allows a harmonisation of sectoral policies and regulations);
2. Support and capacity building of departmental capacities for the elaboration of the SDAT and of departmental development plan (implementation measures for on-site investments, in accordance with SDAT requirements).

These 2 components will be established simultaneously to guarantee the coherence and efficiency of national and local activities by the MATDGGT and the 12 departmental and municipal councils.

Among the co-benefits expected from this activity, one may cite the reduction of usage conflicts, the improvement of land property security, the improvement of the business climate, and the preservation and reasoned management of natural resources and landscapes.

This program is described in more detail in Appendix 1.

[21] Strengthening of spatial planning in the Republic of the Congo.

2.2 Governance support

Many legal and regulatory texts on land use and management have been issued and/or published. However, although these texts consecrate sustainable natural resource management principles, the REDD+ dimension is not sufficiently considered. Similarly, sectoral policies must be revisited to improve the consideration of the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation. A harmonisation of these policies and legal texts is also necessary.

The Government therefore plans to establish a governance support program which aims to remove barriers which could slow or prevent the establishment and success of sustainable development and a green economy. To do so, the program intends to improve governance through the following components:

- Institutional support for the integration of REDD+ principles into policies and regulations, with a focus on new laws but also the Law on the environment, the Law on protected areas, the Mining code, the Indigenous populations law and the Agriculture-land law, as well as support for the dissemination and application of the revised texts.
- Strengthening of the capacities of the forestry administration. The implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement FLEGT (VPA-FLEGT), which has already begun, plays a central role in this approach. Moreover, this approach will include the promotion of reduced impact logging standards which the government is developing as part of the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program.

2.3 Green mining program

Mining has been identified as one of the direct drivers which could strongly contribute to deforestation. According to the FREL, the development of the mining sector could become the third cause of deforestation at the national level over the 2016-2020 period (CN REDD, 2016). It is therefore necessary that the legal and regulatory framework be revised, and that the development of this sector take into account the REDD+ dimensions. The government therefore recommends the implementation of a mining program which would take the following form:

- Development of national low-impact mining operation standards, adapted to the REDD+ for the industrial, semi-industrial and artisanal sectors, and support for their popularisation, implementation, and monitoring.
- Development of a national offset program for the effects of the development of industrial and semi-industrial mines.

2.4 Green industrial agriculture program

The FREL predicts that the development of the industrial agriculture sector, in particular palm oil, could become the most important driver of deforestation at the national level, with 12,7 MtCO2/year over the 2016-2020 period (CN REDD, 2017). However, the government has demonstrated its will to direct the development of its agroindustry towards savannah zones. In 2016, the Republic of Congo signed the Marrakesh Declaration for the Sustainable Development of the Oil Palm Sector in Africa. This commitment was followed by the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) and the Tropical Forest Alliance on 21 March 2017, and the subsequent development

of national principles for the sustainable development of the palm oil industry, with a first workshop in August 2017.

To support these efforts and meet the aims set by the APOI, a support program was suggested to back the development of the sustainable palm oil industry, which will group the following activities:

- Define national principles for sustainable industrial agricultural production and integrate these into current and future agricultural laws;
- Carry out a national interpretation of these principles and of the RSPO criteria;
- Support agronomical sciences to identify and promote improved varieties and technical itineraries adapted to savanna zones, as well as appreciate their economic and financial viability;
- Improve agroindustrial concession granting procedures to ensure their transparency, and generalise the development and implementation process for the spatial planning of agroindustrial concessions;
- Strengthen the capacities of the agricultural administration in terms of control and monitoring.

2.5 Green infrastructure program

Infrastructure development in the Republic of Congo being relatively basic, the Government has assigned itself the task of developing its infrastructure, in particular for roads and energy (production and transmission). This is deemed crucial for the development and diversification of its economy. However, important infrastructure construction works (dams, ports, energy transport lines), may be left out of the REDD+ dynamic. To minimise the impact of these projects, these will already be integrated in the spatial planning process. However, the government also plans to develop standards for the responsible development of its infrastructure. Likewise, it intends to develop or revise legal and regulatory texts relating to the realisation of major works and build capacities of key stakeholders.

3. Geographically integrated programs

3.1 The Sangha-Likouala Emission Reductions Program (ER-Program)

The Sangha-Likouala ER-Program aims to implement the vision for low-carbon development of the Republic of Congo by demonstrating the feasibility of alternative approaches to development to reduce GHG emissions, improve sustainable landscape management, improve and diversify local means of subsistence, and conserve biodiversity. This jurisdictional program aims to establish a model for sustainable development within Sangha and Likouala departments, covering 12.4 million ha, 11.7 million of which are forests. The ER-Program's accounting area covers 52% of the total national forest area. Forest losses for these two departments are estimated over the period 2000-2012 to represent 13,758 ha or 9.48% of national forest losses (NERF,2017). Due to its large size and jurisdictional approach, this program is ambitious. It will be one of the first African projects to pilot REDD+ at scale with the aim to:

- Reduce emissions by 10,202,168 tCO_2e over 5 years (2018-2022),
- Emphasize sustainable landscape management,
- Improve and diversify local means of subsistence and
- Preserve biodiversity.

The program was conceived to gather and coordinate various sources of investment, including:

- The private sector (primarily forest companies present in the area);
- The FIP and CAFI (see Appendix 1 on the Project Idea Notes),
- AFD, which, as part of C2D funding, in support of the ER-Program is planning:
    - A "Northern Congo Forest Landscapes" project (PPFNC) with a biodiversity component (connectivity of protected areas and concessions), a local development fund support component (including cocoa plantations in community developments), and a component to support planning for forests and undeveloped concessions;
    - A project to stimulate agricultural, including support for the cocoa industry in the Northern regions of the country
- The International Development Association (IDA), the GEF (Global Environment Facility) through the World Bank, the UNDP, the DFID, the EU and the AfDB (see Table 8 on projects aligned with REDD+);

The intervention strategy has 5 main pillars:

Table 11: Activities and financial partners for the ER-Program in the Republic of Congo

Alignment with the REDD+ NS	Description	Identified financial partners
Direct activities		
O2. Sustainable management of forest resources (forest concessions)	Reduction of the impacts of logging operations via (i) the implementation of RIL practices and (ii) the conservation of HCV areas in forest concession zones	Private sector AFD/FFEM (PPFNC)
O3. Sustainable agriculture (industrial) O4. Green mining	Reduction of the impacts of the agroindustry and the mining sector on forest ecosystems via (i) the production of sustainable village palm oil (RSPO certified) and (ii) the development of green mines	Private sector
O3. Sustainable agriculture (small producers)	Improvement of the means of subsistence and living conditions of communities via (i) the promotion of cocoa production in degraded areas, (ii) the sustainable improvement of the productivity of subsistence agriculture, and (iii) the development of sustainable palm oil production activities in collaboration with communities in agro-industrial concession zones	AFD (project supporting the cocoa industry in the northern Congo) FIP (WB and DGM) Private sector GEF (WB, UNDP)
O2. Sustainable management of forest resources (protected areas)	Sustainable management of protected areas and development of revenue-generating activities	AFD/FFEM (PPFNC) GEF (WB, UNDP)
Enabling activities		
O1. Governance improvement O2. Sustainable management of forest resources O3. Sustainable agriculture	(i) governance improvement through the strengthening of partners' capacities and the implementation of the FLEGT process, (ii) strengthening spatial planning at the national and local levels, and (iii) development of agricultural value chains (cocoa and palm oil) for small producers	DFID/EU (VPA FLEGT) AFDB (PACIGOF) CAFI FIP

Integrated into the ER-Program, support for agroforestry in the SDCs is sought from the FIP (see Section 6, part 4).

3.2 Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the departments of Pool and of the Plateaux

The department of Pool is dominated by a forest-savanna mosaic landscape. It constitutes the dominant wood energy supply basin for the city of Brazzaville, whose energy demand is estimated at 1 million tons per year by 2025. Agriculture in this region, considered the breadbasket of Brazzaville, primarily follows a swidden model. The combination of these activities has led to strong deforestation and degradation of small-scale forest areas (deforestation rate of 2.02%). The department of Plateaux, dominated by savanna areas, suffers from similar pressures.

The Government therefore proposes a program to develop an innovative value chain for the sustainable fuelwood supply industry of the Brazzaville fuelwood supply basin, to strengthen food security through the establishment of 6,000 ha of community agroforestry plantations (fuelwood/subsistence crops), and to develop technologies for the improvement of energy efficient means of fuelwood use and transformation. To meet these strategic objectives, the program will be structure around the following 3 components:

Component 1: The establishment of forestry plantations for the production of fuelwood. This component will take place in the department of Pool (North) and of the Plateaux and will include (i) the identification of beneficiaries, of plantation types and of associated technical itineraries, (ii) support for the establishment of plantations, (iii) continued support, monitoring and evaluation;

Component 2: The establishment of agroforestry plantations for the production of fuelwood and the improvement of agricultural productivity. This component will take place in the department of Pool (South) and will also include (i) the identification of beneficiaries, of plantation types and of associated technical itineraries, (ii) support for the establishment of plantations, (iii) continued support, monitoring and evaluation.

Component 3: Improvement of charcoal production techniques and distribution of improved cook stoves with (i) the implementation of more efficient charcoal production technologies, (ii) a choice of improved cook stove models, (iii) the production and distribution of improved cook stoves.

This program is being submitted to the FIP for co-financing (see Section 6.4 for details).

3.3 Sustainable management of forestry ecosystems in Mayombe and coastal areas

The Mayombe forests cover approximately 1.5 million ha, the third largest forest area in the country. Made up of rainforest but also mangroves and coastal forests, this forest tract holds important and very diverse biological resources. It also includes the Conkouati-Douli National Park and the Dimonika Biosphere Reserve. However, it suffers from significant anthropogenic pressures, such as slash and burn agriculture, the gathering of fuelwood, illegal logging operation, wild fauna poaching and artisanal mining operation (e.g. gold mining in the Dimonika Biosphere Reserve). Indeed, deforestation in Kouilou department, in which this forest is located, was estimated to be 15.643 ha or 10.7% of national forest losses between 2000 and 2012 (NERF, 2017). Over the 2000-2010 period, the Mayombe

tract was subjected to a rate of deforestation estimated at 2.39% (BRLi, 2014). In light of the economic, social and ecological importance of this tract, the government envisages the following components:

Component 1: Promotion of agroforestry and fuelwood plantations to settle agriculture and respond to fuelwood needs. To this purpose, 8,000 ha of agroforestry plantations and 2,000 ha of fuelwood plantations are targeted to start with.
Component 2: Support for the sustainable management of forest concessions and the promotion of RIL.
Component 3: Support for small-scale miners focussed on the organisation of artisans in economic or cooperative interest groups, the training of artisans in sustainable techniques and operational best practices.
Component 4: Support for the protection of biodiversity focussed on the training of eco-guards and relevant administrations and the supply of materials to carry out increased monitoring of poaching and illegal practices.
Component 5: Restoration of the mangroves and of the coastal forest ecosystems (20,000 ha) of the Pointe-Noire coastal zone and in the Kouilou department.
Component 6: Support for the of capacity building and multi-stakeholder dialogue on sustainable development. This concertation mechanism will involve farmers, local communities, forest, oil and mining societies, and micro-credit structures.

3.4 Forestry and agroforestry plantations and sustainable forest management in the Niari Valley

The Niari Valley is dominated by savannas, but also includes small forest tracts and gallery forests. It is mainly located in the Bouenza department. The latter has faced deforestation representing 2,051 ha, or 1.4% of national forest losses (NERF, 2017). This deforestation increased rapidly in the last decade. The principal drivers are the unsustainable production and consumption of fuelwood for household needs and the supply of brick ovens, shifting slash-and-burn agriculture, and industrial logging operations.

To respond to these drivers of deforestation, the Government envisages the implementation of the following components:

Component 1: Support for fuelwood plantations, which will aim to produce fuelwood for communities and baked brick craftsmen, thereby contributing to the reduction of the impact of fuelwood supply. To this purpose, a target area of 5,000 ha will be established.
Component 2: Promotion of improved cook stoves and kilns with the aim to rationalise the use of fuelwood.
Component 3: Support for agroforestry plantations which will aim to settle agriculture while improving the living conditions and revenues of the populations. To this purpose, an area of 10,000 ha will be established.
Component 4: Support for the sustainable management of forest concessions through the creation and implementation of simplified management plans.

3.5 Sustainable management of the Chaillu Forest Tract

The Chaillu Forest Tract is the second-largest of the country, covering approximately 3.5 million ha in the Lékoumou, north-west Niari, and the north-east Bouenza departments. Due to its historical accessibility and the richness of its biodiversity and land, the Chaillu Tract has been one of the country's

main food production areas for several decades. It is subject to diverse anthropogenic pressures linked to shifting slash and burn agriculture and the irrational exploitation of commercial timber. Over the 2000-2012 period, forest area loss of these three departments was of 20,470 ha or 14% of national forest loss. In the years to come, mining activity will be an important driver of deforestation, with the start of the Mining Project Development (MPD), Congo Iron and DMC mining projects. To respond to these drivers, the government of Congo envisages the implementation of a sustainable forest management program, which will combine the following 3 aspects:

Component 1: Forest management and sustainable practices focussed on (i) the pursuit of sustainable forest management, (ii) the implementation of RIL practices and (iii) capacity building of local communities and authorities in terms of monitoring and evaluation of forest management.
Component 2: Improvement of agricultural practices through agroforestry systems in the community development zones to increase agricultural production, thereby increasing the revenues of local communities while reducing their carbon footprint. To this purpose, an area of 5,000 ha is targeted.
Component 3: Development of alternative revenue-generating activities to improve the livelihoods of local populations while preserving their environment.

3.6 Community agroforestry in Cuvette

The departments of Cuvette and Cuvette-Ouest, which account for 18.6% of the total surface area of the North Congo massive (14 million ha), have seen the deforestation and degradation of their forest ecosystems with the expansion of shifting slash and burn agriculture, the removal of fuelwood (for domestic energy needs and fish smoking), and the development of agro-industrial palm oil and rubber plantations in the Makoua zone. Indeed, over the 2000-2012 period, deforestation was of 2.665 ha or 18.3% of national forest losses (NERF 2017). To respond to these phenomena, the government envisages a community agroforestry program which supports sustainable agro-industrial practices in Cuvette with the following components:

Component 1: Support to local communities and indigenous populations for the adoption of sustainable agroforestry schemes. This component aims to respond to the pressures exerted by slash and burn agriculture through sustainable and resilient models. For this purpose, a surface area of 2,000 ha is targeted.
Component 2: Reforestation of the Congo River banks around fishing villages (Mossaka and Loukoléla, etc.), for fuelwood and fish smoking needs on 4,000 ha.

4. Identification and justification of the co-funding of the projects submitted to the FIP

The Government seeks to raise funds from the FIP to support two of the geographically integrated programs: the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program, and the Pool-Plateaux Agroforestry Program.

The “Agroforestry plantations in the North Congo region in degraded or non-forest zones” project, an integral part of the ER-Program in the Sangha and Likouala departments (see Section 6, part 3.1), and the “Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the Pool and Plateaux departments” project aim to implement REDD+ activities on the ground to benefit communities through the development of

agroforestry plantations (for subsistence and commercial agriculture) and fuelwood plantations in degraded and non-forest areas. These two projects/programs directly address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation linked to the populations' activities: inefficient slash and burn agriculture (currently the main driver of deforestation), and the unsustainable removal of fuelwood. Finally, these activities also allow for enhancements of carbon stocks.

Unsustainable logging operations, which is the main driver of forest degradation in Congo, has not been adopted specifically for FIP funding for a variety of reasons, including:

- The existence of support through other REDD+ aligned projects such as those presented in Section 5, and complementary support planned as part of the ER-Program (such as the FCPF performance-based payments) and of other geographically integrated projects (see Section 6.3);
- The government's will to create benefits mainly for the populations, who cannot through their own means participate in and benefit from the REDD+;
- The lack of activity related to agroforestry and sustainable fuelwood production on the national territory.

The two projects co-funded by the FIP will be developed in the departments of Sangha, Likouala, Pool and Plateaux, which make up 58% of the national surface area (see Figure 6):

- In the Sangha and Likouala departments of the country as part of the ER-Program with the development of agroforestry plantations of (i) cocoa, (ii) fruit trees/subsistence crops. Although they currently display a low deforestation rate, these departments are an important concern in terms of protection and conservation. Indeed, they account for over 50% of forest surface area, with over 70% of undisturbed forests (BRLi, 2014). An important increase in deforestation and forest degradation rates is predicted for the next few years in both departments.
- In the departments of Pool and the Plateaux (wood energy supply basin of Brazzaville) with the development of (i) fuelwood plantations, (ii) agroforestry plantations of fuelwood/subsistence crops. These departments are among those with the highest deforestation rates with, respectively, 0.38 and 0.2% of gross annual loss and a forest cover of less than 17% (see Table 2). The development of sustainable fuelwood production and agriculture activities is therefore a high-priority issue for communities which depend on these ecosystems.

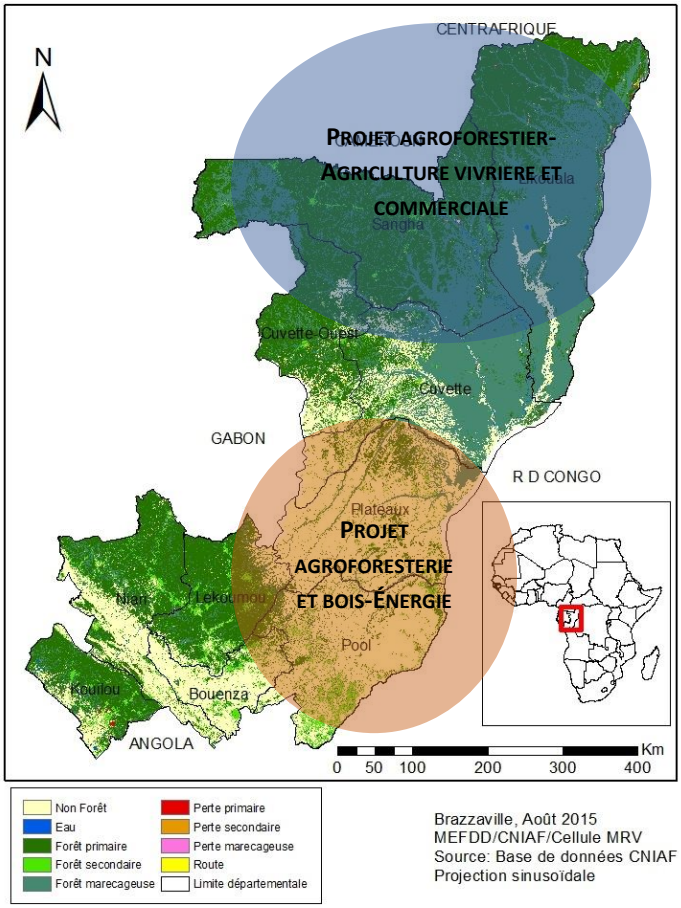


Figure 6: Location of the geographically targeted interventions of the projects co-financed by the FIP

As part of both FIP projects, operations will be implemented across the entire commodity value chain, from seed and plant production to the transformation and marketing of agriculture and wood-energy products (fuelwood and charcoal). For the agroforestry and fuelwood project, efficient use will also be considered with support for the production and commercialisation of improved cook stoves.

These projects were chosen for their innovative nature. The development of forestry and agroforestry plantations will allow (i) an improvement of populations' revenues while preserving natural resources, as well as access to funding tied to the preservation of part of their production zone, and (ii) the development of an innovative value chain for the fuelwood supply industry of the Brazzaville urban basin. To guarantee their success, they will be developed in close synergy with the land use planning project, which anticipates the development of Departmental Land Use Planning Schemes which will allow (i) the securing of FIP investments and (ii) the replication of investments at the relevant departmental levels but also at a national level.

4.1 Alignment of the FIP program with the National REDD+ Strategy and the country assistance strategies of the MDBs

The most recent strategic partnership framework between the World Bank and the Republic of Congo[22] is built on two fundamental pillars: competitiveness and employment (in particular support for the agricultural sector), and vulnerability and resilience. The African Development Bank strategy for the 2013-2022 period is based on two main objectives: inclusive growth and a transition towards green

[22] http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/953881468247277224/pdf/NonAsciiFileName0.pdf

growth, with agriculture as a particular area of interest[23] (notably through the Feeding Africa initiative 2016-2025).

These projects are justified by their alignment with the strategic options of the National REDD+ Strategy and the country assistance strategies of the MDBs:

Table 12: Rationale for the FIP program in relation to REDD+ and MDB strategies

	Causes of deforestation and targeted degradation	Alignment with the National Strategy	Alignment with MDB strategies
North Congo agroforestry plantations	*Indirect:* Poverty and lack of economic and technological alternatives *Direct:* Slash and burn agriculture and unsustainable removal of fuelwood	SO 2.5 Increase forest carbon stocks SO 3.1 Improvement of farming conditions and agricultural productivity	Creation and diversification of revenues Improvement of food security and reduction of population vulnerability Improvement of ecosystem resilience and biodiversity conservation
Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the departments of Pool and of the Plateaux		*As above, as well as:* SO 4.1 Strengthen sustainable fuelwood production SO 4.2 Improve transformation and use of fuelwood and charcoal	

4.2 FIP investment strategy

In accordance with the expected impacts of the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy in Republic of Congo (see Figure 5: Theory of change in the Republic of Congo's National REDD+ strategy), the FIP investment strategy is based around three complementary results pillars:

(i) Increase carbon sequestration in plantations and reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and unplanned degradation for subsistence farming and fuelwood (via the development of sustainable economic alternatives and the improvement of the energy efficiency of fuelwood transformation and consumption techniques)

(ii) Improve food security and resilience of rural populations by diversifying revenues

(iii) Preserve biodiversity and improve resilience of fragile ecosystems by reducing pressures caused by populations' subsistence needs.

4.3 Description of the activities and implementation of the FIP program

Northern Congo agroforestry project

With a focus on avoiding future deforestation through shifting agriculture and increasing carbon stocks in highly degraded zones, the project aims to (i) promote the production of shade cocoa by small producers, using agroforestry systems applied in degraded forests located in Community Development Zones (SDC) which are part of logging operation concessions, and (ii) introduce sustainable agriculture via a fruit-subsistence crop agroforestry model to increase agricultural productivity and the diversification of crops in the degraded surfaces of the SDCs. The project will support the establishment

[23]https://www.afdb.org/fr/about-us/mission-strategy/afdbs-strategy/

of approximately 5,000 ha of agroforestry plantations and the preservation of approximately 4,000 ha of natural forest.

The project has been divided into 3 components:

1. Technical support to growers, which aims to (i) build the capacity of beneficiaries on technical itineraries and best practices in agroforestry based on cocoa and based on fruit trees/subsistence crops and (ii) facilitate access to high-quality seeds and plants;
2. Financial support to growers, which will allow the establishment of (i) revolving funds for investment in micro-projects managed by the CDMCs or by the concertation councils of the Local Development Fund (LDF), (ii) payment systems for conservation with Simple Management Plans (SMP);
3. Post-harvest support for growers, which aims to support the transformation, storage, transport, and marketing of products.

The design of this project is fully integrated with the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program. In fact, it enables the involvement of local communities and indigenous populations who would not have had the financial capacity to participate in the ER-Program. The generated carbon credits will then allow the perpetuation of activities established by the priority program.

The project will be implemented by the MEF in concertation with the MAEP, and with the support of the World Bank, the AFD, the FAO (co-funding from the GCF), and the *Congolaise Industrielle des Bois* (CIB)-OLAM.

Community and fuelwood agroforestry program in the departments of Pool and of the Plateaux

This program aims to stimulate the development of an innovative value chain for the sustainable fuelwood supply of the Brazzaville urban basin and to strengthen food security through the establishment of 6,000 ha of fuelwood and agroforestry (fuelwood/subsistence crops) community plantations, and the development of technologies to improve the energy efficiency of fuelwood transformation and use. To meet these strategic objectives, the project will be structured into 3 components:

1. The establishment of forest plantations for fuelwood production. This component will be carried out in the departments of Pool (North) and Plateaux and will include (i) the identification of beneficiaries, associated plantation types and technical itineraries, (ii) support for plantation establishment, (iii) continued support, monitoring and evaluation;
2. The establishment of agroforestry plantations for fuelwood production and improvement of agricultural productivity. This component will be carried out in the department of Pool (South) and will also include (i) the identification of beneficiaries, associated plantation types and technical itineraries, (ii) support for plantation establishment, (iii) continued support, monitoring and evaluation.
3. The improvement of carbonisation techniques and the distribution of improved cook stoves with (i) the implementation of more efficient charcoal production technologies, (ii) a choice of improved cook stove models, (iii) the production and distribution of improved cook stoves.

This project will be implemented by the MEF (in particular with the ProNAR and the SNR for components 1 and 2) with the support of AfDB and FAO.

4.4 Consideration of gender and vulnerable group dimensions

Gender inequality in Republic of Congo is pronounced in terms of monetary income, with men receiving on average about 25% more income than women. Indeed, women hold a central place in socio-economic activities, but are predominantly found in low-productivity and low-income sectors (UNDP, 2015). In addition, the status of rural women and indigenous women is more worrying than in urban areas. Congolese women account for almost 70% of agricultural workers; moreover, their educational level is much lower, and the household tasks are more demanding (search for drinking water and firewood, lack of equipment and arduousness of agricultural and domestic work, etc.).

In the cocoa, subsistence crop and fuelwood sectors, the program will attach great importance to the issue of gender and gender equality, in particular through the empowerment of women and the development of itineraries improving agricultural productivity, thereby reducing the arduousness of labour.

Approaches will build and/or strengthen capacities of rural communities, especially women and young people, in a variety of subsistence activities, including agriculture in agroforestry systems and fuelwood production, and will facilitate their access to micro-credits while providing them bank securities to extend and generate alternative income-generating activities.

Beyond the fuelwood industry, the distribution of improved cook stoves, both to rural households in supply zones and to urban households in Brazzaville will, directly impact women: reduction of the arduousness of firewood collection in rural areas, reduction of the wood charcoal budget in urban areas, reduction of harmful fumes.

For vulnerable groups, in particular indigenous peoples (IP), the program, through its spatial planning component, will pay particular attention to securing land and usage rights and the respecting of IPs' socio-cultural practices through (i) the alignment of sectoral policies and regulations and (ii) spatial planning. Particular attention will also be paid in the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program to the participation modalities of IPs, notably for the conservation of forest areas and the payment for environmental services.

Box 1: The situation of women and vulnerable groups in the Republic of Congo

Women

Women in the Republic of Congo make up the majority of the population in both urban and rural areas, where women account for respectively 52.0% and 51.2% of the population (ECOM, 2011). [24] At the national level, policies and laws formally establish the principle of equality between men and women and parity is introduced in the 2015 Constitution; but their effective implementation remains an important challenge. The situation of women in Congo remains characterized by notorious discrimination at the legal level (*family code, social and economic rights*), in addition to de facto inequalities (levirate, widowhood rites, successions, gender-specific violence, etc.) (UNDP, 2015). Participation in economic and political life is also weak, although efforts are being made to improve the economic and social situation of women through a number of legal provisions (*school law, electoral law, etc.*). According to UNDP (2015), the low participation levels of women in the decision-making process can be explained by the role they are given by predominant socio-cultural norms and values in Congolese society. It seems that men, inspired by tradition, keep women in the role of influencing agents (*counsellors*) rather than as decision-makers (*leaders*).

Women in Republic of Congo have a higher life expectancy than men. However, the maternal mortality rate is high: 426 deaths per 100,000 live births (DHS, 2011)[25]. In education, the gap between men and women is

[24] Congolese Household Survey (ECOM) 2011.
[25] Health and Demographic Survey (*Enquête Démographique et de Santé (EDS)),* 2011.

relatively low; in the field of formal education, inequality is mainly caused by early pregnancy and sexual harassment. Gender inequality is more pronounced in terms of monetary income, with men receiving on average about 25% more income than women. Indeed, in Congo, women are central to socio-economic activities, but find themselves mostly in low-productivity and low-income sectors. In the 15-30 age group, 18% of men work in the formal sector, which is more remunerative, against 6% of women; the ratio of men with bank accounts, compared with women who have bank accounts, is significant (1.66); only 28.8% of agricultural holdings belong to women, while they account for 70% of agricultural workers (UNDP, 2015). In urban areas, they work mainly in the trade and artisanal processing of agricultural products (*corn alcohol, fruit juices etc.*). They are also present in the social sectors (*health, maternal and primary education*) (UNDP, 2015).

The situation of rural women and indigenous women is even more worrying, as their educational attainment is much lower, household tasks are heavier (*search for drinking water and firewood, lack of equipment, arduousness of agricultural and domestic work, etc*.). Rural households indeed have low access to safe drinking water (*16.9% against 83.4% in urban areas*), electricity (*6.8% against 52.9% in urban areas*) and clean sanitary systems (*0.9% against 33.9% in urban areas*) (ECOM, 2011).

Indigenous populations and vulnerable groups

The Government of the Republic of Congo and civil society bodies consider the country's indigenous peoples to be several culturally and ethnically distinct groups[26], who are collectively called in the entire Congo basin by the pejorative and discriminating term "Pygmies"; Congo is today the only country in this sub-region to prohibit by law the use of this term (Law 05-2011), demonstrating its desire for indigenous peoples' social inclusion and citizen equality. In 2010, the special UN report on the rights of Indigenous peoples described their economic and social situation in the Republic of Congo as "extremely unfavorable" and worried about "*their marginalization from the rest of Congolese society, in particular with regard to working conditions, accommodation, education, health, access to land and natural resources, recognition by the civil state and participation in public life*" (OHCHR, 2010).

According to the General Population and Housing Census of 2007 (RGPH 2007), the number of indigenous peoples is as high as 43,378 inhabitants, or 1.2% of The Congolese population (CN REDD, 2017b). This population mostly inhabits rural forest areas, mainly in the departments of Likouala (13,500), Lékoumou (11,500) and Sangha (7,900). The indigenous population is young: 41% of indigenous people are under 15 years old, while only 5% are over 60 (MPEATI, 2011). One of the main characteristics of these groups is their exclusion and marginalisation from current political, economic and social structures. All these groups are in non-dominating positions in Congolese society, and their distinct identity and fundamental rights have been and remain threatened in a way never experienced by the Bantu majority (OHCHR, 2010).

Indigenous peoples are a combination of minority ethnic groups in Congo whose social, economic, cultural and religious way of life is directly linked to the preservation of forest ecosystems: these minority groups remain socially and economically very vulnerable, despite a strong state support policy in the last decade, government actions and programs, supported by MDBs (including UNICEF) and the civil society, including indigenous organizations. Congolese Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Organisations consultation platform on REDD+ (CACO-REDD+), created in 2012, reflects this commitment and these constant efforts to socially integrate indigenous peoples.

In 2011, the Republic of Congo became a pioneer in Central Africa by adopting the first specific law for the protection of indigenous peoples (Law 05-2011). This commitment was reaffirmed in 2013 during the Universal Periodic Review of Congo before the UN Human Rights Council. However, this political will does not translate into reality. Implementing legislation texts of Law 05-2011 have not been promulgated and the inequalities and discriminations against indigenous peoples, and their marginalization, persist.

[26] These groups include the Baaka (*north regions of the Likouala and Sangha departments*); the Mbendjélé (*south regions of the Likouala and Sangha departments),* the Mikaya (Sangha department), the Gyeli *(north-west region of the Cuvette department*), the Luma (*Sangha, Cuvette and Likouala departments*), the Twa (*department of the Plateaux up to the border with the DRC*); and the Babongo (Lékoumou, Niari and Kouilou departments).

4.5 Co-benefits

The socio-environmental co-benefits expected from the projects/programs are:

- Improvement of the subsistence means of local communities and indigenous peoples and of their resilience to climate change through the diversification and improvement of income sources, including subsistence and commercial agricultural products and fuelwood,
- Biodiversity protection and resilience of forest ecosystems through a reduction of pressures on forests,
- Improvement of soil quality thanks to adapted technical itineraries;
- Improvement of stakeholders understanding in terms of environmental management.

4.6 Potential for success and replication

These projects/programs are based on valuable achievements to date that bolster their future success and their replication at a national scale.

North Congo agroforestry project

The project is integrated into the larger framework of the ER-Program of the North-Congo, which will support the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the project.

Moreover, the presence and implication of the private sector in the project zone constitutes an important advantage for the implementation of this project and its long-term continuation. Indeed, between 2011 and 2016, CIB-OLAM has been a government partner for the implementation of the National Cocoa Development Plan. As part of the PND, a tree nursery with an annual capacity of 1.4 million plants was established in Pokola, the production and distribution of plants was organised, as well as training for growers. Initiatives have already been launched locally and can serve as a basis for the development of good practices for technical itineraries.

The Republic of Congo also has a number of specialized state services and which will be able to advise and orient certain activities. These include the National Reforestation Service (MEF), the Non-Timber Forest Products Valorisation Centre (MEF), the MAEF, etc.

The project's replication potential is high because of its innovative nature and its socio-economic impact. Indeed, within the framework of the 2014-2018 Cocoa PND, the Republic of Congo aims to plant more than 23,000 ha of cocoa. Moreover, within the framework of the ProNAR, the Republic aims to reforest one million of ha, including 100,000 ha with communities.

Community and fuelwood agroforestry program in Pool and Plateaux

The MEF, in particular through the SNR and the ProNAR, has experience in afforestation project management financed by private and public development partners. The ProNAR builds on a long history and the experience of Congo in the forest plantation sector, both in forest (*Limba, etc.*) and savannas (*eucalyptus and tropical pines*) areas.

To guarantee its success, this project will rely on existing initiatives such as the PROFADELL and CAFEC projects, which also work on agroforestry and fuelwood models, based on successful experimental models from other regions (*e.g. Mampou in the DRC*).

To guarantee its sustainability, the project foresees the creation and revitalization of local organisations which will be in charge of sustaining the project in the long term. These organisations will have a recognised status and internal rules validated through an FPIC process. Social inclusion and

multi-stakeholder management are at the heart of the project. Beneficiaries will choose the planting and agroforestry systems that best suit them, based on the technical recommendations of project developers.

Like the North-Congo agroforestry project, the project is highly replicable in both the Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire and Bouenza supply basins to increase wood-energy supplies.

These projects will constitute a first showcase of the country's REDD+ potential and should attract the interest of investors, both public and private. Indeed, other technical and financial partners can provide co-financing to extend the scale of plantations to other territories. Private investors will also be able to replicate these new agroforestry models to produce high value-added commodities. Private sector engagement and the improvement of favourable investment conditions will contribute to improve value chains and investments in sustainable forest management. This will help generate local employment opportunities for planting, maintenance, seedling production, service delivery, and arrangements for farmers, thus contributing to a positive dynamic. Private sector participation is a key element of the REDD+ process. The Government itself will be able to duplicate these practices on private land and thus contribute to a national expansion of agriculture, in particular in the form of private-public partnerships, which will enable agribusinesses investors to cooperate with small producers' cooperatives.

These projects have a leverage effect for the country's low-carbon socio-economic development, in line with forest preservation, enhancement of carbon stocks and livelihood improvement.

Section 7: Risk assessment and mitigation measures

This section identifies the main risks associated with the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy and mitigation measures.

Table 13 : Risks and mitigation measures for the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy

Risks associated with the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy	Grade	Mitigation measures
SOCIO-POLITICAL RISKS		
Risk of social tension in connection with unfavourable socio-economic conditions and budget constraints	*High*	*Good governance, national cohesion, political dialogue, improving the business climate* *Strengthening public-private dialogue*
Social risks due to time lags in social change (new approaches and practices to be adopted) and duration of a donor funded program (usually 5 years)	*Moderate*	*Efficient implementation of the information process, raising awareness and local stakeholder involvement and ownership*
Governance risks related to change in decision-making processes (the REDD+ process requiring the establishment of a significant consultative and participatory system) which could increase distrust towards the state and social blockages	*Moderate*	*Set up an Independent Observatory which can act as a check for stakeholders at every stage and, while acting as a driving force, serve to reorient expectations*
Weaknesses, lack of infrastructure and lack of State supervision to perform its sovereign missions	*Moderate*	*Capacity building, development of public-private partnerships*
SECTORAL RISKS		
Lack of spatial planning before the implementation of projects which could compromise their sustainability	*High*	*Ensure the development of an efficient PNAT/SNAT applied to all sectors, develop simplified management plans*
Potential land conflicts after land reform process	*High*	*Socio-cultural support of the customary land recognition process*
Cash crops: social dimension (labour-intensive, sparsely populated forest areas: risk of using the elderly or children) and environmental (risk of conversion/predation on forest ecosystems)	*High*	*Develop incentive/deterrent standards and regulations, integrate payments for environmental services, develop simplified management plans, community supervision by CDMCs.* *Define support, follow-up and practice monitoring systems over the long term (beyond the 5-year duration of support projects with international donors)*

MACROECONOMIC RISKS		
Fall in oil profits and necessity to diversify economy at the expense of natural resources and forest cover *(e.g. mining, agribusiness)*	*High*	*Promoting and ensuring the implementation of integrated, rational and participatory land use management to reduce the impact on forest cover* *Systematization of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and control of ESMF implementation*
Excessive level of indebtedness which deteriorates the business climate and leads to loss of sovereignty *(conditionality and certification delegations)*	*Moderate*	*Improving the management of public finances, tax collection*
Price volatility and price drop of agricultural commodities for export (*cocoa, palm oil, etc*.), loss of competitiveness	*Moderate*	*Support the banking sector in defining new insurance tools based on floor price (stabilization fund, lines of credit, microcredit)* *Short marketing circuits, participation in field experiments, seed bank systems, etc.; to carry out these enabling activities, cooperatives, associations and/or groups of economic and social interest will be promoted and strengthened, diversification of cultivated products*
TECHNOLOGICAL RISKS		
Risks of non-adaptation/appropriation of new technologies and new technical itineraries with existing socio-cultural conditions	*Moderate*	*Producer training, adapt national standards to meet growing export market requirements (certification)*
Lack of technological capacities to process, store and market agricultural products *(value chain performance*)	*High*	*Ensure that the entire value chain is taken into account in all agricultural support projects*
Ability to produce and source quality vegetal material *(seeds, cuttings, nurseries, etc.)*	*High*	*Diversify sources of supply*
INSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN CAPACITY		
Capacity gaps, lack of human and institutional skills	*High*	*Capacity Building* *Institutional memory transmission system*
Inadequacy of governance processes and intersectoral decision-making	*High*	*Identification of a supra-ministerial body attached to the Office of the Prime Minister.*
Lack of capacity in terms of data collection, processing and publication generated within the REDD+ process	*Moderate*	*Database centralization, securing, and structuring*

Lack of representativeness of private sector and civil society members and difficulty of equal involvement amongst stakeholders	*High*	*Establish a participatory, inclusive and transparent decision-making processs as soon as project feasibility studies begin. Stakeholders' representatives will be selected by the stakeholders and will have the capacity to understand and participate in the process* *Decentralize and strengthen the REDD+ process at local level*
Lack of capacity of the selected project promoters	*High*	*Capacity building*
Community disinterest in REDD+ project implementation (especially plantations that do not generate immediate economic benefits)	*Moderate*	*Establishment of incentive systems (micro-credit, insurance, support to secure land, etc.)* *Development of demonstration plots*
ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS		
Increased drought and precipitation variability	*Moderate*	*Implementation of systems resilient to climate change (production diversification, choice of resistant genetic material, etc.)*
Fires	*High*	*Support firewall maintenance*
Diseases linked to monocultures systems or technical itinerary with low biodiversity, low resilience to natural hazards (viruses, parasites, etc.)	*Moderate*	*Favour diversified systems*
Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)	*High*	*Strengthening of impact studies on wildlife aspects and associated measures* *Improvement of the State compensation system*

Section 8: Financing plan and instruments

The Investment Plan developed is based on the Republic of Congo's National REDD+ Strategy and covers the 2018-2025 period, which focuses on the transition from the REDD+ preparation phase (phase 1) to the REDD+ investment phase (phase 2) and performance-based payments (phase 3). It should enable the country to implement the strategic options of the Strategy. To facilitate the transition from theory to practice, the country has engaged in the mobilization of funding in a structured and efficient manner.

The table below shows the REDD+ projects identified by the Government for the 2018-2025 period, estimated budgets, and sources of co-financing expected for their implementation.

Table 14: Financing plan for REDD+ identified programs over the 2018-2025 period

Financing plan for REDD+ identified programs over the 2018-2025 period (M USD[27])						
Programs	FIP		CAFI	GCF	Existing and/or planned projects	Additional funding to be mobilized
	Grant	Loan				
Enabling programs						
Land Use planning	-	-	20	4	EFI (*To be determined*)	N/A
Governance support	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green Mines	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green industrial agriculture	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Green infrastructure	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Geographically integrated programs						
Sangha-Likouala ER-Program	4	12	**	*To be determined*	GEF (UNDP) TRIDOM 2 (3) GEF (WB) PFDE (5,1) AFD cocoa project (6,6) AFD PPFNC (9) FIP DGM (*to be determined*) DFID/EU FLEGT support (*to be determined*) WB PRISP (1,5) Private sector (29,5) FCPF – Carbon Fund (*to be determined*)	WB-PDAC (*to be determined*)[28]
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments	2	6	-	*To be determined*	AFDB (7) AFD (to *be determined*) EU (*to be determined*) FIP-DGM (to *be determined*)	WB-PDAC (*to be determined)*
Sustainable management of Mayombe forest ecosystems and of coastal ecosystems	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Community agroforestry in Cuvette	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Sustainable management of the Chaillu forest tract	-	-	-	*To be determined*		
Forestry and agro-forestry plantations in the Niari valley	-	-	-	*To be determined*		

** included in the spatial planning scheme

[27] The amounts in euro were converted into USD using a 1.2 exchange rate (rate observed on 19/09/2017)

[28] Although PDAC plans to mobilize USD 100 million for its implementation, it is considered "to be mobilized" for the implementation of the programmes because the allocations will be made through calls for projects.

Detailed financing plan for programs co-funded FIP

The "Agroforestry planting project in Northern Congo " (as part of the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program) and the "Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux " programs are seeking to mobilize a combination of grants and loans totalling $24 million from the FIP, including $18million in loans and $6 million in grants.

Co-funding and parallel funding are also expected for:

- The agroforestry project in Northern Congo: $2.4 million from the GEF-WB (PFDE), $6.6 million from the AFD (Cocoa project), amounts from the DGM, the GCF, the WB-AID (PDAC) and the FCPF (carbon fund) have yet to be determined;

- The Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments: 7 million USD from the AfDB and amounts from the AFD, DGM, EU and WB-AID (PDAC) have yet to be determined.

The table below shows the financing plan for the programs proposed for co-funding by FIP.

Table 15 : Financing Plan for programs proposed for co-funding by FIP

Financing Plan for programs proposed for co-funding by FIP (M USD)					
	FIP		**Total**	**Co-funding / parallel funding**	
Program/Component	Grant	Loan		**GCF**	**Other**
Agroforestry planting project in Northern Congo (part of ER-Program)					
C1: Technical support to planters	2	5	**7**	*To be determined*	GEF-PFDE ($2,4 million) WB-PDAC (*to be determined*) AFD cocoa project (€5.5 millions) AFD PPFNC (*to be determined)* FIP DGM (*to be determined*) FCPF – Carbon Fund (*to be determined)*
C2: Financial support to planters	1	3	**4**	*To be determined*	
C3: Post-harvest support to planters	1	4	**5**	*To be determined*	
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments					
C1: Forest plantations for fuelwood production	1	4	**5**	*To be determined*	AFDB ($2 million) AFD (*to be determined*) GCF / FAO (*to be determined*)
C2: Agroforestry plantations for fuelwood production and improvement of agricultural productivity	1	1	**2**	*To be determined*	AFDB ($2 million) AFD (*to be determined*) DGM (*to be determined*) WB-PDAC (*to be determined)* GCF / FAO (*to be determined*)
C3: Improved carbonization techniques and dissemination of improved stoves	-	1	**1**	*To be determined*	AFDB ($3 million) AFD (*à déterminer*) EU (*à déterminer*) GCF / FAO (*à déterminer*)
TOTAL	**6**	**18**	**24**	***To be determined***	***To be determined***

Funding sought for the implementation of the other identified programs in the 2018-2025 period

This Investment Plan clearly indicates that the financial resources currently available are insufficient to meet the magnitude of needs and ambition. The table below shows the preliminary estimates of investment costs and budgets sought for the implementation of the other identified programs in the 2018-2025 period.

Table 16: Estimated budget for the implementation of the Investment Plan

Program	Estimated budget (M USD)
Enabling programs	
Spatial planning	24
Governance support	7
Green Mines	4,5
Green industrial agriculture	4
Green infrastructure	2
Geographically integrated programs	
Sangha-Likouala ER-Program	92,6
Agroforestry and fuelwood community project in Pool and Plateaux departments	31+
Sustainable management of Mayombe forest ecosystems and of coastal ecosystems	32
Forestry and agro-forestry plantations and sustainable forest management in the Niari valley	30
Sustainable management of the Chaillu forest tract	22,5
Community agroforestry in Cuvette	11
TOTAL	**260,6+**

Section 9: Results framework for the implementation of the investment plan

The results framework is based on the impacts, outcome and results of the National REDD+ Strategy's theory of change (see Figure 5: .

Table 17: Results framework for the National REDD+ Strategy Investment Plan

Impact, effect, result	Indicators	Means of verification
Impact 1: Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions due to deforestation and forest degradation and increased absorption by "sinks" in the forest sector		
GHG emission reduced and increased carbon stocks	▪ Amount of GHG emissions in LULUCF sector over amount of GHG emissions of the reference scenario ▪ Net and gross deforestation and degradation rates	▪ National Communication and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) ▪ MRV and FREL database
Impact 2 : Development co-benefits		
Poverty reduced and livelihood improved	▪ Evolution of household monetary and non-monetary income (food security, health, etc.) (Indigenous peoples included)	▪ Socio-economic surveys
Biodiversity is preserved and the resilience of forest ecosystems has increased	▪ Rate of change in forest cover, rehabilitated areas, managed forest concessions (PA and logging concessions) and certified forest concessions surface areas.	▪ MRV and FREL database ▪ CNIAF inventories of fauna and flora
Outcome 1: Governance is strengthened, land and funding is secured and transparency is improved		
Governance is strengthened by integrating REDD+ principles into multi-sectoral policies and regulations	▪ Number of sectors that have integrated REDD+ principles into their regulations	▪ Official gazette (REDD+ monitoring unit)
Inter-ministerial coordination is strengthened and a PNAT is adopted	▪ Existence of a PNAT ▪ Existence of a revised national territorial development Plan (SNAT) ▪ Number of meetings held by the National Planning Council, the inter-ministerial committee and departmental commissions ▪ Existence of land-use dispute resolution mechanisms	▪ Official gazette ▪ Minutes of meetings
Land management is improved	▪ National coverage regarding customary right recognition certificates	▪ Mapping of available certificates at national cadastre/registration level
Sustainable finance mechanisms are established	▪ Funds generated per year	▪ Budget report of the mechanism

Outcome 2: Forest ecosystems are managed sustainably and planted areas increased		
Timber exploitation is sustainable through the implementation of RIL techniques and the strengthening of legality and traceability	▪ Area of logging concessions under sustainable management ▪ Area of logging concessions certified ▪ Logging damage rate in forest concessions ▪ Material yields	▪ MEF statistical database ▪ CNIAF monitoring and studies
The capacity of the forestry administration is strengthened	▪ Number of offences recorded by the administration ▪ Number of offences recorded by stakeholders over the number of offences solved by the administration	▪ Departmental directorates follow-up mission reports ▪ Progress reports ▪ Minutes meeting reports
PAs are managed sustainably	▪ PA area with a sustainable management plan over total PA surface area	▪ MEF statistical database
NTFP value chains are strengthened	▪ Evolution of the quantity of NTFP commercialised on markets ▪ Evolution of the number of value-added NTFP	▪ Investigation report on consumption
Forest plantation areas are increased and managed sustainably	▪ Evolution of plantation areas	▪ MEF statistical database
Outcome 3: Agricultural production is improved while minimizing negative impacts on the environment		
Agricultural sectors are supported through the organization of the profession, capacity building	▪ Number of small producers organized in association ▪	▪ Agricultural statistics database ▪ Ministry of Finance statistics database
Agricultural productivity is improved	▪ Yield per hectare and agricultural speculation ▪ Improved agricultural area ▪ Evolution of the deforestation rate in relation to unplanned and planned agriculture	▪ Agricultural statistics database ▪ MNV and FREL database ▪
Industrial agriculture is developed by adopting best practices thus reducing impacts on the environment and forest ecosystems	▪ Percentage of the agro-industrial surface developed in savanna on the total developed surface	▪ MAEP agricultural statistics database
Agricultural research is strengthened	▪ Number of innovative and sustainable models developed ▪ Number of innovative and sustainable implemented ▪ Number of small producers aware of these innovative and sustainable practices	▪ MAEP agricultural statistics database
Outcome 4: Fuelwood is produced sustainably and demand is reduced through improved energy efficiency and clean energy substitution		

Fuelwood production is sustainable and plantations are developed in large supply basins and managed sustainably	▪ Evolution of planted areas for fuelwood production	▪ MEF statistical database
Fuelwood transformation and energy efficiency is improved	▪ Percentage of charcoal production generated through improved techniques ▪ Household penetration of improved cook stoves	▪ Development project statistics
Energy recovery from waste is developed	▪ MW / year produced by cogeneration	▪ MEH statistical database
Other clean energy sources are developed	▪ MW / year produced from renewable sources	▪ Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics (MEH) statistical database
Outcome 5: Mining is developed while minimizing negative impacts on the environment		
The industrial and semi-industrial mining sector expands by adopting operating practices with minimal impact on the environment	▪ Existence of national standards for mining operations integrating REDD+ principles ▪ Percentage of mining companies applying (i) reduced impacts measures and (ii) compensation measures related to deforestation ▪ Percentage of mining companies holding an environmental compliance certificate (in the operating phase)	▪ Ministry of Mines and Geology operating agreements ▪ Directorate General of Mines and of the Environment progress reports ▪ Companies' progress reports ▪ Ministry in charge of Mines and Geology monitoring reports
A national offset system is established	▪ Percentage of emissions from mining activities offset	▪ Monitoring report of the system ▪ CNIAF
LDFs are developed in mining concessions to support sustainable income-generating activities	▪ Number of established and functional LDFs / Number of mines in operation ▪ Number of initiatives funded by the LDFs ▪ Mining companies' contribution rate to LDFs	▪ Minutes of LDFs committee meetings
The artisanal mining sector is recognized and supported to minimize environmental impacts	▪ Number of formal artisans over the total number of artisans	▪ Ministry of Mines statistical database

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Appendix 1: Projects proposed for FIP funding

1. Agroforestry project in degraded and non-forest areas in North Congo

1.1 Implementation partner, government agency and direct stakeholders

Project management will be carried out by the MEF and/or MAEP. It will be supported by the World Bank.

1.2 Problem statement

The Republic of Congo is aware of the richness of its natural resources and keen to protect them to contribute to the fight against climate change. The recent dramatic fall in oil prices has given urgency to the Government's campaign to diversify its economy away from its heavy dependence on oil. This raises a potential threat to forest carbon stocks, as agriculture, forestry and mining are among the key alternative sectors identified for development with grave consequences for forests if they are not implemented responsibly. At the same time, the Government has also identified REDD+ as an opportunity for economic diversification.

As such, the FIP was identified as a complementary funding source to build the success of the Sangha-Likouala Emission Reductions Program. Indeed, the FIP complements other financing sources to support populations in developing income-generating and emission-reducing activities.

The objective of the project is to reduce deforestation and forest degradation resulting from slash and burn agriculture and to increase carbon stocks in already heavily degraded areas. To this end, this project will support the implementation of sustainable agriculture through climate-smart agroforestry schemes based on cocoa or fruit and subsistence crops. The project will promote the development of economic activities on a green growth curve by demonstrating the feasibility of innovative approaches to economic development that minimize impacts on forests.

4.7 Investment strategy

To address issues related to deforestation and forest degradation, the government proposes to use climate funding to develop a rapidly growing new commodity sector in a sustainable way, by supporting approaches moving away from slash-and-burn agriculture to a fruit/subsistence-based or cocoa-based agroforestry models that protect forests. Investment in such a project has a dual goal: (i) to fight poverty by generating and securing new incomes; and (ii) to combat climate change by reducing emissions relating to deforestation and degradation of surrounding forests and pressure on biodiversity.

The project will work with communities to improve their means of subsistence and provide them with alternative sources of income by promoting a climate-smart agroforestry approach based on (i) cocoa production as an associated model in degraded forests located in community development series that are part of logging concessions, and (ii) fruit and subsistence crop production to increase agricultural productivity and crop diversification in degraded areas of the community development series.

1.3 Transformational impact and co-benefits

The involvement of stakeholders at the micro scale (local communities and indigenous populations) in innovative revenue-generating activities, which are sedentary and less space-consuming, will greatly favour the reduction of emissions and will guarantee the success of the larger-scale Sangha-Likouala ER-Program.

The project will bring significant benefits to rural communities in the targeted departments. Smallholder farmers will have access to new skills and technologies for climate-resilient agriculture, and improved agricultural practices. Agroforestry will help improve yields, increase income and resilience to climate change.

The proposed agricultural activities will be economically self-sufficient and cost-effective. They are thus free from the need for future external support. Moreover, the approach is based on revolving funds that are intended to last well beyond the project and thus multiply the impact of FIP funding.

The activities will also enable farmers to generate employment and create value-addition opportunities, especially for women and vulnerable groups, thus contributing to the improvement of gender equality and inclusive development.

The project will create links between the private sector and small producers to strengthen value chains. This will help generate local employment opportunities for planting, maintenance, seedling production, service delivery, and arrangements for farmers, thus contributing to a positive dynamic.

Private sector involvement is a key component of the REDD+ process that the FIP is part of, which is considering using carbon financing to attract larger investments in the agroforestry sector, especially cocoa. Consequently, the FIP project may have a multiplier effect beyond its area of intervention.

1.4 Project description

The project is divided into 3 main components and aims to support small growers in the adoption of a climate-smart approach. The climate-smart agroforestry model is a resource management system, controlled by the local population, where trees are associated with agricultural (or livestock) activities on the same plot so that the resulting ecosystem resembles natural forests in terms of specific wealth, plant structure, and above- and below-ground biomass. The project will support the planting of 5,000 ha of agroforestry and the conservation of 4,000 ha of natural forests. As a result, the project will reduce carbon emissions (avoided emissions) and increase carbon stocks up to 3.7 million tCO_2e over a 20-year period.

The approach allows higher overall productivity per unit area, better control of potential diseases, better economic profitability and increased ecological services (conservation of biodiversity, maintenance of soil fertility, carbon sequestration, etc.). Agroforestry systems provide flexibility and resilience that are important to smallholder farmers affected by the sometimes-high volatility of world cacao prices and climate change. This approach is built on a package of conditions to be fulfilled in advance of the implementation of agroforestry approaches. These conditions are as follows:

Respect for local land use planning

Agroforestry activities will only take place in Community Development Zones (SDC), which are forest concession areas reserved for local populations, including for agricultural activities. Agroforestry activities will therefore take place in areas previously designated as agricultural areas in the simple management plans (developed in a participatory manner) of these community development series.

As far as land tenure security is concerned, the project will draw on the experience of the PFDE and will therefore be based on the arbitration of the Communities Development Management Committees (CDMC) responsible for ensuring the proper implementation of the Simple Management Plans in the SDCs. The agroforestry activities will therefore be able to be carried out with an authorization of agricultural exploitation issued and duly signed by the chief of the lands.

Choice of plantation sites

To mitigate the risk of deforestation and the opening of new deforestation fronts, the choice of planting sites is crucial. Already degraded sites will be privileged and optimized. For this purpose, several classes of degradation have been defined, taking into account both the national forest definition[29] and the minimum non-anthropogenic degradation threshold (75%) defined in the Emission Reduction Program Document.

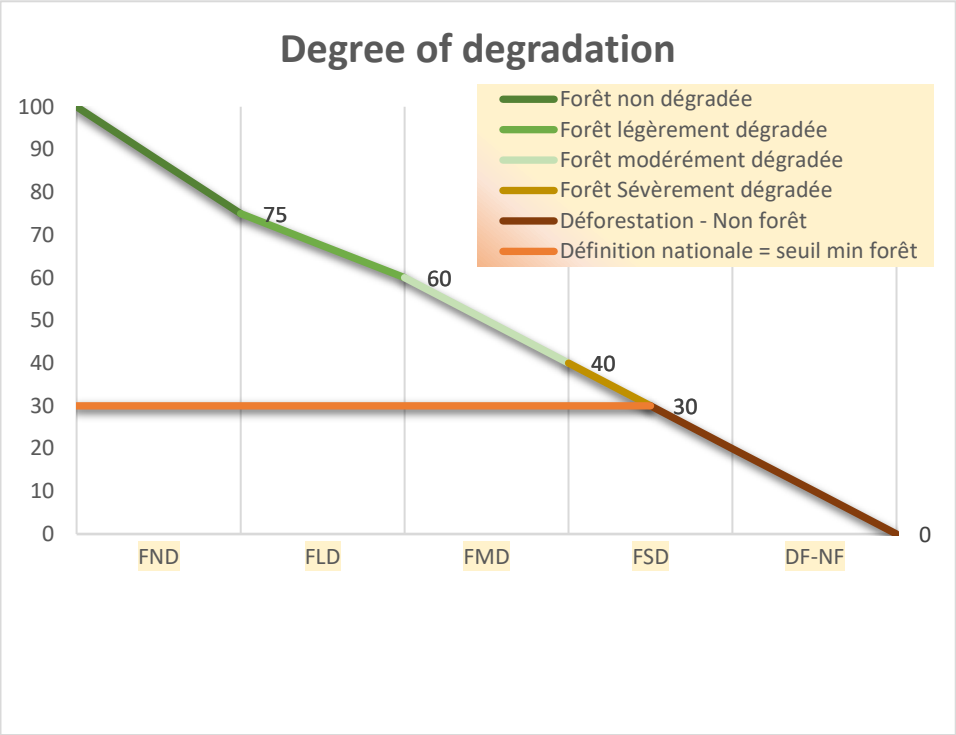

Figure 7. Definition of the different degrees of forest degradation

Thus, the implementation of climate-smart agroforestry will be carried out only on the last three categories of degradation levels, i.e. areas with between 0-60% forest cover:

(i) for cocoa, moderately degraded areas will be favoured (between 40-60% of forest cover). Indeed, because of the physiology of cocoa which allows it to grow under shade, the plants will be inserted into already degraded forests to ensure that these retain a value for the farmers rather than being seen as a resource to be converted into traditional agricultural systems with a very low carbon storage capacity, and
(ii) for agroforests based on fruit and more heliophile food crops, more degraded zones will be favoured (0-40% of forest cover), thus increasing the carbon stock and settling agriculture which is otherwise shifting under a business-as-usual scenario.

These categories will be identified and mapped based on satellite imagery and field verification.

[29] National definition of the forest: "A forest is defined by a minimum area of 0.5 ha, a tree cover greater than 30% and trees with a height of 3 meters minimum".

Adapted plantation surface areas

The aim is to give farmers the option of reducing the average 7 ha slash and burn agriculture surface area necessary for the survival of a household to a maximum of 5 ha, in return for a set of incentives. Of these 5 ha, farmers will choose the ratio between the agroforestry system based on cocoa and the sustainable agroforestry system based on subsistence and fruit crops. The adoption of perennial crops such as shade-grown cocoa will stimulate and diversify household incomes, while supporting subsistence crops will improve food security.

Adapted plantation density for the cocoa-based system

Conventionally, planting is done at relatively high densities, of about 1,100-1,300 feet of cocoa per hectare. However, such a practice only maximizes production for the first few years. After 4 to 5 years, competition between cocoa trees is exacerbated, with the direct consequence of stagnating or even decreasing production. The project will limit cacao tree density to 850 per ha and for fruit trees, at most 100 per ha.

In summary, the project uses a climate-smart approach that does not distort the plantation site, but enriches it. In other words, this approach favours:

- addressing the food needs of local communities and indigenous peoples by proposing a food-based agroforestry model in severely degraded areas. In this case, there would be an increase in carbon stock through the establishment of the agroforestry system;
- improving livelihoods by boosting income through cocoa-based agroforestry systems. In this case, emissions related to the opening of new spaces for unsustainable and unproductive systems are avoided;
- considering all aspects of natural forest cover regeneration in the conservation of lightly degraded and non-degraded zones (60-100%).

4.7.1 Component 1: Technical support for growers

Sub-component 1.1: Popularisation and training on climate-smart agricultural practices

For the cocoa-based agroforestry approach, the project will build on the experiences of the Forestry and Economic Diversification Project, PFDE (agroforestry microprojects and banana-cocoa project). The farmers' training program established under these projects will be renewed and will focus on production techniques that maximize quality, yield and sustainability. This will allow farmers to sell their production at a higher price. Training will focus on international standards of production, land preparation, planting, maintenance, harvesting and processing. Extension control agents will have to monitor production to provide quality assurance and oversee the sustainability of the activity.

For the agroforestry approach based on fruit and subsistence crops, the project will raise farmers' awareness of the benefits of agroforestry systems and train interested farmers. Training will include the use of improved varieties, agroforestry and intercropping systems, soil conservation techniques, organic fertilisation (including mulching, composting and burial of biomass, in particular leguminous plant species), pest management, forest fire management, processing of agricultural production and marketing. The project will also create demonstration community plots to promote the use of organic fertilizers and nitrogen-fixing species. Nurseries will be established for these species.

Sub-component 1.2: Access to high-quality genetic materials

The cocoa plants will be high quality hybrids produced under the National Cocoa Development Plan according to strict production standards. Farmers willing to participate in this project will be able to select the agroforestry system that seems best suited to their situation. They will have to submit a microproject proposal whose feasibility will be assessed by the CDMC. Following the validation of their microprojects and in addition to the training, farmers will have access to improved seeds for the first crop cycle. Monitoring compliance with the conditions package will be done through several means:

- The CDMC, supported by the FIP project management unit, will examine the compliance of the microprojects with the requirements outlined above.
- The FIP management unit will carry out on-site verification before and during the installation of the plantation and will perform (i) plots and plantations coordinates measurements and (ii) registration.

Compliance with this package will be a condition for financial support for growers.

4.7.2 Component 2: Financial support for growers

Sub-component 2.1: Revolving funds

Since cocoa plants are produced through the National Cocoa Development Plan, the project will ensure the purchase and transport of these plants, financial support for field preparation and basic inputs for production.

To maximise reach, all support to farmers (including that involved in component 1) will pass through the revolving funds managed by the CDMC or by the concertation committees of the Local Development Funds (LDF). These committees will receive support from an organisation experienced in revolving fund management to guarantee transparent fund management.

The Project will provide grants to beneficiaries based on submissions to the CDMC, which will evaluate them with help from the support organization. The project will use mobile money to transfer the funds for the purchase of the equipment needed to implement the microprojects. Farmers will then reimburse the revolving funds administered by the CDMC according to a predefined timetable based on their crop timings, so that these funds can be reinvested in other micro-projects.

Sub-component 2.2: Payments for conservation

Payments for conservation to small growers consist of incentives for the conservation of local community forests (located in the SDC and the buffer zones of protected areas), in line with the Simple Management Plans developed by the PFDE.

Collective incentives for conservation: The purpose of this type of payment is to deal with community activities such as illegal logging or artisanal mining that may be a threat to sustainable forest management. These payments will be based on performance, that is to say on the number of ha of forest preserved, which would have been deforested and burnt under a business-as-usual scenario. For example, communities may decide to place a conservation area where they could still collect Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) and use performance payments to reinvest in projects that (i) benefit the entire community and (ii) are more aligned with REDD+ objectives. This could include building a processing unit for cocoa, etc. The aim of these collective payments is to create communal

incentives to the respect of conservation, compliance with the SMPs and requirements on agricultural best practices. In summary, communities will receive these payments only if they comply with the guidelines associated with, respectively: (i) Single Management Plans, and (ii) reducing areas burned by their agricultural practices.

Individual incentives for conservation: This type of payment is intended to accompany the implementation of component 1 of the agroforestry plantation project developed above. In this case, conservation payments will help smallholder farmers to abandon slash and burn farming practices and may limit rebound effects. Individuals will receive payments to reinvest in their sustainable agriculture model and in the maintenance of these new plantations. This incentive must constrain the agroforestry activity to small areas (less than 5 ha) so that it does not itself become a driver of deforestation. An individual with medium agroforestry areas (less than 5 ha) but who will protect a large area of forest will receive more support than an individual who prefers to plant 10 ha or more of monoculture cocoa.

These are also performance payments where individuals will receive these payments if and only if they comply with the guidelines associated respectively with: (i) the Single Management Plans, (ii) the agroforestry schemes proposed by the project, and (iii) the reduction in area burned by their agricultural practices.

Post-plantation monitoring will be carried out regularly throughout the project life cycle and beyond. During the project, it will be carried out through:

- participatory monitoring with communities to ensure that conditions are met to obtain collective payments for conservation;
- the CDMC and the FIP unit (with the aim to monitor SMP implementation);
- the management unit of the ER-Program and the CNIAF which, as part of the MRV, will regularly carry out monitoring campaigns using remote sensing and field verification;
- the private logging company responsible for the SDC in question, who will also be responsible for the continued compliance with requirements (see RIL requirements specification).

Moreover, CDMCs will be audited annually by the FIP management unit to ensure the proper functioning and governing of these entities.

4.7.3 Component 3: Post-harvest support for growers

To increase farmers' incomes and maintain a sustainable commercial interest in agroforestry systems, the project will provide support through the following three sub-components.

Sub-component 3.1: Support for product transformation

This support will be provided through the training of farmers' groups and the provision of simple mechanised processing units (mobile or installed in key central locations).

Sub-component 3.2: Support for product storage

The project will support the renovation of existing basic food storage facilities and train farmers in the management of their products and storage techniques.

Sub-component 3.3: Support for the improvement of access to markets

High transport costs due to the poor state of infrastructure in the production areas, insufficient competition between traders due to limited access to credit, the geographical dispersion of

production, the inadequate organization of producers, low household purchasing power and inadequate information relating to markets are all factors that weaken farmers' ability to profit from their production in the marketplace. To improve access to markets, the project will organise the farmers into groups that will pool their production to obtain a sufficient volume of production so that its conveyance can become profitable for the carriers (who are often also the wholesale buyers). Additional support will be provided to organisations for budgeting, accounting and marketing.

1.5 Preparation for implementation

Experience at the national level exists and can be shared and used for the implementation of the FIP project. The experiences and capacities acquired during the implementation of the PFDE project and the PND Cacao will be capitalised upon. The presence of OLAM, a specialist in the cacao sector, can aid in obtaining technical and marketing support.

The Republic of Congo also has state services that are specialized in the sector and will be able to advise and reorient certain activities as required. These state services include the National Reforestation Service, the Non-Timber Forest Products Valorisation Center, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock Extension Services, etc.

1.6 Potential national and international partners, including their financial support to the REDD+

Potential partners at the national level are the MEF and the MAEP including directions mentioned above (such as the SNR, CVPFNL, etc.). In addition, local public administrations such as the CDMC, which continue to benefit from capacity building (via the PFDE), can play a role in supporting the implementation of the project.

At the private sector level, OLAM is an important implementation partner for the cocoa sector. Indeed, between 2011 and 2016, CIB-OLAM was a government implementation partner for the National Cocoa Development Plan 1. As part of the PND1, CIB-OLAM provided technical support – through the creation of the Pokola nursery, which has an annual capacity of 1.4 million plants, the free production and distribution of plants, farmer training, and positioned itself as a potential buyer of quality national produce.

Among development partners:

- The AFD is establishing (i) a project to revive the cocoa sector for the amount of 5 million euros; and (ii) a forest landscape project in northern Congo, one of the components of which deals with supporting innovative and climate-smart agricultural systems (agroforestry) for the amount of 8 million euros.
- The UNDP is establishing, through GEF funds, the TRIDOM project. One of the components aims the promotion of revenue-generating activities for populations in park buffer zones (agroforestry) for the amount of 3 million euros.
- The World Bank is establishing a pilot project for agroforestry activities in the SDC of North Congo as a part of the PFDE financed by the GEF. Its funding for these activities is of just under 2 million dollars.
- The World Bank is also introducing its commercial agriculture project (PDAC), which offers an open menu of options to support certain agricultural sectors. This project has a financing capacity of 100 million dollars which could contribute to the implementation of the cocoa PND2 through the production of seedlings, support to the implementation of a value chain for the production and marketing of cocoa in the Republic of Congo and the provision of technical and financial support to growers.

- The FAO is currently drafting a project proposal for the GCF which will also include co-financing for the development of agroforestry systems in the Northern regions of Congo. The monetary value of this component has not yet been determined.

1.7 Justification of FIP funding

The project aims to improve the population's means of subsistence and living conditions while reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. These results are mainly global public goods with substantial benefits for the population. Public funding is justified for this purpose. FIP funding is justified because the project contributes to reducing deforestation and mitigating climate change, has a real potential leverage effect, ensures full stakeholder involvement and provides substantial co-benefits, all in harmony with FIP criteria.

The figure below shows the importance of investing in the FIP due to the place it occupies in the financial system of REDD+ in Republic of Congo.

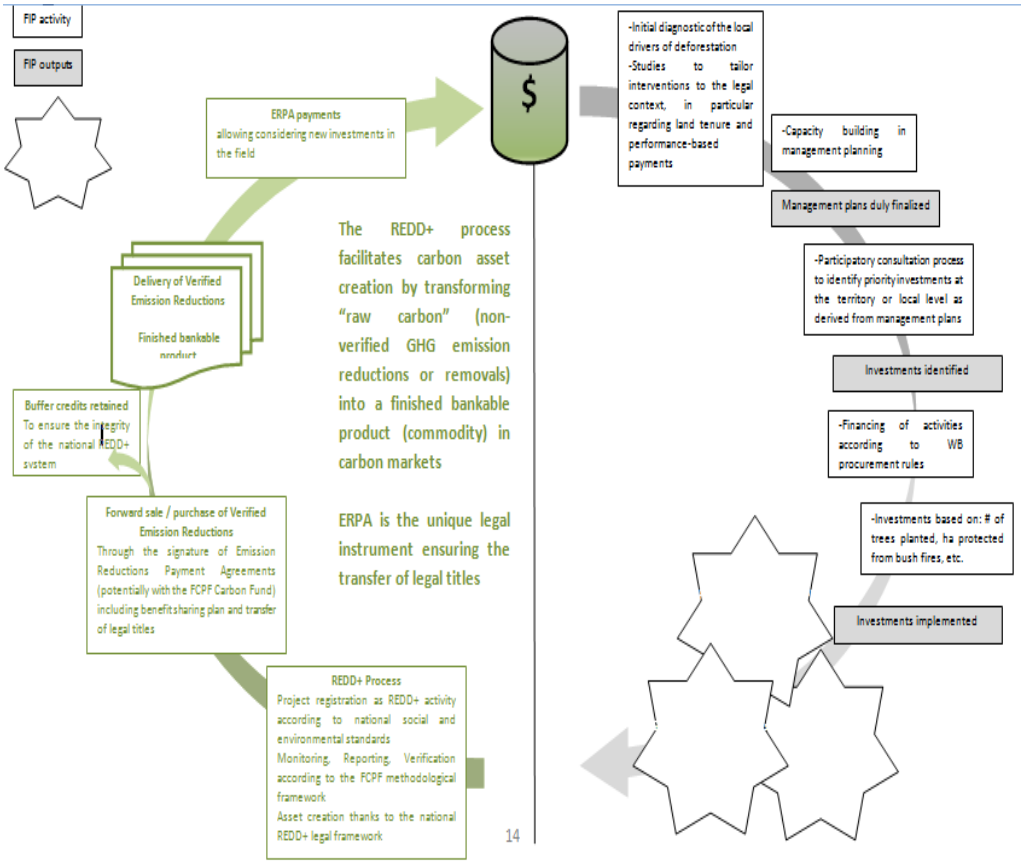

Figure 8. Importance of the FIP investment

The FIP funding adheres to all FIP criteria, as shown in the table below.

Table 18. Alignment of the agroforestry plantation project in Northern Congo, mainly in degraded or non-forest areas, with the FIP criteria

FIP investment criteria	
1. Climate change mitigation potential	Implementation of the FIP agroforestry project will reduce up to 3.7 million tCO_2e over a 20-year period. It should also be noted that the FIP will contribute to the reduction of at least 10 million tonnes over five years in the framework of the ER-Program by allowing (i) the reduction of emissions caused by local communities and Indigenous Peoples and (ii) the participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in the program. The success of the ER-Program is conditioned by overall performance and therefore by the number of participants.
2. Demonstration potential	The proposed agroforestry activities are economically profitable activities that aim to make growers self-sufficient. The revolving fund approach makes it possible to perpetuate these activities beyond the duration of the project. This approach could be replicated in other parts of the country.
3. Economic efficiency	Agricultural initiatives covering the whole industry and value chain will contribute to the success of the project. The fact that the FIP is an entry ticket to participate in the ER-Program gives additional funding opportunities through results based payments. The project therefore contributes to the establishment of a virtuous circle of investment (see Figure 3). The activities are expected to be self-sufficient and therefore will not require future financial support. The "revolving funds" approach allows an extension of activities as it generates investments. The project will leverage investments from the World Bank's Commercial Agriculture project.
4. Success potential	Existing pilot initiatives will inform the FIP project. Sharing experiences from these initiatives will facilitate the implementation of the project and ensure its success. The inclusion of the project in the ER-Program and the presence and the involvement of the CIB OLAM in the project area also represent significant assets to guarantee its success.
5. Integrated sustainable development (co-benefits)	• Long-term livelihood improvement • Protection and conservation of biodiversity • Strengthening of participative management in the SDCs. • Adaptation to climate change thanks to the diversification of revenues generated by agroforestry.
6. Safeguards	The project will be subject to REDD+ safeguards (to be incorporated into the new Forest Code). The project will also capitalize on the experiences of the PFDE, which has already developed its safeguards for the same type of activities as those suggested by the FIP.

1.8 Risks and safeguard measures

The project will comply with the safeguards developed by the Government that apply the REDD+ principles, criteria and indicators, as well as the World Bank's operational policies.

The proposed project is expected to have positive social and environmental impacts. In accordance with World Bank safeguards policies, project-specific safeguards will be produced during the preparation phase in accordance with the Bank's safeguard requirements, only after the submission and approval of the Investment Plan. By virtue of its preparation for REDD+, supported by the FCPF, CN-REDD has validated its Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and Environmental

and Social Management Framework (ESMF) at the national level. The REDD+ preparation process also produced five frameworks, namely (i) a resettlement policy framework, (ii) a pest management framework, (iii) a process framework, (iv) an indigenous peoples' framework, and (v) and a cultural heritage framework. A grievance redress mechanism is being finalized. All these documents will inform the FIP investment planning process, as well as the further development of the project and the project-specific safeguard documents required during preparation.

With regard to participation and consultation, project preparation will be based on approaches such as the FPIC and detailed and comprehensive consultation procedures already implemented by CN-REDD in the context of the REDD+ preparation process but also by the PFDE as part of its consultation activities.

The project preparation process will work with the PFDE, which has also developed its safeguard instruments and is already addressing problems in the agroforestry sector. These safeguard measures can thus serve as a model for the present project. This collaboration between the various existing projects will ensure that the project is inclusive and informed (through information exchange activities) and that there is broad community support for the proposed activities. Some landscape-level activities may lead to changes in land use that have an impact on means of subsistence. However, only voluntary measures based on community decision-making will be supported. Community decision-making processes will be designed and monitored to ensure that they identify appropriate measures to mitigate the negative impacts of vulnerable members of the community, in accordance with World Bank standards.

1.9 Funding plan

Tableau 19: Financing plan for the priority agroforestry plantation project in degraded and non-forest areas

Support program for the implementation of agroforestry plantations in the North Congo (part of the ER-Program) (M USD)						
	FIP and CAFI funding plan				**Cofunding / Parallel funding**	
	CAFI	**FIP**			**GCF**	**Other**
Component	Grant	Grant	Loan	**Total**		
C1: Technical support for growers	-	2	5	**7**	*TBD*	GEF-PFDE ($2,4 million) WB-PDAC (*TBD*) AFD cocoa project (€5.5 million) AFD PPFNC (*TBD*) FIP DGM (*TBD*) FCPF – Carbon Funds (*TBD*)
C2: Financial support for growers	-	1	3	**4**	*TBD*	
C3: Post-harvest support for growers	-	1	4	**5**	*TBD*	
TOTAL	-	4	12	**16**	*TBD*	*TBD*

1.10 Provisional calendar

Table 20: Provisional FIP Schedule for the priority agroforestry plantation project in degraded areas and non-forest areas

Activity	**Step**	**Indicative date**
FIP approval		Month 0
Project preparation	Preparation of the World Bank mission	Month 1 Month 1-2

	Preparation of the project document	
Evaluation	Multilateral review of documents Amending and refining of project documents	Month 3-4
Government approval and FIP/CAFI monitoring committee	Submission of a project approval request	Month 5
FIP sub-committee approval	Submission of a project approval request	Month 6
World Bank approval	Submission to the board of directors	Month 8

2. Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the departments of Pool and Plateaux

2.1 Implementation partners, government agency and direct stakeholders

- MDB: FIP (AFDB), AFDB ("Feed Africa" initiative), AFD, GCF, EU (VPA FLEGT)
- Project manager: MEF (ProNAR)
- Contractor: SNR

2.2 Issues and challenges

Forest resources are vital for the livelihoods of the Congolese rural populations: they provide the bulk of fuelwood, construction wood, but also food resources, for which the hunting and gathering NTFPs occupy an important place, in a socio-economic context where nearly half of the national population lives below the poverty line. The incidence of poverty especially high in rural areas (75% against 46.5% at the national level) (UNDP, 2015).

Moreover, the production and consumption of fuelwood, the country's main source of energy for cooking (close to 85% of households) (CN-REDD, 2014), is one of the main direct causes of deforestation and forest degradation, in the absence of any sustainable management or formalisation of the sector. But they are also significant and essential sources of income for rural households located close to a major road or waterway: their sale supplies the major urban markets, such as Brazzaville, Pointe Noire and Ouesso.

Although the annual rate of deforestation in Congo is currently low, the exploitation, processing and consumption of fuelwood is expected to develop gradually in the years to come. According to Massamouna (2017), fuelwood demand in Brazzaville's only urban basin, where the country's demand for fuelwood is the strongest, follows the overall population growth rate of almost 3 % per year: in 2017, this implies an estimated need equivalent to around 864,000 m^3 of wood, which would increase to nearly 1,000,000 m^3 in 2023.

The current modes of harvesting forest resources to feed the different supply chains (uncontrolled, unmanaged operations), processing industries (traditional carbonisation with low yield) and use of fuelwood (use of improved stoves that remains marginal) constitute a barrier to the objectives of sustainable development advocated by the Republic of Congo, which are detailed in its National REDD+ Strategy and have the following consequences (according to Escouflaire, 2014):

- they contribute directly to deforestation and forest degradation and contribute to climate change;
- they represent a danger for the biodiversity conservation;
- they generate a significant loss of State tax revenues;
- they constitute a significant barrier to the perspective of a sustainable and formalised management of natural resources.

2.3 Investment strategy

Sustainable fuelwood supply in the Brazzaville urban basin is a high environmental and socio-economic priority for which the National REDD+ Strategy plans a pragmatic and efficient response through its Objective 4: Rationalisation of the production and use of fuelwood and promotion of other clean

energy sources. To face this important challenge, the suggested investment strategy is based on three main objectives, which are complementary and objectively measurable, as follows:

(i) **Increase national capacity to enhance carbon stock and reduce GHG emissions:** Beyond the fuelwood sector, it is necessary to reduce the level of harvesting of forest resources and reduce the pressure on biodiversity and related GHG emissions (restoration of forest cover by individual and collective village plantations in supply zones, rationalisation of exploitation and processing by and for rural populations in production areas); a forecast target of 6,000 ha of plantations would represent a reduction of emission equivalent to 230,000 tCO_2e (based on the estimates made under the Ntsio project in the DRC);
It is for this reason that beyond the fuelwood industry, the aim is to significantly reduce the level of GHG emissions associated with the use of fuelwood (rationalisation of the use of charcoal and firewood);

(ii) **Begin the development of an innovative value chain for the sustainable fuelwood supply industry in the Brazzaville urban basin**

(iii) **Improve the resilience of rural populations in the supply zone by diversifying revenues:** The aim is to directly reduce poverty from the start of the production to the use of products, in order to ensure the adoption and sustainability of the social change created by the new management methods for the benefiting village workers; this strategic objective will combine the socio-economic benefits of fuelwood forest plantations and resilient agroforestry systems, enabling regular and continuous monetary incomes (agricultural products and fuelwood) for rural producer households, especially during the time needed for the first plantation production (5 to 8 years depending on the species and the technical itineraries).

The proposed project is fully in line with the aims and objectives of the ProNAR, which will be responsible for the management of the project, in conjunction with the SNR, to ensure its coherence and efficiency of action, and its strict alignment with the National REDD+ Strategy.

2.4 Transformational impact and co-benefits

The proposed action, which is based on the development of fast-growing plantations, does not aim by itself to provide fuelwood for the entire Brazzaville urban area, for which the 6,000 ha of expected plantations would cover only 2% of current demand. Instead, in view of the expected transformational impact, the investment strategy aims at generating a powerful leverage effect which will lead the local populations in the supply zones to sustainably build and take ownership, with all the necessary support and technical supervision, of the socio-economic, technical and socio-cultural change induced by this new value chain for the fuelwood sector.

The main expected environmental results are:

- An increase in forest surface area;
- An increase in carbon stocks and a reduction of GHG emissions linked to fuelwood use;
- A reduction of pressures on gallery forests and natural forest formations;
- Biodiversity conservation;
- Improved productivity of the land and of agricultural yields, and the restoration of degraded lands.

The main expected socio-economic results are:

- The improvement and diversification of revenues (fuelwood, subsistence and commercial agricultural products, essential oils, etc.) also linked to the improvement of the adaptation capacities to climate change;
- An improvement in living conditions and the reduction of poverty with the effective and significant inclusion of women and marginalised groups;
- The structuring of existing industries, and the creation of new industries valorising forestry and agricultural resources;
- The reduction of fuelwood collection works (and of their arduousness, in particular for rural women) through the establishment of plantations near communities and the reduction of fuelwood needs with the use of improved cook stoves;
- An increase in the purchasing power of urban households, through the reduction of the budget allocated for household energy;
- An improvement in health conditions (use of cook stoves emitting less fumes and so less harmful for general health, vision and the respiratory system);
- An awareness of the need for forest protection and of mitigation/adaptation to climate change.

2.5 Project description

Clearly targeted intervention zones

At the source of the fuelwood industry, the project will be implemented at the level of the villages and communities of the main fuelwood production areas in the Brazzaville urban area (and therefore close to the transport networks of Brazzaville). According to the study carried out by Massamouna (2017), these are Kinkala, Ngoma Tse-Tse, Mbanza-Ndounga and Ignie (in the Pool department) and Mpouya and Gamboma (in the Plateaux department).

In the Pool and Plateaux departments, fuelwood production is one of the main income generating activities for rural households. In these two departments, the overexploitation of gallery forests for fuelwood gathering generates degradation and deforestation, with strong effects felt by local populations; these local effects are combined with the overall effects of seasonal changes and the gradual shift of the hunger season between the rainy season and the dry season.

The Pool and of Plateaux departments are characterised by the presence of two main alternating ecosystems: forests and savannahs. Forests are restricted forest galleries, while savannas, sometimes grassy, shrubby and wooded, form the core of savannah ecosystems:

- In Pool, forests are in the minority compared to savannahs. These ecosystems take up respectively 12% and 88% of the department's total surface area.
- Plateaux has the advantage of having more forests than the Pool. The surface areas covered by forests and savannahs accounts for 21% and 79%, respectively (Massamouna, 2017).

Land tenure security, cornerstone of the project

Ownership at the production end of the value chain will rely on access to land and secure land tenure of forest and agroforestry plantations. After a preliminary information campaign, access to land tenure will be carried out with interested landowners - customary and/or having pre-existing titles - and the support of the local institutional arrangements allowing land security and access to plantation activities

for most rural households, including those without land (making available, renting, selling, sharecropping, etc.).

This approach, in a context of increasing commodification of land in the major areas of influence of the urban demand of Brazzaville (for agricultural products, fuelwood, etc.), will improve the living conditions of households, including the most vulnerable groups. This improvement will take place both through income from the production and processing of fuelwood and through the improvement of agricultural production by agroforestry systems. Improved agricultural productivity will guarantee food security and sufficient incomes during the period of implementation and growth of limber plantations, and make available a share of the household labour force which may be called upon to develop and maintain forestry and agroforestry plantations.

Gender and vulnerable group dimensions

Upstream of the fuelwood industry, the project will attach great importance to the issue of gender and gender equality, in particular through the empowerment of women and the development of technical itineraries that improve the productivity of labour, and consequently, diminishing its arduousness. The project will train and/or strengthen the capacity of rural communities, especially women, in various subsistence activities, including agriculture in agroforestry systems and fuelwood production, and will facilitate access to micro-credits and provide bank securities with the aim to expand and generate alternative income-generating activities. As a corollary, women's income-generating activities allow household saving and spending that are more concentrated on primary needs (health, education, clothing, etc.), as opposed to male incomes and consumption patterns (including alcohol); moreover, Congolese women often show a level of mutualism and mutual assistance far superior to men (*tontines*, women's associations and groups, self-help groups, etc.).

Downstream of the fuelwood sector, the distribution of improved cook stoves, both in rural households in supply areas and in urban households in Brazzaville, is directly affecting women. In rural fuelwood production areas, the expected significant reduction in the time spent collecting firewood will benefit women directly (almost exclusively a female activity, such as preparing and cooking meals, both in rural and urban areas), which can therefore be carried over to other production, technical training, education or cultural activities. In urban areas, in Brazzaville, women will be directly and almost exclusively affected by the distribution of improved cook stoves, benefiting from the following direct impacts: increase in the purchasing power of households (through the mechanical reduction of charcoal requirements via the use of economical cook stoves) and reduction of fumes emitted in kitchens.

To respond to the strategic aims in a synchronised, functional and operational way, the project will be structured around the 3 following components:

2.5.1 Component 1: Plantation of fast-growing timber species for fuelwood production

Affected zone:	Pool and the Plateaux
Beneficiaries:	Landowners and customary owners, producers' associations
Plantation types:	Plantations of fast growing tree species (soil-improving species Acacia auriculiformis and A. mangium for acid soils, A. mearnsii, Leucaena diversifolia, etc.). The rotation time is 5 to 7 years.
Planted surface per beneficiary:	Between 2 and 10 ha per family unity, with an aim of 4.000 ha.

	(1 group or association of 10 members of distinct families = 20 to 100 ha, etc.)
Products:	Charcoal, fuelwood, and derived products (essential oil of E. citriodora, acacia honey, etc.)

Activity 1.1 *Identification of beneficiaries, plantation types and locations and land security*

The first sub-component will entail the establishment of an exhaustive consultation process in all considered villages and communities, while respecting the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), in compliance with the PCI REDD+, in order to:

- identify potential beneficiaries and available zones for the plantations;
- consult local communities and indigenous people to raise awareness of and discuss the project, identify their needs and the forestry systems to implement (fuel types, products, rotation length, etc.);
- create/revitalize the associations/community groups that will participate directly in the project (including the operation statutes and modalities);
- secure the land of the project zone with customary and legal authorities;
- define simple management plans (SMP) associated with plantations and develop a best practice guide, the basis of the “rules of the game” of the management to be established.

Activity 1.2 *Support for the establishment and management of plantations*

This activity will be carried out through capacity building (including training and materials acquisitions) focussed on:

- technical support and training services (particularly ProNAR and SNR), research partners and local NGOs directly involved in project implementation;
- rural beneficiaries in terms of organisation, business plan development, profit management, industries, etc.
- acquiring materials and training for the establishment and maintenance of nurseries, and the acquisition/distribution of farm inputs. The project will be able to relay on nurseries established in the project zone by the SNR and/or the other projects.
- the implementation of simple management plans (SMP), in particular for soil preparation, plantation, maintenance, cutting and transformation;
- participative project monitoring;
- the establishment of access to micro-credits for households, groups, associations, beneficiaries, etc.

Activity 1.3 *Project support, monitoring and evaluation*

This will involve setting up an inclusive support process for beneficiaries and participatory monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the project's implementation, its social and technical adoption, its long-term sustainability and its replication at larger scales. It will be essential to anticipate the establishment of an effective follow-up that can go beyond the project funding period on at least the duration of a rotation of the plantations to ensure the effectiveness of the project on the long term.

Indeed, support must also be provided through the establishment of accessible and effective support structures and financial mechanisms to ensure long-term support and replication of initiatives. This can be achieved through the establishment of sustainable support structures that will facilitate not only cooperation on the value chain, access to information and training, but also the development of

business plans and access to funding. In addition, suitable financial mechanisms, for example micro-credits for plantations with specialized institutions (MUCODEC type), tax incentives, PES system or even insurance systems, will be developed to support access to sources.

2.5.2 Component 2: Agroforestry plantations for the production of fuelwood and the improvement of agricultural productivity

Affected zone:	Pool (South)
Beneficiaries:	Landowners and customary owners, producers' associations
Plantation types:	Plantations of fast-growing species (e.g. Acacia auriculiformis, A. mangium s, A. mearnsii, Leucaena diversifolia, Leucaena leucocephala or Gliricidia sepium) in combination with cassava, peanut and/or maize crops. The average rotation period considered is 5 years.
Planted surface per beneficiary:	Between 1 and 2 ha, for an aim of 2.000 ha
Products:	Charcoal and firewood, manioc, maize and/or peanuts, fruits, etc.

It should be noted that since plantations will be carried out on relatively small areas, it is suggested to concentrate mainly on fuelwood, which is the resource most used by rural households. The fuelwood produced will be used primarily by the local communities for their daily needs, and avoid the removal of pre-existing forest resources. The surpluses will be destined for sale in the city of Brazzaville.

Activity 2.1 *Identification of beneficiaries, plantation types and sites, and land security*

This activity will also require the implementation of a comprehensive consultation process in all the villages and communities considered by the project, respecting the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), replicating the content of the Activity 1.1. As part of this activity, special attention will be given to identifying, securing land for and benefiting the poorest vulnerable groups.

Activity 2.2 *Support for the establishment of plantations*

This activity will be carried out through capacity building (including training and materials acquisitions) focussed on:

- technical support and training services (particularly ProNAR and SNR), research partners and local NGOs directly involved in project implementation;
- rural beneficiaries in terms of organisation, business plan development, profit management, industries, etc.
- acquiring materials and training for the establishment and maintenance of nurseries, and the acquisition/distribution of improved vegetal materials
- the implementation of simple management plans (SMP), in particular for soil preparation, plantation, maintenance, cutting and transformation;
- participative project monitoring.

The recommended agroforestry systems will be selected according to simple management plans that will be developed with the support of the project and before the start of the works. These simple management plans will determine the technical itineraries, the genetic requirements, the type and frequency of the work and the technical assistance required. They will also determine the location of

projects within the communities, the management and implementation structure among the participating families, and determine the individual plots within the communities. In doing so, simple management plans will establish the basis for a benefit sharing system.

As an example, the Mampu-type systems in the DRC (*acacia and cassava*), Ntisio, the *taungya* method or models developed by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in the Plateaux, could be valorised and promoted. By taking the example of the acacia/cassava/maize agroforestry systems as suggested in the cost-benefit analysis of the National REDD+ Strategy, acacias are planted in association with maize for 4 months, then in association with cassava for 18 months. After the cassava harvest, the plot is occupied exclusively by plantations until the end of the rotation.

Activity 2.3 *Support, monitoring and evaluation of the component*

This will involve setting up an inclusive process of technical and financial support for beneficiaries and of participatory monitoring and evaluation, as for Activity 1.3.

2.5.3 Component 3: Improvement of carbonisation techniques and distribution of improved cook stoves

Affected zones:	Charcoal production sites (improved carbonisation) Brazzaville urban basin and targeted rural households for components I and II (improved cook stoves)
Beneficiaries:	Charcoal craftsmen/craftsmen (for the production of improved cook stoves) Rural and urban households, small businesses
Types:	Diffusion of the so-called "casamançaise" kiln carbonization technique Distribution of economic improved cook stoves (Mboté type) using charcoal in urban areas and firewood in rural areas: objective of 20.000 cook stoves in 5 years
Activities:	Training, support for charcoal craftsmen for the adoption of simple techniques of improved carbonisation (casamançaise kiln) [improved efficiency of 20 to 30% compared to a traditional mill] Support to Brazzaville artisans for the manufacture of improved Mboté-type improved cook stoves (improved yield of 20 to 40%, depending on size, compared to traditional cooking) Distribution of improved cook stoves

Activity 3.1 *Diffusion of improved carbonisation techniques*

The project will support the training of charcoal craftsmen (an almost exclusively male activity) to the so-called "casamançaise" charcoal kilns, validated by many projects and programs in Africa as a particularly appropriate technology, which does not require the purchase of specific materials, but only know-how. Support in the form of small protective equipment (shovels, boots, gloves, etc.) will be provided to charcoal producers, as well as professional management, structuring and organisation support.

Traditional Congolese kilns, using wood from gallery forests or savannahs, have very poor yields, between 20 and 30%. On the basis of a charcoal production resulting from the wood plantations put in place, the expected gain in material yield is more than 30%.

Activity 3.2 *Choice of improved cook stoves*

Several models adapted to the needs of populations in urban and rural areas (such as the size of the home, depending on the volume to be cooked) have already been developed and disseminated in the Republic of Congo. This first activity will therefore involve testing/selecting, alongside the beneficiary populations and artisans who will be called upon for their production, the models to be disseminated in Brazzaville and in the villages in the production areas. These models will be chosen based on available raw materials, efficiency, volume, cost, product life, etc.

According to Le Gagneux (2015), the use of a Congo Mboté type improved cook stove (improved economic cooker model developed as part of the CAFEC project by the NGO *Initiative Développement*) will allow a reduction in fuelwood needs of 20 to 40%, depending on the cook stove models.

Activity 3.3 *Production and distribution of cook stoves*

The main barrier to the distribution of improved cook stoves is the initial purchase cost, which may represent, according to the study of Le Gagneux (2015), 15 to 20% of the monthly salary. In order to reduce the selling price of improved cook stoves and make it attractive for consumers, the project will support artisans in their mass production in order to achieve a competitive production cost.

Improved cook stoves will be mainly distributed in urban areas, in Brazzaville and its urban periphery, where most of the country's fuelwood consumption is concentrated.

The distribution of improved stoves in rural areas will focus on rural households directly benefiting from the project; it will aim to:

- reduce the daily fuelwood requirements of households, and consequently the removal of forest resources,
- reduce the arduousness and time spent by women for this collection, and consequently increase the time available for other domestic tasks, agriculture, and learning,
- commercialise fuelwood from plantations. Given that most of the villages in the villages use firewood, cook stoves will be wood burning cook stoves.

Activity 3.4 *Support and participative monitoring and evaluation of the component*

This will involve setting up an inclusive process of support for beneficiaries and participatory monitoring and evaluation, as for activities 1.3. and 2.3.

A system of certification and legality for charcoal, fuelwood and improved cook stoves will be developed in collaboration with the FLEGT initiative, which will ultimately serve as a basis for the introduction of differential national taxation incentives for strengthening the expected leverage of the project.

2.6 Preparation for implementation

The MEF, in particular through the SNR and the ProNAR, has extensive experience in project management of sectoral projects financed by private and public development partners. One of the important achievements of the ProNAR is the identification of 1 million ha of land suitable for plantations, of various ways of securing land and of economic models for the different types of plantations carried out during the feasibility study of the program.

One of the foundations of the creation of ProNAR undoubtedly stems from the experience of Congo in the sector of forest plantations, in reforestation in forest zones (Limba, ...) and in afforestation of the

savannahs (Eucalyptus and Tropical Pines). To this must be added the exceptional research successes, particularly the cloning of Eucalyptus in 1973 and the development of industrial clonal plantations in the coastal savannahs (with the UAIC followed by Eco and then the EFC), which gave Congo a world-wide reputation for fast-growing forest species.

The ProNAR, with the advantage of its scientific and technical achievements and national know-how and expertise, and its network of scientific and technical partners, will ensure the preparation of the project; through its Coordination Unit, it will fully play its role as a catalyst for the new sectoral policy of the State and its alignment with the National REDD+ Strategy, as well as interministerial dialogue and consultation with stakeholders.

The WCS is also working on agroforestry and fuelwood models that could serve as examples. The project will also collaborate with research institutions and local NGOs working on outreach services to charcoal burners. Models successfully experimented with experienced elsewhere (*e.g. Mampou and Ntsio in the DRC*) will be adapted to the Congolese context.

2.7 Potential national and international partners, including their financial support to the REDD+

The project will be managed by the MFE, via the ProNAR and the National Reforestation Service (SNR). The financial partners are as following:

- the AFDB, though (i) FIP funding and (ii) additional funding from its “Feed Africa” initiative to support the agriculture in Component II,
- the AFD, which showed an interest in the outcomes of the project’s activities, in particular Component III,
- the GCF, which already plans forest plantations in the Pool department to increase the offering of fuelwood. The GCF co-financing principle was agreed to strengthen the plantation development components of the FIP project,
- the European Union, through the FLEGT program, could co-finance the aspects of the program such as the certification and legality of charcoal, firewood, and improved cook stoves.

Among the potential technical partners, one may name:

- The John Aspinall foundation, which, since 2009, has established agroforestry plantations (subsistence and firewood crops) with communities in the North Pool as part of the “Local Development Project surrounding the Lésio-Louna Gorilla Natural Reserve” (PROFADELL), which is funded by the European Union;
- The WCS which carries out similar operations on the Batéké plateaus at the periphery of the Léfini reserves as part of the CAFEC since 2014 (USAID/NICFI funding);
- The organisation Femmes Energie or the Initiative Développement (ID), involved in the implementation of projects for the distribution of improved cook stoves in the Republic of Congo.

2.8 Justification of FIP funding

The investment strategy proposed through the project aims to provide a sustainable domestic energy supply to the vast urban basin of Brazzaville, while improving the means of subsistence of rural populations in supply areas and reducing GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, thus fully meeting the criteria of the FIP. This alignment of project actions with the FIP criteria is detailed in the table below.

Table 21: Alignment of community and fuelwood agroforestry in the Pool and Plateaux departments

FIP investment criteria	
1. Potential for climate change mitigation	The project will enable: - An increase in carbon stocks in plantations estimated at 230.000 tCO_2e - A reduction in pressure on surrounding degraded forests - A reduction of around 30% of emissions resulting from the consumption of fuelwood (estimated at 2tCO_2e/year/household) for 20000 households, or a reduction of CO2 emissions of 30.000 tecCO2 in 5 years.
2. Demonstration potential	The project will have the potential to be replicated around other major urban centres, such as Pointe Noire, Ouesso, Dolisie and other departments of the country where pressure on forests is high
3. Economic efficiency	The cost-benefit analyses of the national REDD+ strategy showed that these activities were viable with a good benefit/cost ratio.
4. Success potential	The ProNAR and the SNR have competences and expertise in the field of rapidly growing plantations in Congo and the instruments needed to secure land. Similar initiatives (agroforestry and improved cook stoves) have been undertaken in the Batéké plateaux as part of the PROFADELL and CAFEC project The project envisages the creation and revitalization of local associations which will be in charge of sustaining the project in the long term. These associations will have recognized statutes and internal rules validated according to the FPIC process. Social inclusion and multi-stakeholder management at the grassroots are at the heart of the project. The beneficiary stakeholders will choose the planting and agroforestry systems that best suit them, based on the technical recommendations of the project leaders.
5. Integrated sustainable development (co-benefits)	
Social	The means of subsistence of the IPLC will improved through the diversification and improvement of revenue sources including fuelwood, subsistence crops, and NTFPs (honey, etc.).
Biodiversity and ecosystem preservation	The project aims to increase forest areas and reduce the pressure on gallery forests, which will have a direct positive impact on biodiversity.
6. Safeguards	The project will include a risk management plan which will be established according to the REDD+ PCIV of the Republic of Congo and the SIS.

2.9 Risks and safeguard measures

The project will include a risk management plan which will be established according to the REDD+ PCIV of the Republic of Congo and the SIS.

The main risk inherent to the "Community and fuelwood agroforestry in the departments of Pool and of the Plateaux" project, identified at this stage, is the low work capacity of rural households, particularly in the Plateaux Department: this risk, considered to be moderate, will have to be the subject of a specific analysis at the project feasibility stage, in order to be confirmed and characterized, and to specify the best options (mutualisation, small mechanisation, ...).

Indeed, plantations for the production of fuelwood, both forestry and agroforestry, will require and mobilize an agricultural workforce whose actual availability could, in certain production areas of the Department of Plateaux, constitute a limiting factor to the quantitative objectives of the project.

The main mitigation measure proposed is to significantly increase the productivity of forest and agroforestry plantations, including agricultural plantations included in the established systems, through the use of quality vegetal material and the development of appropriate technical routes. For example, the use of selected seeds of *Acacia sp.* can provide mature plantations after 5 years, against the required 7-8 years with unselected seed.

To this main risk, we may also add:

- The risk of fires, which will require the definition of appropriate technical itineraries (associated with the strengthening of the capacities of the beneficiaries) to minimize these risks;
- Risks related to the capacity to produce and source quality vegetal material (both during the project and post-project), which requires special attention to be given to building the capacity of the institutions responsible for the production of seedlings, which will need to, by the end of the project, have sufficient human and material resources to monitor the quality of the vegetal material in response to changes in environmental conditions.

In addition, as part of its strategic objectives, the ProNAR will ensure the development of a framework for environmental and social responsibility, based in particular on good governance, an integrated decision-making approach for stakeholders and an effective organisational capacity.

2.10 Funding plan

The estimated total share of the FIP contribution is USD 8 million and this will be supplemented by contributions from other financial partners, including estimated co-financing from the AFDB of USD 7 million and from the GCF as part of the implementation of the INDC of USD 25 million. These co-financings will make it possible both to extend the areas covered by the project but also to complement actions along the value chain or in terms of the sustainability of program activities. It should be noted that the plantation area supported by the GCF for the implementation of the INDC is actually estimated at an additional 14,000 ha but part of this area is likely to be developed by private sector partners.

Other co-financing solutions are also being discussed, in particular with the AFD, for which the intervention areas and amounts remain to be determined.

The provisional funding plan is presented in the following table.

Table 22: Financing Plan for the community and fuelwood agroforestry project in the Pool and Plateaux departments

Financing Plan for the community and fuelwood agroforestry project in the Pool and Plateaux departments (M USD)						
	FIP funding plan				**Co-funding/Parallel funding**	
	CAFI	**FIP**			**GCF**	**Other**
Component	Grant	Grant	Loan	**Total**		
C1: Forest plantations for the production of fuelwood	-	1	4	**5**	X % of 25 million	AFDB ($2 million) AFD (*TBD*)
C2: Agroforestry plantations for the production of	-	1	1	**2**	X % of 25 million	AFDB ($2 million) AFD (*TBD*)

fuelwood and the improvement of agricultural productivity						DGM (*TBD*) WB-PDAC (*TBD)*
C3: Improvement of carbonisation techniques and distribution of improved cook stoves	-	-	1	**1**	X % of 25 million	AFDB ($3 millions) AFD (*TBD*) EU (*TBD*)
TOTAL	-	2	6	**8**	X% of 25 million	AFDB ($7 million) AFD (*TBD*) DGM (*TBD*) EU (*TBD*)

2.11 Provisional calendar

Table 23: Provisional timetable for the community and fuelwood agroforestry project in the Pool and Plateaux departments

Activity	Step	Indicative date
FIP approval		Month 0
Project preparation	Preparation of the World Bank mission Preparation of the project document	Month 1 Month 1-2
Evaluation	Multilateral review of documents Amending and refining of project documents	Month 3-4
Government approval and FIP/CAFI monitoring committee	Submission of a project approval request	Month 5
FIP sub-committee approval	Submission of a project approval request	Month 6

Appendix 2: National Land-Use Planning Project

1.1 Government agencies and direct stakeholders

The technical lead ministry is the Ministry of Territorial Development and Major Works Delegation (MATDGGT), which will be in charge of project management, in association with the departmental councils or municipal councils, for the development of departmental planning schemes.

Funding will be sought from the CAFI and the Green Climate Fund.

1.2 Issues and challenges

Deforestation rates in the Republic of Congo are relatively low, but they could be significantly increased due to development needs and the subsequent influx of investment in its development for transport, agriculture, energy infrastructures, mining, agro-business, etc.

This economic development will lead to significant benefits, particularly in terms of reducing poverty and improving living conditions. However, the development of certain economic activities exploiting natural resources (such as mining, logging operation), agricultural resources (agro-business and intensification of peasant agriculture) or infrastructure resources (roads, energy, urbanization, etc.) can also lead to negative impacts if planning is not carried out correctly, by taking into account social and environmental costs.

The Republic of Congo has also identified improvement in agricultural productivity as a means of combating poverty in rural areas, which, if not done in a reasoned and controlled manner, can also have significant impacts on forest resources in the country.

In 2005, the Republic of Congo adopted a National Territorial Development Scheme (SNAT), the main objective of which was to foster a dynamic of sustainable development through a better geographical planning of activities throughout the national territory. However, it has not been implemented effectively and several shortcomings have been identified, including:

- The absence specific delineated areas for certain uses and of alignment with sub-national boundaries;
- The absence of a legal text giving it the status of technical reference document in the field of spatial planning, guiding the development of future development and sectoral strategies (such as the NDP);
- The absence of links with other sectoral or departmental plans;
- The absence of incentives for implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- The failure to take into account the biodiversity and climate aspects.

On October 10, 2014, the Republic of Congo adopted the Law No. 043-2014 on Land Use Planning and Development. It stipulates that "the State shall implement a land-use policy which guarantees the concomitant development of the various sectors of activity and respects the different forms of land ownership" and establishes the national and regional multi-sectoral consultative bodies necessary for its implementation.

The land-use planning process set up by this law is based on:

- The **sectoral schemes**, which specify the directions of the SNAT. They lay down the fundamental choices relating to the development of priority public services, in particular in the fields of education, scientific research, culture, sports, transport, health, mail and telecommunications, energy, water, tourism, construction, social housing and urban development.

- The **SNAT**, which constitutes the reference framework for the territorial action of the State, local authorities, companies and all development partners. It contains the major requirements destined to ensure the coherence of sectoral policies. These requirements lead to more the attractive organisation of urban and rural spaces, higher employment levels, the sustainable use of land and subterranean resources and the stimulation of private investment. It is re-evaluated every 5 years.
- The **spatial planning code**, which lays down rules for the rational use of space, the protection of safeguard zones, access to federal capital, the exercise of certain economic activities and the exploitation of natural resources. It harmonises the requirements contained in regulations concerning spatial politics, guides the development of sectoral codes, ensures the adaptation of existing regulations and defines land use guidelines;
- The **urban planning code**, which brings together all the fundamental principles and legislative and regulatory provisions that apply to all users of land, including the State, public authorities, businesses and individuals. It delineates the eligibility zones of the projects according to the nature of their activities and the prohibition zones and gives indications on the location of public interest works;
- The **Department Land-Use Planning Scheme (SDAT),** which define the fundamental choices regarding the location of infrastructures, equipment and services of departmental and/or local interest. The departmental spatial planning scheme is based on the directions of the national spatial planning scheme and of economic policy documents. It has a validity of twenty years and is accompanied by a **departmental spatial planning document** which determines, every five years, the projects to be implemented;
- The **municipal master plans**, which determine the essential choices for the renovation of the urban framework and the built environment through comprehensive and coherent global interventions of neighbourhoods with a view to changing their functioning and increasing their attractiveness. They are accompanied by **urban plans** which include sectoral programs for the implementation of master plans. They highlight the areas of intervention of the State and of local authorities, where planning operations aiming to improve livelihood are identified.

The new law represents a real opportunity for the country to define a new National Territorial Development Scheme (SNAT) that meets the objectives of multisectoral spatial planning and reconciles economic development with the sustainable management of natural resources by ensuring a balance between the different uses of the land, while minimizing the risks of conflicts related to incompatible land uses.

1.3 Investment strategy

The aim of the program is to bring the country's national and sectoral strategies and policies into coherence and to make compatible the geographical superposition of human activities and necessary infrastructures in their strategic, economic, social and environmental dimensions.

The definition and implementation of a cross-sectoral spatial planning process is a high-priority, for which the National REDD+ Strategy aims to provide a pragmatic and efficient response, through its Objective 1: Strengthening of governance and of sustainable funding / Sub-option 1.2 Strengthen intersectoral coordination developing a National Land-Use Plan and a National Land Use Scheme.

The proposed investment strategy aims to fund the development of a cross-sectoral spatial planning process, which is integrated and efficient. It is based on two complementary results focuses:

(i) Promoting and securing REDD+ investments through the implementation of concrete solutions to land distribution and use conflicts and effective cross-sectoral coordination throughout the national territory;

(ii) Including targets for reducing GHG emissions due to deforestation, forest degradation and increased carbon stocks in the integrated land-use planning process. Indeed, this planning process will:
- integrate from the onset the preservation aspects of conservation/increase of forest cover and carbon stocks, of biodiversity, and of social inclusion (especially for vulnerable groups) to guide the development of projects (in particular mining, agroindustry, etc.). This activity will involve identifying and defining specific measures for the management of High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) [30] areas;
- coordinate infrastructure interventions (in particular for energy and transport) in the different sectors (mining, energy, timber exploitation, etc.) in order to pool investments and processes, thereby minimizing impacts on land use and forest cover.

It should be emphasized that cross-sectoral coordination in the land-use planning process is a central element for the development of REDD+ investments, without which the process would invariably be concentrated on the forest sector at the expense of the wider objectives of low carbon sustainable development.

The project is in fully in line with the National REDD+ Strategy, with the logic of a green economy model to which the Republic of Congo is committed, and with the vision of the country's emergence in 2025.

1.4 Tranformational impact and co-benefits

This program will fully contribute to the country's path towards integrated spatial development with reduced impact on forest cover. It will exploit the synergies between the various sources of financing and the various stakeholders involved in this spatial planning issue, with potential leverage to attract co-financing from other partners and the private sector.
The program must generate multiple benefits. The related benefits of such a project are:

- The reduction of land-use conflicts,
- The improvement of land security,
- The improvement of the business climate,
- The preservation and reasoned management of natural resources and landscapes.

1.5 Project description

The land use planning support program will focus on the development and implementation of the SNAT and the Departmental/Municipal Planning Schemes. The figure below, based on the process described in the framework of the spatial planning law, illustrates the interactions between the various sectoral and departmental processes and the areas of intervention of the project:

[30] Particular attention will be paid to the protection of peatland areas in the Cuvette and Likouala departments with an estimated average carbon stock of 2,186 tC / ha (Dargie et al., 2017).

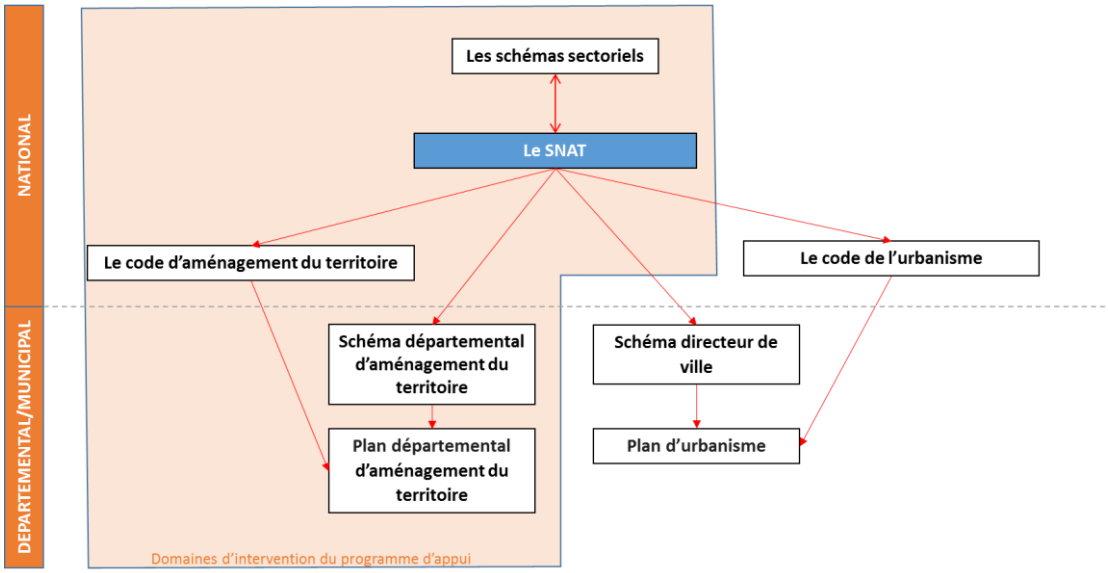

Figure 9: Spatial planning process mapping in accordance with Law 43-2014 and support project areas of intervention

In the Republic of Congo, land use conflicts (overlapping of forest titles, protected areas, mining and oil permits, etc.) needs to be resolved in order to guarantee the effectiveness of land use planning. It should be noted that some overlays are not necessarily incompatible, but rules of good practice must be defined in order to guarantee/secure the activities of the various operators, IPLC and the State.

With this aim, the elaboration of a National Land Use Plan (PNAT) is suggested. This will allow:

i. Mapping of current state of land use (e.g. forest concessions, mining and oil licenses, PAs, agro-industrial concessions, etc.),
ii. Identifying cases of land use rights overlaps,
iii. Analysing/developing, on a case-by-case basis, of scenarios and solutions to prevent possible conflicts related to overlaps,
iv. Elaborating regulations to rule on the compatibility of overlays and resolve conflicts in case of inconsistent overlap.

In a second phase, the SNAT will be able to identify development zones, in transboundary development basins, special economic zones and industrial zones, to direct the future development of the activities on the basis of the existing and potential strategic, economic, social and environmental aspects of the territory.

With this aim, the program has been divided into the two following components:

1. Strengthening of the capacities of national institutions, PNAT, SNAT and spatial planning code development, t
2. Strengthening of departmental capacities, development of the SDAT and of departmental spatial planning plans

1.5.1 Component 1: Strengthening of the capacities of national institutions, development of the NLUP, the SNAT and the spatial planning code

Activity 1.1: Situational analysis and diagnosis of needs in terms of capacity building and GIS data.

The situational analysis and the diagnosis will be carried out at 2 levels:

(i) Identification of stakeholders in the broadest sense (administration, private sector, civil society, IPLC, etc.) and diagnosis of capacity-building needs in terms of spatial planning specific to the context of the Republic of Congo;

(ii) Situational analysis of existing GIS data, identification of gaps and diagnosis of capacity-building needs of the geomatics cell of the MATDGGT responsible for land use and spatial planning data management.

This activity be based on the recommendations formulated as part of the study on the "Strengthening of spatial planning in the Republic of Congo" undertaken by WRI and the World Bank.

Activity 1.2: Strengthening of stakeholder capacities, particularly those of the geomatics cell of the MATDGGT.

In connection with the diagnosis made in activity 1.1, this activity will consist in defining and implementing the capacity-building methodology for the project's various stakeholders.

Activity 1.3: Collection of existing spatial data and identification of gaps.

This activity will consist of collecting, formatting and analysing existing spatial data (remote sensing data, GIS data, etc.) on (i) current land uses and affectations, (ii) agricultural and forestry potentialities (including plantations), mining potentialities, etc. (iii) the distribution of biodiversity, carbon stocking and HCVs. The analysis of the data should make it possible to evaluate the reliability of the original data, uncertainties and gaps in a precise manner.

Activity 1.4: Development of collection methodologies and collection of supplementary data.

On the basis of the analysis of the existing data and the needs identified in activity 1.3, this activity will enable (i) the development of methodologies for supplementary data collection linked to available and/or mobilised resources (ii) the implementation of data collection activities in the field linked to the decentralised agencies involved in the process (see Component 2).

Activity 1.5: Data analysis and mapping of current land use.

This activity will be used to produce the current mapping of land allocations and to identify areas where allocations are superimposed. Particular attention will also be given to areas identified by the PRONAR for the development of plantations in order to secure and encourage the replication of initiatives co-financed by the FIP.

Activity 1.6: Analysis of legal texts, development of decision-making tools and scenarios for resolving conflicts of land use

Based on the mapping produced and Land Use rights overlaps identified and a participatory and cross-sectoral process, the activity aims to develop (i) decision-making tools based on the analysis of existing legal texts and mapping data on land use (including by local communities), potentialities, biodiversity and social values, carbon storage (HCV and HCS mapping), etc. (ii) scenarios for conflict resolution.

Activity 1.7: Development of regulatory texts for the resolution of overlapping conflicts, adoption and extension of the revised PNAT.

This activity requires the implementation of an important participatory process in which all stakeholders must be represented. Indeed, the PNAT will have to be adopted with a broad consensus to ensure its effectiveness and prevent future conflicts.

Activity 1.8: Development of SNAT scenarios and decision support tools.

On the basis of the PNAT produced, the mapping of the potentialities of the territory, indicators of biodiversity, carbon, HVC, etc. and expectations/concerns expressed by the different stakeholders (at the national and local levels, see component 2), this activity should make it possible to develop scenarios and decision support tools for the SNAT.

Activity 1.9: Adoption and popularisation of the SNAT.

The SNAT scenarios will be presented and discussed with all stakeholders at the local and national levels. As for the PNAT, it will have to be adopted with a broad consensus to ensure its effectiveness and prevent future conflicts.

Activity 1.10: Preparation and adoption of sectoral texts and of a spatial planning code.

In conformity with the law, the spatial planning code, a tool for implementing the SNAT, which sets the rules for the rational use of land and guides the development of sectoral codes, will be elaborated. At the same time, the sectoral texts will be amended in order to take into account the provisions adopted in the SNAT and the spatial planning code.

Activity 1.11: Establishment of the web portal on spatial planning and development of a monitoring and performance evaluation process for the spatial planning procedure with a view to its five-yearly review and capacity building for its implementation.

In accordance with Law 43-2014, spatial planning is a participatory, inclusive and transparent process. It was therefore decided that a public web portal dedicated to the process and its results should be set up. Alongside this, a performance monitoring and evaluation methodology will be defined with a view to its improvement and its five-yearly review.

1.5.2 Component 2: Departmental capacity-building, development of the SDATs and of departmental spatial planning documents

In analogy and complementarity to the activities proposed in Component 1 (national level), the departmental capacities will be strengthened with the aim to decentralise the management process.

Activity 2.1: Situational analysis and diagnosis of capacity building needs of stakeholders and decentralised agencies at the departmental level

The situational analysis and the diagnosis will be carried out on 2 levels:

(i) Identification of stakeholders in the broadest sense (administration, private sector and civil society representatives) and diagnosis of capacity-building needs in spatial planning specific to the context of the department;

(ii) Assessment of existing cartographic data, identification of gaps and diagnosis in need of capacity building in relation to the MATDGGT geomatics unit.

Activity 2.2: Strengthening of departmental capacities (see activity 2.1) and in particular capacities for exchange and consultation between the departmental and national levels (ie departmental committees and interministerial commission)

Activity 2.3: Collection of additional data required by the PNAT/SNAT at the departmental level (in line with the recommendations made as part of Activity 4.1).

Activity 2.4: Development of SDAT scenarios.

At the departmental level, SDATs are developed. As part of the project, this process will be carried out in conjunction with the development of the SNAT so as to ensure that the development and decision-making methodologies are compatible and recognised by all stakeholders.

Activity 2.5: Adoption and dissemination of SDATs (in consultation with stakeholders at the departmental and national levels, in line with the SNAT outreach activity 1.9).

Activity 2.6: Development and extension of departmental land use plans

In accordance with the requirements of the SDATs, the activity aims to develop, with each department, departmental development plans which halt, every five years, the projects to be implemented.

Activity 2.7: Development of a procedure for monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the departmental development process with a view to its five-yearly review and capacity-building for its implementation.

This activity aims to define for each department a methodology of monitoring and evaluation of the process of revision of the SDATs and departmental land-use planning plans and to strengthen the capacity for its implementation. It is noted that the monitoring and evaluation process at the departmental level will be closely linked to the national process.

The table below presents a timetable proposal for the implementation of the activities:

Table 24: Proposed activity timetable for the national spatial planning support project

Component	Activity		Year				
			1	2	3	4	5
Strengthening of the capacities of national institutions, development of the NLUP, the SNAT and the spatial planning code	1.1	Diagnosis of national capacity building needs					
	1.2	Capacity building					
	1.3	Collection of existing data and identification of gaps					
	1.4	Collection of supplementary field data					
	1.5	Mapping and analysis of current affectations					
	1.6	Analysis of regulatory texts and scenarios for conflict resolution					
	1.7	Adoption and popularisation of the amended PNAT					
	1.8	Development of SNAT scenarios					
	1.9	Adoption and popularisation of the SNAT					
	1.10	Development of sectoral policies and of the spatial planning code					
	1.11	Development of the web portal and of the monitoring and evaluation procedure					
Departmental capacity-building, development of the SDATs and of departmental spatial planning documents	2.1	Diagnosis of departmental capacity building needs					
	2.2	Capacity building					
	2.3	Collection of supplementary data at the departmental level					
	2.4	Development of SDAT scenarios					
	2.5	Adoption and popularisation of the SDATs					
	2.6	Development and popularisation of the departmental spatial planning documents					
	2.7	Monitoring and evaluation procedure					

1.6 Preparation for implementation

The land use planning law adopted in 2014 provided the framework for the development of the project and enabled the creation of the multi-sectoral consultation and decision-making bodies necessary for the implementation of the program.

Today, the MATDGGT has already benefited from the support of the World Bank and the WRI in order to carry out an initial inventory of existing planning efforts and available capacities in terms of land use (forestry, mining and agriculture sectors). This support was the subject of a report entitled "Strengthening spatial planning in the Republic of Congo". This report was validated at a workshop in Brazzaville in June 2016 following a series of multi-stakeholder exchanges in 2015, where participants from the MATDGGT, sectoral ministries and the civil society developed the outline of a roadmap for the revision of the SNAT. Thus, there is a broad consensus on how to proceed with land-use planning in the Republic of Congo.

Discussions are currently underway concerning the modalities of sharing financial support for the program between the CAFI, through the World Bank, and the FAO, through the Green Climate Fund.

1.7 Institutional arrangements and partners

The program will be implemented by the MATDGGT and the 12 departmental or municipal councils, in close collaboration with:

- The ministry responsible for property affairs and the public domain,
- The ministry responsible for planning

- The sectoral ministries (Ministry responsible for the forest economy, ministry responsible for agriculture, ministry responsible for mining and geology, ministry responsible for energy and the hydraulic sector, ministry responsible for tourism and the environment),
- The ministry responsible for finances,
- The ministry responsible for indigenous peoples,
- The ministry responsible for public works.

Funding will be sought from the CAFI and the Green Climate Fund.

It will be carried out in a participatory and inclusive manner with the private sector, local populations and indigenous peoples, community-based organizations and decentralised authorities. In order to ensure optimal management and effective implementation of planning activities, Article 103 of the land-use planning and development act provides for the setting up of three consultative bodies to serve as directing frameworks for spatial planning policy and arbitration due to the high risk of conflicting overlays in land management. These are as following:

(i) The National Planning and Development Council, under the authority of the President of the Republic, is the supreme decision-making body. It shall lay down general guidelines for the formulation and implementation of spatial planning policy by the State and local authorities and shall deliberate on the opinions of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Planning and Development;

(ii) The Inter-ministerial Committee for Spatial Planning and Development, under the authority of the Prime Minister, is the intermediate body for consultation. It acts as an interface between the national and local levels;

(iii) The Departmental and/or Municipal Spatial Planning Commissions, placed under the authority of the Prefects, correspond to the local level of consultation.

To support the technical aspects of its implementation, the program plans to rely on funding from the CAFI (with support from the World Bank) and from the GCF (with support from the FAO).

1.8 Justification of CAFI funding

Land Use planning has been identified as an important basis for the sustainable management of the forest areas of the Republic of Congo and thus provides an essential contribution to the success of the REDD+.

Table 25: Alignment of the spatial planning project with the investment criteria

Investment criteria	
1. Climate change mitigation potential	The spatial planning program is the foundation needed for the implementation of REDD+ investments throughout the national territory. This is a necessary and minimum condition for the success of REDD+ initiatives that will be developed throughout the country. Beyond the forestry sector, the program will help guide other investments towards greener and environmentally friendly alternatives.
2. Demonstration potential	The program has a national dimension and has the potential to be replicated throughout the entire sub-region.
3. Economic efficiency	Although the project does not directly generate financial benefits, it will enable REDD+ investments to be planned and secured throughout the country. It will improve the business climate and attract both public and private funding.
4. Success potential	The spatial planning law of 2014 and the creation of multi-sectoral consultative bodies at the national level (National Council and Inter-ministerial Committee) and at the departmental level (Departmental/Municipal Commissions) offer a real opportunity for project success.
5. Integrated sustainable development (co-benefits)	
Social	Among the co-benefits of the project, one may cite the improvement of the business climate, the securing of investments, the securing of the rights of populations and reductions in land use conflicts.
Biodiversity and ecosystem preservation	Rational planning of development activities in the area will reduce pressure on forests and preserve areas of high biodiversity value.
6. Safeguards	The project will include a risk management plan to be implemented in accordance with the REDD+ PCIVs in the Republic of Congo and the Safeguards Information System. In accordance with the law on land use planning, it will be carried out in a participatory, inclusive and transparent manner with all stakeholders, including IPLCs and other members of the civil society.

1.9 Risks and safeguard measures

The main risks associated with the project are: (1) inadequate participation of all stakeholders in the project (including the private sector and local communities that will be directly impacted by the project), (2) the non-application of the PNAT/SNAT by the different sectors.

In accordance with the law on spatial planning, the process will be carried out in a participatory, inclusive and transparent manner with all stakeholders, including the IPLCs and the civil society. It is crucial that the process is not limited exclusively to the bodies of consultation and decision-making defined by law. Other parties should also benefit from capacity-building and participate effectively in the decision-making process (particularly in relation to the resolution of current land-use conflicts). In the feasibility study of the project, special emphasis should also be given to how the PNAT/SNAT can be integrated into the various sectoral policies to ensure that they are effectively implemented by these.

In addition, the project will, in line with the REDD+ process in the Republic of Congo, ensure compliance with the safeguard measures developed within the framework of the SESA and the REDD+ PCIV compliant with the Cancun Safeguards and the Operational Policies of the World Bank. The project will apply safeguard mechanisms developed at the national level, including the complaints management mechanism.

1.10 Funding plan

This project will seek funding from two sources: the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The CAFI and the GCF will work through accredited execution agencies.

Table 26: Financing plan for the land use planning project

Funding plan for the National spatial planning support project (M USD)						
	CAFI funding plan				**Co-funding/parallel funding**	
	CAFI	**FIP**			**GCF**	**Other**
Component	Grant	Grant	Loan	**Total**		
C1: Strengthening of the capacities of national institutions, development of the NLUP, the SNAT and the spatial planning code	-	-	-	**-**	4	-
C2: Departmental capacity-building, development of the SDATs and of departmental spatial planning documents	20	-	-	**20**	-	EFI (TBD)
TOTAL	20	-	-	**20**	4	EFI (TBD)

1.11 Provisional calendar

Table 27: Provisional calendar for the spatial planning project

Activity	**Step**	**Indicative date**
CAFI approval		Month 0
Project preparation	Preparation of the World Bank mission Preparation of the project document	Month 1 Month 1-2
Evaluation	Multilateral document review Amending and refining of project documents	Month 3-4
Government approval	Submission of a project approval request	Month 5
CAFI approval	Submission of a project approval request	Month 6
World Bank approval	Submission to the executive board	Month 8

Appendix 3: Stakeholder participation plan

1. Stakeholder definition

The Investment Plan is the result of a participatory process which involved a broad range of stakeholders at the national and local level. These stakeholders are:

The administration (at the national and departmental level): the Ministry of Forest Economy, the Ministry for Spatial Planning, the Ministry for Planning, Statistics, and Regional integration; the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; the Ministry of Finance, Budgets and the Public purse; the Ministry for Mining and Geology.

Financial and technical partners, including: the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Union, UNDP, FAO, US Forest Service, WWF, WRI, WCS.

Civil society / local communities and indigenous peoples: Through the CACO-REDD and through the temporary workgroup of the DGM.

Private sector: Including the UNICONGO private sector association, and private forestry operators, mining association (FedMines)

2. Investment Plan monitoring committee

A monitoring committee for the investment plan was established in February 2016 to ensure monitoring of the different steps leading to the development of the IP. This committee is made up of representatives from the concerned state administrations, the private sector, and civil society (memo n°0506 MEFDD/CAB, 22 February 2016).

Table 28 : Composition of the National REDD+ Strategy Investment Plan Monitoring Committee

Position	Institution
CONA-REDD President	CONA-REDD
Cabinet Director	MEF
General Director of the Forest Economy	MEF
CAFI/FIP Focal point	MEF
National REDD+ Coordinator	MEF
Green Climate Fund Focal point	MEF
General Director of Spatial Planning	MSP
Representative from the Ministry for Planning, Statistics, and Regional integration	MPSRI
Representative from the Ministry of Finance, Budgets and the Public purse	MFBPP
Representative from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	MAEP
Representative from the Ministry for Mining and Geology	MMG
CN-REDD Safeguard specialist	MEF
CN-REDD Communications specialist	MEF
CN-REDD Head of Projects Department	MEF
Two representatives from the civil society	CACO-REDD
General secretary	UNI CONGO

3. Consultation process

The consultation process took place through several steps:

3.1 Departmental consultations on thematic studies carried out before the development of the investment plan.

As part of the development of the Investment Plan, five thematic studies were carried out. They include an examination of the policy and regulatory framework, analysis of REDD potential, analysis of the potential of socio-economic co-benefits, and investigations of the agroforestry sectors and the fuelwood sector. These studies underwent the following departmental consultations:

- Plateaux: 16 to 17 December 2016;
- Cuvette: 19 to 20 December 2016;
- Likouala: 26 to 27 December 2016;
- Sangha: 3 to 4 January 2017;
- Pool: 6 to 7 January 2017;
- Brazzaville: 14 to 15 February 2017.

These departmental consultations were attended by 240 people representing the various REDD stakeholders, i.e. 40 people per department, made up of members of the REDD+ Departmental Committees (CODEPA REDD+) and resource persons (representatives of other public administrations not members of CODEPA, from forest companies and from NGOs).

3.2 Departmental consultations on drafts 1 and 2 of the investment plan

Consultations on the first drafts of the Investment Plan took place between June and August 2017 and were attended by 456 people, as detailed in the following table.

Table 29: Observed participation during the departmental consultations on Drafts 1 and 2 of the Investment Plan

Department	Stakeholder category	Number of participants
Niari	Local organisations and public administration	17
	Private sector	4
	NGOs and Local Communities	12
	Indigenous Peoples	6
	S/Total	**39**
Lékoumou	Local organisations and public administration	7
	Private sector	6
	NGOs and Local Communities	14
	Indigenous Peoples	8
	S/Total	**35**
Bouenza	Local organisations and public administration	16
	Private sector	2
	NGOs and Local Communities	11
	Indigenous Peoples	3
	Other	3
	S/Total	**35**
Kouilou	Local organisations and public administration	16
	Private sector	6
	NGOs and Local Communities	18
	Indigenous Peoples	5
	S/Total	**45**
Pool	Local organisations and public administration	15

	Private sector	1
	NGOs and Local Communities	14
	Other guests	1
	S/Total	**31**
Plateaux	Local organisations and public administration	20
	Private sector	1
	NGOs and Local Communities	11
	Indigenous Peoples	3
	S/Total	**35**
Cuvette-Ouest	Local organisations and public administration	21
	Private sector	1
	NGOs and Local Communities	7
	Indigenous Peoples	4
	Other	2
	S/Total	**35**
Cuvette	Local organisations and public administration	16
	Farmers	4
	Private sector	3
	NGOs and Local Communities	11
	Indigenous Peoples	-
	S/Total	**34**
Likouala	Local organisations and public administration	23
	Private sector	4
	NGOs and Local Communities	10
	Indigenous Peoples	5
	Farmer	1
	S/Total	**43**
Sangha	Local organisations and public administration	14
	Private sector	12
	NGOs and Local Communities	10
	Indigenous Peoples	7
	S/Total	**43**
Brazzaville	Local organisations and public administration	23
	Private sector	14
	NGOs and Local Communities	14
	Indigenous Peoples	2
	Other	1
	S/Total	**54**
Pointe-Noire	Local organisations and public administration	12
	Private sector	4
	NGOs and Local Communities	10
	Indigenous Peoples	1
	S/Total	**27**
	Grand Total	**456**

The table below summarizes the stakeholder participation during this process:

Table 30: Stakeholder representation in the first versions of the Investment Plan review process in the departments

Represented sector	Total	%
Local organisations and public administration	200	44
Private sector	58	13
NGOs and Local Communities	142	31

Indigenous Peoples	44	9
Other	12	3
Total	**456**	**100%**

3.3 National consultations during the first joint missions

The first joint mission for the support of the preparation of the Investment Plan of the National REDD+ Strategy of Congo took place in Brazzaville from the 8th to the 14th of June 2017. Several meetings took place:

- June 8th: concertation with the Monitoring Committee of the development of the Investment Plan and meeting with the Minister of Forest Economy, Sustainable Development and the Environment;
- June 9th: follow-up concertation with the Monitoring Committee; concertation with the private sector and the civil society; concertation with the Ministry for Spatial Planning;
- June 12th: concertation with technical and financial partners

3.4 Departmental consultations for project examination

Departmental consultations for the examination of the land use planning program and of the projects submitted to the FIP for co-funding took place in July and August 2017. These consultations allowed the collection of opinions and recommendations from stakeholders, with the aim to develop complementary programs which have since been included in the present investment plan.

Table 31: Observed participation during the departmental consultations on the examination of projects proposed for the Investment Plan

Department	Stakeholder category	Number of participants	Number of women
Kouilou	Local organisations and public administration	16	2
	Private sector	6	-
	NGOs and Associations	11	2
	Indigenous Peoples	2	1
	S/Total	**35**	**5**
Pointe-Noire	Local organisations and public administration	17	2
	Private sector	6	-
	NGOs and Associations	10	2
	Indigenous Peoples	2	-
	S/Total	**35**	**4**
Niari	Local organisations and public administration	20	2
	Private sector	3	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	5	-
	Indigenous Peoples	5	1
	S/Total	**33**	**3**
Lékoumou	Local organisations and public administration	16	2
	Private sector	5	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	6	-
	Indigenous Peoples	3	1
	S/Total	**30**	**3**
Bouenza	Local organisations and public administration	15	1
	Private sector	5	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	5	2
	Indigenous Peoples	5	1
	S/Total	**30**	**4**

Brazzaville	Local organisations and public administration	28	2
	Private sector	1	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	9	4
	Indigenous Peoples	1	1
	S/Total	**39**	**7**
Pool	Local organisations and public administration	N/A[31]	N/A
	Private sector	N/A	N/A
	NGOs and Local Communities	N/A	N/A
	Indigenous Peoples	N/A	N/A
	S/Total	**31**	**-**
Plateaux	Local organisations and public administration	23	3
	Private sector	-	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	9	2
	Indigenous Peoples	3	-
	S/Total	**35**	**5**
Cuvette-Ouest	Local organisations and public administration	21	3
	Private sector	-	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	14	3
	Indigenous Peoples	-	-
	S/Total	**35**	**6**
Cuvette	Local organisations and public administration	21	3
	Private sector	-	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	14	3
	Indigenous Peoples	-	-
	S/Total	**34**	**6**
Sangha	Local organisations and public administration	16	1
	Private sector	6	-
	NGOs and Local Communities	8	2
	Indigenous Peoples	2	-
	S/Total	**32**	**3**
Likouala	Local organisations and public administration	19	3
	Private sector	5	-
	NGOs and Associations	8	-
	Indigenous Peoples	3	-
	S/Total	**35**	**3**
	Grand Total	**405**	**49**

The table below summarizes the observed participation of stakeholders during this process:

Table 32: Stakeholder representation in the project proposal review process in the departments

Represented sector	Total	%
Loacal organisations and public administration	212	52
Private sector	37	9
NGOs and Local Communities	99	24
Indigenous Peoples	26	7
Undetermined	31	8
Total	**405**	**100**
Including total of women	49	12

[31] Although the consultation was held, the attendance sheet is missing.

3.5 Consultation with the private sector

A separate consultation took place in the Pokola, as well as part of meetings with the CONA-REDD.

3.6 Workshops during second joint mission

The second joint mission to support the preparation of the Investment Plan of the National REDD+ Strategy of Congo took place in Brazzaville from the 11th to the 15th of September. Several meetings took place:

- September 11th: concertation with the Monitoring Committee for the development of the Investment Plan and meeting with the Minister of Forest Economy, Sustainable Development and the Environment;
- September 12th: follow-up concertation with the Monitoring Committee; concertation with the Minister for Spatial Planning; concertation with the Minister for Mining Development; concertation with the Minister of Finances;
- September 13th: concertation with technical and financial partners and civil society;
- September 14th: concertation with the Minister of Planning, Statistics and Regional Integration; concertation with the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

3.7 National validation workshop

The national workshop for the validation of the Investment Plan of the National REDD+ Strategy of Congo was held in Brazzaville on the 18th and 19th of September 2017 under the presidency of Mrs Rosalie Matondo, Minister of Forest Economy. This workshop brought together the members of the REDD+ National Committee (CONA-REDD), the Investment Plan Development Monitoring Committee, the REDD+ Departmental Committees, representatives of public administrations, indigenous peoples and resource persons. Representatives of REDD+ stakeholders validated the REDD+ National Investment Plan with amendments.

3.8 Availability of the Investment Plan on the MEF website for comment

The National REDD+ Investment Plan for Congo was posted on the website of the Ministry of Forest Economy, supported by a press release, for public consultation from 2 to 16 October 2017. No comments were received by the end of this period.

4. Other consultations

Moreover, the Forum for Governance and Human Rights (FGDH), in consultation with civil society organisations who are members of the CACO REDD+ and Sustainable Forest Management (PGDF) platforms organised a workshop in Brazzaville on 18 April 2017[32] to make recommendations for possible actions to ensure that the Investment Plan of Congo strengthens forest governance and local community and indigenous peoples' rights.

[32] *Workshop analysing the links between the national REDD+ investment plan and forest governance.* Brazzaville, 18 April 2017. FERN/FGDH. Project CoNGOs (*NGO collaboration in favour of sustainable and equitable means of subsistence in the forests of the Congo* basin), DFID funding.

Appendix 4: Information on the integration of the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the investment strategy

1. The DGM in the Republic of Congo

The planning and implementation of the DGM are carried out entirely in parallel and in coordination with the elaboration process of the IP, to ensure the coherence of the investments foreseen in the Investment Plan with the enabling activities and sector-specific activities planned as part of the preparation for the DGM.

To this end, civil society has already set up a National Steering Committee (NSC), and is in the process of finalising a first conceptual note for DGM investments. The NSC of the DGM-Congo comprises 29 members, including 23 legislators and 6 observers, including 4 government representatives, one from the World Bank and one representative from forest companies working with indigenous peoples and local communities. The NSC has 14 delegates from IPLCs selected according to a set of criteria established by the DGM working group, set up in December 2015 and following consultation and election missions in June 2016.

2. The stages of the constitution of the National Steering Committee

Several consultations have been conducted by the civil society with the support of the World Bank since October 2015; these led to the establishment of a technical working group for DGM-CONGO, abbreviated as DGMTWG-CONGO, on 16 December 2015.

In January 2016, the DGMTWG-CONGO conducted field missions alongside communities in the 17 districts where there is a high concentration of indigenous peoples, in the FIP departments and on Mbamou Island in Brazzaville.

The DGMTWG-Congo benefited from a capacity-building opportunity on climate change, the first module of which was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in July 2016. The second module on agroforestry was held in August 2017 in Ghana.

STEP 1 Meeting on 7 October 2015 in Brazzaville between the CACO-REDD+, Congo FIP Focal Point and the World Bank. CACO-REDD+ is an informal civil society consultation forum that brings together a range of organisations working on development, human rights and the environment as well as networks such as the National Network of Indigenous Populations in the Republic of Congo (RENAPAC), and the Sustainable Forest Management Platform (PGDF), which works on the VPA/FLEGT.

The purpose of this meeting was to present the DGM process and the workshop programming for the presentation of the DGM Guidelines Framework. The CACO-REDD+ members who took part in this meeting had a mission to share this information with the other organisations, both CACO-REDD+ members and non-members.

STEP 2 From 15 to 16 December 2015, training and information workshop in Brazzaville for members of the National Network of Indigenous Populations in the Republic of Congo (RENAPAC) and CACO-REDD+ members, with the support of the World Bank. It was decided at this workshop to set up the Technical Working Group (DGM-TWG-CONGO), which should work specifically on the DGM, acting as a temporary steering committee, thus becoming the interlocutor between the partners and the other

stakeholders; this DGM-TWG-CONGO, made up equitably of seven indigenous representatives and seven members of local civil society, had the following tasks: raising awareness, consulting and facilitating the vote of delegates of indigenous peoples and local populations of FIP departments to the National Steering Committee DGM-Congo (NSC).

From December 2015 to June 2016, the DGM-TWG-Congo held several working sessions and other activities, including the organisation of missions for information, awareness-raising, consultation, and monitoring of the process for designating members of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the National Steering Committee of the DGM.

STEP 3 From 16 to 27 June 2016, the organisation of missions for information, awareness-raising, consultation and election of representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Local Populations, led by the DGM-TWG-CONGO, which guaranteed adherence and participation of the stakeholders in 5 FIP target departments:

(i) LIKOUALA :
Missions took place in the Districts and Local Communities, which are Impfondo, Epena, Dongou, Enyelle and Bouanela.

People consulted: 520 people in 21 focus groups.
People reached: 3000 people (radio broadcasts).

(ii) SANGHA :
Missions took place in the Districts and Local Communities of Ouesso and the Districts of MOKEKO, (Town and village of Pokola, Djaka, Ngombé, Paris village and Zoulabouth), Sembé and Souanké.

People consulted: 420 people in 17 focus groups.
People reached: 2000 people (radio broadcasts).

(iii) POOL:
Missions took place in the Districts and Local Communities, which are: Kinkala, Kindamba, Vindza, Kimba et Mayama.

People consulted: 350 people in 16 focus groups.
People reached: 1000 people (radio broadcasts).

(iv) PLATEAUX:
Missions took place in the Districts and Local Communities, which are: Djambala, Lekana, Ngo et Gamboma.

People consulted: 350 people in 16 focus groups.
People reached: 1500 people (radio broadcasts).

(v) BRAZZAVILLE :
The mission took place in the Local Community of the Mbamou Island, in the Department of Brazzaville.

People consulted: 130 people in 4 focus groups.
People reached: 400 people (radio broadcasts and meetings).

Consultations with indigenous peoples and local communities were carried out in two ways: individual and group interviews in the form of focus groups, in order to successfully hear all stakeholders, in a location favoured by them and in accordance with the principles of FPIC, and according to gender and

ethnic groups, and to have the opportunity to cross-compare the views and information collected. The elections were also part of the public consultations.

The results obtained during these field missions were the following:

- 6 work meetings were held for the development, validation of tools and preparation of field missions;
- Interviews for civilities with local authorities were conducted;
- 40 awareness-raising meetings were held in the villages;
- 5 radio broadcasts were made;
- Individual interviews were conducted with leaders, companies and other projects working in communities, the notables, and NGO leaders in the communities of each village;
- Focus groups were organised with indigenous peoples and local communities;
- The vote of the 14 delegates of indigenous peoples and local communities at the NSC was facilitated by the mission;
- 35 community relays have been set up and used as information relays between the NSC and the communities;
- A report and a film from the mission are available.

Indigenous peoples have demonstrated, on the one hand, the persistence of discrimination by the Bantu and the extreme poverty they suffer on a daily basis; on the other hand, they recognized the efforts of the Government and its partners regarding the issue of the promotion and protection of their rights. They expressed their broad support for the DGM process, especially due to the efficient taking into account their concerns. The consulted indigenous peoples expressed many grievances related to the improvement of their living conditions and to the effective implementation of Law No. 5-2011 of 25 February 2011 on the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular regarding the following aspects:

a) the settling which is imposed by their own point of view, slowed down by the land insecurity that they still experience,
b) the acquisition of civil status document to be full Congolese citizens,
c) the need for agricultural and mechanical tools, in particular for agricultural development activities in order to ensure food security, to improve socio-economic autonomy,
d) industry training, adapting to the indigenous situation and ways of life,
e) claims related to income generating projects where indigenous people are often not involved and/or beneficiaries,
f) habitat improvements,
g) involvement in the drafting and execution of specifications by private businesses.

The selection criteria for members of the NSC from local communities and indigenous people were as follows:

- be a member of a local community or indigenous people group originating from the localities that will be part of the DGM,
- be elected by the community by a transparent and credible vote, including an election ballot duly signed and countersigned by the mission leader, village chief or customary official,
- parity between the number of IPs and LCs,
- consideration of the gender issue as foreseen in the texts of the CACO-REDD+ and the RENAPAC, which stipulate that 30% of places should be reserved for women,

- CONA-REDD members should not be part of the NSC to avoid duplication and conflicts of interest which would weaken participation in the REDD+ processes,
- choose among the leaders of the CACO-REDD+ and RENAPAC organisations people with experience of the REDD+, whether native or living in Brazzaville and working with communities from DGM locations.

3. The 2017 National Steering Committee work plan

The National Steering Committee of the DGM-Congo has developed an annual work plan for 2017, the key activities of which are:

1) Organisation of the inaugural session of the National Steering Committee (NSC);
2) Preparation and restitution of the session of the DGM-Global national steering committee;
3) Consultation on the draft conceptual note of DGM-CONGO;
4) Organisation of the sub-regional capacity-building workshop on REDD+ project implementation;
5) Awareness-raising of stakeholders on DGM (students, churches, local elected representatives, deputies and senators);
6) Organisation of a capacity-building mission for indigenous peoples and local communities on the setting-up of REDD+ projects and calculation of carbon in the FIP departments;
7) Concertation with indigenous peoples and local communities on the Investment Plan;
8) Participation in the second training module on agroforestry in Ghana in August 2017;
9) Preparation of the June 2017 half-yearly report;
10) Preparation of the Global Workshop and of the COP 23;
11) Acquisition of a head office and real estate, computer and internet equipment;

4. Provisional selection of DGM investments in Congo

The country component of the DGM focuses on aims and thematic areas where indigenous peoples' organisations and local communities can receive DGM funding in the departments implementing the FIP/DGM. The aim of the country component of the DGM is to support investment and build the capacities of indigenous peoples and local populations through subcomponents based on the five strategic options of the national REDD+ strategy and the operational directives framework of the DGM. Investment activities are based on the 5 strategic options of the National REDD+ Strategy.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) is in the process of finalising a first conceptual note for DGM investments: the first elements are presented below, this being a pre-proposal for the NSC, pending the entirety of the contributions expected for the actual development of the DGM-CONGO conceptual note.

The DGM-CONGO NSC is proposing the following sub-components at this stage:

1. **Implementation of field activities, chosen by indigenous peoples and local populations through a call for project proposals,** the main themes of which are the following:
   Theme 1: Promotion of economic activities and of rural subsistence practices which emphasise mitigation and adaptation to climate change,
   Theme 2: Investments in the sustainable management of forest landscapes, in particular of wood and non-timber products, and in the efficient use of energy.

2. **Development of leadership and management abilities, as well as technical competencies, for indigenous peoples and local communities.**

Within this theme, activities are focused on:

- Leadership development, conflict resolution and negotiation skills training to ensure active participation in initiatives relating to natural resource conservation and climate change adaptation, intellectual property and modes of land property, skills development or understanding of REDD+, carbon measurement, mapping, etc.
    - Development of the capacities of indigenous leaders and local populations to access and share information, development of negotiation skills for commercial activity and contracting (wooden or other forest products), for an equitable trade and sharing of benefits;
    - Training in access to financial resources, securing lines of credit, financial management, accounting and book-keeping, and procurement.

- Training and capacity building of indigenous peoples and local populations to assist them in obtaining and strengthening customary land ownership, their rights to natural resources and their traditional forest management systems, and in reducing cultural, social, economic and political barriers that impede the exercise of such rights as well as the maintenance and perfecting of traditional forest management systems;
    - Strengthening organisations and networks of indigenous peoples and local populations so that they participate in national and local policy-making, strategy development and planning processes related to the REDD+ and the FIP;
    - Training to prepare indigenous peoples and local populations for the implementation of income-generating activities, land security and sustainable management for forest ecosystems, etc.

The training sub-activities are as following:

Sub-activity 2.1: Training of indigenous peoples and local populations, with the following sub-tasks:

- Organisational capacities (leadership, advocacy and communication);
- Conflict and complaints management; adaptation to and mitigation of climate change; sustainable management of forestry ecosystems;
- Legislation (in terms of property, the environment, the forest, etc.);
- Agricultural technical best practices for the conservation of land and water (techniques for sustainable soil fertilisation, agroforestry).

Sub-activity 2.2: Training for support organisations, whose tasks are the following:

- Development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects; negotiation and advocacy techniques; partnership research; conflict and complaints management; adaptation to and mitigation of climate change;
- Legislation (in terms of property, the environment, the forest, etc.);
- Agricultural technical best practices for the conservation of land and water (techniques for sustainable soil fertilisation, agroforestry).

Sub-activity 2.3: Support for the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and local populations in the discussions linked to the REDD+ and climate change at the national and international levels, with the following tasks:

- Support for the preparation and implementation of a concertation plan with indigenous peoples and local populations with a view on the effective participation of their representatives in forums at the national, sub-regional and international levels;
- Preparation of the concertation plan (Respect of the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC);
- Identification, labelling and valorisation of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) during the forums.

3. **Financial, accounting and governance management (finance, accounting, commerce, NICT) with the following activities:**
   - Training on access to financial resources and governance;
   - Training in obtaining credit lines;
   - Training in financial and accounting management (finance, accounting, trade, business plan, ...);
   - Training on access to tenders and procurement;
   - NICT training (computer science, advanced telephone use, ...).
   - Establishment of community initiative support Centres (approved management centres);
   - Strengthening the capacities of indigenous peoples and local populations for the creation and management of community cooperatives.

Appendix 5: Independent review of the Investment Plan

PART O: Setting the context (from the reviewer´s overall understanding of the FIP document)

The Republic of Congo covers about 22 million ha of African humid forests. With a low historical rate of deforestation of about 0.07% per annum between 2000 and 2015 and forests covering 69% of the land area, it is one of the few remaining examples of a High Forest Cover and Low Deforestation (HLFD) country in the tropics. Keeping deforestation rates low in HFLD countries is one of the main strategies in the forest and land use sector to deliver on the Paris Agreement's goals and also a stated objective of the INDC of the Republic of Congo, September 2015.

The FIP investment plan of the Republic of Congo is designed to back the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy that supports the country's low-carbon development vision by demonstrating the feasibility of alternative development approaches at larger scale to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance sustainable landscape management, improve and diversify local livelihoods, and conserve biodiversity. As such, the FIP proposal is fully integrated in the country's overall low carbon strategy.

The investment plan, designed for a period of 7 years (2018-2025) has the ambition to centralize, canalize and coordinate all relevant international funds directed to support the implementation of the National REDD+ strategy (page 54, §2). For the time being, the plan includes FIP and CAFI funding proposals; references are made in the text to the formulation of a GCF proposal by the RoC that still needs to be fully developed and formulated and submitted to the GCF for assessment and approval, but is expected to be fully reflected in the final version of the Investment Plan.

With this ambitious goal, the investment plan includes three independent projects, labeled as *"actions prioritaires"* to be implemented with the funds of FIP and CAFI.

The 3 projects are:

(i) **Support to land use policy and territorial planning** (Project 1, CAFI funding[33]). This project´s aims are to integrate REDD+ as an element in territorial planning at national and departmental level and to secure REDD+ investments in the long term. It is implemented by the ministry in charge of territorial management together with the departmental units of the country and its geographical scope is national. As an implementation partner, the World Resources Institute (WRI) is listed. The total amount for the first phase of project implementation is US$ 20 m.

(ii) **Agroforestry and cocoa development in the Departments of Sangha and Likouala** (Project 2, FIP funding). This project is fully embedded in the ER Program of the Carbon Fund (approved in June 2017) as one source of upfront investment finance for the ER results-based program that include, besides the Forest Investment Program (FIP), the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the International Development Association (IDA), French Development Agency (AFD), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), as well as private companies (OLAM) and mainstream INGOs. The FIP component in this jurisdictional ER-program supports the development of a small-scale agroforestry scheme, with emphasis on shade cocoa plantations on "degraded forest land". The FIP contribution is US$ 16 million as

[33] The Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), a multi-donor trust fund managed by UNDP, finances one national investment framework per eligible country in the Congo Basin (incl. the RoC) upon request of the respective national governments. CAFI takes a performance-based approach with disbursements based on targets agreed upon and specified in Letters of Intent agreed upon between the partner country and the donors under the Initiative. For the time, the World Bank has been entrusted by CAFI with an amount of US$ 698,000 to prepare the forest investment plan. See http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00102120, accessed on 12 August 2017.

part of a total upfront investment of the ER Program of 93 million US$. Out of the US$ 16 million, US$ 4 million are designed as grant and US$ 12 million as loan component.

(iii) **Agroforestry and fuelwood plantation in the departments of Pool and Plateaux** (Project 3, FIP funding). This project targets farmers and small scale land owners and promotes small scale (several ha) plantations of fast-growing fuelwood species for commercialization as fuelwood, charcoal or eventually wood chips for urban energy consumers. It is located in the 2 departments with the lowest forest cover and available terrains in savanna area, but which are important source areas for Brazzaville, one of the two largest wood fuel markets in Congo. The FIP funding part is US$ 8 million (2 million as grant, 6 million as loan) and other funding sources include the Dedicated Grant Mechanism of the FIP, AfDB, AFD and prospectively, in future, the GCF.

While project 1 supports a broader, long-term policy and strategy work at territorial level at the national scale, projects 2 and 3 directly address operational REDD+ implementation programs designed to reduce GHG emissions/enhancement of sinks in support of sustainable development/local livelihoods. They are designed to be upfront investment projects with the aim to put in place future results-based payment mechanisms.

Part I: General criteria: The *investment plan complies with the general criteria indicated in the ToRs* [34]

The Investment Plan attempts to address the implementation of a portion of the National REDD+ strategy in a programmatic and complementary way (to the many other projects and programs undertaken in the country in forestry and agriculture)[35]. It deals with a broader investment plan, but also includes direct forest investment projects. Besides the request to FIP funding, the investment plan also includes a funding proposal addressed to CAFI.

The reviewer understands that the current document is the first complete draft that will undergo another round of revisions (including comments from this review) before being submitted formally. Nonetheless, the current review is kept in the format of a TAP review that is based on the FIP criteria.

A. Country capacity to implement the plan	
The Government has demonstrated its commitment to a low-carbon development agenda in the land use sector by pursuing REDD+ since 2008 through the readiness process in the framework of FCPF and UNREDD. Over the years, the country has built-up technical and human resources capacities and the management structures to develop REDD+ through its 3 phases (1) readiness; (2) policies and measures/investments; and (3) results-based payment based on an ER-Program. In this respect, the RoC has finalized its draft National REDD+ Strategy in July 2016, which sets out the strategic options for achieving its vision of pursuing low-carbon development pathways; it has also submitted its Emission Reductions Program Idea Note (ER-PIN) in 2012 to FCPF, and in June 2017 it received its provisional approval for a large scale ER-Program at jurisdictional level (Sangha and Likouala). This large transformative process has been developed by the RoC together with partners drawn from local communities and indigenous peoples, departmental and national government authorities, the private sector, and international donors. The FIP proposal is well	

[34] Each criterion is assessed in 3 colors: green = met the criteria; yellow = need for some additional work; red = did not meet the criteria yet.

[35] The proposed investment program addresses 3 out of the 5 options of the National REDD+ strategy: governance, agricultural systems and wood energy.

embedded in this process and one piece of a larger mosaic that also includes a forthcoming formulation of a full GCF project on REDD+ (supported by FAO).

However, many players (donors, ENGOs, consultants) support the Republic of Congo (RoC) and its technical entities in this endeavour, and the capacities to effectively coordinate all these activities and projects still need to be proven. Also, the implementation of laws and regulations and the implementation of land tenure policies/territorial planning addressing all the sectors of the economy remain weak in the country and have not yet moved to the level of the political declarations. Further efforts are needed to build national capacities and appropriate local conditions for sustainably managing remaining forests and rural landscapes. The FIP Investment Plan outlines a process for making progress in this regard, including by leveraging GCF funding.

Overall, the capacity to run the proposed FIP investment components exists in the country.

B. Developed on the basis of sound technical assessments

Project 1 deals with the very basics of integrated territorial planning at national and subnational levels. It addresses the development of a comprehensive national policy and legal framework and regional (departmental) implementation of territorial management schemes and land-use mapping, including addressing potential land use conflicts, tenure and user security and issues as they relate to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The project is based on already existing work undertaken by MATGT with support of the World Bank and WRI (see report on "*renforcement de l'aménagement du territoire en Rép. du Congo)*". That work has been widely consulted in the country and the proposed activities under project 1 are based on a sound prior assessment.

Project 2 is fully integrated in the Carbon Fund ER Program as one source of the upfront investment elements in the ER-Program development. The project strives to create 5000 ha managed under agroforestry schemes with emphasis on cocoa development in partnership with a private company. The FIP contribution, embedded in the CF ER-Program, will contribute significantly to the Government's objective to promote a sustainable cocoa sector. Its ambition is to of a revived, forest-smart cocoa sector in the country. The technical aspect of this project has already been assessed in the framework of the Carbon Fund ERPD. In its assessment, the TAP reviewed the approaches and found that the overall approach of developing an out-grower scheme for cocoa development is sound. Questions have been raised on the figure presented on page 96 of the FIP document and cocoa plantation will be established in forest zones with 40-60% of natural forest tree (canopy) cover that is considered as "moderately degraded". Planting cocoa under natural forest cover will lead over time to a changed dynamic of forest trees and to a gradual change from forests to non-forest (in this case cocoa plantations). However, considering that conversion is done only on community land (SDC) and the total area of developing cocoa in the time span of the program is negligible (5000 ha in maximum), this might be acceptable. Sub component 2 that deals with forest conservation is supporting existing efforts of simple forest management mainly for NTFP use and local wood use. The question is if the proposed performance payments that will be paid during project implementation will be a sufficient incentive to maintain such conservation areas beyond project duration.

Project 3 rightly focuses on production and consumption benefits to be gained in the woodfuel sector. New management options that combine agroforestry, woodlot plantations and improving energy efficiency at producer and consumer levels are proposed. It is important to make sure that proposed interventions carefully consider the dependence of many people in the supply areas on woodfuel production and the importance of sales as a cash-generating activity. These activities are mostly still in the informal sphere and collaboration among different sectors – energy, forest, land-

use planning and agriculture – is crucial to increase capacities and to formalise the supply chain, without harming the livelihoods of those involved.

Some more technical details could be given, e.g. specifying fuelwood species proposed (not simply *Acacia* sp, but *Acacia auriculiformis* and *A. mangium* for acid soils, *A. mearnsii* and *Leucaena diversifolia* for higher level sites, and *Leucaena leucocephala* and *Gliricidia sepium* in agroforestry systems, *Eucalyptus robusta, E. citriodora* and others for permanent wood lots, etc.). Also consider the issues of potential invasive species with negative effects.

Overall, from the reviewer's first assessment, all three projects have been formulated very carefully and in an integrative way with other projects and initiatives and fully in-line with the national REDD+ strategy. Some more details could be added on technical details, in project 1 mainly in the way how forests and woodlots are integrated in territorial planning (relevant for projects 2 and 3); in project 2 on the establishment of shade cocoa (planting in existing *moderately* degraded forests); and in project 3 on species selection for agroforestry activities and fuelwood plantation development.

C. *Demonstrates how it will initiate transformative impact*

Project 1 clearly addresses the central problem of territorial planning at national scale and in sub-national contexts and is crucial for any long-term sustainable management approach and carbon management. It has a high transformative impact.

Project 2 is more a piloting project dealing with development of agroforestry and woody long-rotation crops (cocoa) in an area that is today mainly dominated by forest cover with a relatively low population density. However it is expected that due to new road infrastructure development, mining and other developments, there will be increased pressure on the resources in the near future. The FIP investment finance dealing with public/private partnership on cocoa development is a key component of the ER-Program. The transformative potential lies primarily in this contribution to the success of the ER-Program.

Project 3 promoted the development of small-scale woodfuel plantations and agroforestry schemes in two forest departments in the savanna area that addresses woodfuel supply of Brazzaville. With its objective of planting 5000 ha over 7 years, it constitutes a modest contribution to the PRONAR with its objective of planting 1 million ha over 10 years. However, it can be expected that the project has a replication effect throughout the more populated areas in the southern part of the country, including Pointe Noire. Efficiency and effectiveness of the proposed actions however need to be proven in the 7 years of project implementation. A good monitoring system thus needs to be developed in this regard.

D. *Prioritization of investments, lessons learned, M&E, links to the results framework*

Project 2 deals with avoidance of deforestation and enhancement of sinks by creating permanent cocoa and other agroforestry management to avoid unplanned shifting cultivation; the specifics of the project is planting of agroforestry species in heavily and cocoa in modestly degraded forests that need to be carefully monitored from a carbon accounting perspective. Project 3 has a clear focus on the REDD+ strategy "enhancement of sinks" dealing with agroforestry (in degraded forest areas) and woodfuel plantations (in savanna areas). One can ask of course if these two approaches are priority in a high forest cover/low deforestation country such as the RoC. The rationale on why exactly these types of investment have been made (against e.g. a SMF REDD+ strategy could have been made more explicit.

Also, there is a need to give a clarification on the distribution of grant and loans in between the various sub-components in Project 2 and Project 3. What are grant-type activities and what are loan-type activities and how will the loan component be issued?

M&E and links to results framework have been done in general terms, although this need to be completed and done on a project-by-project framework (in the further preparation process).

E. Stakeholder consultation and stakeholder engagement

The process of stakeholder consultations on the thematic studies realized in the framework of the FIP preparation were held in the 5 departments (Sangha and Likouala, Pool, Plateaux and Cuvette) between December 2016 and February 2018 (Annex 2, p 122-125). A total of 240 people were reached, mainly members of the departmental REDD+ committees (CODEPA REDD+), resource persons, NGOs and forestry companies.

The process of consultation of the FIP investment plan has not been completed in August 2017. It cannot be assessed yet.

From the contents side, it is not clear to the reviewer to which extent all relevant stakeholders have been included in the review of the final version of the FIP. E.g. it is not clear if and how many farmers have a potential interest in contributing to the outcomes of Projects 2 and 3.

Also, the use of DGM grant is mentioned in the budget and in the annex (page 131), but to which extent it is used in the framework of the implementation of the various sub-components of the two projects is not clear. The reviewer needs to get evidence that confirms consent between stakeholders on the overall direction of the proposed FIP programme. Such elements would need to be completed in the proposal.

F. Social and environmental issues, including gender

Issues related to gender and vulnerable groups have been described in a general way (particularly for project 3) and a box has been provided to describe the general situation of women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups in the Republic of Congo.

A plan of participation of stakeholders has been annexed to the document as well as information on benefits (*"mécanismes spécialisés de subvention"*) for indigenous peoples and local communities.

However, it is not clearly described how project 1 (dealing with territorial issues) will particularly consult with concerned parties; here some more precision should be made in the text. In respect to social and environmental issues of project 2, it is undertaken in the framework of the preparation of the ER-Program in Sangha and Likouala. In project 3, the role of women in particular at all levels of the supply chain merit some more explanation.

G. New investments or funding additional to on-going/planned MDB investments

From the reviewer's standpoint, the FIP proposal is well coordinated with the numerous activities and projects undertaken in the REDD+ framework and agriculture/energy sectors in the country, including, in particular, the CF ER-Program proposal and (forward looking) a potential future GCF project.

The FIP program is well complementary to other ongoing /planned MDB investments. However, the status of the CAFI funding (e.g. the status of the Letter of Intent agreed upon between Roc and CAFI under the Initiative for a performance-based approach with disbursements based on the targets

agreed upon and specified in Project 1 is not clearly shown in the document. As the CAFI funding is an integrated part of the proposed investment plan, this needs to be further clarified.

Also, references are made in the investment plan to co-funding of the implementation of the 3 projects by GCF funding. The status of preparation of the GCF project including the commitment made to the contribution to the 3 proposed projects, however, is yet not strong. Further clarification should be given in the final investment plan on CAFI and GCF project commitments.

H. Institutional arrangements and coordination

The implementation of the investment plan is fully integrated in the national arrangements for REDD+. The FIP investment plan has the ambition to launch phase 2 of REDD+ development of the country and constitutes a starting point for future results-based payment approaches. However the project document could give some clearer statements on how the proposed FIP investments will be monitored in the wider MRV framework and how it links to the national REDD+ registry.

I. Poverty reduction

Poverty reduction is addressed as a major objective that relates to all three projects. However, the argumentation for project 3 on poverty reduction could be made stronger; it is not clear how already poor households would find their way out of poverty with the limited offer to support fuelwood plantation development and woodfuel efficiency only.

J. Cost effectiveness of proposed investments

Budget figures are presented in a very general way and based on the information, it is not possible to reasonably estimate cost effectiveness, in particular for project 1 (CAFI funding, possible additional funding by GCF?).

Project 3 (8 million incl. grant and loan) for FIP seem to be adequate overall (e.g. about US$ 1000 per ha of plantation) but it is not clear what will be financed by the additional donors mentioned in the budget (e.g. DGM grant, AFD, BAD, etc.).

Part II: Compliance with the investment criteria of FIP

Comment on whether the investment plan complies with the criteria specific for FIP (see TORs).

(1) Complies with the principles, objectives and criteria of the FIP as specified in the design documents and programming modalities.

FIP principles:

In addition to the Governance Framework of the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF), the principles (i) to (vi) apply.

(i) National ownership and national strategies

The national proposal is based on nationally agreed strategies as part of the national REDD+ strategy. It is developed in complement to and based on analytical work of the REDD Readiness Preparation Process. It is in line with the overall objectives of the country as formulated in the INDC. The investment plan is complementary to larger development strategies.

(ii) Contribution to sustainable development	
Forests, including managing natural production forests, remain an important cornerstone in the sustainable development policy of the country, particularly in the high forested north. However, accelerated development during the recent period of high oil prices has led to major infrastructure projects including the opening-up of the previously remote forest areas to economic activity (in Likouala in particular). Besides mining, this represents a potential threat to the forest stock, as commercial and subsistence agriculture is expanding, coupled with government policy to boost agricultural development. At the same time, the Government has identified REDD+ as an opportunity for economic diversification. The overall REDD+ program that includes phase-2 REDD+ development through the proposed FIP investment plan yields an important opportunity to demonstrate the feasibility of innovative approaches to economic development that potentially can also minimize impacts on forests. The proposed FIP program however does not address forest management and conservation *per se* and puts emphasis on the enhancement of sinks. That choice needs to be well explained, as in a high forest/low deforestation country one would expect that managing forests plays a central part of sustainable development.	
(iii) Promotion of measurable outcomes and results-based support	
The outcomes of projects 2 and 3 are generally measurable and can be assessed on their results (baselines, numbers, and figures) and can constitute a good basis for future results-based payment approaches. Effective returns of these investments (on loan basis) will only be effective in a time span of 5+ years (fuelwood) earliest and this only under the assumption that the investments are well maintained and protected. Thus, in the reviewer's opinion, it is important to undertake additional efforts to diversify investment approaches. A too narrow focus is given currently on a single woodfuel species (Acacia sp?). The country has proven in the past that it is able to manage a wide array of fast growing species as planted forest. This experience should be fully used.	
(iv) Coordination with other REDD efforts	
Clearly and effectively coordinated and embedded in the wider REDD+ program of the country.	
(v) Cooperation with other actors and processes	
Strong references to developmental programmes by MDBs and bilateral donors is made, including those that work specifically on enabling conditions (CAFI, AFD and others).	
(vi) Early, integrated and consistent learning efforts	
The FIP proposal, in particular project 1 is visibly set as a process and consultation approach. It will develop on activities with and achieved outputs need to be upscaled at policy and legislative level. For projects 2 and 3 (both with clear targets at field level), it is important that the proposed technical approaches are solid and providing the variability necessary so that they can be promoted as sustainable land management alternatives. Considering the scale, projects 2 and 3 have the character of pilot implementation; thus learning effects from implementation are of crucial importance. This element should be clearly stated in the proposal.	

FIP Objectives:

Providing up-front bridge financing for readiness reforms and public and private investments identified through national REDD readiness strategy building efforts, while taking into account opportunities to help to adapt to the impacts of climate change on forests and to contribute to multiple benefits such as biodiversity conservation, protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, poverty reduction and rural livelihoods enhancements.

a) To initiate and facilitate steps towards transformational change in developing countries forest related policies and practices[36]	
The investment proposal deals on the one-hand with necessary transformative change in territorial planning to assure that REDD+ investment can be successfully realized. The project will inform and drive the change in the land use sector, including forest management and conservation. FIP project 2 and 3 address concrete options as defined in the national REDD+ strategy.	
b) To pilot replicable models to generate understanding and learning of the links between the implementation of forest-related investments, policies and measures and long-term emission reductions and conservation, SFM and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries	
Project 1 is clearly focused to develop the enabling conditions for investments for future implementation of long-term emission reductions from land-use. Projects 2 and 3 are focused on forest carbon stock enhancement including a number of measures in the framework of agroforestry plantations and woodfuel plantations. Models overall are replicable, however, models need to be made more diverse, in particular in respect to species selection, involvement of communities, clearer definition of stakeholders involved.	
c) To facilitate the leveraging of additional financial resources for REDD, including through a possible UNFCCC forest mechanism, leading to an effective and sustained reduction of deforestation and forest degradation, thereby enhancing the sustainable management of forests	
Successful implementation of agroforestry schemes, in particular export-oriented cocoa and effective woodfuel plantations can promote the interest of communities and private sector for tree planting and restoring degraded forests. Thus leveraging refers to the formulation of a GCF proposal that can potentially upscale the proposed activities under project 2 and 3. Thus, the proposal is fully in line with this objective.	
d) To provide valuable experience and feedback in the context of the UNFCCC deliberations on REDD+	
While cocoa plantations in the Congo are considered as part of the solution package (enhancement of sinks), the expansion of cocoa in other countries in the region (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire) is considered as part of the problem (deforestation and forest degradation drivers). It will be important to closely monitor the development of these approaches over the coming years as valuable experience can be drawn from these examples.	

[36] This should be done through

(i) serving as a vehicle to finance investments and related capacity building necessary for the implementation of policies and measures that emerge from inclusive multi-stakeholder REDD planning processes at the national level;

(ii) strengthening cross-sectoral ownership to scale up implementation of REDD strategies at the national and local levels;

(iii) addressing key direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;

(iv) supporting change of a nature and scope necessary to help significantly shift national forest and land use development paths;

(v) linking the sustainable management of forests and low carbon development;

FIP Criteria (FIP design document, additions as per FIP Investment Criteria and financial modalities: *Identify the theory of Change behind the proposed interventions (projects) identified and how they contribute to the overall programmatic approach. Consider how the investment program can also effectively meet criteria set by other funding sources, especially the Green Climate Fund, FCPF and Biocarbon Fund.*	
a. Climate change mitigation potential	
The climate change mitigation potential has been effectively addressed. Project 1 deals with a pre-requisite to manage land-use carbon and thus is highly relevant at the conceptional level. Project 2, implemented in the highly forested area of the country, has to clearly demonstrate that agroforestry and cocoa investments are not based on formerly forest-land (as the definition of "degraded forest" used is not fully convincing to the reviewer). As the FIP project is integrated in the wider ER-Program in Sangha/Likouala, this problem needs to be considered in the framework of the ER-program. Project 3 deals with afforestation/reforestation and agroforestry, thus enhancement of sinks on formerly non-forested/savanna area; it has a considerable mitigation potential (4000 ha of plantation, though the tCO_2e figure advanced in Table 25 seem to be overestimated).	
b. Consistency with FIP objectives and principles	
The proposal is consistent with the FIP objectives, though one can ask, considering the specific situation of the country, why enhancement of sinks is a major implementation objective…..	
c. Drivers of deforestation and forest degradation	
The investment proposal is part of an overall well-coordinated national effort on REDD+ and thus holistically addresses the issues.	
d. Inclusive processes and participation of all important stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities.	
This part cannot be assessed for the moment as there is no information provided yet on the stakeholder consultation process of the proposed program.	
e. Demonstrating impact (potential and scale)	
The two implementation projects clearly focus on demonstrating impacts (though the "technical package" proposed is not fully convincing in all aspects and needs some revision).	
f. Forest-related governance	
The investment program proposed does not focus on governance issues (except of course the cross-sectoral approach at the level of territorial planning), but the program complements wider forest governance efforts undertaken by other programs (as well demonstrated in the document). Due to this obvious complementary approach, forest-related governance issues are integrated in the overall performance assessment to ensure measurable outcomes.	
g. Safeguarding the integrity of natural forests	
Problems encountered here are relevant particularly for project 2. There is a fine line between the condition of degraded natural forests that still fulfill a basket of ecological functions of intact natural forests and degraded forest land that no longer fulfills major ecological (soil, water, biodiversity), social and economic functions and which are the main subject for using "degraded	

forests" as basis for forest or agricultural plantations. As the project is a "pilot-project" from which lessons learned will be taken, there is a need for a careful approach as further expansion of cocoa into forest areas (e.g. rotational areas in production forests) bare the risk of gradual degradation and deforestation. A monitoring approach will be needed to observe the long-term effect of the under-planting of cocoa in opened-up natural forests.
h. Partnership with private sector
The proposed FIP strategy intends to leverage resources from the private sector for the effective implementation of some of the major sub-components in Project 2. The FIP document, however, does not specify further the type of investment required by private sector and how PPP-partnership could be effectively put in place (e.g. for project 3), considering the important land tenure issues.
i. Cost effectiveness, incl. economic and financial viability
Project 2 offers good prospects for economic viability through investments in cocoa and other agroforestry crops, including simple management plans in community forests. The conservation component of Project 2 is supporting forest conservation infrastructure that will need, in due time, renewed investments. Project 3, will generate, earliest after 5-years the necessary returns. The challenge and risks associated are well described in the project document (p. 119). Overall, the mixed loan/grant approach offers good opportunities in future for financially profitable models of REDD+.
j. Capacity building
Capacity building efforts are proposed in all 3 projects and all major sub-components, addressed to a variety of stakeholders.

Additional criteria FIP Investment Criteria and financial modalities:		
k. Implementation potential		Good implementation potential overall, as the FIP addresses national and local concerns in respect to territorial planning. The willingness to address these issues under project 1 has been recently confirmed by the highest level of government. However, it needs to be clearly stated that investment in trees (including cocoa) and plantation forestry are long-term in nature and stable governance, capacitated institutions and broader sustainable development approaches in the rural domain are needed to guarantee success.
l. Integrating sustainable development (co-benefits).		Co-benefits are generated in all three projects, in particular in project 1 as it deals with wider territorial planning at national and subnational levels. Projects 2 and 3 address livelihood concerns, tenure security, poverty alleviation, restoring carbon pools and biodiversity and thus generate important co-benefits.

(2) Assessment towards the FIP results-framework

Results	*Indicator*	*Comments*	*Score*
C1 Reduced pressure on forests	*a) Change in hectares (ha) deforested in project/program area*	Measurable, at larger scale particularly in project 3 (Plateaux, Pool)	
	b) Change in hectares (ha) of forests degraded in project/program area	Measurable, at larger scale in project 2 (conservation areas, cocoa plots) and 3 (woodfuel lots). In project 2 there is a need for a critical view on the forest baseline where cocoa plantations will be established in "degraded forests".	
	c) Percentage (%) of poor people in FIP project area with access to modern sources of energy	Not applicable, but could be transformed in respect to more efficient use of energy wood.	
	d) Non-forest sector investments identified and addresses as drivers of deforestation and forest degradation	Need to be further assessed when implementing particularly project 1	
C2. Sustainable management of forest and forest landscapes to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation	*a) Preservation of natural forests integrated in land use planning process*	Project 2 with the proposed 4000 ha of community conservation areas, however very small considering the extent of forests in the ER-Program area.	
	b) Evidence that laws and regulations in project/program areas are being implemented, monitored and enforced and that violations are detected, reported and prosecuted	This is crucial and heavily depends on the successful completion of the regulatory framework in respect to territorial planning and implementation arrangements of the new forest code.	
C3. A institutional and legal/ regulatory framework that supports sustainable management of forests and protects the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples	*a) Evidence that the legal framework (laws, regulations, guidelines) and implementation practices provide for non-discriminative land tenure rights and land use systems and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (women and men)*	Program addresses territorial issues; rights-based issues difficult to assess as results for consultation process not yet received.	
	b) Evidence that a national land use plan exists and progress is made to secure the tenure and territorial rights to land and resources of forest-dependent stakeholders , including indigenous peoples and forest communities	New approaches searched in the rural domain, in particular in project 1.	
C4. Empowered local communities and indigenous peoples and protection of their rights	*a) Increase in area with clear recognized tenure of land and resources for indigenous peoples and local communities (women and men)*	Project 1: not directly relevant Projects 2: agroforestry and community forestry with simple management plans Project 3: consider what is possible in the time span of the program; number of woodlots created	
	b) Level and quality of community and indigenous peoples participation (women and men) in decision making and monitoring concerning land use planning, forest		

	management, and projects and policies impacting community areas		
	c) Improved access to effective justice/ recourse mechanisms	This still needs to be described; how will complaints be handled?	
C5. Increased capacity to plan, manage and finance solutions to address direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.		Detailed indicators need be developed in the specific project context during phase 1 implementation	
C6. New and additional resources for forest projects	Leverage factor of FIP funding; $ financing from other sources (contributions broken down by governments, MDBs, other multilateral and bilateral partners, CSOs, private sector)	Well described approach how FIP interventions are complementary to other sources of funding. Leverage factor is difficult to determine at the current stage	
C7. Integration of learning by development actors active in REDD+	Number (#) and type of knowledge assets (e.g., publications, studies, knowledge sharing platforms, learning briefs, communities of practice, etc.) created and shared	A number of studies proposed, yet no specifics are given. Some more information could be provided on the planned knowledge products	

Part III: Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall assessment of the Investment Proposal

In the opinion of the independent reviewer, the overall programme proposal, including organizing the work in three quite distinct projects, covering different forest and land-use situations in the country is acceptable and feasible (see also recommendation below). The FIP proposal is well embedded in the wider sustainable development context and National REDD+ strategy and is formulated as a matching programme, complementary to a number of other programs, including a possible future GCF project. Also, the proposed Investment Plan addresses the two main themes of the new WB Forest Action Plan 2016-2020: (1) *sustainable forestry* through smallholder plantations and tree (woodfuel) planting; and private investments in forest value chains; and (2) *forest-smart interventions in other economic sectors*, in particular in agriculture (agroforestry/cocoa development, land and tree tenure) and energy (woodfuel plantations and biomass efficiency for local/national urban markets).

Overall, the reviewer assessed a total of 47 criteria and indicators with the following scoring:

30	The criteria and/or indicator has been generally met and there is no need for any revision or larger complement at this stage
14	The criteria and/or indicator is partially met, it is recommended to relook at some of aspects that need further clarification
03	The criteria and/or indicator is partially met and need to be developed [or, at the current stage the criteria is not relevant or could not be assessed due to lack of information]

Some summary recommendations that could enhance the quality of the investment plan

- The proposed investment plan addresses three of the five strategic options of the National REDD+ strategy (options 1, 3 and 4). Nonetheless, the question remains why - in a High Forest/Low Deforestation country (HFLD) like RoC with its important forest resources (22 m ha) including its large extent of permanent production forests (>13 million ha) - option 2 of the REDD+ strategy (sustainable management and valorization of forest resources) did not become an investment priority? In this respect, it would be recommendable to shortly explain the link between the 3

projects chosen to be part of the proposed investment plan and the overall REDD+ strategy, including the planned ER-Program in Sangha and Likouala that might put some emphasis on forest management and conservation. For the independent reader, who does not know the evolving REDD+ context in the country overall, it is not obvious why (i) territorial planning at national level; (ii) a public-private partnership to promote small scale shade cocoa development in the ER-Program area in Northern Congo; and (iii) fuelwood planting and improved efficiency in fuelwood use conjointly builds a comprehensive program.

- All three projects of the FIP/CAFI investment plan include activities that are also listed under the proposed components for a planned GCF proposal[37] (a proposal linked to "agroforestry" currently prepared with support of FAO) that is expected to be submitted later this year to the GCF secretariat. While some general explanations have been given on the coherence of the approaches (page 46, §5) it would be important to explain the functional link between the FIP investment and the planned GCF funding; e.g. to which extent a future GCF investment will link to the proposed investment plan or how GCF and FIP/CAFI proposals that are planned for the same implementation period (2018 – 2025) will collaborate/or complement each other, respectively compete for human resources…

- The important grant contribution of the DGM for supporting local communities is described only in generic terms. From the reviewer's perspective, there is a need to integrate DGM type of activities better into the proposed projects 2 and 3, as in the proposed projects, communities and forest dwellers are supported through capacity building, empowerment, creating complaints mechanisms and other concrete measures.

- Project 3 dealing with tree/woodfuel planting is associated to the National Program of Afforestation and Reforestation (PRONAR, launched in 2011[38]). PRONAR has been supported by the World Bank in the past as part of the implementation of the Forest and Economic Diversification (FELP) Project, including feasibility studies on the operationalization of PRONAR, ground-truth missions and awareness creation of local communities on reforestation and afforestation. Explain how the feasibility studies within PRONAR are linked/or not to the planned FIP investments under Project 2.

- Plantations of fast growing timber for woodfuel are a potential method to increase local livelihoods in rural areas with reasonable access to urban consumers and to increase the share of biofuel and emission neutrality. Woodfuel agroforestry plantations can be developed only partially with livelihoods crop, such as manioc or maize. *Acacia* sp. is cited as the species to promote. The reviewer recommends deepening the analysis and providing a clearer indication on land availability; origin of species, to diversity potential tree species that would be best fit to the climatic and edaphic conditions of the Plateaux and Pool. Charcoal making/woodchip preparation and coppice management can improve livelihoods and sustainable production; coppice rotation is dependent on a multitude of factors including harvest rates, soil fertility and precipitation thus the need for a broader number of tree species. It is further important to consider that woodfuel trade is a largely informal economic activity, meaning that participation is spread between many

[37] What needs to be considered when citing (future) GCF proposals is the fact that GCF proposals submitted by a country are competing in between each other. Priorities are set at government level. http://www.cg.undp.org/content/congo/fr/home/presscenter/articles/2017/08/03/faire-du-fonds-vert-climat-une-opportunit-pour-le-d-veloppement-durable-au-congo.html accessed 10 August 2017.

[38] Initial objective of PRONAN aims to create one million hectares of forest and agroforestry multipurpose plantations by 2020 throughout the national territory.

actors, tax revenues are low and over-exploitation is a risk. Also tenure security to assure that they will be able to harvest trees that they plant is essential is a crucial aspect (links also to project 1). The project could have real potential for effective innovation.

- Natural forest management is a major forestry activity with nearly 13 million ha under long-term concession management, including 23% under FSC certified management schemes (project 2 intervention area). The link given in chapter 5.2.1 is singly focused on timber extraction, giving production forestry an overall negative connotation. The important element of additional carbon uptake through forest management and increased growth of trees on harvested sites has not been considered in the carbon assessment (NERD, cited by CN-REDD 2016). Taking into account the importance of production forestry in the economy, chapter 5 should take into account a more careful assessment of the benefits and constraints of natural forest management under concession arrangements as a valuable alternative to the various other options of REDD+.

- Take into account the recommendations of FCPF Carbon Fund Resolution CFM/16/2017/2 in respect to the approval of the Emission Reductions Program Document of the Republic of Congo into the Portfolio of the Carbon Fund of the FCPF (June 2017). Eventually relate to the recommendation made in the resolution that relates to project 1: "*Finalize and submit to the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), by October 31, 2017, a comprehensive and ambitious National REDD+ Investment Plan, in accordance with the qualitative and procedural requirements of CAFI, which: 1) is endorsed by the Ministerial Chamber of the National REDD+ Committee confirming the country's high-level and cross-sectoral engagement on REDD+; and 2) will include a process for developing a national land use plan*". Also take note of possible important changes in forest management and conservation in the New Forest Code (still under development).

Some minor observations to clarify in the revision of the document
▪ Explain in the very beginning why this document includes as a central element a CAFI funded project ▪ Complete the list of acronyms: e.g. DGM, FCPF-PRE, NERF, … are acronyms in the text but not described ▪ Total duration of the FIP program (7 years or 5 years) not clearly stated, also in respect to budget ▪ Total budget FIP and CAFI: 42 million (p. 14) or 44 million (elsewhere in the text) or 46 million (table 13 page 73). Dev. Grant Facility counted or not? For assessing the cost effectiveness, more details should be given in the projects' budgets ▪ CAFI funding is determined (US$ 20 m) for project 1, but no specification on the status of this funding is given. What needs to be done? When would it be effective? Would all 3 projects start at the same time? ▪ In respect to the GCF proposal, budget figures should be added (see page 14 and elsewhere). Also, the real changes of having submitted a forestry/agroforestry proposal to the GCF in due time needs to be checked.

References

Main document reviewed:

- Plan d'Investissement de la Stratégie Nationale REDD+ de la République du Congo 2018-2015 (version 2.b, 16 Juillet 2017). 133 p.

Additional documents consulted:

- Carbon Fund. Emission Reduction Program in Sangha and Likouala, Rep. of Congo. April 2017. 355p.

- CIF (2014) Linkages between REDD+ Readiness and the Forest Investment Program. CIF Learning. Nov. 2014
- FIP Design Document (July 2009)
- FIP Investment Criteria and Financing Modalities (June 2010)
- FIP Operational Guidelines (June 2010)
- FIP Results Framework (May 2011)
- FIP Revised procedures for the preparation of independent technical reviews of the FIP Investment Plans (March 16, 2016)
- PRONAR - http://www.pronarcongo.org/en/accompagnement-des-entreprises/147-partenaires-au-d%C3%A9veloppement/386-world-bank-support - accessed 10 August 2017
- World Bank (April 2016): World Bank Group Forest Action Plan FY 2016-2020. Focusing on Sustainable Forestry and Forest-Smart Interventions

Appendix 6: Government response to FIP independent reviewer's comments

The Government of Republic of Congo welcomes the recommendations and comments made by the FIP-nominated independent reviewer. The table below addresses all those criteria rated "did not meet the criteria yet" (red) and "need for some additional work" (orange).

Part I: General criteria: The *investment plan complies with the general criteria indicated in the ToRs* [39]

K. Developed on the basis of sound technical assessments		Response
Project 1 deals with the very basics of integrated territorial planning at national and subnational levels. It addresses the development of a comprehensive national policy and legal framework and regional (departmental) implementation of territorial management schemes and land-use mapping, including addressing potential land use conflicts, tenure and user security and issues as they relate to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The project is based on already existing work undertaken by MATGT with support of the World Bank and WRI (see report on "*renforcement de l'aménagement du territoire en Rép. du Congo)*". That work has been widely consulted in the country and the proposed activities under project 1 are based on a sound prior assessment. ***Project 2*** is fully integrated in the Carbon Fund ER Program as one source of the upfront investment elements in the ER-Program development. The project strives to create 5000 ha managed under agroforestry schemes with emphasis on cocoa development in partnership with a private company. The FIP contribution, embedded in the CF ER-Program, will contribute significantly to the Government's objective to promote a sustainable cocoa sector. Its ambition is to of a revived, forest-smart cocoa sector in the country. The technical aspect of this project has already been assessed in the framework of the Carbon Fund ERPD. In its assessment, the TAP reviewed the approaches and found that the overall approach of developing an out-grower scheme for cocoa development is sound. Questions have been raised on the figure presented on page 96 of the FIP document and cocoa plantation will be established in forest zones with 40-60% of natural forest tree (canopy) cover that is considered as "moderately degraded". Planting cocoa under natural forest cover will lead over time to a changed dynamic of forest trees and to		Experience within and outside of the ER-Program area suggests that degradation is a continuous process. As such, areas that at the time of baseline measurement fall within the 40-60% range are generally in the process of being degraded further, as farmers in the area do not currently cultivate shade-adapted crops, and are therefore obliged to degrade / deforest. The intention behind establishing shade cocoa systems in these areas is to prevent the counterfactual, which is further degradation and eventual deforestation. The establishment of shade agroforestry systems would maintain existing forest cover. The idea behind this approach is to inject cocoa

[39] Each criterion is assessed in 3 colors: green = met the criteria; yellow = need for some additional work; red = did not meet the criteria yet.

a gradual change from forests to non-forest (in this case cocoa plantations). However, considering that conversion is done only on community land (SDC) and the total area of developing cocoa in the time span of the program is negligible (5000 ha in maximum), this might be acceptable. Sub component 2 that deals with forest conservation is supporting existing efforts of simple forest management mainly for NTFP use and local wood use. The question is if the proposed performance payments that will be paid during project implementation will be a sufficient incentive to maintain such conservation areas beyond project duration. ***Project 3*** rightly focuses on production and consumption benefits to be gained in the woodfuel sector. New management options that combine agroforestry, woodlot plantations and improving energy efficiency at producer and consumer levels are proposed. It is important to make sure that proposed interventions carefully consider the dependence of many people in the supply areas on woodfuel production and the importance of sales as a cash-generating activity. These activities are mostly still in the informal sphere and collaboration among different sectors – energy, forest, land-use planning and agriculture – is crucial to increase capacities and to formalise the supply chain, without harming the livelihoods of those involved. Some more technical details could be given, e.g. specifying fuelwood species proposed (not simply *Acacia* sp, but *Acacia auriculiformis* and *A. mangium* for acid soils, *A. mearnsii* and *Leucaena diversifolia* for higher level sites, and *Leucaena leucocephala* and *Gliricidia sepium* in agroforestry systems, *Eucalyptus robusta, E. citriodora* and others for permanent wood lots, etc.). Also consider the issues of potential invasive species with negative effects. Overall, from the reviewer's first assessment, all three projects have been formulated very carefully and in an integrative way with other projects and initiatives and fully in-line with the national REDD+ strategy. Some more details could be added on technical details, in project 1 mainly in the way how forests and woodlots are integrated in territorial planning (relevant for projects 2 and 3); in project 2 on the establishment of shade cocoa (planting in existing *moderately* degraded forests); and in project 3 on species selection for agroforestry activities and fuelwood plantation development.	trees in an existing degraded forest system without further degrading it. The IP provides additional technical details in the project idea note (Annex 2.2), including on proposed fuelwood species. Further technical development will take place during project preparation, including a risk assessment for invasive species.

L. Stakeholder consultation and stakeholder engagement		Response

The process of stakeholder consultations on the thematic studies realized in the framework of the FIP preparation were held in the 5 departments (Sangha and Likouala, Pool, Plateaux and Cuvette) between December 2016 and February 2018 (Annex 2, p 122-125). A total of 240 people were reached, mainly members of the departmental REDD+ committees (CODEPA REDD+), resource persons, NGOs and forestry companies. The process of consultation of the FIP investment plan has not been completed in August 2017. It cannot be assessed yet. From the contents side, it is not clear to the reviewer to which extent all relevant stakeholders have been included in the review of the final version of the FIP. E.g. it is not clear if and how many farmers have a potential interest in contributing to the outcomes of Projects 2 and 3. Also, the use of DGM grant is mentioned in the budget and in the annex (page 131), but to which extent it is used in the framework of the implementation of the various sub-components of the two projects is not clear. The reviewer needs to get evidence that confirms consent between stakeholders on the overall direction of the proposed FIP programme. Such elements would need to be completed in the proposal.	Annex 3 now comprehensively presents information on stakeholder consultation and engagement that had not been compiled yet at the time of the Independent Expert Review. As concerns the DGM, it is the government's understanding that preparation of the project is conditioned upon approval of the IP. The details of the DGM project will be developed during that stage.

M. Social and environmental issues, including gender	Response
Issues related to gender and vulnerable groups have been described in a general way (particularly for project 3) and a box has been provided to describe the general situation of women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups in the Republic of Congo. A plan of participation of stakeholders has been annexed to the document as well as information on benefits ("mécanismes spécialisés de subvention") for indigenous peoples and local communities. However, it is not clearly described how project 1 (dealing with territorial issues) will particularly consult with concerned parties; here some more precision should be made in the text. In respect to social and environmental issues of project 2, it is undertaken in the framework of the preparation of the ER-Program in Sangha and Likouala. In project 3, the role of women in particular at all levels of the supply chain merit some more explanation.	Annex 3 now presents how stakeholders have been and will be consulted. As concerns the land use planning project, the role of women at different levels of the supply chain has also been detailed.

N. New investments or funding additional to on-going/planned MDB investments	Response
From the reviewer's standpoint, the FIP proposal is well coordinated with the numerous activities and projects undertaken in the REDD+ framework and agriculture/energy sectors in the country, including, in particular, the CF ER-Program proposal and (forward looking) a potential future GCF project. The FIP program is well complementary to other ongoing /planned MDB investments. However, the status of the CAFI funding (e.g. the status of the Letter of Intent agreed upon between Roc and CAFI under the Initiative for a performance-based approach with disbursements based on the targets agreed upon and specified in Project 1 is not clearly shown in the document. As the CAFI funding is an integrated part of the proposed investment plan, this needs to be further clarified. Also, references are made in the investment plan to co-funding of the implementation of the 3 projects by GCF funding. The status of preparation of the GCF project including the commitment made to the contribution to the 3 proposed projects, however, is yet not strong. Further clarification should be given in the final investment plan on CAFI and GCF project commitments.	The status of CAFI and GCF funding has been clarified in Section 3 for CAFI (joint declaration signature) and the summary of the GCF (the process is at concept note stage).

O. Cost effectiveness of proposed investments	Response
Budget figures are presented in a very general way and based on the information, it is not possible to reasonably estimate cost effectiveness, in particular for project 1 (CAFI funding, possible additional funding by GCF?). Project 3 (8 million incl. grant and loan) for FIP seem to be adequate overall (e.g. about US$ 1000 per ha of plantation) but it is not clear what will be financed by the additional donors mentioned in the budget (e.g. DGM grant, AFD, BAD, etc.).	For the land use planning project, cost effectiveness is difficult to evaluate on a per-unit basis. For comparison, a similar project in Gabon was assessed at $11m, compared to $20m. The cost in ROC is thus $58/km2, whereas in Gabon it is $41/km2. The differential is primarily due to a lower degree of existing preparation in ROC (Gabon already has a v0 of its land use plan, whereas ROC first needs to create a sector analyses and maps), a higher assessment of consultations processes, and the preparation of departmental land use plans in addition to the national plan, which is planned in ROC but not in Gabon.

Part II: Compliance with the investment criteria of FIP

Comment on whether the investment plan complies with the criteria specific for FIP (see TORs).

(3) Complies with the principles, objectives and criteria of the FIP as specified in the design documents and programming modalities.

FIP principles: *In addition to the Governance Framework of the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF), the principles (i) to (vi) apply.*	**Responses**
(ii) Contribution to sustainable development	
Forests, including managing natural production forests, remain an important cornerstone in the sustainable development policy of the country, particularly in the high forested north. However, accelerated development during the recent period of high oil prices has led to major infrastructure projects including the opening-up of the previously remote forest areas to economic activity (in Likouala in particular). Besides mining, this represents a potential threat to the forest stock, as commercial and subsistence agriculture is expanding, coupled with government policy to boost agricultural development. At the same time, the Government has identified REDD+ as an opportunity for economic diversification. The overall REDD+ program that includes phase-2 REDD+ development through the proposed FIP investment plan yields an important opportunity to demonstrate the feasibility of innovative approaches to economic development that potentially can also minimize impacts on forests. The proposed FIP program however does not address forest management and conservation *per se* and puts emphasis on the enhancement of sinks. That choice needs to be well explained, as in a high forest/low deforestation country one would expect that managing forests plays a central part of sustainable development.	Northern Congo represents the government's priority area due to its relatively intact forests. SFM in the area is being addressed through the ER-Program, which foresees $17.8m for this activity through the FCPF Carbon Fund's results-based payments. In addition, an $7.5m AFD project will address SFM in northern Congo, Congo is mobilizing $6.8m from the GCF for SFM, and the EU is in the process of defining its support for FLEGT ($8.6m). Carbon stock enhancements are prioritized to avoid Brazzaville's demand for charcoal from spilling over into more heavily forested areas that are within easy driving distance of Brazzaville thanks to the newly surfaced N2 highway, and thus becoming drivers of deforestation. Reasons for that choice have further been made explicit in section 6. In addition, the geographic programs included in the revised version of the IP include suggested SFM activities for other priority regions.

FIP Criteria (FIP design document, additions as per FIP Investment Criteria and financial modalities: *Identify the theory of Change behind the proposed interventions (projects) identified and how they contribute to the overall programmatic approach. Consider how the investment program can also effectively meet criteria set by other funding sources, especially the Green Climate Fund, FCPF and Biocarbon Fund.*	**Responses**
d. Inclusive processes and participation of all important stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities.	
This part cannot be assessed for the moment as there is no information provided yet on the stakeholder consultation process of the proposed program.	Annex 3 has been added to the IP since the external review and fully details stakeholder involvement.
g. Safeguarding the integrity of natural forests	
Problems encountered here are relevant particularly for project 2. There is a fine line between the condition of degraded natural forests that still fulfill a basket of ecological functions of intact natural forests and degraded forest land that no longer fulfills major ecological (soil, water, biodiversity), social and economic functions and which are the main subject for using "degraded forests" as basis for forest or agricultural plantations. As the project is a "pilot-project" from which lessons learned will be taken, there is a need for a careful approach as further expansion of cocoa into forest areas (e.g. rotational areas in production forests) bare the risk of gradual degradation and deforestation. A monitoring approach will be needed to observe the long-term effect of the under-planting of cocoa in opened-up natural forests.	See response to Criterion C above.
h. Partnership with private sector	
The proposed FIP strategy intends to leverage resources from the private sector for the effective implementation of some of the major sub-components in Project 2. The FIP document, however, does not specify further the type of investment required by private sector and how PPP-partnership could be effectively put in place (e.g. for project 3), considering the important land tenure issues.	Involvement of the private sector beyond targeting of commercial members of the charcoal value chain, is planned, in particular in the plantation component, for which, through co-financing from GCF and with support from FAO and AFD, a credit guarantee is being planned.

(4) Assessment towards the FIP results-framework

Results	*Indicator*	*Comments*	*Score*	*Response*
C1 Reduced pressure on forests	*d) Non-forest sector investments identified and addressed as drivers of deforestation and forest degradation*	Need to be further assessed when implementing particularly project 1		Agreed, although further development of Projects 2 and 3, in particular where they invest in small-scale agroforestry, will also contribute to achieving this indicated.
C2. Sustainable management of forest and forest landscapes to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation	*b) Evidence that laws and regulations in project/program areas are being implemented, monitored and enforced and that violations are detected, reported and prosecuted*	This is crucial and heavily depends on the successful completion of the regulatory framework in respect to territorial planning and implementation arrangements of the new forest code.		Agreed. The FIP projects are designed to support the new forest code.
C3. An institutional and legal/ regulatory framework that supports sustainable management of forests and protects the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples	*a) Evidence that the legal framework (laws, regulations, guidelines) and implementation practices provide for non-discriminative land tenure rights and land use systems and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (women and men)*	Program addresses territorial issues; rights-based issues difficult to assess as results for consultation process not yet received.		Detailed consultations with local populations and indigenous peoples will be carried out during project preparation. In the case of Project 2, these will build on previous participatory simplified management planning, and activities will be informed by a land tenure assessment carried out during development of the Sangha-Likouala ER-Program.
	b) Evidence that a national land use plan exists and progress is made to secure the tenure and territorial rights to land and resources of forest-dependent stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and forest communities	New approaches searched in the rural domain, in particular in project 1.		Project 1 will indeed address this concern, and tenure issues will also be addressed during preparation of Projects 2 and 3.
C4. Empowered local communities and indigenous peoples and protection of their rights	*a) Increase in area with clear recognized tenure of land and resources for indigenous peoples and local communities (women and men)*	Project 1: not directly relevant Projects 2: agroforestry and community forestry with simple management plans Project 3: consider what is possible in the time span of the program; number of woodlots created		Projects 2 and 3 incorporate aid to tenure considerations into their project design.
	b) Level and quality of community and indigenous peoples participation (women and men) in decision making and monitoring concerning land use			

	planning, forest management, and projects and policies impacting community areas			
	c) Improved access to effective justice/ recourse mechanisms	This still needs to be described; how will complaints be handled?		A summary of Congo's feedback and grievance redress mechanism has been added to Section 3.4.
C5. Increased capacity to plan, manage and finance solutions to address direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.		Detailed indicators need be developed in the specific project context during phase 1 implementation		Agreed.

Background Note on Republic of Congo's Investment Plan

To implement its ambitious vision for REDD+, the Government of Republic of Congo is pursuing multiple sources of funding, including the Forest Investment Program, the Central African Forest Initiative, the Green Climate Fund, and bilateral sources. To supports its fundraising efforts, the Government has developed a single Investment Plan (IP) for the implementation of its National REDD+ Strategy. The IP follows the FIP template, and covers the first five years (2018-2022) of the 2018-2030 National REDD+ Strategy. The IP therefore presents the Government's investment priorities for this first phase. The document functions as a reference framework for investments by the Government and its development partners.

Contrary to a "traditional" FIP IP, it therefore goes beyond proposing only FIP investment projects. Rather, it sets forth an overall investment program into which the proposed FIP investments are integrated. In keeping with FIP's requirements, the investment projects proposed to the FIP are developed in detail. Other programs of the IP are at various stages of development, and are therefore presented in less detail. The proposed FIP investments themselves remain consistent with the Expression of Interest on the basis of which the FIP selected Republic of Congo into its pipeline. They constitute priority investments for the Government.

Producing a single, comprehensive IP not only facilitates donor and investment coordination, but also allows the Government to submit the IP to multiple funders. As a first step, the Government is submitting the IP to the FIP. In parallel, it is submitting the IP to CAFI, which has a different approval process from the FIP's. CAFI has communicated that it would like to make a decision on the IP in February 2018, and will in the meantime provide comments on the IP that the Government will take into account. The Government hopes to do so within 3.5 weeks of their receipt, after which CAFI will submit the IP for an independent evaluation, the results of which are expected to be integrated in early 2018. Lastly, in 2018, the Government will also be submitting a proposal to the GCF based on the IP.

It is the Government's understanding that CAFI's evaluation process is not expected to focus on the investment projects proposed for FIP funding. It further understands that CAFI's evaluation will primarily concentrate on the IP's overall strategic vision, ambition, and governance. As such, the FIP Sub-Committee's decision-making on the IP could be coordinated with CAFI's while also retaining a degree of independence from the latter. The Government expects any evolution of the IP past its October 31 submission to the FIP to exclude the FIP investment projects, save for modifications requested by the FIP-SC or as otherwise agreed with the FIP-SC.