

Document of  
The World Bank

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READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT NOTE

ON A

PROPOSED GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT US\$1.95 MILLION

TO THE

REPUBLIC OF GABON

FOR

GABON - REDD+ READINESS (P167065)

June 25, 2019

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Vice President: Hafez M.H. Ghanem

Country Director: Elisabeth Huybens

Practice Manager: Africa Eshogba Olojoba

Senior Global Practice Director: Karin Erika Kemper

Task Team Leader: Mirko Serkovic

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**DATA SHEET**

*Republic of Gabon  
Gabon – REDD+ Readiness*

**READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL (R-PP) ASSESSMENT NOTE**

*Africa*

**Basic Information**

Date: June 25, 2019	Sectors: Forestry
Country Director: Elisabeth Huybens	Themes: Climate Change
Practice Manager: Africa Eshogba Olojoba	Environmental and Social Risk Classification: Substantial
Senior Global Practice Director: Karin Kemper	
Lending Instrument: TF Grant	
Team Leader(s): Mirko Serkovic	

Date of R-PP Formulation Grant Agreement signature: July 30, 2009

Expected date of Readiness Preparation Grant Agreement signature: August 31, 2019

Joint IFC: N/A

Project Implementation Period:                      Start Date: August 1, 2019                      End Date: December 30, 2020

**Project Financing Data**

<input type="checkbox"/> Loan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit	<input type="checkbox"/> Guarantee	

**For Loans/Credits/Others (US\$M):**

Total Project Cost : US\$ 1.95 M

Total Bank Financing :  
US\$ 1.95 M

Total Cofinancing : N/A

Financing Gap : N/A

Financing Source	Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT	
IBRD	
IDA: New	
IDA: Recommitted	
Others: Forest Carbon Partnership Facility	US\$ 1.95 M
Financing Gap	
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$ 1.95 M</b>

Regional FCPF Trust Fund Number: TF080736

FCPF Country Child Trust Fund Number:

Recipient: Republic of Gabon

Responsible Agency: Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux

Contact: Mr. Lee White

Title: Director, ANPN

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### Institutional Data

#### Practice Area / Cross Cutting Solution Area

##### Cross Cutting Areas

- Climate Change  
 Fragile, Conflict & Violence  
 Gender  
 Jobs  
 Public Private Partnership

#### Sectors / Climate Change

Sector (Maximum 5 and total % must equal 100)

Major Sector	Sector	%	Adaptation Co-benefits %	Mitigation Co-benefits %
Agriculture, fishing, forestry	Forestry	100	100	100
Total		100		

I certify that there is no Adaptation and Mitigation Climate Change Co-benefits information applicable to this project.

#### Green House Gas Accounting

Is GHG accounting applicable for your project?

No

#### Themes

Theme (Maximum 5 and total % must be equal to 100%)

Major theme	Theme	%
Environment and natural resources management	Climate change	100
Total		100

#### Private Capital Mobilized

#### Gender Tag

Does the activity plan to undertake any of the following? **Please select Yes or No for each:**

Gender analysis and/or consultation on gender related issues. **Yes.**

Specific actions to address the distinct needs of women and girls, or men and boys, or positive impacts on gender gaps. **Yes.**

Mechanisms to facilitate monitoring and/or evaluation of gender impacts. **No.**

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### **Clearances to the Readiness Preparation Proposal Assessment Note**

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Global Practice Manager: Africa Eshogba Olojoba; June 12, 2019

Regional Safeguards Advisor: Hanneke Van Tilburg; June 24, 2019

ESF Practice Managers (Environment and Social): Africa Eshogba Olojoba; Aly Zulficar Rahim; June 12, 2019

Procurement Specialist: Lova Niaina Ravaoarimino, June 4, 2019

Financial Management Specialist: Dahlia Takodjou Meku; May 7, 2019

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## **PURPOSE OF THE READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT NOTE**

As part of its responsibilities for the FCPF, the World Bank has been asked to ensure that the FCPF's activities comply with the relevant World Bank Operational Policies and Procedures, in particular the Safeguard Policies, and the policies on Procurement and Financial Management.

The World Bank has also been asked to assist REDD Country Participants to formulate and implement their Readiness Preparation Proposals (R-PPs).

The purpose of this Readiness Preparation Proposal Assessment Note (R-PP Assessment Note), therefore, is for the World Bank to assess if and how the proposed REDD+ Readiness Support Activity, as presented in the R-PP, complies with Safeguard Policies, and the World Bank's policies on Procurement and Financial Management, discuss the technical quality of the R-PP, record the assistance it has provided to the REDD Country Participant in the formulation of its R-PP, and describe the assistance it might potentially provide to the REDD Country Participant in the implementation of its R-PP.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANPN	National Agency of National Parks ( <i>Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux</i> )
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CPRRNAT	Natural Resources and Land Use Provincial Regulatory Commission
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
EIDD	Sustainable Development Impact Study ( <i>Etude d'impact du développement durable</i> )
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FMT	Facility Management Team
FoSeRP	Forestry Sector Revitalization Project
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GoG	Government of Gabon
HCS	High Carbon Stock
HCV	High Conservation Value
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
MRV	Monitoring, reporting and verification
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIF	National Investment Framework
NNRFOS	Gabon's Natural Resources Monitoring and Observation System ( <i>Système national d'observation des ressources naturelles et des forêts, SNORF</i> )
PC	Participants Committee (of the FCPF)
PNAT	National Land Use Plan ( <i>Plan National d'Affectation du Territoire</i> )
PSGE	Strategic Plan for Gabon as Emerging Market ( <i>Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent</i> )
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and fostering conservation, sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks
RIL-C	Reduced-Impact Logging-Carbon
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

**REPUBLIC OF GABON**  
Gabon – REDD+ Readiness

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**REPUBLIC OF GABON**  
Gabon – REDD+ Readiness

**I. Introduction and Context**

**A. Country Context**

*Gabon's biogeophysical attributes and socioeconomic position*

1. The basins of the Congo and Ogooué rivers comprise the second largest expanse of tropical forest on earth. The region's forests remain relatively intact and are globally important as a reservoir for biodiversity and a sink for atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. Gabon is a highly-forested nation, with 88 percent forest cover, and houses approximately 18 percent of the Congo-Ogooué Basin's forest. These forests are one of the last strongholds for the forest elephant with an estimated elephant population of 40,000. Gabonese forests are thought to be home to 50 percent of all remaining forest elephants in Africa. Gabon is also an important country for the conservation of the Western Lowland Gorilla and Chimpanzees. This biodiversity is afforded protection through a network of protected areas that include 13 national parks created in 2001, totaling 1,293,000 ha; together with park buffer zones, protected areas cover 15 percent of Gabon's territory. In addition to natural capital, forests have always played an important role in the country's economic development. Economically, they had long been the main national asset before being overtaken by oil in the early 1970s. In 2016, the entire sector represented CFAF 240.1 billion, or 2.9 percent of national GDP.

2. Gabon is subdivided into nine provinces with a land area of 267,667 km<sup>2</sup>. With its 1.8 million inhabitants, is one of Africa's most urbanized countries with approximately 75 percent of its population living in urban centers with more than 50 percent of inhabitants living in the capital (Libreville), as well as other urban centers including Port-Gentil (the economic capital), and Franceville (a mining region). Gabon is a sparsely populated country, with an average density of the population of 5 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, which makes Gabon the African country where the forest-to-inhabitant ratio is one of the highest. The rural population is thinly scattered over the hinterland where access is difficult. Gabon is the fifth largest producer of oil in Africa. Gabon is also well-endowed with forests, fisheries, biodiversity and mineral resources. It is Africa's second largest exporter of timber and it has the second largest deposit of manganese worldwide.

3. In the 2016 Human Development Report, Gross National Income (GNI) per capita is US\$19,044, among the highest in Africa. However, the country has not been able to ensure equitable development and social welfare among the population. It is ranked 109 in the world according to the Human Development Index. During the oil boom years of 1973 to 1985, the Government promoted full employment policies in government agencies and public enterprises. Oil wealth brought benefits to the urban elite and public servants which were further shared through family networks but did not reach an important share of the population which remained poor until today. Inequalities plague the current social service delivery system, and access of the poor to services remains low.

4. For decades, Gabon's economy has been driven by oil exports. Though timber harvest has been an important component of the economy, forests have remained relatively sheltered from activities that promote deforestation – resulting in a deforestation rate of only 0.04 percent annually. However, as oil prices decline, Gabon's development strategy depends on economic diversification to other sectors. Economic diversification is expected to increase resource exploitation by extractive industries and expansion of agricultural intensification, both of which could have implications for Gabon's forests.

5. Gabon's economy suffered considerably from the recent oil price shock. At the time of the terms of trade shock in 2014, oil represented 84 percent of total exports and oil revenue constituted 49 percent of total fiscal revenue. As oil prices fell from US\$100 per barrel in 2014 to an average of US\$45 in 2016, growth slowed significantly, and twin deficits emerged. GDP growth slowed to 2.1 percent in 2016 with lower commodities prices (oil and manganese) and production. The industrial sector overall stagnated in 2016. The decline in public spending combined with significant arrears from the public sector weighed on services sector growth, which slowed from 5.2 percent in 2015 to 3.2 percent in 2016. Agriculture, a relatively small sector, was the only bright spot; its growth reached 11.9 percent in 2016 from 8.2 percent in 2015. Inflation increased to 2 percent (year-on-year) in 2016 from 1 percent in 2015, remaining below the CEMAC target threshold of 3 percent; inflation in December 2016 was 4.1 percent due to rising fuel prices resulting from the elimination of most subsidies.

6. To foster a shared and more diversified growth, Gabon's challenges consist of: (i) improving efficiency and equity in the use of the country's resources, both natural and financial; (ii) diversifying the economy by improving the investment climate for responsible private sector development; and (iii) improving governance, through improved transparency and accountability in the use of its resources and public service delivery. The management of natural resources is central in this agenda.

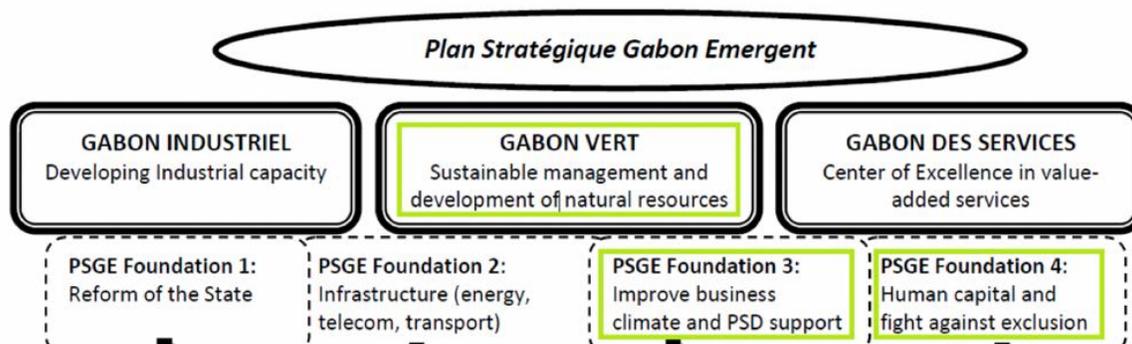
#### *Emerging Gabon: Gabon's forward-looking vision*

7. To address these challenges, the Gabonese President presented a new economic vision in 2009: Emerging Gabon. The strategic road map for an Emerging Gabon (*Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent—PSGE*) aims to modernize the country and turn it into an emerging economy by 2025. It is based on accelerating growth and reducing poverty while also looking to capitalize on Gabon's comparative advantages at both the regional and global levels to diversify its economy and pursue sustainable development. Combined with the Sustainable Development Law (No. 002/2014), the PSGE lays the foundation for transforming Gabon into an emerging, yet diversified economy while maintaining natural capital. The strategy is built on three pillars:

- a. Industrial Gabon (*Gabon Industriel*) aims to develop Gabon into a metallurgic and industrial center of excellence (optimizing oil and mining, construction, building materials, and agro-industrial transformation).
- b. Green Gabon (*Gabon Vert*) with three major goals: (i) Instituting sustainable forest management and transforming Gabon into a global leader in certified tropical timber production; (ii) Developing agriculture and livestock farming sustainably to improve food security; (iii) Creating sustainable and responsible fisheries.

- c. Gabon Services (*Gabon des Services*) with the objective of making Gabon a center of excellence in business, ecotourism, and value-added services such as higher education and research, health, media, and information technologies.

Figure 1: Emerging Gabon (*Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent—PSGE*)



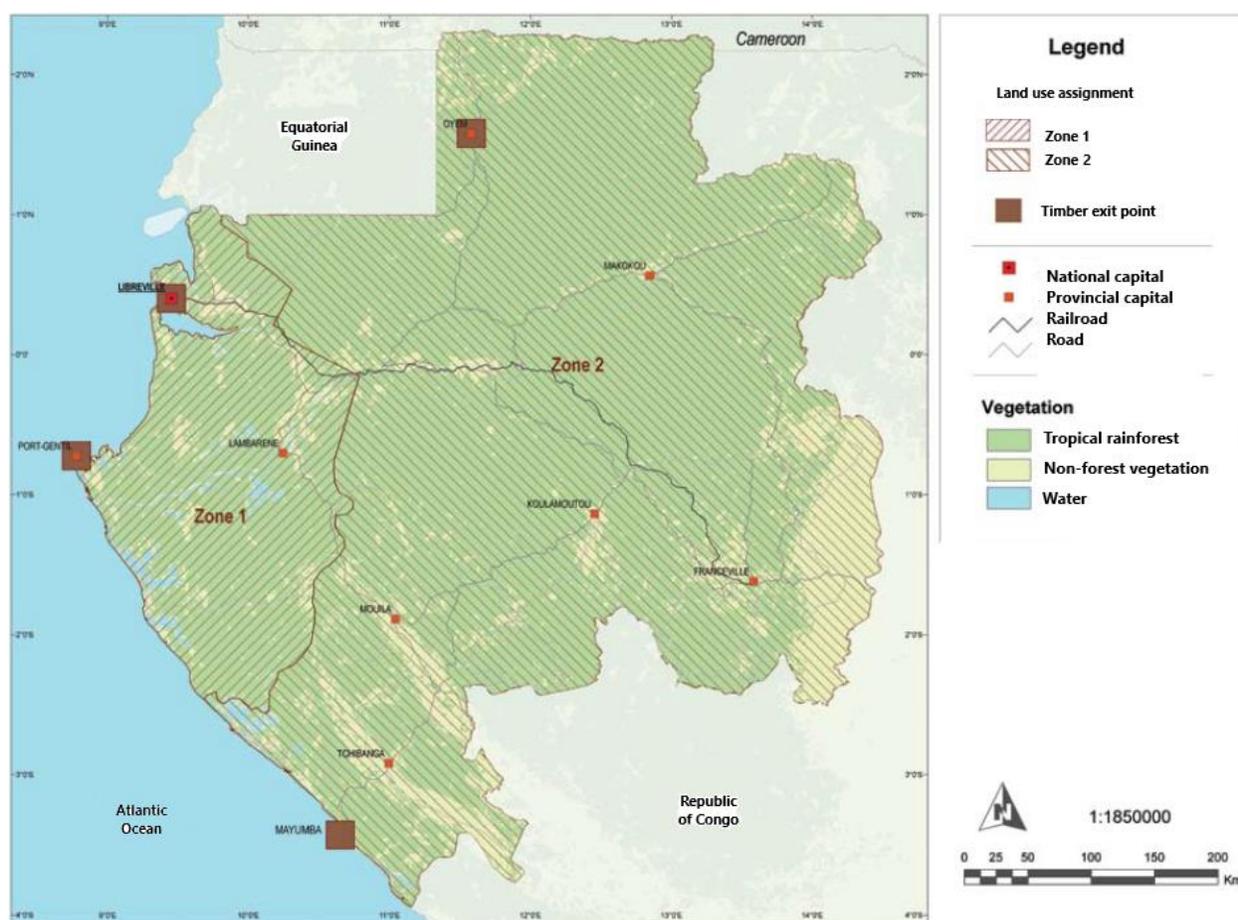
## B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

8. Consistent with the new strategic focus of Emerging Gabon, Gabon has been an active participant in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations. In 2010, the President established a National Climate Council to coordinate Gabon’s response to climate change by developing a strategic, overarching plan called *Plan Climat*, which incorporates climate change considerations into the country’s sectorial development strategies.

9. Gabon submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC in April of 2015. Because a high percentage of Gabon’s estimated emissions are from the forest sector (due mostly to logging), the NDC is largely focused on sustainable management of forests and sound land use planning. The Government of Gabon (GoG) has the vision that forests, their use, conservation and long-term functioning, have a true potential to achieve holistic low emission development.

10. Gabon is divided into two main zones in terms of logging activities. “Zone 1” in figure 2 comprises more than 30 percent of the country’s forests. It is easily accessible and is characterized by a relatively good communications network. More than 50 percent of Gabon’s population lives in this zone and it is under strong pressure. The flagship and endemic *Okoumé* tree is abundant in this zone. The zone is homogeneous in terms of altitude and vegetation but very rich in the diversity of its natural habitats. Six main types of forest are observable: open, swampy, periodically flooded, permanently flooded, savannas and mangrove islands. “Zone 2” in figure 2 comprises 70 percent of the remaining forest area. It has less diversified natural habitats, with forest types that are distributed over the altitudinal gradient (lowlands, valleys, low altitude, medium altitude, high altitude, plateaus). Finally, four sites (Libreville, Port-Gentil, Mayumba and Oyem) are the main points of exit of international timber flows.

**Figure 2: Logging areas and main points of exit of international timber flows**



11. The forestry sector is a significant contributor to Gabon’s economy. In 2016,<sup>1</sup> GDP for forest exploitation was CFAF 91.1 billion (+21.5%), or 1.1% (0.9%) of national GDP at current prices. GDP linked to wood-related industries was CFAF 149 billion (+6.6%), or 1.8% (1.6%) of national GDP. The entire sector represents CFAF 240.1 billion, or 2.9 percent of national GDP. However, the sector was significantly impacted in 2010 by the institution of a ban on the export of unprocessed logs which aimed at supporting the development and modernization of the domestic timber processing industry.

12. The ban was instituted during the international financial crisis of 2008-2009, at a time when global demand for tropical timber was experiencing severe contraction. Most of the companies whose main activity was in exporting unprocessed logs were faced with the choice of either establishing sawmill units to their operations or ceasing their activities; almost all of these companies had not prepared for this conversion—even though the 2001 Forest Code had already required that, by 2012, 75 percent of logs be processed before export—and many could not obtain the commercial financing necessary do so. Many of Gabon’s timber enterprises lost their appetite for implementing forest management plans seen as too restrictive and costly. Between 2005-2009, the five years before the ban, Gabon’s log production averaged 3,126,339 m<sup>3</sup>/year. In the five

<sup>1</sup> Source: DGEPPF, 2016 National Economy Scoreboard. Figures in parentheses show changes in relation to 2015.

succeeding years, 2010-2015, this production fell to an estimated 1,548,731 m<sup>3</sup>/year; a drop of over 50 percent.

13. With industrial logging being one of the main factors of forest degradation in Gabon, the ban contributed to a decrease in overall forest degradation, and concomitantly in greenhouse gas emissions. A 2016 World Bank study on the impact of the export ban, *Impact of the 2010 log export ban on forests, the timber industry and the Gabonese economy (Report No. ACS20539)*, estimated that these avoided emissions resulted in greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions of approximately 11.53 million tCO<sub>2</sub>/year since 2010. According to the same study, most of the gains in avoided emissions—around 88 percent—are due to the reduction of collateral forest degradation that occurs during logging operations. In the case of Gabon, while the decline in log production from the export ban is equivalent to direct emission avoidance of 1.41 million tCO<sub>2</sub>/year, the vast majority of decreased emissions (10.12 million tCO<sub>2</sub>/year) comes indirectly (e.g. from the access roads that are not opened through dense vegetation or the damage to neighboring trees during felling that does not occur).

14. However, reconfiguration of the sector has also led to an influx of foreign investors whose appearance has strengthened Gabon's timber processing capacities significantly from 1.5 to 2.5 million m<sup>3</sup>/year. Much of this is due to the opening of the Nkok Special Economic Zone (SEZ), where more than 81 companies have already pledged to invest US\$1.7 billion, as a result of an ambitious partnership between the Republic of Gabon and Olam International Limited. Because much of Gabon's low deforestation rate and emissions savings has been linked to an industrial forestry sector lacking in processing capacity, this development has the potential to erode much of the country's gains in reduced GHG emissions. Preventing such a loss entails that sustainable forest management plans are adhered to, a fact that underscores the necessity of the Government of Gabon to maintain a comprehensive forestry observation system.

15. Lack of data hinders precise estimation of carbon emissions from the logging sector, but current approximations indicate that it accounts for a relatively high proportion of Gabon's total emissions. Logging concessions cover approximately 150,883 km<sup>2</sup>, or 57 percent of the surface area of the country. In 2013, approximately half of these concessions were subject to management plans meant to promote sustainability; it is unclear to what extent existing management plans are implemented. Furthermore, illegal logging is believed to have escalated in recent years, supported by well-organized criminal networks.

16. Showing further commitment to the Green Gabon pillar and its commitment to develop its forest sector sustainably, the Gabonese President announced in September 2018 that all logging concessions must be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified by 2022. Any logging company operating in Gabon, not involved in this certification process in 2022, will be deprived of its license. Currently only three out of 40 major forestry companies are FSC certified: Rougier Gabon, Precious Woods and the Gabon Timber Company (*Compagnie des Bois du Gabon*).

17. Without careful planning and mitigation, development activities initiated to support economic diversification and improved food security in the context of the PSGE could result in high rates of deforestation, habitat destruction, national insecurity, high species extinction and destabilization of livelihoods of forest-dependent communities. On the other hand, the country's

exceptionally rich biodiversity, high forest cover, and low rate of deforestation offer tremendous opportunities for the design and implementation of innovative sustainable development models. Such models have the potential to diversify the nation's economic portfolio and enhance agricultural and extractive resource production, while ensuring biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation - by both minimizing and/or avoiding emissions and reducing emissions from the forestry sector through improved forestry practices.

18. Understanding that sound land use planning is critical to the implementation of Emerging Gabon, the GoG launched a National Land Use Planning process (*Plan National d'Affectation du Territoire - PNAT*) in 2013 under the political coordination of the *Secrétaire Général du Gouvernement* and technical oversight of the National Climate Council. The PNAT process is the government's primary mechanism for achieving its sustainable development, forest conservation, and climate change mitigation goals. It oversees all political and technical aspects related to national-scale spatial planning.

19. Gabon received funding from the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI) in support of its goals of minimizing and avoiding emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. CAFI is a collaborative partnership that supports strategic, holistic and country-level investments in low-emissions development, including activities that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+)<sup>2</sup>.

20. Gabon, as part of the CAFI partnership, developed its National Investment Framework (NIF) which was finalized in April 2017 and presented to the CAFI Executive Board. Based on this NIF, the GoG and CAFI signed a Letter of Intent<sup>3</sup> in June 2017 whereby CAFI pledged US\$18 million and the GoG committed to reducing by 50 percent its greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, compared to 2005, from improved forestry practices. The Letter of Intent is articulated around three objectives:

*Outcome 1: The implementation of a national land use plan.*

The first outcome is optimizing and adopting the PNAT, based on robust information and coupled with an inclusive, multi-ministerial process. Emphasis is put on participative mapping of resource use by rural communities and public consultation and communication in the land use planning process, as well as on optimizing land allocation for industrial and small holder agriculture, in line with the Gabonese NDC.

*Outcome 2: A National Natural Resources and Forestry Observation System.*

The second outcome is a rigorous long-term Natural Resources Monitoring and Observation System (NNRFOS). It is expected to include observations from space and

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<sup>2</sup> The Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)'s objective is to recognize and preserve the value of the forests in the region to mitigate climate change, reduce poverty and contribute to sustainable development. CAFI support focuses on developing and implementing National Investment Frameworks (NIFs) endorsed at the highest level by national institutions with cross sectoral mandates, providing funding based on the achievement of policy and programmatic milestones that are spelled out in letters of intent, encouraging donor coordination and alignment of bilateral assistance to partner countries based on NIFs and promoting inclusive participation of all stakeholders. <http://www.cafi.org/content/cafi/en/home.html>

<sup>3</sup> The financial commitment of US\$ 18 million is pledged in two equal tranches. The second tranche is conditioned to reaching intermediary milestones that will be independently evaluated.

ground measurements to allow Gabon to identify and mitigate changes in forest cover, as well as to monitor the biodiversity and carbon sequestration capacity associated with various land use decisions. The system will simultaneously monitor i) forest ecosystem health, ii) floral and faunal diversity and iii) provision of ecosystems services (carbon sequestration, biodiversity, and food security), with a view to evaluating the impacts of climate change and land use planning decisions on these variables. The completion of the Natural Resource and Forest Monitoring System will provide a transparent means to evaluate, monitor and report on the PNAT, as well as Gabon's compliance with the NDC commitments.

*Outcome 3: Efforts to maintain carbon sequestration by forests, reduce emissions related to forest degradation and improve inclusive forest governance.*

These objectives will be reached by preserving High Carbon Stock (HCS) and High Conservation Value (HCV) forests; introducing a permanent cap on the area of non-HCS/HCV forests that can be converted to other land uses; reducing areas under forest concessions; and fighting illegal logging, among other strategies.

21. As part of the PNAT process, Gabon has completed an assessment of land use, land use change drivers, forest law, policy and governance. Additionally, the GoG has already established a working governance and implementation structure and consulted with various ministries, set up an institutional monitoring framework, and determined how to address feedback and grievances (though has yet to establish it). A broad range of key stakeholders has been identified and time and effort has been invested to raise general awareness of the basic concepts and process of REDD+. By the end of the process, data layers that define the terrestrial forest environment (including HCV and HCS forests, areas of high timber value, and areas of importance for national and cultural heritage), village customary use zones and practices, regions of high potential for agriculture or mineral extraction, and infrastructure and energy development needs will all be mapped. A consultation process with multiple stakeholders, including forest-dependent people, is defined as an integral component of the PNAT process. The decision-making process will include a full assessment of positive and negative potential impacts of land-use decisions and a PNAT that optimizes economic benefits, conservation values, and local needs will be produced over three years of data collection and consultation. The GoG is continuing to work with CAFI to achieve Outcomes 1 and 2 but requires additional support to achieve Outcome 3 (Efforts to maintain carbon sequestration by forests, reduce emissions related to forest degradation and improve inclusive forest governance).

22. In support of Outcome 3 of the Gabon-CAFI partnership, the GoG requested support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to improve emissions estimates from the forestry sector and design a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale, including examining the potential for reforestation. More specifically, support was requested to: (1) improve knowledge and estimates of current emission levels from forest degradation in logging concessions; (2) define guidelines for improved forestry management, with an emphasis on reduced impact logging-carbon (RIL-C); (3) examine the potential of reforestation, plantations and stock enhancement programs; and (4) examine the potential of a national "label" program to incentivize operators to implement RIL-C, or other best practice forestry guidelines.

23. In September 2017, the FCPF Participants Committee allocated<sup>4</sup> US\$ 1.95 million to Gabon for the implementation of its REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP)<sup>5</sup>. The activities to be financed with support from the FCPF are fully integrated into the activities being financed by CAFI.

24. The GoG has requested the World Bank to act as implementing partner for the implementation of the FCPF's R-PP. The World Bank has been a long-term partner in supporting the GoG to manage forest resources and develop this economic sector. Approved in 2005, a US\$15 million Development Policy Loan (DPL) for Natural Resources Management (NRM) aimed to increase the contribution of natural resources to national income and reduce the country's heavy dependence on declining oil resources while protecting the resource base and improving management efficiency. The World Bank's involvement in the NRM-DPL built upon the Forest and Environment Project (*Projet Forêt Environnement – PFE*), which closed in 2002 after helping to improve the knowledge base on Gabon's forest resources and assisting the preparation of the 2001 Forest Law, while strengthening the technical capacities of the Ministry of Forest (also in charge of Environment). In 2015, the Government requested support from the World Bank for the wood sector, which resulted in an assessment of the impact of an export ban of raw logs on the economy and which identified options for a program in support of developing the industrial wood sector. The Bank and the GoG have also been in discussions about a potential Forestry Sector Revitalization Project (FoSeR Project or FoSeRP). The FoSeR Project would help give greater competitiveness to the forestry and wood sector while ensuring the principle of sustainable management of forest resources.

### C. Relationship to CAS/CPF

25. *Performance and Learning Review (PLR) of the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS)*. The CPS for the FY2012-2016 period set in motion a portfolio of activities to strengthen three strategic development pillars: (i) governance and public-sector capacity; (ii) competitiveness and employment; and, (iii) human development and environmental sustainability; gender equity was a cross-cutting theme. The PLR, which revised the CPS, extending it to FY2018, noted that Gabon had made significant progress in increasing transparency and sustainability of natural resources management, having achieved all the CPS targets for 2012-2016<sup>6</sup>. Because of Gabon's strong commitment to climate action—it was the first African country to submit its NDC and it reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation by 475 million tons between 2000-2016, mainly via its own financing—the PLR adjusted the CPS to lend support explicitly to implementation of Gabon's NDC. The current project complements Gabon's existing efforts in

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<sup>4</sup> Resolution PC24/2017/6.

<sup>5</sup> Though Gabon signed a R-PP formulation grant in 2009 it did not eventually execute it. In 2017, Gabon engaged again with the FCPF and submitted a R-PP that it had developed with its own resources. The submission of the R-PP was accompanied by a request for the Readiness Preparation Grant in question, which was approved by the FCPF Participants Committee in 2017 subject to revisions to be made to the R-PP which were finalized in 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Creation of a national database on biodiversity; biological inventory at three sites and biological surveys of over 700,000 ha; increased surveillance in three national parks and participatory management plans for the Loango, Moukalaba-Doudou, and Mayumba parks.

reducing emissions, as laid out in the country's NDC, by rendering land use planning in the forestry sector data-driven and sustainable.

26. The project's goals are closely linked to the two strategic themes supported by the current CPS: 1) *increasing competitiveness and employment*, which the project addresses through developing human capacity in the public and forestry sectors, and positioning the domestic forest industry to take advantage of increasing consumer awareness of sustainability concerns; and 2) *vulnerability and resilience*, by identifying sensitive and high-value forested areas in order to protect and/or restore them. The Project is expected to contribute to the CPS by increasing transparency and accountability (Outcome 1) by underpinning national land and natural resource use management with scientific rigor; improving private sector development (Outcome 3) by incentivizing the private sector and adding economic market value to Gabon's wood products through a sustainable forestry certification initiative; and building vocational skills and capacity (Outcomes 4 and 5) through trainings in forest sector emissions calculations methodologies and improved logging practices.

## **II. Proposed PDO/Results**

### **A. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

27. To improve estimates of emissions from the forestry sector and to design and validate with key stakeholders a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale.

### **B. Key Results**

28. The key results are (please see Annex II for the complete Results Framework):
- Methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation implemented (Yes/No); and
  - National emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector designed and validated with all key stakeholders (Yes/No).

## **III. Project Context**

### **A. Concept**

29. The Project will provide US\$ 1.95 million in funding to support Gabon in carrying out a subset of activities outlined in its R-PP, namely to improve emissions estimates from the forestry sector and to design a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector.

#### **1. Description**

30. The Project will have three components:
- Component 1: Improved baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector;
  - Component 2: Design of a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector; and
  - Component 3: Project coordination.

## Project Components and Costs (US\$, '000)

Activities for FCPF Funding	Cost ('000 US\$)
<b>Component 1: Improved baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector</b>	<b>579</b>
1.1 Implementation of a methodology to calculate emissions from degradation in forestry concessions at national scale	579
<b>Component 2: Design of a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector</b>	<b>1,173</b>
2.1 Design and validation of strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations	600
2.2 Evaluation of potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs, particularly in highly degraded forests as an additional means of reducing emissions from the forestry sector	59
2.3 Design and validation of a strategy for certifying forestry concessions reducing emissions	240
2.4 Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment and development of safeguards instruments	137
2.5 Consultations with stakeholders	137
<b>Component 3: Project coordination</b>	<b>198</b>
3.1 Reinforcing capacity and training	103
3.2 Office supplies, materials and other goods	55
3.3 Financial audit and fees	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,950</b>

### Component 1: Improved baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector.

31. Gabon has initiated a robust and transparent national forest monitoring system that combines remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches to estimate anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions and removals (the National Natural Resources and Forestry Observation System, NNRFOS). The NNRFOS will support forest law enforcement agencies in their task of monitoring and verifying forest management operations and identifying illegal logging operations. Even though the NNRFOS meets the country's goal of monitoring land-use plan implementation and identifying unplanned deforestation events, taken alone it is not enough to accurately estimate and monitor emissions from the forestry sector. There are technical, financial and human resource challenges associated with calculating emissions from

forest degradation. Uncertainty in quantifying carbon loss from degradation, particularly from selective logging, can be large. Conventional methods of remote sensing and surveying are generally not sufficiently sensitive to alleviate this uncertainty.

32. Based on an evaluation of various options and in collaboration with the Institute of Tropical Research, Gabon has selected a methodology to improve emissions calculations from forestry activities. The project will support the training of a team and the implementation at a national scale of the selected methodology (Activity 1.1). This will include the mobilization of a field inventory team, the funding of field inventory and data collection missions and the purchasing of field equipment and other goods to enable these missions. Moreover, the project will support the hiring of an international consultancy organization to accompany the national teams undertaking this activity, as well as activities 2.1-2.3 which are interrelated. All data generated under this activity will be included as an integral component of Gabon's National Forest Monitoring System (NNRFOS).

### **Component 2: Design of a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector.**

33. Data generated from activities under Component 1 will be used to identify emissions factors associated with specific aspects of logging operations (e.g. residual damage from felling, skid trails, road creation, wood transformation and wood waste management, etc.). Based on these calculations and further analytical work, emissions from the industry will be identified and the most effective and feasible technical and legal mechanisms to reduce these emissions will be defined in a national strategy to be validated by key stakeholders (Activity 2.1). These would comprise improved harvest practices that are known as Climate Effective Reduced Impact Logging, or RIL-C<sup>7</sup>. The strategy will integrate technological advancement options and inform decision-makers of any institutional and governance reforms that may be required to achieve emission reductions (for example, a revision to the forest code, better regulation of transformation activities, and so on).

34. Activities under this component will also assess the degree by which well-designed, multi-purposed plantations and reforestation programs could reduce emissions from the forestry sector (through either carbon sequestration or by avoiding degradation of High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests) while also increasing economic revenue. A full evaluation of how these activities could contribute to growing the economic contribution of forestry to the nation's economy will also be undertaken (Activity 2.2). The project will support the mobilization of technical experts, the funding of field missions and the purchasing of field equipment and other goods to enable these missions.

35. The potential for certifying forestry concessions that are implementing the emissions reductions strategy will be assessed as a means for simultaneously incentivizing the private sector and adding economic market value to Gabon's wood products. This will include the potential for integrating these measures into the FSC certification scheme that all Gabonese logging concessions must comply with by 2022 (Activity 2.3). The project will support the mobilization

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<sup>7</sup> Research has shown that logging improvements can maintain timber production and reduce carbon emissions by 30-50%. Considering the need to balance human demand for timber products with climate change mitigation, RIL-C is a potential strategic conservation intervention in Gabon.

of a technical team to undertake this assessment, under the guidance of the international organization.

36. A Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) of the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector will be conducted, upon which the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and other relevant safeguards instruments will be developed (Activity 2.4)<sup>8</sup>. A gender analysis will be done as part of the SESA to identify gender risks and mitigation measures to be included in the design of the strategy. A firm will be hired to conduct this work. Finally, consultations with key stakeholders will be conducted by the government according to the project's Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan, SEIDP (Activity 2.5).

### **Component 3: Project coordination.**

37. This component will support the overall daily administration of the project and reinforce the capacity of the implementing agency to carry out project activities. Given the activities to be undertaken and the relatively short implementation period, the Project will fund the recruitment of a project coordinator and the following consultants to be dedicated part-time to the project: a financial and administrative officer, a procurement officer, an environmental and social management specialist, a monitoring and evaluation specialist and a project assistant.

## **2. Overall Risk and Explanation<sup>9</sup>**

38. *The overall risk rating for the project is Substantial.* Though project activities are limited to technical assistance, the future implementation of the strategy could present potential risks and impacts for forest communities. The safeguards risk is therefore rated as *Substantial* as explained below. In addition, the fiduciary risk sector is rated as *Substantial* given the PIU's performance with other World Bank projects which needs to be improved.

39. The fiduciary risk is rated as *Substantial* because, based on past performance, the PIU will need to take some measures to improve its financial management; specifically, installing an adequate accounting software, reinforcing the capacity of the PIU, updating the procedures' manual and recruiting an external auditor. There is a clear roadmap to improve fiduciary performance and this is further elaborated in the Financial Management Assessment Summary (paragraphs 42-48).

40. The safeguards risk rating is *Substantial* as, even though the future implementation of the emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector is expected to have positive environmental impacts, forest logging (in the context of reduced-impact logging) presents potential risks and impacts for forest communities and could lead to illegal activities such poaching and harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), access to sensitive sites and other negative environmental

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<sup>8</sup> This SESA is limited to the scope of the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector funded by this project, which is different to the SESA to be conducted for the National Land Use Plan under the CAFI project and referred to in Gabon's R-PP (and, by association/infering, Resolution PC/24/2017/6).

<sup>9</sup> <http://intresources.worldbank.org/INTOPCS/Resources/380831-1405609276340/SORTGuidanceNote.pdf>

impacts. The strategy could also generate impacts on Indigenous Peoples (sensitive populations in the legal context of Gabon) and local communities (forest dependent peoples and other populations) living next to forest concessions. Social impacts would mainly be related to access restriction to land, relationships with local communities (gender based violence, respect of forest dependent's style of life), and on local populations' livelihoods. The Recipient has an acceptable legal and regulatory environmental and social framework and potential impacts are expected to be adequately managed during implementation of the strategy in accordance with the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and other safeguards instruments that will be prepared during the implementation of the grant. However, the Recipient is unfamiliar with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). To mitigate this risk, capacity building and training on the ESF will be required during the project's lifetime.

## **B. Implementing Agency Assessment**

41. The implementing agency (PIU) would be the National Agency of National Parks (*Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux - ANPN*). The ANPN has experience with the implementation of Bank-financed projects, including the Wildlife and human-elephant conflicts management in the South of Gabon project (P157249) and the Sustainable management of critical ecosystems project (P143914). The ANPN also has experience with the implementation of projects by other development partners. The implementing agency's capacity to implement the project activities within the anticipated timeline is deemed appropriate. Project management will be incorporated within the current structure of ANPN, which will take responsibility for all fiduciary aspects of the project, including planning, budgeting, disbursements, accounting, reporting for project resources, and procurement. To optimize efficiencies and synergies, the coordination and technical implementation of project activities will rely as much as possible on the team already established for the CAFE project. As mentioned previously, the Project will fund the recruitment of a project coordinator and various consultants given the additional activities to be undertaken and the relatively short implementation period.

42. The Steering Committee established for the CAFE project would also serve as the Steering Committee for this Project. The Steering Committee will be chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Economy, Prospective and Development Programming and composed of the main relevant ministries.

43. The National Climate Council (NCC) leads the planning and implementation process for REDD+. The NCC is an inter-ministerial body chaired by the President of the Republic. It includes a Technical Committee led by a representative of the President's cabinet that will serve as the NCC's coordinating committee. ANPN, along with the Gabonese Space Studies and Observations Agency (AGEOS), lead the implementation of activities. The Ministry of Forest Economy, Fisheries and Environment (MINEF), in charge of the protection and sustainable management of ecosystems is charged with the technical oversight of all activities related to logging. The Ministry of the Economy, Forecasting, and Development Programming (MEFDP) is responsible for the sustainable management of Gabon's natural capital through the implementation of the Sustainable Development Law.

### C. Project Stakeholder Assessment

44. Project activities complement the broader PNAT process financed by CAFI, which has been the main platform for stakeholder participation.

45. Civil society stakeholders and the broader public have been engaged in the PNAT process through regular meetings and updates of the Climate Council, which also makes information publicly available on its website<sup>10</sup>. Information has also been shared via an interactive website dedicated to PNAT<sup>11</sup> and national television. A strategy for continued consultations at multiple stakeholder levels within the PNAT process includes the creation of permanent provincial, district and village-based information and consultation centers, designed to share information, gather input and adaptively manage land in a transparent and inclusive manner. It will also include the engagement of forest-dependent populations, discussions of traditional land-use patterns and rights through a rural participatory mapping exercise, and a process for stakeholder feedback.

46. An inclusive Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan (SEIDP) for the Project has been prepared proportional to the nature and scale of the Project and associated risks and impacts. It considers forest dependent people, forest concessionaires, minorities, land use planners, among other stakeholders who may be affected in terms of land use and access restrictions to forest resources.

### IV. Proposed Team Composition and Resources, including Technical Assistance Provided by Bank Staff to Date

47. The R-PP was developed without funding from the FCPF. However, it was reviewed and assessed by the World Bank task team, the FCPF Facility Management Team, independent reviewers on behalf of the FCPF's Technical Advisory Panel and the FCPF PC.

The Task Team includes:

Name	Title	Unit
Mirko Serkovic	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Task Team Leader)	GENA2
Steven Silverstein	Technical Specialist	GENA2
Lova Niaina Ravaoarimino	Senior Procurement Specialist	GGOPF
Henie Dahlia Takodjou Meku	Financial Management Specialist	GGOAC
Cyrille Valence Ngouana Kengne	Senior Environmental Specialist	GENA3
Albert Francis Atangana Ze	Environment Consultant	GENDR
Alain Owono	Social Development Specialist	GSU01
Antoinette Kounda Kiki	Team Assistant	AFMGA

### V. Assessment Summary

#### A. Technical

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.conseilnationalclimat.ga/fr/actions/plan-national-daffectation-des-terres-pnat>

<sup>11</sup> <http://wri.github.io/pnat-landing-page/#l=fr>

48. The activities to be financed by the FCPF grant are linked to key deliverables outlined in Gabon's REDD+ R-PP, approved by the FCPF Participants' Committee, and build on the activities already supported by the Gabon-CAFI partnership. Furthermore, they have been confirmed after technical discussions with the GoG and follow the guidelines, standards, and technical criteria established by the FCPF.

## **B. Financial Management**

49. Project management will be incorporated within the current structure of ANPN, which will take responsibility for all fiduciary aspects of the project, including planning, budgeting, disbursements, accounting, reporting for project resources, and procurement.

50. In line with the financial management policies of OP/BP 10.00 on IPF, ANPN's financial management arrangements have been assessed and are acceptable to the World Bank. ANPN is currently executing the Wildlife and human-elephant conflicts management in the South of Gabon project (P157249) and the Sustainable management of critical ecosystems project (P143914) with *Moderately Unsatisfactory* FM performance.

51. The Financial Management Assessment conclusion is that the proposed PIU FM arrangements in place in terms of staffing, accounting and reporting need improvements to adequately apply to the Grant. With regards to the risks identified, the PIU will need to improve its financial management; specifically: (i) installing an adequate accounting software and training its users (before effectiveness and ninety days after grant signature); (ii) reinforcing the capacity of the PIU by recruiting a financial and administrative officer (two months after effectiveness); (iii) updating the procedures' manual (three months after effectiveness); and (iv) recruiting an external auditor (one month after effectiveness). The implementing unit will be in charge of managing the grant activities including all FM related aspects. From these recommendations, the installation of an adequate accounting software and training of its users will be established as conditions for the effectiveness of this grant.

52. With regards to Audit arrangements, the audit of the grant will cover each fiscal year of the project implementation period commencing with the year during which the first withdrawal is made from the project account. In such circumstances, the audit of the grant will be required not later than six (6) months after the end of the fiscal year. Such audit would be carried out by the external auditor of one of the projects implemented by the ANPN. The ToR will be adjusted accordingly and extend to the new project activities.

53. A designated Account (DA) will be opened in local currency (CFAF) in a financial institution acceptable to the Bank and will be managed by the ANPN. Transaction-based disbursement will be used to document transactions.

54. An initial advance will be made to that Designated Account. Withdrawals from the grant will be transaction based and all supporting documentation for expenses must be properly archived and readily accessible for both controls and audit purposes.

55. FM residual risk is deemed **Substantial** and the proposed arrangements are adequate to meet minimum FM requirements provided the PIU implements the following mitigation measures: (i) finalize the procurement and installation of the accounting software including subsequent training and hands on support; (ii) finalize the recruitment process of the external auditor; (iii) hire an accountant dedicated to the project; (iv) update the procedures manual to take into account the specificities (activities, FM, etc.) of the new Project. Detailed Financial Management reviews and support to the PIU financial and accounting team will also be carried out on a risk basis, either within the regular proposed supervision plan or a more frequent schedule if needed, to ensure that expenditures incurred under the Grant remain eligible.

### **C. Procurement**

56. Responsibility for procurement will also be incorporated within the current structure of ANPN, which is already executing the Wildlife and human-elephant conflicts management in the South of Gabon project (P157249) and the Sustainable management of critical ecosystems project (P143914) with *Satisfactory* performance. The capacity of the ANPN to also implement this Project was assessed as adequate. However, a dedicated procurement officer will be recruited to strengthen the existing procurement unit.

57. Procurement under the AF will be in accordance with the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" (Procurement Regulations) dated July 2016 (revised November 2017) under the "New Procurement Framework" (NPF), and the "Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants", dated October 15, 2006 and revised in January 2011 and as of July 1, 2016, and other provisions that may be stipulated in the Financing Agreement. In accordance with paragraph 5.9 of the "World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" ("Procurement Regulations") the Bank's Systematic Tracking and Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) system will be used to prepare, clear, and update procurement plans and conduct all procurement transactions for the project. The World Bank Standard Procurement Document under the New Procurement Framework will be used for all international competitive procurement. As part of the preparation of the additional finance, ANPN (with the support from the World Bank) prepared a Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) that describes how procurement activities will support project operations for the achievement of project development objectives and deliver Value for Money (VfM). The PPSD clarifies institutional arrangements for procurement; roles and responsibilities; thresholds, procurement methods, and prior review, and the requirements for carrying out procurement. ANPN also prepared a draft procurement plan for the entire period of project implementation, which was approved by the World Bank.

### **D. Social and Environmental (including Consultation, Participation, Disclosure and Safeguards)**

58. Gabon has an acceptable legal and regulatory environmental and social framework. The Ministry of Forest Economy, Fisheries and Environment (MINEF) through the Directorate General for the Environment and Nature Protection (or *Direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la*

*Protection de la Nature* –DGEPN) is the principal agency responsible for the management of the environment. It coordinates, monitors, and supervises all activities in this field. The implementing agency (National Agency of National Parks or *Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux* – ANPN) has two safeguards specialists (social and environment) onboard and also has experience with the implementation of Bank-financed projects, including the Wildlife and human-elephant conflicts management in the South of Gabon project (P157249) and the Sustainable management of critical ecosystems project (P143914). An environmental and social management specialist dedicated to this project will be recruited with project funds. Safeguards staff do not have experience with the World Bank’s ESF. Given the expanded scope of the ESF and the clients’ lack of familiarity with the new ESF, capacity building and training will be required during the project’s lifetime.

59. The scope of this Project is limited to technical assistance. It does not include the implementation of REDD+ investment programs on the ground and the FCPF support is limited to analytical studies, capacity building, and consultation processes at the national and sub-national levels. However, the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector to be developed will eventually be implemented in forest concessions (though its implementation is not within the scope of this project). Forest logging presents potential risks and impacts for forest communities; illegal activities (poaching); exploited areas; trees preserved for populations; etc. The Strategy will consider that there are populations (forest dependent peoples and other community groups) who live and have livelihood activities (agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering) in areas where logging is undertaken. Actions to be included in the Strategy will consider potential impacts on their practices in terms of land use and access restrictions to forest resources. Gender related impacts will also be considered with specific mitigation provisions to be included in the strategy.

60. In relation to the PNAT process, Gabon’s Sustainable Development Law requires that a formal Sustainable Development Impact Study (EIDD, its French acronym) be completed prior to its validation. The PNAT process, including its EIDD, is financed by CAFI with the support of AFD as implementing agency but will integrate environmental and social management guidelines from a range of partners (current and future), including the World Bank.

61. An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) has been prepared by the Borrower to address the environmental and social risks identified for this Project. Impacts are expected to be adequately managed during implementation of the Strategy in accordance with a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to be prepared by the Project. The SESA will identify and propose environmental and social management measures to be implemented to address the potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with the Strategy. Forest concessions engaged in the implementation of the Strategy will be required to prepare specific instruments but these will benefit from the strategy context created by the SESA and the ESMF. The ESMF will include standing methods and procedures, along with appropriate institutional arrangements for screening, reviewing, implementing, and monitoring specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) to prevent adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts.

### **D.1. Social (including Safeguards)**

62. The national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector to be designed in the framework of this project will consider that there are populations (forest dependent peoples and other community groups) who live in areas where logging is undertaken. The Strategy may affect their practices and generate access restrictions. To avoid this and to ensure that the Strategy will not create social risks, specific measures will be taken. An Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) will be elaborated to find potential impacts on forest dependent peoples and a Process Framework (PF) will be elaborated to identify impacts and set measures to be included in the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector.

### **D.2. Environmental (including Safeguards)**

63. Key environmental concerns are related to potential risks and impacts from implementation of the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector. Forest logging, even in the context of Reduced-Impact Logging (RIL), presents potential risks and impacts for forest communities and could also lead to illegal activities such poaching and harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). Potential impacts can be related to (i) disposal and management of wastes during logging and log processing; (ii) occupational health and safety of workers and (iii) nuisances related to air and noise emissions; (iv) labor influx ; (v) forest damage during logging and (vi) road construction. To address these issues, in addition to the ESMF, the Project will elaborate a Pest Management Plan (PMP).

### **D.3. Consultation, Participation and Disclosure**

#### **i. Experience to Date**

64. The main platform for consultations with stakeholders to date has been through the PNAT process.

65. The design and implementation of the PNAT is one of the cornerstones of Gabon's sustainable development strategy (*Gabon Vert*), which was subject to an inclusive national validation in 2015 which included government, political, civil society and business constituencies.

66. Early stakeholder engagement, information sharing and dialogue required to initiate the PNAT process necessarily occurred at upper-levels of the government, where multiple, uncoordinated land allocation initiatives were being independently proposed within individual Ministries. The PNAT process has included an intensive data gathering and organization phase and the clarification of current land zoning and uses. Government-level information sharing took the form of data sharing and the compilation of a unified database collated from multiple Ministries. The PNAT process also included the creation of a multi-ministerial committee to promote dialogue, transparency and improved collaboration among sectors. The results of these early information-sharing ministerial efforts have been communicated and shared with the broader public and civil society stakeholders via the creation of an interactive website<sup>12</sup> and through regular

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<sup>12</sup> <http://wri.github.io/pnat-landing-page/#l=fr>

meetings and updates of the Climate Council, including on its website<sup>13</sup>, as well as on national television.

67. Government outreach to non-centralized stakeholders has historically been challenging due to a lack of resources and logistical constraints. Thus, provincial leaders and rural populations have not been meaningfully involved in national-level decision-making processes, even in the presence of a strong political will for inclusion. Through work funded by CAFI, the GoG has been working to ensure that this trend does not continue into the PNAT process. One of the most important aspects of the process will be enlisting the support and fostering a sense of ownership by the multiple stakeholders, including government and civil society members at the provincial, departmental and local levels.

68. Having completed the government level information sharing and dialogue process – which was required to first understand the existing state of land allocation and to resolve existing ministerial level land disputes – the next phase of the PNAT process will include a component to design and implement a broader stakeholder engagement and information sharing plan. A strategy for continued consultations at multiple stakeholder levels is in progress, and includes the creation of permanent district-based information and consultation centers, designed to share information, gather input and adaptively manage land in a transparent and inclusive manner. These activities are to be undertaken within the Gabon-CAFI partnership, which funds the PNAT process.

69. Gabon is committed to ensuring the PNAT information sharing and dialogue process is inclusive in its approach and incorporates inter-ministerial coordination, a decentralization process, and the full participation of relevant stakeholders, particularly local populations. This will include the creation of permanent provincial, district and village-based information and consultation centers, designed to share information, gather input and adaptively manage land in a transparent and inclusive manner. It will also include the engagement of forest-dependent populations, discussions of traditional land-use patterns and rights through a rural participatory mapping exercise, and a process for stakeholder feedback. The design and implementation of this system has been included in the NIF agreed upon by CAFI and will be financed through the CAFI partnership.

70. **Provincial level consultation:** Permanent committees (Natural Resource and Land Use Provincial Regulatory Commissions – CPRRNATs<sup>14</sup>) will be created to facilitate political, technical and consultative activities at the provincial level.

71. **District level consultation:** To further ensure a transparent, inclusive and consultative PNAT process, the GoG will establish a consultation and information center for land-use planning in each departmental prefecture – 48 centers nationwide. By deploying a transparent and formal stakeholder input mechanism, stakeholder feedback will be integrated into the PNAT in an iterative manner. Through establishing a grievance reporting mechanism, stakeholders will have

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.conseilnationalclimat.ga/fr/actions/plan-national-daffectation-des-terres-pnat>

<sup>14</sup> Provincial scale committees to be chaired by the provincial governors, with representation from senior executives from the key sectoral agencies and national parks, major economic operators (agriculture, forestry, mining, etc.) and representatives of civil society in each province.

access to grievance reporting and redress. The grievance redress process will follow the relevant legal statutes and comply with the consultation and safeguards requirements.

72. **Village scale consultation:** To make certain that activities proposed as part of the national development strategy serve the intended purpose of improving livelihoods and promoting economic development opportunities for all citizens, the PNAT technical team will conduct participatory village mapping exercises in each of the country's 2,589 villages to integrate the needs of forest-dependent communities and other marginalized groups into the PNAT.

## **ii. Proposal Going Forward**

73. An inclusive Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan (SEIDP) has been prepared proportional to the nature and scale of this Project and associated risks and impacts. This considers forest dependent people, forest concessionaires, minorities, land use planners, among other stakeholders who may be affected in terms of land use and access restrictions to forest resources.

## **VI. ANNEXES**

Annex I: Systematic Operations Risk-Rating Tool (SORT)

Annex II: Preparation Schedule and Resources

Annex III: Results Framework

Annex IV: R-PP Submitted by the REDD Country Participant

Annex V: Implementation Schedule

**Annex I: Systematic Operations Risk-Rating Tool (SORT)**

<b>Risk category</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>1. Political and Governance</b>	M
<b>2. Macroeconomic</b>	M
<b>3. Sector Strategies and Policies</b>	M
<b>4. Technical Design of Project or Program</b>	L
<b>5. Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability</b>	M
<b>6. Fiduciary</b>	S
<b>7. Environment and Social</b>	S
<b>8. Stakeholders</b>	M
<b>9. Other</b>	
<b>OVERALL</b>	S

## Annex II: Preparation Schedule and Resources

Preparation Schedule				
Milestone	Basic	Forecast	Actual	
AIS Release			April 2018	
Concept Review			N/A	
Readiness Preparation GFR approved			June 18, 2019	
Readiness Preparation Grant signed		August 31, 2019		
Sector Unit Estimate of Resources Required from Preparation through Approval				
Source of Funds	Preparation Expenses to Date (USD)	Estimate of Resource Requirements (USD)		
		Fixed	Variable	
<b>Bank Budget</b>				
<b>Trust Funds</b>	60,000	5,000	5,000	
Team Composition				
Bank Staff				
Name	Title / Specialization		Unit	UPI
Mirko Serkovic	Natural Resources Management Specialist (Task Team Leader)		GENA2	353536
Steven Silverstein	Technical Specialist (Operational support)		GENA2	478566
Lova Niaina Ravaoarimino	Senior Procurement Specialist		GGOPF	293987
Henie Dahlia Takodjou Meku	Financial Management Specialist		GGOAC	538751
Cyrille Valence Ngouana Kengne	Senior Environmental Specialist (ESF)		GENA3	512180
Albert Francis Atangana Ze	Environment Consultant (ESF)		GENDR	457740
Alain Owono	Social Development Specialist (ESF)		GSU01	498937
Antoinette Kounda Kiki	Team Assistant		AFMGA	229334
Non Bank Staff				
Name	Title	Office Phone	City	

### Annex III: Results Framework

<b>Project Development Objective (PDO):</b> to improve estimates of emissions from the forestry sector and to design and validate with key stakeholders a strategy to reduce emissions from forestry practices at a national scale.									
PDO Level Results Indicators	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline (2018)	Target Values <sup>15</sup>		Frequency	Data Source/ Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection	Description (indicator definition etc.)
				2019	2020				
<b>Indicator One:</b> Methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation implemented	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project report	ANPN/MINEF	
<b>Indicator Two:</b> National emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector designed and validated with all key stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project report and report from validation.	ANPN/MINEF/MEFDP	
<b>INTERMEDIATE RESULTS</b>									
<b>Intermediate Results of Component One: Improved baseline emissions calculations in forestry sector</b>									
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator One (1.1):</i> Inventory team trained on methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project report	ANPN/AGEOS	
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator Two (1.2):</i> Methodology for calculating emissions from forest degradation implemented by	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project report, percentage of forestry concessions completed	ANPN/AGEOS	

<sup>15</sup> Target values are cumulative.

inventory team in forestry concessions at national scale									
<b>Intermediate Results of Component Two: National emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector validated through PNAT process</b>									
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator One (2.1):</i> Strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations designed and validated and validated with all key stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project documents.	ANPN/ MINEF	
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator Two (2.2):</i> Potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs evaluated and integrated into the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project documents.	ANPN/ MINEF	
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator Four (2.3):</i> Strategy for certifying forestry concessions engaged in Gabon emissions reduction program with “Green Gabon” label designed and validated with all key stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project documents.	ANPN/MINEF	
<i>Intermediate Result Indicator Three (2.4):</i> SESA conducted, and safeguards instruments developed and integrated into the national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Annual	Review of project documents.	ANPN/MINEF	

#### **Annex IV: R-PP Submitted by the REDD Country Participant**

✓ The Readiness Preparation Proposal:

[https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/2018/July/RPP\\_Gabon\\_Revised\\_v23072018\\_clean.pdf](https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/2018/July/RPP_Gabon_Revised_v23072018_clean.pdf)

✓ Resolution PC/24/2017/6 adopted by the PC at the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting held in September 2017 in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, on Gabon's Readiness Preparation Proposal:

<https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/2017/Sep/Final%20Resolution%206%20Gabon.pdf>

## Annex V: Implementation Schedule

Activities	Responsible	Y1				Y2
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
<b>Improve baseline emissions calculations from the forestry sector</b>						
Activity 1.1. Implementation of a methodology to calculate emissions from degradation in forestry concessions at national scale	AGEOS					
<b>Design and validate a national emissions reduction strategy for the forestry sector</b>						
Activity 2.1. Design and validation of strategy to reduce emissions from logging operations	ANPN / MINEF					
Activity 2.2. Evaluation of potential of reforestation and/or wood plantation programs as an additional means of reducing emissions from the forestry sector	ANPN / MINEF					
Activity 2.3. Design and implement a strategy for certifying forestry concessions reducing emissions	ANPN / MINEF					
Activity 2.4. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment and development of safeguards instruments	ANPN / MINEF					
Activity 2.5 Consultations with stakeholders	ANPN / MINEF					