

UN-REDD 2021 Technical Assistance Inception report

1. Introduction

UN-REDD has been supporting countries with REDD+ implementation and increasing ambition and delivery of forest solutions in their NDCs, both through country assistance and knowledge management. From 2021, UN-REDD has established a need to also assist countries with emerging opportunities to implement Article 6 of the *Paris Agreement*, especially with regards to international cooperative arrangements and carbon market platforms for forests. In this sense, from mid-2020, UN-REDD has been carrying out an assessment of several countries that have potential and interest in accessing emerging forest carbon markets or investments, with results of high environmental integrity, conforming with emerging standards, such as ART/TREES.

This inception brief derives from the UN-REDD 2021 Workplan and Budget for Technical Assistance (TA), which was approved by the UN-REDD Executive Board on 19 November 2020, and includes the mentioned assessment on country prospects to access carbon markets with high-quality standards, so to help forests be part of the implementation of Article 6 of the *Paris Agreement*. The aim of the inception process has been to calibrate the optimal deployment of TA to countries over the coming year, so to consolidate ongoing processes and harness new avenues. This inception brief provides a snapshot of the UN-REDD country focus and core delivery in 2021, including REDD+ finance innovations, and global communications and knowledge management.

The sections below provide the information by country and global communications and knowledge management areas. Each country section presents a set of deliverables that are either on the immediate critical path to meet high environmental integrity standards, or building the pipeline for the longer term, with a larger set of countries, to generate a greater volume emission reductions/enhanced removals of high environmental integrity.

2. Country Support (Realising, rewarding and enhancing forest solutions / Outcomes 1-3)

2.1. Argentina

Context

UN-REDD has consistently supported Argentina with technical and policy advice for the last seven years, first through targeted support on REDD+ safeguards and on national forest monitoring system and then through a complete UN-REDD National Programme. Through the implementation of the UN-REDD NP, and in close collaboration with other key initiatives such as the WB FCPF, Argentina managed to successfully complete the REDD+ readiness phase, fulfilling all the requirements under the Warsaw Framework. More specifically, the country developed in a participatory manner and submitted to the UNFCCC its national REDD + strategy (National Action Plan on Forests and Climate Change, PANByCC for its Spanish acronym) published on the REDD+ Info Hub in January 2019. The PANByCC draws on an analysis of the causes leading to deforestation and forest degradation, the strategic guidelines for enforcing Law 26,331 on the Minimum Standards for the Environmental Protection of Native Forests (Native Forests Law) and the measures envisaged in the Nationally-Determined Contribution (NDC). Thanks to UN-REDD the country also developed a toolkit for the implementation of the its PANByCC, with guidance on participation, gender, free prior and informed consent in line with the ILO Convention 169, and planning for social and environmental benefits. Together with other policies and initiatives, the PANByCC, acting under the overall framework of the Native Forests Law, is a key instrument for the country to achieve NDC LULUCF commitments. Some relevant examples: national plan on sustainable forests management with integrated livestock, MBGI; the territorial planning of native forests, OTBN; the 2020 decree on agricultural crops export aiming at increasing crop/grain production and values,

achieving higher income from export gains, recovering degraded land buffer areas by applying safe new technologies and reducing the use of agrochemicals.

The forest reference emissions level (FREL) was finalized and submitted to the UNFCCC in January 2019 and technically assessed. The FREL encompasses the forest regions of Parque Chaqueño, Selva Paranaense, Yungas and Espinal (accounting for approximately 90% of the national territory covered by native forests; it covers the area with the biggest loss of forest cover and, therefore, where most of the deforestation driven GHG emissions occur). The FREL reported is 101,141,848 tCO₂e for the historical period 2002–2013 and encompasses gross emissions due to deforestation.

The country continued developing and strengthening its National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and made important advances in its national safeguards approach, including the design of the Safeguards information system and submission to the UNFCCC of the first summary, reporting on how safeguards have been addressed and respected in the period 2014-2019, was submitted to the UNFCCC in 2019.

Completing all the Warsaw Framework, the successful closure of the UN-REDD NP left the country well positioned to access REDD+ results-based payments. This success, combined with the results in emission reductions the country achieved for the period 2014-2016 and thanks additional national and international efforts, Argentina managed to secure RBPs from the GCF Pilot Programme in November 2020.

Consultations

UN-REDD discussed with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Nation (MAyDS for its Spanish acronym), Secretary of Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Innovation (the REDD+ Focal Point) who demonstrated interest in further learning on climate finance and on the opportunity to explore and potentially participate to innovative voluntary schemes, including via ART/TREES.

A virtual working session was therefore held with the MAyDS national Directors of Climate Change, of Forests, and of External Resources, in February presenting the context and discussing potential next steps.

- The government requested more specific information on ART/TREES and expressed their interest in continuing to learn more about possible sources of payment for results in addition to those through ART/TREES.
- Positive feedback was provided in the aftermath of the working session, with the request from the government of supporting strengthening of the human resources capacities in the MAyDS in the matter related to climate finance, innovative schemes including ART/TREES, and enhancing capacities on carbon and non-carbon elements;

In the month of March, the country counterpart has been working at national planning, including of the National Climate Change Cabinet; finalization of the planning phase and potential confirmation for the way forward of the collaboration is expected by end of March.

Deliverables

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Scoping assessment of carbon markets opportunities, analysing major emerging certification schemes with high environmental integrity, including the country's compliance/eligibility on carbon elements and safeguards, with a view to produce technical and policy recommendations and eventually drafting a related expression of interest towards the ART/TREES certification scheme

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2.2. Chile

Context

Chile advanced rapidly in the development of its REDD+ elements of the Warsaw Framework under the UNFCCC, providing a model for other countries by being one of the first countries to include four REDD+ activities (deforestation, degradation, increase in carbon stocks and conservation). It also developed a

sophisticated and clear benefits sharing mechanism that provides a sound basis for the use of the proceeds from REDD+ results. For these processes, Chile secured support from a wide array of sources, including the FCPF, the GEF, Swiss bilateral cooperation and two modalities of UN-REDD – targeted support and a national programme, among others. UN-REDD has provided technical support as well as policy advice throughout the past 5 years on a broad range of areas of REDD+ readiness, including gender and benefit sharing and has accompanied Chile to access results-based payments from the GCF REDD+ pilot programme.

Chile has progressed significantly in REDD+ readiness and implementation and has advanced in the evaluation and implementation of various actions in order to establish new models of sustainable forest management, forest restoration in degraded areas affected by fires and exotic species that are replicable and scalable. Chile's FREL/FRL (2016) and the first monitoring phase allowed Chile to present results in its first REDD+ Technical Annex on Results. Chile is still consolidating its NFMS. During 2019 and 2020, cadastral data, the evaluation of native vegetational resources, the National Forest Inventory, the National GHG Inventory and the Dendroenergy Inventory were integrated for consistency. In terms of safeguards, the country elaborated and submitted to the UNFCCC its [first summary of information](#) and has an [online SIS](#) in place. The digital system will be strengthened under a stepwise approach, according to country needs. The national modules and indicators are being designed. In addition, the country launched a [Co-benefits System](#) (SCB for its acronym in Spanish).

Chile has requested a no-cost extension of its UN-REDD National Programme in order to finalise planned activities that could not be concluded due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Consultations](#)

UN-REDD informed CONAF (REDD+ Focal Point entity), in view of Chile's advanced status that granted access for RBP (GCF and World Bank Carbon Fund) they might also be interested in participating in other innovative voluntary schemes including ART/TREES.

Following the inception plan, virtual meetings between UN-REDD agencies and CONAF were held in early February, where the TA 2021 was presented. NICFI was also briefed on the inception process in Chile.

[Deliverables](#)

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Chile's feasibility and potential to generate ER under the ART/TREES standard assessed
- Financing access optimization strategy supported, including technical/policy recommendations and preparation of TREES Concept
- Assessment of safeguards requirements of forest carbon markets, initial focus on ART/TREES, including review of evidence that REDD+ safeguards have been addressed and respected, identification of gaps and proposal of action to solve the gaps

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2.3. Colombia

[Context](#)

Colombia aims to reduce deforestation and forest degradation by promoting and establishing forest management in the Colombian territory, under a sustainable integrated rural development approach, which contributes to local livelihoods, local development, and increases ecosystem resilience, promoting adaptation and mitigation of climate change. This goal has been translated into an important set of policies and actions in recent years, including: a National Policy for Deforestation Control and Sustainable Forest Management that sets a roadmap and establishes deforestation reduction targets (reduce deforestation to less than 100,000 ha/yr by 2025, zero net deforestation by 2030), whose goals have been reflected in the Nationally Determined Contribution; a National Council to Combat Deforestation and Other Associated

Environmental Crimes (CONALDEF); a National Restoration Plan with an associated goal of planting 180 million trees; the delimitation of the agricultural and livestock frontier in 2018; incentives schemes such as the carbon tax-break for carbon-neutrality and payments for environmental services; and support for community forestry. It has achieved REDD+ results, rewarded through the REM Program and the Green Climate Fund. Colombia is committed to a sound participatory process that would allow the articulation of all the actors. Plans, agendas and strategies have been developed integrating views from diverse actors and sectors.

However, there are also areas for improvement that require continuous support not only financially, but also technically: there is still a significant financing gap to implement the REDD strategy; monitoring restoration and begin to quantify the real contributions of processes (gains and losses); continue to promote and strengthen the organic governance structure that allows for the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders; address barriers to accessing climate finance; strengthen the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of safeguards at the national and local levels.

The proposed work plan seeks to contribute to national efforts in these pending challenges, and is structured on the basis of activities detailed below.

Consultations

The workplan was developed through consultations held with the REDD+ Focal point and the Head of International Affairs at the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, which was also complemented by technical discussions which also included IDEAM and FINAGRO. This was done during a virtual mission held in late January.

In addition, briefings were provided to NICFI, both with staff at the Norwegian Embassy in Bogota and in Oslo.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Technical recommendations to develop national financial mechanisms and incentives to support community forestry investments
- Expanded use of high-resolution satellite datasets to support the expansion of forest monitoring capacities (e.g. restoration and forest degradation)
- Strengthened National Safeguards System by consolidating the Safeguards Module in RENARE, a key component of the Safeguards Information System
- Strengthened capacities to address and respect safeguards, particularly in relation to territorial governance and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities
- Support to government and indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations on issues related to participation and engagement, including with indigenous peoples and local communities
- Technical inputs to facilitate the dialogues between the Environment Ministry and indigenous peoples and local communities including strengthening dialogue and participation mechanisms such as the National Environmental Committee for Indigenous Peoples (CNAI)

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Identified opportunities to enhance the environmental integrity of REDD+ results (and define recommendations and adjustments for the different mechanisms and protocols)
- Support elaboration of the ART/TREES Concept and the registration process.
- Training of indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations on REDD+ and the voluntary carbon market to strengthen their in-house capacity to interact with REDD+ project developers, government agencies and international REDD+ actors such as the ART-secretariat and Emergent.

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2.4. Congo basin

UN-REDD support to the Congo basin has historically focused on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Republic of the Congo, which together hold most of the Congo basin forests. When established, the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI) took the leading role in mobilising and channelling support and financing for climate-forest reforms and field investments in the region. Some limited TA was provided in the past years on selected technical areas.

UN-REDD has had conversations with CAFI on areas of potential support to consolidate REDD+ investments and implementation already underway. In 2021, UN-REDD will provide technical assistance to DRC, Gabon and the Republic of the Congo. In **DRC**, UNDP/UN-REDD technical assistance will focus on supporting implementation delivery of ongoing UNDP investment programmes for REDD+ under FONAREDD that are financed by CAFI, as this has been highlighted in meetings with the CAFI Secretariat as a key need to help the country move forward its REDD+ implementation. The exact inputs will be determined through an integrated Congo Basin Vision that UNDP is currently developing, led by its Regional Bureau for Africa and the Nature, Climate & Energy cluster, and which will also bring more TA to the FONAREDD programmes. In **Gabon**, where CAFI is leading the support to facilitate country access to ART/TREES, UN-REDD will support with the safeguards dimensions, led by UNEP (see country segment below for further details). In the **Republic of the Congo**, the UN-REDD support will complement ongoing CAFI efforts, focusing on carbon accounting, tenure and safeguards issues that are key to enable access to carbon markets applying ART/TREES (see country segment below for further details).

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2.5. Costa Rica

Context

Costa Rica has been a global leader in environmental finance, with a pioneer scheme of payment for environmental services established in the late 90's, during the inception of the Rio environmental conventions. Some 25 years later, Costa Rica is currently pioneering its way with new carbon market mechanisms for forests, which are emerging under the umbrella of the Paris Agreement. Costa Rica is already engaged in REDD+ Results-Based Payment (RBP) initiatives: in late 2020, the country signed an ERPA with the World Bank's FCPF and received approval for GCF REDD+ Result-Based Payment proposal from the Green Climate Fund with UNDP as Accredited Entity. A significant share of the proceeds from REDD+ RBPs will be used to support Costa Rica's world renowned [National Payment for Environmental Services Programme \(PES\)](#).

The national PES programme will be an important mechanism to transfer needed cash resources directly to impoverished groups to support the COVID-19 recovery phase. In fact, the Costa Rica PES scheme is the only existing government cash transfer programme that directly targets indigenous peoples. Over the last 5 years, the PES programme has been fully funded by the national carbon-tax and water fees, with minimal contributions of the national private sector. In the current economic downturn, international environmental finance from the FCPF and GCF, as well as future potential resources from carbon markets, are of enormous importance to continue and further expand this scheme, which serves environmental and social goals simultaneously, as well as helping the country meet the ambitious goals of its NDC.

The ART platform with the TREES standard is the newest of such future potential forest carbon market opportunities. As soon as ART/TREES started operations, Costa Rica, with the technical assistance of UNDP and the backing of the national GCF/RBPs/REDD+ programme, assessed country prospects to access it and prepared a formal concept note, which was submitted in December 2020 to the ART Secretariat. To succeed in this international forest carbon scheme, which is part of a broader national REDD+ climate strategy, an intense process lies ahead for Costa Rica during 2021, supported by a FONAFIFO-UNDP cooperation arrangement, as endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Energy in 2020. Costa Rica, as a partner country of UN-REDD, is willing to share the knowledge and lessons of the ongoing process to access

ART/TREES through UN-REDD, for the benefit of other countries and jurisdictions considering the same avenue, in order to enhance the global action and ambition for forest solutions.

Consultations

A planning meeting with FONAFIFO in January 2021 scoped UN-REDD linkages, as UN-REDD is becoming an active partner in the jump start of ART/TREES globally. UNDP informed FONAFIFO and the National REDD+ Secretariat of Costa Rica that, in view of Costa Rica's forerunner status in its will to access ART/TREES and other REDD+ performance finance schemes, the country was being proposed to be part of the UN-REDD priority countries from 2021.

The National REDD+ Secretariat is favourable to participation in the UN-REDD Programme with the understanding that the UN-REDD Programme will align with the current priorities of the Secretariat and minimize transaction costs. To this end, it was agreed that UNDP would continue leading the technical assistance to the country on the design and implementation of a diversified strategy to access REDD+ performance finance from both market and non-market sources, including notably the GCF and ART/TREES/Emergent, and additionally will provide linkages to the UN-REDD partnership, including the mobilization of FAO and UNEP technical assistance that FONAFIFO may request.

In view of these renewed UN-REDD linkages, FONAFIFO expressed two requests for UN-REDD technical assistance to FAO and UNEP, as follows:

- FAO: Technical assistance to support the adaptation of the Collect Earth Desktop tool to collect data on land-use change at point level within the plot. Through time, Costa Rica may also appreciate tailored technical advice on selected MRV technical challenges that may emerge as the mentioned financing strategy is implemented (details to be further discussed during the year).
- Costa Rica has expressed a desire for access to high resolution satellite images for 2013. UN-REDD should be able to accommodate Costa Rica's need for such data.
- UNEP: Support with the monitoring of non-carbon benefits for the 2018-2019 period, based on the baseline already established with UNEP support during the preparation of the ERPD submitted to the FCPF Carbon Fund.

These requests were examined by the UN-REDD agencies internally, discussed with FONAFIFO and then integrated in the workplan below.

Deliverables

The major deliverables of the UN-REDD Technical Assistance in 2021 are presented below:

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realised

- Collect Earth Desktop tool adapted to the specific MRV need of Costa Rica to collect data on land-use change at point level within the plots
- Methodologies for the monitoring of non-carbon benefits for the 2018-2019 period supported, based on the previous baseline assessment

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Design and implementation of a diversified strategy to access REDD+ Results-Based payments from both market and non-market sources, including notably the GCF and ART/TREES/Emergent, amongst others, supported
- Submission of TREES registration document and initial monitoring report supported
- Costa Rica's experiences with performance-based finance for REDD+ and with accessing carbon markets under the Paris Agreement collected, analysed and disseminated, aiming to foster South-South cooperation

Outcome 3 – forest solutions enhanced

- Assessment, acceleration and enhancement of the NDC mitigation actions in the forest and land-use sectors supported, while ensuring a green COVID-19 recovery using the proceeds from REDD+ RBPs

The support to the ART/TREES pathway, which will be provided under the framework of the FONAFIFO-UNDP cooperation agreement for REDD+, will help ensure country success, as well as foster knowledge management and South-South cooperation on REDD+ performance finance. To be noted that in the current COVID-19 recovery phase, the PES scheme expansion must be carefully targeted to achieve desired environmental and social outcomes, taking into account the particular goals of the programme as well as synergies and trade-offs with other goals, programmes and sectors.

This technical assistance plan will be provided in synergy with the national REDD+ programmes under implementation, and in close concert with international REDD+ partnerships the country is engaged in. Given the restrictions on travel imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, digital means and virtual exchanges of best practices will be preferably organized, including potentially the jump-start of a virtual platform on REDD+ performance finance that UN-REDD is considering establishing.

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2.6. Côte d'Ivoire

Context

Côte d'Ivoire belongs to the West African forest biome, but has lost much of its natural forests. The country is politically committed to reducing deforestation and forest degradation, including through REDD+. Diverse governmental agencies are engaged in promoting a wide range of forest solutions, including the Ministry of Water and Forests, the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development and, more recently, the regional governments of Bélier and Cavally. Côte d'Ivoire has completed the REDD+ readiness phase, fulfilling each of the four pillars of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ (UNFCCC). Côte d'Ivoire has also advanced towards developing an Emission Reduction Programme under the FCPF Carbon Fund and initial results should be reported during 2021. The country has successfully launched two jurisdictional approaches to deforestation-free cocoa production and rural development, in a context of protecting the country's last forest reserves in the Cavally region and deploying forest ecosystem restoration solutions in Bélier region. In addition, the GCF/SAP/REDD+ project (PROMIRE) is in inception phase and aims to advance opportunities for ecosystem restoration in the context of the Cocoa & Forest Initiative.

As the leading cocoa producing and exporting country in the world, the cocoa-forest nexus remains the nucleus of the forest solutions in Côte d'Ivoire, and an essential avenue for a successful REDD+ implementation. The country is engaged in different partnerships to advance deforestation-free agriculture, with a focus on cocoa, including the Cocoa & Forests Initiative, and the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative policy dialogue process with the EU on deforestation-free cocoa trade in line with forthcoming EU trade legislation to remove deforestation from value chains.

The country is also revising its NDCs to the Paris Agreement. It is a comprehensive, intense process, with diverse governmental agencies, national stakeholders and international partners working together. The aim is to capture forest solutions well, and submit an enhanced and ambitious NDC to the UNFCCC before the CoP-26, which will conduct a first stock-taking.

Consultations

This workplan is based on digital conversations with officials from concerned governmental agencies, UN country offices and international partners. The key stakeholders that provided input into, and that will benefit from the proposed technical assistance include the National Secretariat for REDD+ (SEP-REDD), the Ministry of the Environment & Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Water & Forests, the Cocoa & Coffee Board (CCC), the NDC Partnership, and the regional governments of Bélier and Cavally. The proposed set of technical-assistance activities was jointly reviewed with the SEP-REDD in February 2021 and shared with the National Committee on REDD+ for inputs.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Pioneer jurisdictional approaches on the cocoa-forest nexus consolidated and disseminated: the regions of Cavally (deforestation-free cocoa production strategy) and Béliér (forest ecosystem restoration strategy)
- Fostered dialogue with stakeholders, including private and public partners for the inclusion of deforestation-free principles and criteria in national commodity platforms; strengthen the platform for dialogue and coordination with stakeholders around optimal business models for the sustainable development of agroforestry systems and value chains
- Newly available high-resolution imagery leveraged to enhance measurement of emissions and emission reductions from forests. Activities will essentially focus on the validation of the maps supporting activity data (deforestation and degradation) for 2000-2020
- Activity data statistically valid at provincial level (active project zones from the different on-going projects) in order to feed the FREL and ensure consistency across scales
- Finalised economic and financial agroforestry models, rooted into landscape approach - models will include different commodities: cocoa, timber, rubber and oil palm
- Technical backstopping to the dialogue process between the country and donors on deforestation-free cocoa production & trade, promoting field innovations and lessons, financing options and jurisdictional approaches
- Technical and knowledge exchanges between Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Ghana on deforestation-free commodity models (agroforestry models based on cocoa, coffee and rubber) and deforestation-free commodity value chains

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Analysis and review of the status of emission reduction and/or carbon rights / titling in the framework of the development of the national REDD+ benefits sharing mechanism and assessment of potential legal options of emission reduction rights, respectful of the new forest code
- Update on what opportunities there are to access carbon finance and formulate strategic recommendations with regards to the new carbon standards (e.g. ART/TREES2 s). Strategic recommendations will aim to lay out a trajectory for the country to access carbon finance to support its development objectives
- Leveraging potential (international) public funding for REDD+ implementation with private finance at the landscape level to scale up sustainable business practices

Outcome 3: Forest solutions enhanced

- Consolidation, finalisation and submission of the reviewed NDC, with due integration of forest solutions and REDD+ plans
- Advice to the NDC implementation plan, including financing and investment arrangements for forest solutions

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2.7. Ecuador

Context

Ecuador has been an early partner country to the UN-REDD Programme, completing REDD+ readiness in 2018 and becoming an archetypal case of UN-REDD support and value. In particular, in 2012-2018, Ecuador implemented a UN-REDD National Programme for REDD+ and received UN-REDD technical assistance. This

enabled Ecuador to fulfil the UNFCCC REDD+ provisions (Warsaw Framework for REDD+) and access various climate financing sources for REDD+ action and rewards, including the ProAmazonia investment programme financed by the GCF, a REM project, and a GCF REDD+ Results-based Payments (RBPs) project.

In 2020, in the context of the ongoing REDD+ portfolio (ProAmazonia and GCF/RBPs programmes) as well as part of the national workplan under the Climate Promise initiative, the Government requested UNDP technical advice to map financial REDD+ options for the country, including opportunities emerging under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. For that purpose, the Paris Agreement, LULUCF & NDC Tool (PLANT) was used to underpin a national analysis, which included feasibility for ART/TREES.

Considering the preliminary results from the PLANT assessment, the Government requested UNDP further support to analyse the ART/TREES process and prepare a proposal to be submitted to ART during 2021, in connection to their REDD+ portfolio and NDC ambitions. UNDP then proposed to integrate Ecuador among the UN-REDD priority countries for technical assistance. The Government also requested further support on the deployment of the new national trading brand, "Ecuador: Premium & Sustainable", in which deforestation-free value chains are a pillar. This process was launched in late 2019 with UNDP advice, with support by the ProAmazonia programme and with a UNDP-Lavazza partnership on deforestation-free coffee as the forerunner effort.

Consultations

The Ministry of Environment & Water of Ecuador (MAAE) leads REDD+ processes and programmes in Ecuador, including implementing the major REDD+ investment and results-based programmes, the NDC process, and the national engagement in the UN Climate Promise. In this context, in 2020, the MAAE requested UNDP advisory support to scope how to reinforce the REDD+ agenda through the avenues enabled by Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. UNDP offered the PLANT methodology, which has been used since, including a focus on prospects to access ART/TREES.

In August 2020, FAO engaged in this analytical and dialogue process, particularly regarding the forest and carbon monitoring dimensions for ART/TREES, building on the UNDP-FAO collaborations on REDD+ nationally (ProAmazonia) and internationally (UN-REDD).

The first set of results of the NDC & REDD+ assessment with PLANT was presented to the MAAE and other stakeholders in December 2020. At that time, the UN-REDD partnership was also in discussions with its Board, donors, and the ART Secretariat on increasing support to its partner countries to enable them access to and benefit from the ART platform by using the TREES standard.

Given these developments and synergies, UN-REDD integrated Ecuador in the 2021 workplan. A rapid UN-REDD 2021 inception process was undertaken in early 2021. Meanwhile, Ecuador had also conversations with ART partners, including the ART Secretariat, the Government of Norway, and Emergent to further scope the national prospects.

A virtual UN-REDD inter-agency meeting with the MAAE took place in February 2021. The ART prospects of Ecuador and the associated technical assistance from UN-REDD were presented and discussed, leading to the TA plan presented below. The *Green Gigaton Challenge* was presented to show Ecuador's ongoing efforts to support rewards/purchases of emission reductions using ART-TREES. UNDP as lead agency for Ecuador was also in contact with the senior advisor of the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative to discuss the context of the country in terms of prospects for the ART/TREES national process, the requests that MAAE put forward, and the agreements reached to respond to these requests.

Ecuador's UN-REDD technical assistance plan was presented to, and cleared by the Undersecretary for Climate Change of MAAE, on 12 February 2021.

Deliverables

Ecuador's potential for an ART/TREES submission will be fully assessed using the PLANT tool and once the country data is updated in 2021. Considering current information, two key challenges have been identified, i.e. the inclusion of emissions from forest degradation and the registration approach for years that Ecuador already received results-based payments. UN-REDD will assist Ecuador assess its prospects for ART/TREES,

examine gaps, map the technical support needed and, if feasible, helping prepare and submit a TREES concept note. The major deliverables of the UN-REDD Technical Assistance in 2021 are presented below:

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realised

- Assessment of the information on carbon emissions required to allow the country's participation in ART/TREES supported, including the development of an improvement plan for the national forest monitoring system and MRV to fulfil information gaps
- Deployment of the national deforestation-free export brand ("Ecuador Premium & Sustainable") supported, coordinating action and standards among the ministries of agriculture, environment, and foreign trade

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- ART/TREES readiness pathway, using the PLANT tool, including assessment of gaps and building stakeholder capacities and dialogues throughout (potentially leading to a TREES concept drafting/submission, depending on the results of the assessment)
- Safeguards assessment of ART/TREES requirements updated, including the identification of actions to address gaps

Outcome 3 – forest solutions enhanced

- National capacity building to align performance-based finance schemes and options for forest solutions, including NDCs linkages

This technical assistance plan will be provided in synergy with the national REDD+ programmes under implementation and in close concert with international REDD+ partnerships engaged in the country.

The work related to the deployment of the national deforestation-free export brand, which is key to secure REDD+ results in the long term, includes technical assistance to various milestones: development and implementation of a pathway towards deforestation-free production; generation of the national certificate of production free of deforestation in alignment to international agendas on deforestation-free trade (e.g.: FACT's, EU emerging legislation); development of a traceability system; and pilot experiences with national and international companies seeking deforestation-free supply chains (e.g.: Lavazza, Olam, SilvaCacao).

Ecuador is equally scoping linkages between REDD+ performance finance and the COVID-19 recovery. UN-REDD may support this effort with knowledge and international experiences.

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2.8. [Gabon – to be reconfirmed]

Context

Historically, Gabon was part of the UN-REDD Programme and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). However, the Country concluded that the REDD+ framework, as presented in Durban in 2011, was unlikely to provide sufficient incentives and flexibility for countries with high forest cover and low deforestation (HFLD) to simultaneously pursue their climate change mitigation and development goals. As such, Gabon could not engage in the REDD+ process without first defining and adopting its own development strategy.

Today, in partnership with the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and FCPF, Gabon has made progress on this path to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and has, therefore, opened the door to discussions on how to potentially engage in the REDD+ process for specific sectors. In 2017, the Government of Gabon and CAFI signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) which establishes a partnership for the implementation of Gabon's National Investment Framework (CNI) and commits to reducing its gross emissions by 50% compared to 2010 level by 2025 (this implies a reduction of more than 50% in the forestry sector). Since then, the country has made progress in preparing the Warsaw Framework elements and achieving ART/TREES conformance. Gabon has now the FREL finalised, NFMS completed, and the first summary of safeguards information submitted to UNFCCC.

The landscape of carbon finance has quickly developed over the last years, and with the ART/TREES draft v2 available, new types of carbon finance are becoming more prominent, especially from the private sector. Gabon is open to explore national and international carbon market schemes to transact their forest carbon credits for higher price.

Consultations

The Programme scoped out indicative deliverables for Gabon, aligned to achieving ART/TREES conformance. Consultations allowed the Programme to gain an understanding of what has been done already in Gabon, especially by CAFI, in terms of getting TREES compliant, so that potential UN-REDD added value could be ascertained. In fulfilling the LoI with CAFI, in terms of TREES conformance, Gabon could serve as a regional champion to crowd in other countries interested to supply high-quality ERs/ERs, for higher prices, as part of the *Green Gigaton Challenge*. After an agreement with Gabonese government and in coordination with CAFI, the planned activities proposed below were identified as priority for 2021.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realised

- SIS development, focused on the design of a SIS webpage and the elaboration of template for the collection of safeguards information from REDD+ actions on the ground and national level information, and building on work being undertaken by CAFI to meet ART-TREES requirements

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Review of CAFI-led assessment of safeguards conformance, gaps and gap-filling actions informing the development of safeguards conformance plan, in coordination with CAFI, as a contribution to an ART/TREES concept note submission

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2.9. Ghana

Context

Over the last years, Ghana has been working with the FCPF to develop the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP), an ERPA was signed in 2019. In 2021, Ghana is about to submit its first monitoring report to the Carbon Fund. Ghana has reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation quite significantly against the 2005-2014 reference level. Preliminary calculations indicate that Ghana may have significantly reduced emissions also against a TREES-compliant reference level.

Ghana has already invested significant efforts into setting up a forest monitoring system, and an approach to addressing safeguards. The country has made submissions to the FCPF Carbon Fund and also to the UNFCCC, including both of an Sol and FRL. For Ghana, it will be key to understand how these existing systems can be leveraged and further improved to enable access to carbon finance.

Consultations

The opportunity to work with Ghana presented itself as a logical continuation of work that FAO is currently carrying out to support Ghana's reporting to the FCPF Carbon Fund. The possibility to jointly explore carbon finance opportunities for Ghana was discussed with senior staff of the Forestry Commission, including the national REDD+ focal point, in early February, and a clear indication of interest was received shortly after. The NICFI team indicated interest during a meeting in mid-February.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Assist with the collection of activity data, as well as the analysis. Such additional data collection is necessary to meet TREES requirements. Support will also be provided to review the classification

protocol (QA/QC), and to conduct training on interpretation of satellite data. The newly available high-resolution Planet data will be leveraged

- Provide technical assistance on safeguards elements, including a gap assessment against requirements of carbon standards, notably TREES safeguards indicators (including analysis of evidence of conformance with indicators, gaps, and identification of actions/measures to gaps) within the GCFRP
- Assist with the population of the safeguards web portal. The web portal is set up to transparently report how Ghana is addressing and respecting REDD+ safeguards. This includes extension of the scope beyond the GCFRP area

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Carbon finance scoping. This will include generating detailed estimates of expected volume of carbon credits and a gap analysis against technical requirements, safeguard and legal requirements and eventually developing initial documentation (e.g. ART/TREES concept note)

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2.10. Indonesia

Context

Indonesia demonstrated reductions in deforestation and accessed funding for Results-Based Payments (RBP) under the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). After 10 years of work, in July 2020, Norway confirmed its first payment of USD\$ 56 million to Indonesia for reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation for the period 2016-17. In August 2020, the Green Climate Fund agreed to pay USD 103 million to Indonesia for REDD+ results achieved from 2014-2016 with UNDP as the Accredited Entity. The Environmental Fund Management Agency (BLU BPD LH), with technical inputs from UN-REDD, has also developed policy, legal and operational documents on REDD+ fund distribution that reflect best international practices. The drafting of the Plan for Peat Ecosystem Protection and Management (RPG) is receiving technical and policy inputs from all administrative levels and coordinated with support from the UN-REDD and is currently being implemented.

Main barriers/gaps and some important ongoing policy discussions include:

- The availability of financial resources for REDD+ remains limited, which despite recent results in terms of realizing RBPs implies that there is limited financial resources to finance policy implementation in the coming years.
- A new and ambitious carbon pricing, which will be enacted through a presidential decree, will require substantial technical support in terms of drafting the underlying regulation and in terms of lower-level regulation to move forward with implementation.
- The future status of international tradable REDD+ generated GHG emission reductions.
- The Job Creation Act (Law no.11/2020). Which amongst other weakens legal framework around Integrated Fire Management is likely to increase fire risk and consequent land and forest fire related GHG emissions.

Consultations

Consultations were held with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Directorate General Climate Change Control, the EU delegation, the Norwegian Embassy, Kemitraan (the Partnership for Governance Reform), the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago (AMAN) and the UN Resident Coordinator office. Based on feedback from these consultations, deliverables for 2021 have been revised and reflected in the next section. Details of these consultations are documented and can be made available for further perusal. The following were some notable points of the consultations:

The MoEF asked UN agencies to differentiate and coordinate the support provided to BPD LH. The government has a preference for reporting to UNFCCC following IPCC guidelines and has not made a firm commitment on other standards and there may be some resistance to ART/TREES as it introduces additional requirements. The draft Presidential Regulation on Economic Value of Carbon contains a section on international carbon trade, which provides a broad framework to explore modalities to engage in market-based transactions. However, technical considerations related to baselines across all sectors and suitable carbon pricing instruments are on-going and further development of additional policies by technical ministries such as the MoEF and Ministry of Finance will be required.

AMAN noted a need to strengthen the capacity of indigenous peoples to secure tenure over 11 million ha of forests, on which they currently depend upon for their livelihoods. Donors, civil society and the UNRC stressed the importance for UN-REDD to work alongside the government on COVID-19 recovery, designed as National Economic Recovery Programme (PEN), and the new Omnibus law and technical advice on the Food Estate programme to support increasing food production.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Improved quality of emission reductions and enhancements using high-resolution satellite data to rapidly collect national or subnational statistics on deforestation and degradation
- Policy, legal and operational documents for the BLU BPD LH reflect best international practices and standards adapted for (i) design of the funding instrument for REDD+; (ii) strategic investment planning that could contribute to COVID-19 economic recovery; (iii) review of REDD+ funding proposal submitted to BLU BPD LH
- Policy reform on sustainable peatland management through technical assistance on effective and feasible peatland and forest-fire management policies
- Blended finance promoted, as a tool for sustainable landscape management, through the existing Tropical Landscape Finance Facility

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Ministry of Environment and Forestry's Regulations on Carbon Pricing or Economic Value of Carbon is developed and implemented integrating improvements for the forestry sector that contributes to regulating how market and non-market-based instruments can support the achievement of NDC targets
- Country analyses of issues, options, opportunities/prospects and recommendations to prepare and engage in UNFCCC Art. 6, shared with Ministry of Environment and Forestry as implementing agency and BLU BPD LH as REDD+ fund management agency, are derived from results of assessment using the PLANT (Paris Agreement, LULUCF and NDC Tool), which will include, but not limited to domestic and existing or upcoming international market-based standards for the forestry sector
- Scoping and identification of potential demand for Indonesian forest carbon credits in international markets, to determine (1) the type of potential buyers and their expectations of carbon credit quality and corresponding prices; and (2) the biodiversity, ecosystem service and social co-benefit potential of international carbon market transactions

Outcome 3: Forest solutions enhanced

- The NDC implementation roadmap under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and other related/relevant ministries includes policy and technical analyses and recommendations derived from PLANT
- Technical improvements to Indonesia's NDC on emission factors and activity data for fires, peatlands and mangroves; and capacity development in NDC requirements for UNFCCC reporting

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2.11. Mexico

Context

Mexico has submitted its revised NDC in late 2020, reinforcing the role of the REDD strategy to meet its zero net deforestation target by 2030 and contribute to its unconditional (-22%) and conditional (-36%) mitigation targets with respect to BAU. In addition, Mexico has continued to improve in its REDD+ efforts, including progress in monitoring and expansion of REDD+ initiatives at the subnational level. However, financial resources have become even more limited in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, making it more pressing for the country to access climate finance in order to maintain and scale its actions to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

Access to results-based payment schemes has been limited by the lack of sufficient clarity on carbon rights and benefit sharing arrangements, which also led Mexico to withdraw from the FCPF's Carbon Fund. In response, a legal reform bill is under review in Congress, which is expected to be discussed during 2021. At the same time, interest in REDD+ by States continues to expand, including from States under the Governors Climate and Forests Task Force initiative, for alignment between the State level REDD+ efforts with the national REDD+ framework need to be ensured. Advancing efforts to address drivers of deforestation, particularly in key supply chains, has received increased attention in both the States' and federal levels.

During 2021, Mexico expects to prepare and present its REDD+ Technical Annex and develop the necessary regulations and procedures to clarify carbon rights, benefit sharing and modalities to access carbon finance. This should enable the country to explore additional sources of carbon finance.

While lack of clarity on carbon rights may limit initial use of the credits, the process of engaging with ART/TREES could play a positive role to re-engage with key stakeholders and reach an agreement. In addition, the interest in REDD by State governments could play a positive role to advance on these pending issues.

Consultations

Mexico's priorities and how best could UN-REDD support them was discussed during a virtual mission, followed by several technical exchanges with different technical groups in CONAFOR and INECC. In addition, NICFI staff was briefed on the emerging activities. In addition, the tentative actions under the GCF-TF were taken into account in drafting the proposed workplan.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Technical recommendations to involve private sector actors in key supply chains in sustainable production models
- Strengthened NFMS through application of FAO's Assessment tool and improved access to Open Foris Arena
- Technical support and inputs for strengthening the national safeguards system, with a focus on updating the SIS and developing the 2nd summary of information on safeguards
- Technical support and inputs for developing communication and training materials on safeguards

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Recommendations to enhance environmental integrity of REDD+ results and facilitate access to carbon finance, including undertaking an assessment of the conformity with ART/TREES
- Technical support to consolidate modalities to access carbon finance at various scales from a variety of sources, including RBPs and carbon markets
- Technical and legal recommendations on carbon rights and benefit sharing arrangements in line with anticipated legal reform to facilitate access to carbon finance

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2.12. Myanmar

Context

The Government of Myanmar has made significant advancements against the pillars of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ including the completion of the national REDD+ strategy development through an inclusive and gender-responsive stakeholder engagement process (the final document is currently in the process of official endorsement). Much of the achievements and lessons learned are the result of dedicated work carried out under the UN-REDD National Programme which ended in November 2020.

The country is currently receiving support under the UN-REDD TA on two initiatives launched in 2020: *“Addressing Forest Crime through Improved Forest Governance in the Lower Mekong Region (LMR)”* and *“Integrating Mangroves into REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar”*.

Consultations

In an already difficult context due to the continuous persistence of COVID-19 pandemic, the recent political development caused by coup d'état of February 1st 2021 makes it impossible to realistically plan for the implementation of additional activities. In line with the “Myanmar UNCT Engagement in Current Context” document the country team plans to continue with the planned activities under the two initiatives mentioned above to the best extent possible, relying on remote support and International and National Consultancies. However, to date, no engagement with Government counterpart seems possible, also because of the successful and growing civil disobedience movement: the majority of government officials (including staff of the Forestry Department) are on strike (don't go to work and don't answer phone calls or emails).

As a consequence, and after consultation among the UN-REDD agencies it is proposed that no activities will be added under the TA 2021. The country team, however, considers the UN-REDD support of paramount importance in order to build on and continue the successful work carried out in previous years. The country team therefore recommends the opportunity to re-assess the situation in six-month' time to identify windows of opportunity and for planning a re-entry in 2022.

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2.13. Papua New Guinea

Context

PNG has been one of the leading countries for the international REDD+ process since its very early days. There is also a long history of technical assistance to PNG by UN-REDD. As part of UN-REDD, as well as independently, FAO has been working to support both PNGFA and CCDA. Currently, PNG is working to develop a proposal for the GCF to access results-based payments. Preliminary calculations have indicated that PNG may also have significant amounts of emission reductions against a TREES-compliant reference level.

Consultations

The FAO, PNGFA, CCDA have been working together since 2019 on PNG's reporting of REDD+ results and accessing results-based payments. CCDA senior officers indicate their interest on the implication of the REDD+ carbon trading to the country's enhanced NDC submitted in December 2020. The possibility of accessing carbon markets through ART/TREES was first discussed in early 2021. Senior staff of CCDA indicated strong interest in exploring the opportunity together during a meeting the 19th February. The General Manager of MRV and National Communication Division and the Acting General Manager of REDD+ and Mitigation Division expressed their interests to conduct the scoping study for the PNG's eligibility for ART/TREES in mid-February.

Deliverables

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Carbon finance scoping. The opportunity to generate carbon credits and access carbon finance through leading carbon standards (notably including ART/TREES) will be explored. Should the scoping indicate good potential and the Government of PNG be strongly interested, then developing initial documentation will be targeted

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2.14. Peru

Context

Peru has advanced in the implementation framework for its National Strategy on Forests and Climate Change (ENBCCC), including the establishment of stakeholder participation and institutional coordination mechanisms. Capacity building and scoping exercises were also undertaken to prioritize REDD+ actions at the regional levels and identify investment opportunities to contribute to the implementation of Peru's ENBCC and NDC. The NDC of Peru has been reviewed and updated for the period 2021-2030¹ for robustness and enhanced ambition. The role of forests and REDD+ is a major component of Peru's NDC and the ongoing revision, which is being supported by a multi-stakeholder platform around NDCs, known as "Dialoguemos".

Peru is currently implementing the Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) with the Governments of Norway, Germany and the UK, which enables payments followed by the accomplishment of specific policy milestones. The third phase will entail performance-based finance for measured, reported and verified GHG emission reductions. The technical assistance of UN-REDD is directed to advance these lines of work, with a specific focus on a national submission to ART/TREES. This work will entail a mix of policy work, forest monitoring capacities, technical expertise and safeguard provisions. The activities comprising the following 2021 workplan builds on, and extends, the Programme's ongoing technical assistance, and includes additional activities with significant potential to contribute to REDD+ (current and future) results.

Consultations

Peru's priorities and how best UN-REDD could support the country was discussed during a virtual mission held in mid-February 2021, followed by technical exchanges with MINAM. In addition, Norway was briefed (at both embassy and capital level) on the emerging activities.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Advice and technical support to the overall execution of the Joint Declaration of Intent on REDD+ (phase II) as well as assist with working sessions and specialized meetings with relevant stakeholders
- Technical support and inputs for the implementation of the national safeguards roadmap, with a focus on completing the SIS
- Capacity development using SEPAL and new imagery supported toward institutionalised forest monitoring system to enhance the quality of results
- Develop a baseline for potential areas suitable for forest restoration activities in the Amazon and other biomes
- Legal recommendations on the institutionalization of the NFMS to strength measuring and reporting of emissions reductions

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Peru's ART/TREES standard compliance assessment developed

Outcome 3 – forest solutions enhanced

- Technical inputs to enhance the implementation of Peru’s LULUCF NDCs measures, looking into alignment and taking into account progress achieved through REDD+

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2.15. Republic of Congo

Context

With a forest area of 21.9 million ha (64% of the country) and a deforestation rate of 0.06% (FRA 2020), Congo is a high forest low deforestation (HFLD) country. Forests are a key component of Congo’s first NDC (2017) with the vision that “the sequestration potential of the forest is maintained and reinforced both through better management and reforestation”. The FSC certified forest area in Congo has recently increased, and with 3.0 million hectares of forest certified, it is the country with the largest amount of certified forest in the Congo Basin.

The Republic of Congo has engaged in REDD+ since 2008. The country has submitted a Forest Reference Emission Level to the UNFCCC in 2016 (including deforestation and forest degradation) and published its REDD+ strategy in 2017. In 2019, Congo became part of the Carbon Fund pipeline with an Emission Reduction Programme in Sangha and Likouala departments. CAFI will be funding two new large REDD+ implementation programmes starting by the end of 2021 to scale up REDD+ results, and propose a full GCF REDD+ project in March 2021, focusing on wood-energy supply. Congo has not yet submitted a safeguards summary of information to the UNFCCC but has made progress on the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).

In 2021, UN-REDD will provide technical assistance to support national REDD+ implementation ensuring consistency of the REDD+ investments across domestic and international sources, with particular attention to and coordination with CAFI and GCF support.

Consultations

The proposed activities build on the support the UN-REDD Programme has provided to the Republic of Congo during the last years and have been discussed periodically with CN-REDD and CNIAF, most recently during virtual meetings in February 2021. Continued work towards improving the national forest monitoring system will, in parallel, also be funded through a project proposed to CAFI. The UN-REDD Programme will provide complementary support with the focus on options for accessing carbon finance in 2021.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Updated emissions and emission reductions calculations leveraging newly available NICFI imagery

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Support with a tenure study in the context of possible title transfer of ERs for selling to the FCPF Carbon Fund and/or ART/TREES2 within a HFLD modality
- Support to advance its work on REDD+ safeguards with a view on emerging carbon finance opportunities. A gap analysis against the ART/TREES2 requirements will be conducted as an input for the “carbon finance scoping” exercise planned within the NFMS institutionalization project proposed to CAFI

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2.16. Uganda

Context

Uganda has several elements of the Warsaw Framework in place, including the National REDD+ Strategy, NFMS, and a FREL. In addition, Uganda is the first country in Africa to report on REDD+ results of 8,071,231 tCO₂e to the UNFCCC for the period 2015-2017. Through its NDC, Uganda has pledged to conditionally reduce its GHG emissions by 22% by 2030 compared to a business-as-usual scenario, focusing specifically on three sectors – energy, forestry and wetlands which collectively emit 77.3 MtCO₂e annually. Uganda has made a commitment to restore 2.5 million hectares of deforested and degraded land, as a pledge towards the Bonn Challenge.

The UN-REDD national programme support to Uganda ended in December 2017. The country, however, continued to make progress in the implementation of REDD+ actions. UN-REDD technical assistance in 2021 can allow Uganda to scope for private buyers¹ of, and investors in, forest carbon, as well as upgrade carbon accounting systems and SIS development to access RBPs for any achieved ERs and removals results.

Consultations

Consultations with the Government of Uganda (Ministry of Water and Environment, National Forestry Authority, Forestry Sector Support Department) and the World Bank allowed the Programme to gain an understanding of what has been done already in Uganda, especially by the World Bank, in terms of readiness support and large-scale forest sector investments, so we can ascertain potential UN-REDD add-value. After discussions with the Government of Uganda, the deliverables proposed below were identified as priority for 2021.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- First summary of safeguards information, potentially considering ART/TREES safeguards requirements
- SIS development, aligned to ART/TREES safeguards requirements, focused on contents and design of SIS webpage, together with templates and recommendations for data collection, compilation and reporting of safeguards information from REDD+ actions

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Assessment of the results for 2018 against 2016-2017 and the potential performance to generate carbon credits and access carbon finance under ART/TREES and formulate strategic recommendations – adequate gap analysis so that Uganda counterparts understand how high they will need to leap
- Assessments of safeguards conformance, gaps, and gap-filling plans for conformance to ART/TREES requirements
- Roundtable dialogues^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} between corporate buyers and investors, and government, to achieve common understanding of expectations and conditions regarding private-sector investments in forest carbon
- Facilitated partnerships between the country and private sector actors to scale up investment to/buyers^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} from targeted REDD+ programmes (notably the Elgon and Albertine Rift regions under World Bank investment programme) that include forest restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks

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2.17. Viet Nam

Context

Viet Nam is one of the most advanced countries in the Asia Pacific region in terms of REDD+ Readiness. Following the approval of the revised REDD+ Strategy (National REDD+ Action Programme) through Prime Ministerial decision in 2017, submission and revision of the FRL and completion of a national forest monitoring and information system that incorporates information on safeguards, the country is moving towards measurement of REDD+ results and the development of multi-sectoral and sub-national approaches to the implementation of the NRAP objectives.

Viet Nam has made advancements in 2020 in conducting its MRV against its submitted FRL, and while the Technical Annex is still to be submitted (as of February 2021), this is expected in early 2021, and for Viet Nam to undergo the technical assessment under the UNFCCC. According to the available MRV data against the FRL, Viet Nam has significant performance that may be rewarded through Results Based Payments (RBPs).

Implementation of policies and measures for REDD+ is progressing, including the formulation and implementation of a number of project initiatives that are considered critical to ensuring market pressures from coffee and other commodities are managed sustainably.

The country's forestry industry is also growing significantly, as one of the world's leading wood furniture exporters. While timber sourcing is expected to continue to be global in extent, sustainable supply from its domestic long-rotation plantation resources is among the key policies of the government also supporting its REDD+ objectives.

Consultations

This workplan is based on consultations with key stakeholders in Viet Nam, including the REDD+ Office and the Vietnam Forest and Forest Protection Fund (VNFF) of VNFOREST, the Vietnam Academy of Forest Sciences (VAFS), the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI), all under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the former representatives of CSOs and ethnic groups under the UN-REDD Phase II Programme, as well as the EU Delegation in Viet Nam, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Viet Nam.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- The project Integrated Sustainable Landscape Management through Deforestation-free Jurisdiction in Lam Dong and Dak Nong and related project planning and implementation documents reflects integration of forestry in the land-use planning process, and lessons from this integration inform future development of provincial planning guidelines
- Facilitated engagement with potential actors, technical inputs for relevant REDD+ interventions
- Domestic and international financial institutions engaged to deliver transition to deforestation-free practices
- Study to identifying bottlenecks for smallholders/SMEs to benefit from deforestation-free supply chains and identification of pathways that incentivize deforestation-free supply chains
- BUR TA on REDD+ technically endorsed by UNFCCC TA and, as appropriate, preparation towards an updated FREL/FRL; input for the GHG inventory for LULUCF sector under the BUR

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Case study of Vietnam's potential to generate emissions reductions and enhanced removals to selected international quality standard(s) for forest carbon
- Gap assessment of carbon accounting (MRV), safeguards and legal arrangements against requirements of international forest carbon standards for accessing carbon markets and/or REDD+ results-based payments
- Strategic recommendations for potential next steps for Vietnam

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2.18. Zambia

Context

The country has made much progress against the pillars of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. In 2021, Zambia is working to secure funding for REDD+ implementation: a jurisdictional programme in the Eastern Province is being developed for support by the BioCarbon Fund, a GCF proposal is under development for Northwestern Province, and the private sector has launched several carbon projects to work with communities towards reducing deforestation. The 2018 community forest management regulation and the statutory instrument on carbon management that is forthcoming in 2021 are important milestones for the Forestry Department to manage a multi-level approach to REDD+. In parallel, the Forestry Department is working to further consolidate its national forest monitoring system and safeguards information system.

Consultations

The activities proposed for 2021 represent a continuation of work undertaken during the last years. Planning for 2021 started as early as May 2020 jointly with Forestry Department staff, and the forest monitoring activities proposed below were identified as priority for 2021 during a meeting with senior Forestry Department staff in November 2020. Similarly, regarding activities on the topic of safeguards, close communication took place with the Forestry Department, the Climate Change Department and the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (designated to host the SIS). Since the proposed activities are a continuation of technical assistance on safeguards during 2018-2020, they were validated during regular interactions with the Safeguards Technical Working Group, which last met face-to-face in September 2020. Consultations on the 2021 annual workplan concluded with a dedicated meeting among the advisers of the three UN-REDD agencies and senior Forestry Department staff in early February 2021.

Deliverables

Outcome 1 – forest solutions realized

- Technical assessment of the Forest Reference Emission Level
- Maximizing quality of REDD+ results measurement by collecting activity data using the newly available NICFI high-resolution imagery dataset
- Training on map production Training will be provided to help the FD's remote sensing team start their mapping work
- Recommendations and inputs for starting the elaboration of the second summary of safeguards information

Outcome 2 – forest solutions rewarded

- Carbon finance scoping based on updated estimates of the reference level, as well as emissions and emission reductions during 2019-2020. It will also factor in latest progress on the Statutory Instrument on Carbon Management, as well as on the treatment of safeguards

3. Knowledge Management (Connecting actors and knowledge for forest solutions / Outcome 4)

Output 4.1. Knowledge on how to scale up REDD+ implementation is captured, managed and disseminated to accelerate climate action

Rationale

The UN-REDD Programme is the UN's knowledge and advisory platform on forest solutions to the climate emergency. In 2021, knowledge management and communications will continue to be pillars of UN-REDD, and the Programme will continue to provide a suite of global knowledge management (KM) and communications tools and activities to support Outcomes 1-3 through

which the Programme can meet its partner countries' targeted needs in order to turn the tide on deforestation.

UN-REDD will continue to increase the knowledge and capacities of countries, stakeholders and partners committed to REDD+ results and will provide a proven, scientific base to further strengthen global and regional REDD+ efforts through normative good practices, informed by real-world experiences in partner countries. Knowledge on good practices of innovative and scalable REDD+ solutions, drawing on lessons learned from activities undertaken through Outcomes 1-3, will be facilitated, captured and disseminated to scale up delivery of REDD+ and forest solutions.

The UN-REDD knowledge management and communications infrastructure consists of the UN-REDD online portal, knowledge products (e.g. briefs, videos, reports), knowledge events (e.g. UN-REDD webinars, contributions to multi-stakeholder events and with a particular focus on the integration of forests into COVID-19 recovery plans), communication channels (e.g. newsletter, social media, website) and South-South cooperation initiatives. This KM and communications infrastructure allows UN-REDD to disseminate lessons and good practice, to support its partner countries at large, and to support a global movement for forest and climate action. Knowledge management also includes key cross-cutting dimensions such as gender-responsive REDD+ approaches, which remain programmatic priority in UN-REDD's knowledge generation and dissemination.

Deliverables

- User-friendly online repository of REDD+ knowledge, based on the outdated Workspace, providing partner countries and the wider REDD+ and forest solution constituencies with good practices, guidelines and lessons learned
- Knowledge briefs/events to promote the rights, knowledge and inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities in forest solutions
- Preliminary lessons learned from supporting countries to engage in leading fund and market standards, with focus on ART/TREES, documented and shared with countries and jurisdictions
- Knowledge briefs and events on keynote issues that connect national REDD+ action with the *Paris Agreement*, particularly with regards to NDC land & forest enhancements, international cooperation arrangements (Art. 6), and the enhanced transparency framework for the forest sector (Art. 13)
- Country and jurisdiction lessons on accessing and implementing REDD+ performance-based finance
- Comparative analysis of rights, title, and benefits of REDD+ results-based actions and options to reduce of potential conflicts associated with tenure/rights, to be implemented in collaboration with external partners (e.g. Tenure Facility, EU REDD Facility, CIFOR, AMAN and others)
- A set of knowledge products on thematic areas relevant to 2021 global fora: deforestation and food systems, triggers of transformational change, fire monitoring and management, etc.; to be produced and disseminated at international, regional and local events and in preparation for the World Forestry Congress
- Systematize, assess and share evidence on the cost and effectiveness of REDD+ actions to inform priority setting
- A functional UN-REDD Gender Marker Rating System that measures and reports on the gender-responsiveness of UN-REDD's technical assistance and knowledge management and briefings on gender mainstreaming in policy work, investment programming and performance-based finance on the climate-forest nexus
- Regional/bilateral knowledge exchanges and South-South collaboration in LAC on priority REDD+ areas (including indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities, monitoring, financing, benefit-sharing, REDD+ implementation and NDCs, access to international carbon finance, and restoration)

Output 4.2. Collective political and societal support to NbS increased

Rationale

Forests are recognized as the most mature, scientifically proven, and concrete nature-based solution (NbS) with a potential to deliver 5.3 GtCO₂e annually and various pro-poor co-benefits, from improved health to job creation and augmented livelihoods and food security. The UN-REDD Programme will therefore reinforce Outcomes 1 - 3 by increasing the societal support for forest solutions in the Super Year for Nature towards CBD CoP15 and UNFCCC CoP-26 and beyond through a broadening of its audience and by leveraging the momentum of the NbS movement.

Forest solutions also support the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing jobs and livelihoods, especially to the most marginalized, while furnishing a shield against future zoonotic diseases. Hence forest conservation and restoration are win-wins for stimulus investment. They can create millions of green jobs to boost rural economies and provide long term sustainable growth. Forests must therefore be a fundamental part of economic recovery plans.

Deliverables

- Series of regional case studies on COVID-19 and Building Back Better and Greener, and associated communication/KM products, campaigns and events (especially regional and country-specific) that demonstrate the value of forests and nature for economic recovery plans to mainstream forest solutions into COVID-19 decision making
- Events at UNFCCC CoP-26, the UN Food Systems Summit and other strategic moments, including high-level, to advance the political support and financial commitment for the potential of forests to mitigate climate change and position forest solutions squarely at the heart of the Paris Agreement and in support of the SDG Agenda
- Strengthened indigenous peoples' participation & knowledge contribution to the UNFCCC Local Communities & Indigenous Peoples Platform
- Support to international and regional networks of indigenous peoples and local communities on issues related to the climate-forest-territory nexus (e.g. UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, International Indigenous Women's Forum, UNFCCC LCIP Platform, AIPP, COICA)
- Green Gigaton Challenge communications efforts to support the objective of catalysing funds to transact one gigaton of high-quality emission reductions from forest-based natural climate solutions by 2025 with a clear demand sign by UNFCCC CoP-26. Global dialogues between companies and governments to achieve a common understanding of their expectations and conditions related to carbon markets, REDD+ and private sector investments in forests
- Communication products to support countries and UN-system initiatives on turning the tide of deforestation (case studies, evidence and data products, input to events and campaigns)
- Public campaign in collaboration with the video gaming industry through UNEP's Playing for the Planet partnership with a target of reaching 500 million people to grow knowledge and inspire action around the conservation and restoration of forests culminating in an event at UNFCCC CoP-26
- Scoping partnerships and innovations to stimulate REDD+ community funding

Output 4.3. Digital cooperation and frontier technologies deployed to accelerate and enhance NbS

Rationale

The use of digital technology has become a necessity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the UN-REDD Programme, profiting from its already existing digital cooperation expertise, responded quickly to the new need by moving its KM activities online while ensuring digital inclusion. In 2021 depending on the status of limitations on travel and social interactions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, consultations, webinars and knowledge exchanges will continue to be held online. Continuing UN-REDD's programmatic commitment to social inclusion, accessibility for marginalized groups will remain a priority consideration.

In addition, UN-REDD will continue to invest into innovative technical solutions for satellite data and remote sensing towards the creation of digital public goods. Finally, UN-REDD in line with the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation will explore the transformative potential of frontier technology for forest solutions, from big data to artificial intelligence, in support of Outcomes 1-3.

Deliverables

- Development and promotion of innovative technical solutions (Open Foris, ARENA and SEPAL) for generating and managing high-quality forest data for tracking REDD+ and other climate commitments
- Strengthening digital cooperation and advancing technical and legal solutions for making country data open, accessible and transparent (e.g. webportals, data sharing agreements, communication strategies for forest monitoring data)
- Pilot initiatives and information briefs on making digital cooperation and virtual engagement socially inclusive, particularly among indigenous peoples, local communities, women and the rural youth engaged in forest and climate action
- Enhancing country access to tools that support planning and implementation of integrated landscape approaches to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, through the co-development and implementation of a decision flow support framework and the creation of a related navigator.
- Assessment of the potential of frontier technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, -for REDD+ and forest-based solutions, for example to improve collective decision making or big data analytics and visualization.