



# Combined Project Information Documents / Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 24-Mar-2021 | Report No: PIDISDSA25468

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Congo, Republic of	Project ID P166189	Project Name Northern Congo Agroforestry Project	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 11-Jan-2021	Estimated Board Date 04-May-2021	Practice Area (Lead) Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Congo - Ministry of Finance and Budget	Implementing Agency Republic of Congo - Ministry of Forest Economy	

## Proposed Development Objective(s)

To strengthen climate-smart agriculture and conservation practices in Community Development Zones in the departments of Sangha and Likouala

## Components

Involving indigenous peoples and local communities in climate-smart agroforestry and sustainable forest resource management  
Paying for environmental services in Sangha and Likouala  
Project management, monitoring, and evaluation  
Contingent emergency response

**PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)****SUMMARY**

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	15.58
<b>Total Financing</b>	15.58
<b>of which IBRD/IDA</b>	0.00
<b>Financing Gap</b>	0.00

**DETAILS****Non-World Bank Group Financing**



Trust Funds	15.58
Climate Investment Funds	15.58
Environmental Assessment Category	
B-Partial Assessment	
Decision	
The review did not authorize the team to appraise and negotiate	

Other Decision (as needed)

## B. Introduction and Context

### Country Context

1. The Republic of Congo (ROC) is a lower-middle-income country in Central Africa with a capita gross national income at purchasing power parity of USD 5,380 (as of 2016). The country has a wealth of natural assets - including extensive forests, arable land, and minerals - that have the potential to build a robust economy and improve the living standards of its population. This potential remains largely unrealized, however. From 2011 to 2015, the ROC's annual growth rate averaged 3.9 percent, below the 8.5 percent target set by the 2012-2016 National Development Plan to achieve the country's ambition to become an upper-middle-income country by 2025. Factors that constrain more rapid and sustained economic growth in the country include: (i) recurring socio-political instability and civil wars; (ii) commodity (particularly oil) price volatility that drives economic cycles; and (iii) weak governance. The ROC has a relatively small population of 4.6 million which is growing rapidly at 2.8 percent per annum. Its population is highly concentrated in urban areas (64 percent) and the overall population density is one of the lowest in Africa, at 15 people per square kilometer (as of 2016).

2. Oil dominates the ROC's economy, accounting for more than half of GDP and more than 80 percent of exports. The economic crisis deepened in 2017, with GDP contracting by 4.6 percent, compared to 2.8 percent in 2016. New oil fields coming on stream in 2017 did not offset the depressed economy. Economic growth is expected to slowly recover with an average growth rate of 1.1 percent over 2018-2020, driven by the launch of the Moho Nord oil field and implementation of fiscal adjustment measures proposed under an IMF-supported program and the WBG DPO series under discussion as part of a coordinated policy response in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC).



3. Wood is the second-most important source of export revenues, accounting for about 6 percent of total exports in 2013. In 2014, the Congolese forest industry produced about 2.4 million m<sup>3</sup> of logs. The total export value of primary timber products is around USD 455 million<sup>1</sup>.

4. The agriculture sector is of major importance to the economy and food security but remains far below its potential. It only contributes 4 percent to GDP<sup>2</sup>, as only 2 percent of the 10 million hectares of arable land are cultivated. However, the sector is a major source of employment, providing about 40 percent of jobs. Agricultural exports (palm oil, sugar, and cocoa) are stagnant and the country suffers from a rapidly deteriorating trade balance for food. 14 percent of families are food insecure.

### **Poverty, inequality, vulnerability in the Republic of Congo**

5. The poverty rate was 37 percent in 2017, significantly higher than in comparable middle-income countries. ROC ranks 135th out of 188 countries on the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) 2016 Human Development Index. It underperforms on its social indicators compared to countries of similar income. In particular, inequality is high in Congo as the Gini coefficient (0.463) has remained practically unchanged despite sustained growth during 2000-2014. In other words, the poorest experienced a deterioration in their standards of living, whereas those in the middle of the distribution and a small share of the wealthiest households experienced a large increase in their welfare. Moreover, poverty increased in rural areas (71 percent) while it decreased in urban areas (20 percent). Also, women, youth, indigenous peoples, and those who lack political connections remain economically marginalized.

6. ROC ranks 135th out of 157 countries<sup>4</sup> on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>5</sup> Women earn less than men and are more likely to be self-employed. There is a clear gender gap with respect to access to services and ownership and control of economic assets by women. Labor market analyses show that gender employment gaps result from unequal access to education and skills. Despite 70 percent of the country's agricultural workforce being made up of women, it is estimated that Congolese women farmers are half as productive as men, largely because (a) they face additional barriers compared to men in accessing land, credit, and inputs, and (b) a higher share of their time is devoted to child rearing and household tasks. The economic contribution of women at the household level is also not recognized, and as a result, their ownership and control of productive assets, particularly of land, and their participation in decision making are limited. Even though the family code protects women against discrimination, women remain underrepresented in decision-making forums and leadership positions at local levels, including in producer organizations and cooperatives, politics, and higher levels of government. Transformation of the agriculture sector in Congo would require concentrated efforts to ensure women can access, (i) agriculture education and skills training (particularly young women), (ii) agricultural technology, improved seeds, agricultural advice, and entrepreneurship training, and (iii) laws that allow for ownership and control of economic assets by women.

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<sup>1</sup> ITTO 2015, <http://www.timbertradeportal.com/countries/congo/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Republic-of-Congo-Agricultural-Sector>

<sup>3</sup> Republic of Congo's CPF FY2019-2022.

<sup>4</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COG>

<sup>5</sup> The index shows the loss in potential human development due to disparity between female and male achievements in two dimensions, empowerment and economic status, and reflects a country's position relative to normative ideals for the key dimension of women's health. Overall, the GII reflects how women are disadvantaged in these dimensions.

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>



7. The ROC is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change – and agriculture and forests are among the most vulnerable sectors within the country. The country ranks 157th out of 182 countries on overall vulnerability and 179th out of 192 countries in its food sector on the Notre Dame GAIN index.<sup>6</sup> Temperatures in the region are expected to increase in line with global averages. The annual number of hot days and nights is expected to increase, while the number of cold days and nights is expected to decrease. Mean annual precipitation has decreased between the 1950s and 1980s, and greater fluctuations in intra-seasonal precipitation patterns have been observed in recent years. By the middle to end of the 21st century, mean annual precipitation is expected to increase. These climatic changes are projected to heavily impact the agriculture sector: Projected impacts include already elevated flood risks, increased vulnerability of rain-fed agriculture to more erratic rainfall, as well as changes in pest and diseases vectors due to rising temperatures

#### Sectoral and Institutional Context

8. Cognizant of global challenges and long-term domestic interests, the ROC is committed to a green growth development pathway, which includes REDD+.<sup>7</sup> Environmental protection and efforts to combat climate change constitute a pillar in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for 2012-2016 (National Development Plan which is currently being updated for 2018-2022), with Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) as a key strategy for achieving these goals. The ROC has been engaged in REDD+ since 2008, and with the support of the World Bank and UN-REDD, it has made substantial advances in preparing for the implementation of REDD+. In 2015, the ROC submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that presents conservation of the forest stock as a key contribution to climate change mitigation. It describes the Government's objectives to reduce emissions by half by 2025 promoting agroforestry systems and agroecological practices, in addition to implementing 80 percent of Congolese agriculture in savannahs. The NDC is conditional on receiving external support. The ROC furthermore signed the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) Joint Declaration in November 2015 with a commitment to seek "transformational change to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and contribute to sustainable development".

9. At the request of the Government, a World Bank made a series of policy notes on agriculture (P160644). One of them recommended a climate-smart agroforestry model for Northern Congo, where there is a high deforestation risk (see below section on the description of project area). The climate smart agriculture model proposes production systems intended to allow cocoa, one of the biggest potential deforestation drivers if not properly implemented, to become part of the solution to deforestation. The resulting REDD+-focused cocoa production approach is receiving closely coordinated support from the Global Environment Facility through the World Bank-supported Forest Economy Diversification Project (FEDP – P124085), the IDA-funded Commercial Agriculture Project (CAP – P159979), the French Development Agency, and the Food Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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<sup>6</sup> ND-GAIN score explanation at <http://index.gain.org/ranking/vulnerability>

<sup>7</sup> Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and sustainable management of forests, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.



10. Past initiatives have provided proof of concept for replicable approaches to cocoa- and agroforestry-based agriculture development. For example, in 2012, the ROC partnered with CIB-OLAM to relaunch the cocoa sector through:

- a. The promotion and implementation of sustainable productive orchards in degraded zones, providing support to 707 small producers, prefunding small farmers' shade cocoa production, and providing fertilizer. Jointly with the Government, CIB-OLAM gave micro-credit loans to 400 small producers and provided them with agricultural tools. Trainers were also recruited to provide the "proof of concept" for the commercialization of cocoa that meets international quality standards.
- b. Support to research and development to improve agronomic practices. Three "Office Café Cocoa" shops in the Sangha Department were rebuilt and technical support and training were provided to 500 small producers to manage cocoa plantations.

11. This initiative resulted in the production of 418 tons of cacao between 2012 and 2015. The Government, with support from the World Bank's Commercial Agriculture Project (CAP), is designing a second phase of the National Cocoa Development Plan (NDP), which will integrate climate-smart agroforestry as a basis for the relaunch of this sector.

12. The ROC successfully applied to the Forest Investment Program (FIP) for investment support for REDD+, having received in December 2017 the FIP Sub-Committee's endorsement for its Investment Plan, which falls under the National REDD+ Strategy. This provides access to up to US\$24 million. The Investment Plan covers the strategy's priority options for achieving the government's vision of a low-carbon development pathway. The government intends to implement US\$15.575 million through the Northern Congo Agroforestry Project (*Projet Agroforesterie Nord Congo*, PANC; P166189) to generate emission reductions under the Emission Reductions Program in Sangha-Likouala (ERP-SL or ER Program; P163361) financed by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). A second FIP-funded project will take place in central Congo. The PANC constitutes a key building block of the ER Program and seeks to address shifting agriculture as a driver of deforestation, while allowing small farmers to partake in the ER Program benefits. The PANC is accompanied by and closely linked with the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (DGM; P169610), which will support community engagement in REDD+.

### Description of the Project Area

13. The two northernmost departments of Sangha and Likouala cover 12.4 million ha, 11.7 million (or 94 percent) of which are forested. This represents 52 percent of the national forest area. With an estimated population of 306,000 (109,000 in Sangha and 197,000 in Likouala), population density is only 2.5 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The poverty rates in Sangha and Likouala are 64 percent and 67 percent, respectively, about twice the national average.

14. Sangha and Likouala could represent a future deforestation hotspot. The main direct causes of deforestation and forest degradation are: (i) unsustainable shifting agriculture; (ii) unsustainable or illegal logging; (iii) industrial agriculture development and (iv) mining. These direct causes are exacerbated by indirect drivers of deforestation and degradation: (i) weak governance, (ii) lack of policy coordination and land use planning, (iii) poverty and insufficient enabling conditions for sustainable economic activities,



and (iv) population growth and infrastructure development. Changes in these indirect factors will affect the rate and type of future deforestation and degradation.

15. The majority of Sangha and Likouala has been allocated as industrial concessions. The two departments contain 17 forest concessions operated by 12 firms (6.6 million ha), two agro-industrial concessions operated by two firms (200,000 ha), 13 mining exploration and research concessions belonging to 13 firms (including overlapping claims of forestry concessions). In addition, the area includes three national parks and a community conservation reserve (2.7 million ha), and 2.9 million ha of unattributed areas. Concession management implies that communities face access restrictions. In the case of forest concessions with management plans, logging companies leave a portion of the concessions to forest communities, called Community Development Zones<sup>8</sup> (CDZ), in which communities can practice agriculture and economic activities.

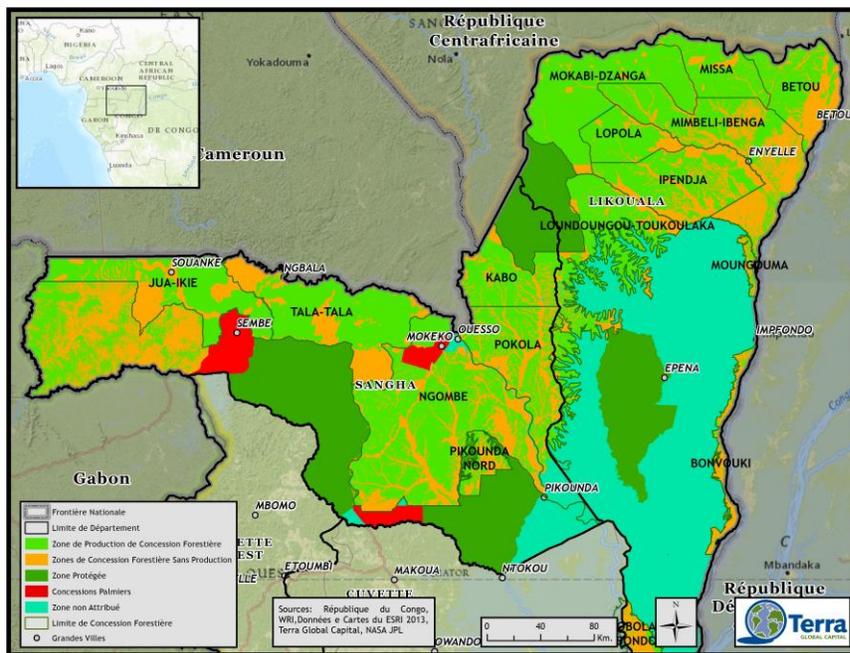


Figure 1. Map with the attribution of lands in the project area (Source: Sangha-Likouala Emission Reductions Program Document, Republic of Congo)

16. In these CDZs, the most common income-generating activity outside the formal forestry sector is shifting agriculture. The most common crops are cassava and maize, though most communities also rely on non-timber forest products and informal forestry for household consumption. Slash and burn practices don't offer competitive yields, which generally limits incomes. As the practices are extensive, agriculture represents a major driver of deforestation and forest degradation, and therefore is an important

<sup>8</sup> The community development zone is a set of village terroirs centered around trees, forests and other natural resources likely to contribute to the development of economies rural communities and the fight against poverty. It takes into account natural forests and artificial habitats, agricultural land, fallow land, fishing and hunting areas. Surface is calculated based on the necessary agricultural surface / household and the necessary forest surface /household times a demographic factor. Today about 56,000 ha are under CDZs.



contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The significant indigenous population mostly relies on hunting and gathering for its livelihood, with limited small-scale agriculture.

### **Alignment with National and World Bank Strategies**

17. The PANC is aligned with Congo’s National Development Plan (NDP) and the World Bank’s Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for the country. Pillar 3 of the 2018–2022 NDP<sup>9</sup> includes agriculture as a key sector and forestry as an intervention sector to diversify the economy, highlighting REDD+ as an element to obtain its objectives. The first focus area of the FY20–24 CPF aims to strengthen economic management to create an improved climate for private sector-led growth. This includes support for improved agriculture productivity and commercialization (Objective 1.3) and addresses, among other issues, climate resilience and productivity of subsistence farmers. The second focus area of the CPF seeks to build human capital and enhance resilience for social inclusion and sustainable growth. In the context of improving the sustainable management of natural resources (Objective 2.4), it recognizes REDD+ as an opportunity to align Congo’s economic development imperatives with its sustainability goals. Forest-smart development and sustainable agriculture are thus highlighted as important sectors to support the Government’s strategy of economic diversification

18. The project directly contributes to the World Bank’s corporate goals of alleviating extreme poverty and building shared prosperity in a sustainable fashion: It focuses on a remote rural area that suffers from chronic underinvestment, and that display high poverty rates. It aims to reduce the rate of deforestation, placing particular emphasis on the sustainability of income generation in a vulnerable forest area.

19. Furthermore, the project directly contributes to the action areas “creating climate-resilient landscapes” and “promoting climate smart agriculture” in the World Bank’s Africa Climate Business Plan. The project also aligns with the World Bank Group’s Climate Change Action Plan (2016) and Forest Action Plan (FAP) (2016). These strategic documents confirm the World Bank’s commitment to deploy performance-based mechanisms to support client countries’ efforts towards achieving a low-carbon development trajectory. Specifically, the FAP defines a programmatic approach as its operational centerpiece to move away from an instrument-driven approach to combine various instruments (technical assistance, investments, and performance-based payments) supported by a mix of financing sources.

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

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

To strengthen climate-smart agriculture and conservation practices in Community Development Zones in the departments of Sangha and Likouala

20. Key Results

21. **The proposed PDO indicators are as follows:**

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<sup>9</sup> Report No. 126962-CG



22. **For climate-smart agriculture:**
- a. Area under climate-smart agriculture management practices (ha)
  - b. Households that have adopted climate-smart agriculture practices (number):
    - i. of whom led by women (percentage)
    - ii. of whom indigenous peoples households (percentage)
23. **For conservation practices:**
- a. Area of forest preserved (ha)
  - b. Net greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric ton)

#### D. Project Description

24. The project will adopt a climate-smart agroforestry approach focusing on two types of agricultural production systems with complementary benefits: (i) Cocoa-based agroforestry system on moderately degraded sites; (ii) climate smart production of subsistence crops on severely degraded to non-forest sites. This dual approach achieves higher overall productivity per unit area, improved control of potential diseases, increased economic profitability, and strengthened ecosystem services (conservation of biodiversity, maintenance of soil fertility, carbon sequestration). Agroforestry systems provide flexibility and resilience that are important to smallholder farmers affected by high production and market risks driven by climate change and the volatility of world cocoa prices respectively. The promotion of production systems will be conditional upon a set of criteria to be fulfilled by beneficiaries.

25. The project will be divided into three main components to provide adequate and comprehensive support to agroforestry and forest conservation. Component 1 provides smallholders with technical and conditional financial support for implementing agroforestry systems in degraded areas. It also provides value chain strengthening activities to producer groups through a microproject scheme. Component 2 pilots Payments for Environmental Services (PES) that incentivize forest conservation and reforestation and are sustainable in the long-term. Component 3 is dedicated to project management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The project includes a Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) as Component 4. While the MEF is the implementing agency of the PANC, activities will be carried out in synergy with the Ministry of Agriculture, particularly the Ministry's cocoa, banana, and cassava programs.

#### **Component 1: Involving indigenous peoples and local communities in climate-smart agroforestry and sustainable forest resource management (US\$10.3 million)**

26. **The overarching objective of this component is to reduce the footprint that itinerant slash-and-burn agriculture leaves on the forest while improving local livelihoods.** FIP financing will scale-up activities initiated under PFDE seizing upon the simple management plans (*plans simples de gestion*, PSGs) to expand climate-smart cocoa and subsistence agroforestry and forest resource management to additional households in the Sangha and Likouala departments. To complement these activities and, in particular, support refugees (who often lack access to land for agroforestry), the project also supports market gardening. The establishment of nurseries will allow the continuous provision of seedlings. The component also seeks to strengthen the business case for climate-smart agroforestry and sustainable



forest resource management by working with producer groups to bolster value chains. It will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the public and private sectors to support the commercial viability of agroforestry.

**Subcomponent 1.1: Promoting climate-smart agroforestry production (US\$7.6 million)**

27. The project will scale-up ongoing agroforestry activities as a means to reduce deforestation and forest degradation from traditional slash-and-burn agriculture. Simultaneously, the project seeks to improve community livelihoods by increasing and diversifying income streams and nutrition. This will involve the provision of inputs to production and training in new agricultural techniques. Participation in activities will be voluntary and will focus on small farmers cultivating no more than 5 ha of land. Approximately 3,000 households will be targeted. Priority will be given to involve vulnerable populations, especially women, IPs, and unemployed youth.

**Subcomponent 1.2: Supporting integrated value chains for agroforestry and non-timber forest products (US\$2,400,000)**

28. The subcomponent will first catalyze the creation of producer groups, especially among target communities with high adoption rates of the agroforestry and market gardening schemes promoted in Subcomponent 1.1. It will also strengthen the capacity of existing groups with the help of service providers to address the low education levels in the project area. Specifically, it will provide technical assistance for (i) identifying communities/producer groups suitable for support, (ii) carrying out pre-investment studies, including on supply chains, (iii) formulating simple proposals with producer groups to request support for productive investments, and (iv) facilitating access to markets by connecting producer groups with buyers and traders. Additionally, targeted support to producer groups comprised of IPs will seek to transfer and reinforce skills in non-timber forest product (NTFP) value addition. Trainings will aim to provide IPs with skills in useful handicrafts, for example, in the production of baskets or mats woven from rattan or other forest resources. Activities to support producer groups will include support to agents of the MEF and MAEP in disseminating relevant laws and regulations, particularly those pertaining to professional producer organizations. The latter cover establishing economic interest groups (i.e. producer groups) and their umbrella organizations in the cocoa, banana, and other sectors, activities to strengthen these structures, building relationships with forest companies and other private sector actors to ensure the inclusion of these economic interest groups in agriculture, forestry, and non-timber forest product value chains. The project will foster dialogue with private sector stakeholders for better coordination and to encourage partnerships to support value chains for agriculture forest products, with the goal of providing smallholders in forest concessions with access to capital and new markets.

29. Value chain microprojects. Supported by service providers and agricultural extension services, producer groups will draft and submit simple business proposals that clearly identify market demand for their products and show the financial sustainability of their operations. Proposals are expected to cover investments necessary to unlock higher value addition (depending on market requirements, the supply chain, and associated constraints), such as: improved access to quality inputs for higher productivity (e.g. seeds, cuttings, fertilizer, equipment, tools); minor on-farm infrastructure (e.g. small irrigation systems); off-farm infrastructure for storage, processing, and packaging (e.g. warehouses); and, climate-sensitive technologies and soil and water conservation measures (to enhance resilience to climate change/variability and improve existing carbon pools). The project will support the implementation of



proposals through microprojects. Investments will systematically be accompanied by technical assistance, including through extension services, technology transfer, and coaching. Relevant expertise may include installing and maintaining infrastructure and machinery investments, as well as improving marketing skills and management of businesses and finances. Assistance is expected to reduce the risk of the investments and to improve their returns and impacts by: (i) preparing producers groups for receiving the investment, and (ii) accompanying them during the investment period to help resolve strategic, marketing, financial, operational, and technical challenges that may hinder performance. To improve the state of local infrastructure, synergies will be established with other World Bank and donor-funded projects, in particular PDAC and PFDE.

### **Component 2: Paying for environmental services in Sangha and Likouala (US\$3.1 million)**

30. The PANC will pilot a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) scheme for carbon sequestration in Congo that could be scaled up under the ERP-SL. The project will develop criteria for receiving payments and a system to monitor compliance and distribute payments to beneficiaries.

#### **Subcomponent 2.1: Piloting individual incentive-based payments for forest conservation (US\$1.6 million)**

31. In tandem with the support to agroforestry, the project will offer an incentive-based mechanism to beneficiaries to conserve natural forest area. The mechanism is a conditional cash transfer (CCT) providing PES. This PES scheme will be modeled on lessons learned from notable PES interventions in other parts of the world, such as the Global Environmental Facility-funded Chimpanzee Sanctuary Wildlife Conservation Trust PES project in Uganda (2011-2013) and the Bolsa Floresta in Brazil, and adapted to local conditions.

#### **Subcomponent 2.2: Piloting collective incentive-based payments for forest conservation (US\$1.6 million)**

32. The purpose of this second type of PES incentive is to offer economic alternatives to activities that may be a threat to sustainable forest management on communal lands (e.g. illegal logging, illegal mining, overextraction of fuelwood). These payments will be based on performance, that is on the number of hectares of forest preserved. For example, communities may decide to designate a conservation area (where they could still collect NTFPs) and use performance payments to reinvest in projects that (i) benefit the entire community and (ii) are aligned with REDD+ objectives. The aim of the collective payments is to create community incentives for conservation, compliance with the PSGs, and agricultural best practices.

### **Component 3: Project management, monitoring and evaluation (US\$2.1 million)**

33. This component will finance project management, implementation, and M&E. It will also provide support to MAEP and MEF capacity building for oversight and monitoring.

### **Component 4: Contingent emergency response (US\$0.0 million)**

34. Designed as a mechanism to implement the government's rapid response to an emergency, this component would enable the project to finance emergency recovery activities and reconstruction sub-projects under an agreed Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) Operations Manual (OM).



It will enable the immediate disbursement of funds and allow the government to request a reallocation of project funds to partially cover an eligible crisis or emergency. A crisis or emergency eligible for financing is an event that has caused, or is likely to imminently cause, a major adverse economic and/or social impact to the client, associated with a natural or man-made crisis or disaster. If no adverse natural event occurs during the lifetime of the project, the component will not be activated.

### Other project characteristics

35. **Mobilization of additional climate finance:** By reducing emissions, the project will contribute to the ER Program, increasing its likelihood of success and of disbursing the results-based finance that the FCPF Carbon Fund is planning to make available to the ROC.

36. **Biodiversity and other environmental co-benefits:** The project's emphasis on sustainable land use management will result in multiple environmental co-benefits, notably the protection of primary forests that provide ecosystem services including maintenance of soil and water quality, erosion control, climate regulation, as well as biodiversity conservation. In a context of accelerated deforestation, climate-smart agroforestry systems provide habitat and migratory corridors for many wild species that live in the forest fragments surrounding intensive farming areas.

37. **Governance:** The project will improve the governance of natural resources through local-level simplified management plans as a basis for land use decisions on agricultural production and forest protection.

38. **Vulnerable groups:** Women involved in farming will benefit from capacity-building, improved farming practices, and resulting increased incomes. In addition, PES schemes will place a special emphasis on the fair treatment of women, and the voice of women in local governance bodies will be promoted. The project will facilitate women's access to agricultural education, skills training, new technologies, improved seeds, advice and guidance, and entrepreneurship training, with the aim of contributing to gender equality in the project area. Equally, the project will strive to address issues focusing on the intersection of environment and natural resource management and social norms, e.g. gendered roles and awareness on climate adaptation and mitigation. The project will assist IPs by furnishing access to finance for the establishment of mixed cocoa agroforestry plantations and beekeeping activities to improve livelihoods and reduce pressure on forests. Finally, the project will work with refugee populations through activities involving market gardening and food processing.

39. **Private sector involvement:** The project will create links between the private sector and small producers to strengthen value chains. This will help generate local employment opportunities for planting, maintenance, seedling production, service delivery, and arrangements for farmers, thus contributing to a positive dynamic. Private sector involvement is a key component of the REDD+ process that the project is a part of. Consequently, the project may have a multiplier effect beyond its area of intervention.

## E. Implementation



## Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

40. The institutional arrangements proposed for this project, under the supervision of the MEF and in partnership with the MAEP, include the following institutions: i) a Steering Committee comprised of MEF, MAEP, MAFDP, MPIRTMM,<sup>10</sup> and MRSIT<sup>11</sup>; ii) a PIU; iii) technical service providers (particularly NGOs); and iv) institutions that will transfer and disburse the PES and microprojects to the beneficiaries.

41. The project will be implemented by the existing PFDE PIU under oversight of the MEF. Due to its current role, which includes the implementation of the project preparation grant of the PANC, this PIU is familiar with agroforestry activities in northern Congo's rural areas and the design of the project. A brief overlap between the two projects will allow for continuity in the operations of the unit and a smooth transition. The PIU will be responsible for project implementation, management, coordination, supervision, social and environmental safeguards monitoring, and M&E. The PIU will be led by a Coordinator and will include a Treasurer (who will also serve as Administrative Assistant), an Accountant, a Financial Management Specialist, a Procurement Specialist, a Social Development Specialist with experience in GBV and communications (also responsible for social safeguards), and an Environmental Specialist with experience in M&E and agroforestry (also responsible for environmental safeguards). These positions will have been recruited through a competitive process or to be filled by civil servants seconded for this purpose.

42. To support and monitor project activities, the PIU will rely on the decentralized structures of the MEF. A Departmental Directorates of Forest Economy (Directions Départementales de l'Economie Forestière; DDEF is located in each of the two departments. The two DDEFs coordinate 16 *Brigades Forestières*, which are small outposts located across the departments and will be able to further strengthen the project's permanent field presence.<sup>12</sup> Supported by project funds, the DDEFs and the *Brigades Forestières* will make staff and equipment available for regular site visits and also support the PIU's supervision role logistically. A focal point in each DDEF will act as liaison person in the field between the PIU, the DDEF, the *Brigades Forestières*, the service providers, the FDLs, and the GIECs. They will facilitate the work of the service providers implementing project activities through technical, logistical, and administrative support. They will also support beneficiaries directly, for example by providing technical advice and facilitating the submission of complaints to the GRM. Field monitoring and evaluation will be carried out regularly by the PIU to coordinate and guide these structures as effectively as possible.

43. All technical assistance and particularly the support for sub-projects will be provided through service providers. These will be contracted through competitive processes. Based on the experience from PFDE implementation, it is expected that the service providers for community-level activities will most likely be local NGOs, though the process will also be open to private sector actors and international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The service providers will support capacity building activities for individuals, groups (e.g. producer associations), and local institutions like CGDCs. The processing and evaluation of microproject applications submitted under the microproject program will be carried out by an independent organization that will be competitively contracted for this purpose as

<sup>10</sup> *Ministre du Plan, de la Statistique, et de l'Intégration Régionale des Transports, de l'Aviation Civile et de la Marine Marchande*

<sup>11</sup> *Ministère de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation Technologique*

<sup>12</sup> The *Brigades Forestières* are in the following locations: Souanke, Sembe, Tala-Tala, Mokeko, Kabo, Pikounda, Liranga, Bouanela, Toukoulaka, Epena, Doungou, Enyelle, Berandjokou, Dzanga, Betou, and Enyelle.



described in Section II.B. This organization will report to the PIU according to requirements that will be defined in the project's operational manual and in line with best practices.

44. A Project Implementation Manual (PIM) will be prepared. It will lay out the implementation arrangements and include detailed sections on procurement objectives, use of World Bank guidelines, the Procurement Plan, thresholds for procurement methods and prior review, procurement tasks and responsibilities, strengthening procurement capacity, procurement categories, procurement steps, contract management and expenditure reports, publications of awards and debriefing, fraud, corruption, and documentation and filing systems. The PIM will be a living document that is expected to be updated periodically to refine project procedures. It will draw from relevant sections of the PIM of PFDE, PDAC, and Lisungi.

45. A project preparation grant was provided to the government to prepare the project. The grant was allocated to the PFDE PIU, which used it particularly to contract studies on the cocoa value chain and land management, and to develop the safeguards instruments of the project.

#### **F. Project location and Salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

The project will take place in the two northernmost departments of Sangha and Likouala. These departments cover 12.4 million ha, 11.7 million (or 94%) of which are forested. This represents 52% of the national forest area. With an estimated population of 306,000 (of which 109,000 in Sangha and 197,000 in Likouala), population density is only 2.5 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The poverty rates in Sangha and Likouala are 64 percent and 67 percent, respectively, about twice the national average. Common income-generating activities in the project area include agriculture and employment in the formal and informal forestry sectors. There are a lot of indigenous people in the area who mostly rely on hunting and gathering for their livelihoods, with limited small-scale agriculture.

#### **G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Grace Muhimpundu, Social Specialist

Donat Vema Tunamau, Social Specialist

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**SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY**

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>PO/PB 4.01 is triggered as project activities could potentially have impacts on the environment. This will be for example at the level of Component 1: Involving indigenous peoples and local communities in climate-smart agroforestry and sustainable forest resource management; Component 2: Paying for environmental services in Sangha and Likouala; Component 3: Project management, monitoring and evaluation; and Component 4 : Contingent Emergency Response. These impacts are foreseen to be substantial, site specific localized and manageable; so the project’s proposed classification is the EA category “B”. The Environmental Safeguards Policies triggered are PO/PB 4.01 "Environmental Assessment"; PO/PB 4.04 "Natural Habitats"; OP/PB 4.09 "Pest management and pesticides"; PO/PB 4.10 "Indigenous Peoples"; PO/PB 4.11 "Physical Cultural Resources"; OP/PB 4.12 "Involuntary Relocation"; PO/PB 4.36 "Forests"; PO/PB 17.50: Right of access to information.</p> <p>To ensure that any environmental issues by the project activities are appropriately addressed, the project has prepared an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to serve as a guide for developing ESIA's and ESMPs as needed, when the exact location of sub-projects will be known. In particular, the ESMF includes a diagnostic of the project's environmental and social risks and proposes the environmental and social procedure for managing component activities, including aspects related to labor influx, gender based violence, child labor, as well as occupational health and safety.</p>
Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	NA
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	<p>OP/BP 4.04 is triggered to enable the project to perform the screening of the identified sites and their vicinities relative to natural habitats. The aim is to avoid project activities that would create significant degradation of natural habitats. The project will also seek to identify appropriate conservation measures, follow-up, assessment and</p>



		management of natural habitats within the project area. The Government will be encouraged to provide necessary information to the people and to provide them with the right incentives to protect and to support the conservation of natural habitats and to facilitate, if necessary, the rehabilitation of degraded habitats. Mitigation measures were included in the ESMF.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	Yes	The policy is triggered as the project is envisaging to implement its activities in both Sangha and Likouala departments - high forested departments (natural forest up 90%). Potential impacts and proposed enhancement/mitigation measures were included in the ESMF.
Pest Management OP 4.09	Yes	OP/BP 4.09 is triggered because the project will support activities related to agriculture that might require the use of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals which can create negative effects on the environment. This policy supports the integrated pest control approaches. The project has prepared a Pest Management Plan (PMP) as a standalone document, consulted upon, to ensure that environmentally friendly methods for pest control are applied, such as biological control, cultural practices, and the development and use of varieties that are pest and disease resistant or tolerant. The PMP has been finalized and published in country and on the World Bank's website.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	The project triggers OP 4.11 (Physical and Cultural Resources) to ensure that should the project be located in, or in vicinity of, physical cultural resources, notably sacred sites of local communities (numerous in Likouala department), chance finds procedures along with guidance on sensitization have been included in the ESMF, and should be part of every civil work contract, even where risks are deemed low. The ESMF includes the identification of risks and impacts of chance finds of Physical Cultural Resources and mitigation measures identified. This will be part of site specific ESIA/ESMPs
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	The project will implement its activities in the Likouala and Sangha departments where there is a presence of groups identified as IPs as per OP 4.10 definition. In order to properly capture and ensure the inclusion of IPs, the project has prepared an



		Indigenous Peoples Framework (IPPF) to properly capture and include IPs as beneficiaries of project activities. The IPPF has been and published in country and on the World Bank website.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	Project activities are likely to result in land acquisition and negative socio-economic impacts on the populations. In order to mitigate these risks, the project has developed an RPF.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	The project activities are localized and will not have any impacts on dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The project activities are localized and will not have any impacts on international waters.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The project activities will not be in any disputed areas.

## KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

### A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

The project is not likely to have significant adverse environmental or social impacts. Potential adverse impacts are expected to be site-specific and manageable. The project is therefore classified as Environmental Assessment Category B. This classification considers the capacity of the implementing entities, the sector specific risks and other stakeholders involved, and the previous experience in managing related Bank projects under the Safeguards Policies (including the Forest and Economic Diversification Project; P124085/P158604).

Environmental and social risk is rated substantial due to the presence of particularly vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples and refugees. Still, developed in close cooperation with key stakeholders, the PANC is designed to mitigate environmental and social risks in the forest sector. It supports sustainable forest management, climate-smart agricultural practices, and benefit sharing, and strengthens the voice of IPLCs, women, and refugees. Given its emphasis on reducing the conversion of forest to agricultural land, the PANC is expected to have positive environmental and social impacts. These include habitat and biodiversity conservation and the support of PES schemes that are expected to reduce erosion and maintain soil fertility, among other benefits. Environmental risks will be managed through the relevant frameworks. The project seeks to improve the livelihoods of local communities and the most underrepresented, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups. These include women, IPs, refugees, albinos, and people with disabilities. The project is expected to reduce poverty and unemployment generally and specifically among these groups.

There is potential for social discontent if stakeholders are not satisfied with the distribution of project benefits. This could result from disagreement over the allocation of benefits, from misunderstandings regarding the purpose of the project (and particularly the PES), and/or failure to receive payments within the agreed time period. The safeguards instruments were therefore developed in an inclusive, participatory process to identify social risks and develop mitigation measures.



The IPPF analyzes the situation of indigenous peoples in the current context and highlights the specific problems related to their place in the Congolese society. The analysis shows that despite the efforts made over the last ten years by the State, UNICEF, the World Bank, etc., IPs are still subject to marginalization and are often the poorest. If specific and adapted measures are not taken, there is concern that the IPs would not benefit from the project to the same extent as the neighboring Bantu population. Indeed, there is a concern that all the benefits of the project would be monopolized by the Bantu population. Further risks to IPs include:

- loss of control/access to the lands and areas of use which they traditionally use as a source of subsistence and which at the same time represent the foundation of their socio-cultural system,
- further marginalized within Congolese society,
- inability to defend their legal rights,
- increased dependency on other ethnic groups,
- loss of cultural and social identity.

The identified potential impacts of the project with a view to resettlement include loss of land for housing use, loss of housing, loss of crop land, and loss of socio-economic activities. Physical displacement could be possible in areas that would be designated as protected areas. The number of actually affected people is difficult to estimate at this stage, but will be assessed through field surveys as part of the implementation of resettlement plans.

Although child labor is prohibited by national law, reports indicate that children under 16 years have been engaged in labor, with indigenous children and children from rural areas being the most affected as they are likely to be subjected to the worst forms of child labor. The International Labour Organization estimates that close to 85 percent of children in rural regions with IPs are working for very low wages. Indigenous children and children born to foreign parents are disproportionately affected by high rates of child labor. Work performed by children in the agriculture sector commonly involves long hours, physically arduous tasks, carrying heavy loads of firewood, handling of dangerous tools, and a high risk of exposure to occupational health hazards. Children are often involved in the production of manioc, peanuts, corn, plantains, cassava, potatoes, and sugar cane, as well as in catching and smoking fish.

Certain activities planned under the project, specifically support for agroforestry and cash crops such as cocoa, may require the use of phytosanitary products. As part of the implementation of the activities of the PANC, the Integrated Pest Management Plan was designed to minimize potential negative effects on human, animal, and environmental health, and to promote integrated pest management. The PANC PIU, the National Committee on Pesticide Management, the Plant Protection Directorate, and the General Directorate of the Environment will ensure national supervision of the plan's implementation; departmental services will be responsible for local environmental monitoring in the project intervention sites; the Hygiene Directorate of the Ministry of Health and Population will also participate in external health monitoring in the project intervention sites. Risks include the following:

- At the legislative and regulatory level, there are several texts drawn up concerning the approval, management, use, approval and control of phytosanitary products. Unfortunately, these legislative documents are not widely disseminated and little known to the public, resulting in the circulation of certain products containing dangerous active substances.
- The distribution and marketing of pesticides is based, for the most part, on informal sales and very few private professional structures are approved to conduct this activity. Reliable statistics on the consumption of pesticides in Congo are not available, and an inventory of chemicals was last made in 2014.
- Generally speaking, Local Communities and Indigenous Populations in the potential intervention areas of the PANC do not use pesticides, because of the subsistence agriculture they practice. However, analysis of available data reveals that most who Congolese who use pesticides are poorly informed as to their proper and relevant use and of



various alternative methods, particularly in the context of integrated pest management.

- The project does not provide for the acquisition of pesticides in its activities, but rather offers support for integrated pest control and biological control. However, with the development of agricultural and agroforestry activities, and support for income-generating activities, the introduction of pesticides into the activities carried out by the populations of beneficiary communities could become a reality that will have to be well managed.
- A National Committee on Pesticide Management has been set up, but this structure is not yet functional.

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:

Given its emphasis on reducing the conversion of forest to agricultural land and the planting of agroforest tree species, the project is expected generally to have positive long-term environmental impacts. These include habitat and biodiversity conservation and the support of PES schemes that are expected to reduce erosion, maintain soil fertility, and sequester carbon among other benefits. However, if successful as a generator of revenue, the promotion of cocoa agroforest mosaics may lead to a perverse effect whereby farmers cut the natural forest to replant with cocoa species.

Implementing an agroforestry project has inherent social risks that require prudent management. This is particularly the case with regards to land tenure and rights to forest resources. By encouraging farmers to rehabilitate degraded forest lands through agroforestry, issues related to customary land tenure may occur in the medium to long-term.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

n/a

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.

The PANC was developed in alignment with the National REDD+ Strategy and the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA). SESA was conducted in an iterative process with participation from civil society and other stakeholders. Furthermore, Congo has defined its Principles, Criteria, and Indicators for social and environmental aspects of REDD+ (PCI REDD+), which are in compliance with the Cancun Safeguards, World Bank Operational Policies, as well as FSC principles and indicators. The consultations on the PCI-REDD+ were also held in the project area and included capacity building activities throughout the country in local languages with IPLC representatives, civil society, departmental authorities, and the private sector. The PANC will apply the safeguards instruments developed during preparation and in line with the national standards. All project activities will also need to comply with national COVID-19 prevention measures, particularly the health authorities' sanitary guidance to prevent the spread of the disease.

To help identify and manage any potential adverse impacts, the project triggers the following safeguards policies: Environmental Assessment (OP/BP OP4.01), Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04), Forests (OP/BP 4.36); Pest Management (OP 4.09), Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10), Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11), and Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12). An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), and a Pests Management Plan (PMP) have been developed, cleared, and disclosed in the country and on the Bank's website. These frameworks will be used by the borrower to screen project activities and help prepare Resettlement Action Plans, Environmental and Social Management Plans, and Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts. The frameworks define the guidelines to be adopted, specific studies that should be conducted, the compensation to be provided, the procedures to allow people to appeal against the proposed activities, and the procedures for managing such appeals. They also describe a GRM and the M&E process needed to verify the sound implementation of mitigation measures.



The ESMF identifies major environmental and social issues in the project area, defines the environmental and social risks associated with the project interventions, and proposes budgeted risk and impact management measures. It also specifies the roles and responsibilities of the main actors and partners, determining the need for capacity building. It further proposes a Grievance Redress Mechanism, determines safeguards monitoring arrangements, and proposes public consultations. Furthermore, it includes health and safety provisions to be included in work contracts, covering health, safety, and hygiene measures, STD awareness, COVID-19 awareness, and measures to help prevent and address gender-based violence. Measures identified to address deforestation risks include the support of reforestation activities (especially in the context of construction), the use of improved seeds, participatory construction site selection, and capacity building and awareness campaigns institutions and civil society.

The IPPF aims to ensure that the development process proposed by the PANC can benefit indigenous populations in the same way as other members of the communities; avoid, mitigate or compensate for the potential negative repercussions of these projects on these communities, both on their environment, on their rights, on their economy, and on their culture. This includes ensuring that the benefits of the activities of Component 1 and 2 of the PANC are economically, culturally and socially appropriate. Measures in the IPPF result from exchanges with the IPs; through this consultation the following activities have been proposed:

1. Capacity building measures:
  - a. Set up a program specific to the IPs with specific criteria and closer supervision
  - b. Set up a capacity building program on food ration management
  - c. Involve IPs throughout the value chain
  - d. Capacity building for agricultural, livestock and beekeeping production for the benefit of IPs
  - e. Reinforcement of the technical and methodological capacities of IP associations to conduct them and to manage community activities (marketing, agriculture, breeding and gathering of non-wood forest products)
  - f. Close supervision of IPLCs, strengthening IP capacity on savings. Establishment of an alcohol and tobacco control program
  - g. Assist the indigenous populations in the establishment of autonomous IP organizations by cluster, in order to be able to better coordinate, communicate and facilitate IP activities.
2. Accompanying measures
  - a. Establish in each Forest Management Unit (FMU) an agreement with the Bantu on IP working days in their plantations
  - b. Advocacy with Bantu landowners to facilitate the access of PAs to land
  - c. Involve PAs in all administrative structures or associations (CGDC, IPCCs; concertation committees)
  - d. Subsidy for indigenous students (registration fees, school clothes, canteens etc.)
  - e. Realization of water points or drilling
  - f. Provision of improved seeds
  - g. Subsidy for the establishment of IGAs (subsistence farming - yams, cassava -, cash crops - market gardening, bananas, cocoa -, beekeeping, basketry, sheep and goat farming).
3. Further studies
  - a. Perception of IPs in natural resource management
  - b. Carry out an inventory of the indigenous mechanisms for the management and rehabilitation of forest landscapes
  - c. Mapping of camps and areas that can be exploited by the IPs in order to establish acts of allocation (a certificate of customary land grant, a lease or an assignment or allocation) validated by the civil authority of the area.
4. Monitoring and evaluation by the different actors



- a. In order to prevent and manage conflicts that may arise in the implementation of the IPP, a grievance redress mechanism has been proposed based on the experience of the IPs and the project.

The project does not envisage, a priori, any physical displacement of the populations living in the targeted areas. However, the implementation of simple management plans and the possibility of granting agricultural authorizations and/or land titles to farmers by land managers could have negative social impacts in terms of acquisition of land and resettlement and require adequate procedures. As the sites of the sub-projects have not been fully identified yet, the project has developed a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF). The framework seeks to help avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement, adequately design and implement resettlement activities, to foster the participation of people in the planning and implementation of resettlement programs, and support displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore, their standard of living.

Eligibility for compensation are the following persons: (a) holders of a formal and legal right to land, including customary rights; (b) those who have no formal right to land at the time the census begins, but who have titles or other titles recognized or likely to be recognized by the law; (c) irregular occupiers who do not have no formal rights or titles (these will receive resettlement aid and compensation for loss of assets rather than compensation for loss of land). Compensation mechanisms will be in kind first, then in cash upon sustained request from the recipient.

To mitigate the risk of child labor and to contribute to strengthening the rights of children, the project will include adequate measures in the PIM and safeguards plans, with the goal of ensuring that children under 16 years are not engaged as workers under the project, in accordance with the national Labor and Child Protection Code. Children under the age of 18 years will not be allowed to engage in hazardous work in line with the code and the safeguards policies. The PIM will establish an age verification system (e.g. through a nationally recognized ID card or local committees that could be set up for this purpose) to ensure that children are not employed or engaged in project activities. To be eligible for project support, the beneficiaries will commit to a code of conduct that will include the prohibition of child labor. This document will be annexed to the contractual document between the beneficiaries and the project. Beneficiary households will also pledge to enroll their children in school. Non-compliance with the code will lead to exclusion from the project. The project will use culturally appropriate approaches to create awareness among beneficiaries on the impacts of child labor on the health and education of children. The project will also ensure that all contractors follow a code of conduct that prohibits child labor.

The project includes additional activities that are expected to reduce social risk. To better manage land tenure challenges in the target area, the project will carry out a study on the land dynamics in the Community Development Zones. The study will recommend measures that the project can implement to protect the land rights particularly of IPs. The IPPs will also set out measures to ensure that (a) IPs affected by the project benefit adequately from its activities and receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits, and that (b) any potential adverse impacts of the project on IPs are avoided, minimized, mitigated, or compensated for. The IPPs will be submitted to the Bank during implementation. The project will also develop a GBV assessment and a GBV Action Plan to determine a) which protocols and mechanisms the project needs to put in place to address GBV risks and b) how to address any GBV incidents that may arise.

The proposed GRM is another risk mitigation measure and is structured around three levels:

Level 1: Village (complaint is dealt with by a committee composed of the Focal Point of the project, the customary authority, and representatives of women and young people.

Level 2: Complaints that have not been resolved at the first level will be forwarded to a mediation commission composed by the PANC Coordinator and two representatives of LCIPs and women's organizations.



Level 3: Formal justice system

The PMP identified the risks described above. To reverse the negative trends concerning the known weaknesses in the management of pests and pesticides, which may cause negative effects on the project, a priority action plan will make it possible to contribute to standardization in the use of pesticides and in integrated pest management. The objectives pursued by the IPMP action plan are to:

- Strengthen the institutional framework for the management of pests and pesticides;
- Improve the legislative and regulatory framework for the management of pesticides;
- Improve systems for the use and management of pesticides to protect the environment and the health of handlers and populations;
- Build the capacities of stakeholders and local communities and indigenous populations in the management of pests and pesticides;
- Promote integrated pest control;
- Raise public awareness of the risks associated with pesticides and involve communities in the implementation of activities;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the pest and pesticide management plan.

Finally, to ensure better coordination of vector control and pesticide management, the National Committee on Pesticide Management should be revitalized, supported and strengthened in its role as a steering, coordination, monitoring and multisectoral consultation structure to guide the process.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.

The key stakeholders are the communities residing within forest concessions in Sangha and Likouala. Developed in close cooperation with key stakeholders, the PANC is designed to mitigate environmental and social risks in the forest sector. The safeguards instruments were developed in an inclusive process. The SAP and the ESMF were developed through a participatory approach to identify social risks and develop mitigation measures. Risks related to land acquisition were identified and an RPF was prepared. As the departments of Sangha and Likouala are among the departments with the largest number of indigenous people, an IPPF was prepared to ensure that program activities do not negatively affect their rights or culture.

**B. Disclosure Requirements**

**Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other**

Date of receipt by the Bank  18-Feb-2021	Date of submission for disclosure  25-Feb-2021	For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors
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**"In country" Disclosure**

Congo, Republic of  
25-Feb-2021

Comments



**Resettlement Action Plan/Framework/Policy Process**

Date of receipt by the Bank

18-Feb-2021

Date of submission for disclosure

25-Feb-2021

**"In country" Disclosure**

Congo, Republic of

25-Feb-2021

Comments

**Indigenous Peoples Development Plan/Framework**

Date of receipt by the Bank

18-Feb-2021

Date of submission for disclosure

25-Feb-2021

**"In country" Disclosure**

Congo, Republic of

25-Feb-2021

Comments

**Pest Management Plan**

Was the document disclosed prior to appraisal?

No

Date of receipt by the Bank

18-Feb-2021

Date of submission for disclosure

25-Feb-2021

**"In country" Disclosure**

Congo, Republic of

25-Feb-2021

Comments

**If the project triggers the Pest Management and/or Physical Cultural Resources policies, the respective issues are to be addressed and disclosed as part of the Environmental Assessment/Audit/or EMP.**

If in-country disclosure of any of the above documents is not expected, please explain why:



The number of people potentially affected by physical displacement is set to 1 as reliable estimates are not available yet. Estimates will be made based on field surveys as part of the Resettlement Plans that will be prepared as needed.

**C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting)**

**OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment**

Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?

Yes

Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?

Yes

**OP/BP 4.04 - Natural Habitats**

Would the project result in any significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats?

No

If the project would result in significant conversion or degradation of other (non-critical) natural habitats, does the project include mitigation measures acceptable to the Bank?

NA

**OP 4.09 - Pest Management**

Does the EA adequately address the pest management issues?

Yes

Is a separate PMP required?

Yes

If yes, has the PMP been reviewed and approved by a safeguards specialist or PM? Are PMP requirements included in project design? If yes, does the project team include a Pest Management Specialist?

Yes

**OP/BP 4.11 - Physical Cultural Resources**

Does the EA include adequate measures related to cultural property?

Yes

Does the credit/loan incorporate mechanisms to mitigate the potential adverse impacts on cultural property?

Yes

**OP/BP 4.10 - Indigenous Peoples**



Has a separate Indigenous Peoples Plan/Planning Framework (as appropriate) been prepared in consultation with affected Indigenous Peoples?

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional unit responsible for safeguards or Practice Manager review the plan?

Yes

If the whole project is designed to benefit IP, has the design been reviewed and approved by the Regional Social Development Unit or Practice Manager?

NA

#### **OP/BP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement**

Has a resettlement plan/abbreviated plan/policy framework/process framework (as appropriate) been prepared?

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional unit responsible for safeguards or Practice Manager review the plan?

Yes

#### **OP/BP 4.36 - Forests**

Has the sector-wide analysis of policy and institutional issues and constraints been carried out?

Yes

Does the project design include satisfactory measures to overcome these constraints?

Yes

Does the project finance commercial harvesting, and if so, does it include provisions for certification system?

NA

#### **The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information**

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank for disclosure?

Yes

Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?

Yes



### All Safeguard Policies

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?

Yes

Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?

Yes

### CONTACT POINT

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**APPROVAL**

Task Team Leader(s):	David Maleki Juvenal Nzambimana
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**Approved By**

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