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[Approval by mail]: Mozambique: Emissions Reductions in the Forest Sector Through Planted Forests with Major Investors (FIP, IFC) (PFIPMZ032A) – IFC Responses to US Comments

The concessions of IFC's client in Zambezia total 173,327 hectares. These are dispersed across an area of approximately 10,000 square kilometers. Much of this area has limited road access. The size of the area potentially influenced by the investment, and its remoteness, limits options for monitoring forest degradation.

The LEGEND land delimitation program will lay the groundwork for community monitoring and management of land – including natural forests – through formation of representative associations. However, these land management associations (which do not exist today) will take time to become effective. Eventually, these associations should monitor and manage land use – possibly incentivized through REDD+. IFC believes this is the most sustainable approach.

The annual livelihood survey monitors loss of natural forest in an indirect way. The survey has questions about use of eco-system services, such as firewood, natural fruits, mushrooms and honey. A decline in the availability of these products signals a loss of natural forest. This data can be analyzed to see whether there are geographic concentrations.

Remote sensing using satellite images is a realistic method of monitoring forest changes over the program area. In the project plan, we have referenced Global Forest Watch (GFW), because it is free and easy to use. This system uses 30 meter resolution satellite imagery. Up to date, high resolution imagery (0.5 meter resolution) covering the area of influence would cost approximately $200,000, not including analysis, which cannot be covered by FIP resources and is not envisaged in the IFC-FIP project.

There are several interlinked World Bank programs that will support IFC's monitoring and reporting of impacts on natural forests in the area surrounding client operations. These include REDD+, the Zambezia Landscape Program and the World Bank FIP. The REDD+ program will use high resolution satellite imagery to monitor forest degradation.

Within 6 months, IFC will present a plan to monitor and report on natural forest degradation in the areas where the program is working. This plan will combine community monitoring, geospatial analysis of the livelihood survey data on eco-system services and remote sensing data.

A stakeholder forum has been developed under the Zambezia Landscape Program. IFC's client is an active member of this forum. IFC's client has also established a NGO Consultative Committee of 30 national and international NGOs. Annual forest losses in the Zambezia Landscape will be discussed at both stakeholder fora. If GHG emissions targets are reached, these stakeholders could benefit from REDD+ funding.

Regarding degradation versus conversion in the Miombo ecosystem, smallholder farmers cannot remove stumps and roots when they open new farm land. The native species will grow back, when the land is left fallow for several years. Therefore, smallholder farmers may degrade an area, but they do not fully convert it. This type of forest degradation can be detected using GFW, although measurement is more precise with higher resolution imagery.