

## Democratic Republic of Congo: Forest Dependent Communities Support Project (FDCSP)

### Concept Note

#### I. INTRODUCTION AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

1. *The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a country with huge potential.* With its immense extraordinary agricultural and mineral resources, the second largest contiguous tropical rainforest block in the world, fertile land, huge hydroelectric potential and 70 million inhabitants, the DRC has the potential to become one of Africa's richest countries and one of the continent's key engines for growth. However, more than 80 percent of its population lives under conditions of extreme poverty (less than US\$1 a day). 71 percent of people are food insecure and 57 percent do not have access to basic health services.
2. Since 2001, the country has been recovering from a series of conflicts and is still a fragile country with enormous needs for reconstruction and economic growth, but with a severely constrained fiscal space and weak institutions. This economic recovery has not benefited most of the population or the development of the private and formal sector. In 2009, over 70 percent of youth was underemployed.
3. DRC harbors half of all African rainforests, with 62 per cent of its territory covered by some sort of forest ecosystem. Forests of all types make a critical contribution to the livelihoods of about 40 million people who are among the world's poorest, by providing them with food, household energy, medicine, building materials, and cash income.
4. While the rate of deforestation is relatively low (0.3%), the forest cover loss in absolute terms is one of the highest (350,000 ha per annum over the period 2000-2010), destroying forest-dwellers' traditional resources. In addition, rates could escalate rapidly in the future with an increase in political stability and rapid development of agriculture, mining and associated transport and energy infrastructure.
5. DRC has gained international recognition for implementing a national process of "REDD+ Readiness", led by the National REDD Coordination under the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism (MENCT), whereby the country prepares itself for international financial flows supporting efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The national REDD+ strategy has been prepared through a participatory process. It identifies strategic options that can effectively and efficiently reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, while maximizing co-benefits in terms of poverty reduction and biodiversity protection. Cross-sectoral policies and programs cover the agriculture, energy and transport sectors and the relevant technical Ministries are involved in the dialogue aiming at reducing deforestation.
6. The Forest Investment Program (FIP) is an initiative under the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF). The FIP seeks to address the underlying drivers of deforestation and to catalyze transformational change by providing upfront investment to support the implementation of the REDD+ strategy, and generate information and experience for policy and regulatory changes. For that purpose, DRC has prepared an Investment Plan under the umbrella of the Forest Investment Program (FIP) to support activities that tackle the main drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the country, and create intervention models that can be scaled up in the future. It mostly targets three fuelwood supply basins: (i) Kinshasa (supported by the World Bank); (ii) Kananga/Mbuji-Mayi and (iii) Kisangani (both supported by the AfDB). The intervention areas were selected through a participatory process at the national level. DRC received a grant for US\$60 million to implement the investment projects

according to the priorities identified in the Investment Plan and focusing mostly on the 3 firewood and charcoal supply basins (see Annex 3).

In complement to this investment, the FIP Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities has been established to provide the communities in the eight FIP pilot countries a financing and learning mechanism to support their participation in and complement the FIP investment programs and projects. Its global design is a product of a collaborative effort between the Indigenous Peoples and local community representatives from various countries and the MDBs. DRC has been ably represented in this process, with rigorous engagement from self-selected representatives. The indicative allocation for DRC for the DGM is US\$6.0 million.

## **II. RELATIONSHIP TO THE FIP INVESTMENT PLAN**

7. The DGM project is complementary to the FIP Investment Plan. The Investment Plan aims at increasing the proportion of energy wood and agricultural products produced in a sustainable way, with a view to promoting the sustainable management of natural forests, and addressing the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, in particular the three targeted Basins.
8. **Geographical complementarity.** First, the areas for the consultations and the setting up of a National Steering Committee (NSC) – see Annex 2 – are all included in the three FIP Basins. While the FIP activities will only focus on portions of each basin, the area selected for the DGM will include surrounding sectors and territories in order to fit with the living territories of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and Local Community (LC) living territories. In addition, it will reduce the risks of leakage from the FIP and mitigate the risk of creating tensions between the communities in the FIP investment areas and the ones in the same Basin but outside of the investment area.
9. **Improve an inclusive participation.** The FIP will invest through the existing official and traditional institutional framework (Village Development Committee, land tenure chiefs (“chef de terre”), farmers’ organization for spatial planning (CARG), provincial government and decentralized technical services, etc), in which the minorities may not be adequately represented. Therefore, the DGM will support the inclusion of the indigenous people and local communities’ representatives by building their capacities and bringing financial independence.
10. **Complementary investments.** While the FIP will support farmers’ organizations to improve their planning and efficiency to increase the quantity of sustainable agriculture and timber products, this project will focus on improving the traditional livelihood for the indigenous people and the local communities – the focus will be less on agriculture, equipment and trainings, but more on securing the land rights or the non-timber forest product collection areas.

## **III. PROPOSED PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

11. The project objective is to (i) strengthen the capacity of the targeted Indigenous Peoples and local communities to engage in the FIP and REDD+ activities, and (ii) promote local development in favor of sustainable forest management.

## **IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

12. The proposed project will implement activities that are aligned with the Thematic Areas and Potential Activities for Sub-Component 1 and 2 from the DGM Framework Operational Guidelines. They will be geared towards strengthening community capacity to: engage on REDD+ policy; participate in

land-use planning, production practices and organization; and to develop as entrepreneurs and businesses. It will also finance demand-driven local investments held by community organizations. This approach complements, and contributes to, Government's ongoing efforts to engage non-state actors, in particular local communities in sustainable natural resource management.

The proposed project components are as follows:

- *Component 1 – Reinforce the role of IPs and LCs in the REDD+ process.* This component will provide tailored support including on administrative and financial management issues and improve dissemination of information about REDD and its impact on IPs and LCs (including a communication strategy and workshops). The activities that could be financed out of this component will support both capacity building and knowledge exchanges. They may include: (i) large audience trainings and seminars for the communities; (ii) study tours, virtual discussions, development of community/farmer demonstration plots, community level internships to support a practical transfer of knowledge nationally, regionally, and internationally, (iii) selected scholarships, technical training in specialized institutes, and (iv) setting up cultural center to support knowledge transfer among the generations and promotion of the forest-dweller culture.
  - *Component 2 – Small grants* aiming at promoting economic activities and rural livelihoods that enhance climate change adaptation and support the sustainable management of forest landscapes, including non-timber products. Those activities will provide grants to communities to engage in alternative livelihoods or in making their current livelihood more sustainable such as (i) community-led sustainable management, natural regeneration and restoration of forest landscapes; (ii) traditional farming and cultivation practices that enhance local agro-biodiversity, including medicinal and aromatic; (iii) agro-forestry production systems, agro-ecology tillage practices, reforestation and plantations; (iv) collection and processing of non-timber products (medicinal plants, essential oils, etc.); (v) indigenous/traditional landscape management practices including water and soil conservation, (vi) energy-efficient or energy-saving practices including wood energy plantations, sustainable charcoal/briquette production, biogas/other renewable energy supply projects, in every case in a locally adapted form, operating at a community and family level.
  - *Component 3: Monitoring & evaluation* This component will finance the costs of the National Executing Agency (NEA) which will implement the project. The NEA will be selected through a competitive process (see also section on Implementation Agency Assessment). The NEA will be in charge of developing review and risk assessment criteria, disbursing the grants, ensuring appropriate use of DGM funds, maintaining documentation of country projects, and reporting to the WB on use of DGM funds. In addition, under this component the NEA will undertake monitoring and evaluation activities of the various pilot activities.
13. Components and related activities will be further developed during project preparation and in consultation with communities in the target areas and with the support of the NSC.
14. ***The project will trigger environmental and social safeguard policies.*** Most of the areas where the investment may take place are remote areas, with critical ecosystem that in addition may play a sacred/cultural role for the local communities and the Indigenous People. Therefore, at concept stage, OP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment), OP 4.36 (Forests), OP 4.04 (Natural Habitats), and OP 4.12 (Involuntary Resettlement) have been triggered with OP 4.11 (Physical Cultural Resources) to be decided during preparation.

15. While Component 1 and 3 will mostly finance capacity building, the component 2 (small grants) will have a direct impact on the ground – it will apply a community-driven approach, and for that reason neither the precise locations nor the potential impacts will be known at the time of the preparation. A programmatic Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared at the global for the DGM as a whole and can be reviewed during preparation for any country-level activities. In addition, an ESMF has been established for the two FIP-funded projects for similar investments anywhere in the country. OP 4.12 has been triggered as a precautionary measure to manage impacts that may result from restrictions of access – a Process Framework will be prepared for the FIP and may be adjusted for the DGM.
16. ***The DGM will be designed and implemented with the following principles:*** (a) ownership and joint decision-making by IPs and LCs; (b) transparency and accountability in selection of implementing partners, members of governing bodies and beneficiaries; (c) flexibility, efficiency and administrative simplicity to enable easy and streamlined access to grants by IPs and LCs; and (d) social inclusion and equity by reaching out and ensuring the participation and the protection of women, children, elders, and other vulnerable elements of society. Particular attention will be given to activities addressing gender-specific livelihood, health, and cultural issues, and activities promoting the engagement of youth. This may include communication efforts targeted at women and youth, designing grant windows focused on women and youth friendly activities, etc.
17. ***Sustainability will be a key element of design.*** During project preparation, the “Groupe de Travail Technique de préparation du mécanisme dédié en RDC (GTT/DGM)” and the World Bank team will explore inclusion of elements in design that strengthen the sustainability of activities financed through the DGM. This may include, for example, exploring partnership platforms, similar to the “plateforme de dialogue et de suivi participative sur les industries extractives”, between the Government and other stakeholders, and building resource partnerships with local governments. Lessons on sustainability will be drawn from similar facilities in DRC and other countries.

## V. PREPARATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

18. ***Consultations on the DGM*** started in 2012 in the DRC under the leadership of the main national IP platform, the REPALEF (“Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la Gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers en RDC”). The REPALEF, comprised of 83 member-organizations, was created when the two largest IP groups, namely DGPA (“Dynamique des Groupes des Peuples Autochtones”) and Linapyco (“Ligue Nationale des Populations autochtones Pygmées du Congo”), decided to join forces under one single umbrella network. The REPALEF has been very active in the preparation of the national DGM, organizing internal information/consultation meetings with their members as well as meetings with external partners (Government, civil society, donors). Specifically they held several workshops at the start of 2013 to collect and consolidate the DRC’s contribution to the DGM Framework Operational Guidelines document. They have since then participated in various preparatory meetings held jointly with the GTCR (“Groupe de Travail Climat REDD”) and RRN (“Réseau des Ressources Naturelles”), two large Congolese civil society networks involved in REDD+ activities. Under the facilitation of the World Bank, ad hoc meetings were held on September 30, October 4, 9 and 11, 2013.
19. A dedicated technical working group has recently been established, called “Groupe de Travail Technique de préparation du mécanisme dédié en RDC (GTT/DGM)” and comprised of 11 people including 6 IP and 5 LC representatives. This group has delivered some preparatory documents, including Terms of Reference and a detailed budget related to the establishment of the National Steering Committee (NSC).

20. ***The project will be overseen by the National Steering Committee*** whose main function will be to approve the project work program, to select proposals to award grants and monitor progress of the projects. In addition it will, among other things, ensure that lessons learned are transmitted to ongoing national processes. This NSC will be composed by IP and LC representatives from each FIP basin and will rely heavily on REPALEF. GTCR and RRN will provide logistical support and experience. While the NSC will be different from the REPALEF itself, it will be very important for REPALEF to be involved in this Committee, directly (as a member) or indirectly (providing technical expertise) in order to strengthen REPALEF's capacity and ensure its representativeness in the long term at national level.
21. The NSC will respect the principle of balance along gender and regional lines. The inclusion of youth will be encouraged. The NSC will include decision-making members representing IPs and LCs; active observers representing government, MDBs, etc.; and a Secretary who will coordinate and support the meetings.
22. ***The NSC will be supported by a National Executing Agency which will implement the project.*** The NEA will be a nongovernmental organization, with the requisite capacity to prepare and implement the proposed project according to Bank operational policies (financial management, procurement, safeguards, etc.). The NEA will be selected during project preparation and will start operation after project approval.
23. ***The Steering Committee will be established during the preparation process.*** The dedicated working group GTT/DGM provided a list of areas and activities that could be relevant for the project and that would complement the FIP action. The selected areas were agreed with the FIP national team and are located inside the fuelwood provision basins as described in the FIP Investment Plan. Now that the list of territories has been agreed, all the information regarding the IP and LC groups of those areas is being reviewed in order to start the consultations in February 2014 in each area. In addition, the GTT/DGM is building relationship at central level since, while the DGM will not be implemented by a government agency, it will nevertheless be critical for the project to engage with key sectoral ministries and Finance.
24. ***Project preparation will consist of extensive consultations.*** Because of the complex nature of ownership and use of natural resources in the DRC, project preparation and implementation will require frequent consultation with IPs, the targeted LCs, community-based organizations, traditional authorities, local governments, and national ministries, as necessary. Consultations will be carried out following international and local best practice. As necessary, the design of the consultative process will be informed by relevant assessments underway in the sector<sup>1</sup> It has been agreed that as much as possible the consultation schedule will be aligned with those of the FIP projects to maximize synergies between the two sets of activities and to minimize community-level consultation fatigue.

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<sup>1</sup> The national REDD+ SESA is almost completed and has already undertaken numerous consultations.

### Annex 1 - Preparation Schedule

Preparation activities will be undertaken in close coordination with the FIP to minimize costs and maximize synergies. The project timeline is as follows:

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Consultations for selection of NSC members initiated	February 2014
Establishment of the NSC and First meeting	September 2014
Launching of the selection process for the NEA	September 2014
FIP Sub-Committee approval	November 2014
World bank Approval	January 2015
Effectiveness	2015

### Annex 2 – List of targeted areas for the initial consultations (“Territories”)

<b>BASIN</b>	<b>PROVINCE</b>	<b>TERRITORIES</b>
<b>KINSHASA</b>	<b>BANDUNDU</b>	<b>KIRI</b>
		<b>OSHWE</b>
		<b>INONGO</b>
		<b>OPALA</b>
		<b>BANALIA</b>
		<b>BAFWASENDE</b>
		<b>YAHUMA</b>
		<b>MAMBASA</b>
<b>MBUJI-MAYI / KANANGA</b>	<b>KASAI ORIENTAL</b>	<b>LUPATAPATA</b>
		<b>LUSAMBO</b>
		<b>LUBEFU</b>
		<b>LUBAO</b>
		<b>KABINDA</b>
	<b>KASAI OCCIDENTAL</b>	<b>DIMBELENGE</b>
		<b>MWEKA</b>
		<b>LUEBO</b>
<b>KISANGANI</b>	<b>ORIENTALE</b>	<b>OPALA</b>
		<b>BANALIA</b>
		<b>BAFWASENDE</b>
		<b>YAHUMA</b>
		<b>MAMBASA</b>

