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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT

TF-10038

ON A

GRANT
FROM THE
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$13 MILLION

TO THE

Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)

FOR THE

Enhancing Institutional Capacities on REDD issues for Sustainable Forest
Management in the Congo Basin
January 30, 2019

Environment & Natural Resources Global Practice
Africa Region

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective Jul 31, 2018)

Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo

Currency Unit = CFA Franc (FCFA)

US\$ 1 = 559 FCFA

Democratic Republic of Congo

Currency Unit = Congolese Franc
(CDF)

US\$ 1 = 1643 FCFA

FISCAL YEAR

January 1 – December 31

Regional Vice President: Hafez M. H. Ghanem

Country Director: Elisabeth Huybens

Senior Global Practice Director: Karin Erika Kemper

Practice Manager: Africa Eshogba Olojoba

Task Team Leader(s): Loic Jean Charles Braune

ICR Main Contributor: Juha Antti Kalevi Seppala

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFD	French Development Agency / <i>Agence Française de Développement</i>
AGN	African Group of Negotiators
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CEEAC	Economic Community of Central African States / <i>Communauté Économique des États de l' Afrique Centrale</i>
CEFDHAC	Conference on Dense Humid Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa / <i>Conférence sur les Écosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale</i>
CI	Conservation International
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
COMIFAC	Central Africa Forests Commission / <i>Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale</i>
COP	Conference of the Parties
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ER	Emission Reductions
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEB	Global Environmental Benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTC	Climate Change Working Group / <i>Groupe de Travail Climat</i>
GIZ	German International Cooperation / <i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>
IFR	Interim Financial Reports
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISR	Implementation Status & Results Report
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
OFAC	Central African Forest Observatory / <i>Observatoire des forêts d'Afrique centrale</i>
PCF	Prototype Carbon Fund
PIF	Project Identification Form
PMU	Project Management Unit
PREREDD	Regional REDD+ Project / <i>Projet Régional REDD+</i>
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, as well as conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
REFADD	Network of African Women for Sustainable Development / <i>Réseau Femmes Africaines pour le Développement Durable</i>
REPALEAC	Network for Indigenous People and Local Stakeholders for Sustainable Management of Forests in Central Africa / <i>Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la gestion durable de forêts denses et humides d'Afrique centrale</i>
REPAR	Network for Parliamentarians for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems / <i>Réseau des Parlementaires pour la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique centrale</i>
RESA	Regional Environmental and Social Assessment
ROC	Republic of Congo
RPP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
SBSTA	(UNFCCC) Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
US\$	United States Dollars
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group

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DATA SHEET

BASIC INFORMATION

Product Information

Project ID	Project Name
P113167	AFCC2/RI-Enhancing Institutional Capacities on REDD issues for Sustainable Forest Management in the Congo Basin
Country	Financing Instrument
Africa	Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category	Revised EA Category
Partial Assessment (B)	Partial Assessment (B)

Organizations

Borrower	Implementing Agency
Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)	COMIFAC

Project Development Objective (PDO)

Original PDO

The Project Development Objective is to strengthen the capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues and on forest carbonstocks measurements, in particular.

**The World Bank**

AFCC2/RI-Enhancing Institutional Capacities on REDD issues for Sustainable Forest Management in the Congo Basin (P113167)

FINANCING

	Original Amount (US\$)	Revised Amount (US\$)	Actual Disbursed (US\$)
World Bank Financing			
TF-10038	13,000,000	13,000,000	13,000,000
Total	13,000,000	13,000,000	13,000,000
Non-World Bank Financing			
Borrower/Recipient	3,000,000	0	0
Total	3,000,000	0	0
Total Project Cost	16,000,000	13,000,000	13,000,000

KEY DATES

Approval	Effectiveness	MTR Review	Original Closing	Actual Closing
14-Jul-2011	30-Nov-2011	28-Jan-2015	31-Aug-2016	31-Jul-2018

RESTRUCTURING AND/OR ADDITIONAL FINANCING

Date(s)	Amount Disbursed (US\$M)	Key Revisions
09-Apr-2016	7.66	Change in Results Framework Change in Components and Cost Change in Loan Closing Date(s) Reallocation between Disbursement Categories Other Change(s)
08-Mar-2018	12.53	Change in Loan Closing Date(s) Reallocation between Disbursement Categories Change in Institutional Arrangements

KEY RATINGS

Outcome	Bank Performance	M&E Quality
Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Substantial



RATINGS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN ISRs

No.	Date ISR Archived	DO Rating	IP Rating	Actual Disbursements (US\$M)
01	25-Oct-2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	.40
02	15-Apr-2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	.61
03	31-Oct-2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	.70
04	05-May-2013	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	1.16
05	26-Dec-2013	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	2.71
06	27-Aug-2014	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	4.02
07	06-Mar-2015	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	5.39
08	30-Sep-2015	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	6.69
09	22-Apr-2016	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	8.17
10	10-Nov-2016	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	9.33
11	10-May-2017	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	10.73
12	29-Nov-2017	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	12.47
13	07-Aug-2018	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	13.40

SECTORS AND THEMES

Sectors

Major Sector/Sector (%)

Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry 100

Public Administration - Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry 43

Forestry 57

Themes

Major Theme/ Theme (Level 2)/ Theme (Level 3) (%)

Social Development and Protection 15

Social Inclusion 15

Participation and Civic Engagement 15



Environment and Natural Resource Management	85
Climate change	50
Mitigation	50
Renewable Natural Resources Asset Management	20
Biodiversity	20
Environmental policies and institutions	15

ADM STAFF

Role	At Approval	At ICR
Vice President:	Obiageli Katryn Ezekwesili	Hafez M. H. Ghanem
Country Director:	Yusupha B. Crookes	Elisabeth Huybens
Senior Global Practice Director:	Jamal Saghir	Karin Erika Kemper
Practice Manager/Manager:	Idah Z. Pswarayi-Riddihough	Africa Eshogba Olojoba
Project Team Leader:	Carole Megevand	Loic Jean Charles Braune
ICR Co Author:		Juha Antti Kalevi Seppala



I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

A. CONTEXT AT APPRAISAL

Context

1. The Congo Basin forest is the world's second largest contiguous block of tropical forest harboring an extraordinary biodiversity and a high level of endemism. It forms an integrated ecological unit, encompassing the territories of Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Republic of Congo. The Congo Basin forest also provides valuable ecological services, such as flood control, climate regulation at the local and regional levels, and buffer against global climate change with huge amounts of carbon stored in its abundant vegetation. The forests of the Congo Basin are estimated to be a carbon reservoir of 24-39 Gt of carbon (i.e. three to four times the level of worldwide anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases).
2. The international initiatives to tackle Climate Change started in earnest in 1992 at the UN Rio Summit¹, which saw the birth of several Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC itself did not enforce reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, and thus it was later complemented by the Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted on 11 December 1997 and entered into force on 16 February 2005 and introduced binding reduction targets for developed countries. Unfortunately for the Congo Basin countries, the Kyoto Protocol only rewarded reforestation² or afforestation³ activities and Congo Basin countries, which had a low historic deforestation rate, could not benefit from a significant incentive for protecting their forests – despite the high carbon content. However, they were about to transition toward a stage where deforestation rapidly increases, and they were determined to promote the “avoided deforestation” agenda, which would allow them to receive benefits for the sound management of their carbon stock.
3. At the 11th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC in Montreal, in November 2005, and later at COP 13 in Bali in 2007, with the impulse of countries that are highly forested with low deforestation rate, international negotiations progressed well on the valuation of “avoided deforestation” through a mechanism that is now known as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)⁴. This refers to performance-based financing that rewards efforts to reduce forest degradation and deforestation vis-à-vis an established baseline, which can be independently monitored, reported and verified (see Box 1 below). The UNFCCC launched negotiations to formally establish the REDD+ mechanism to compensate countries in their efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. The subsequent COPs – especially Cancun in 2010 – showed regular progress in designing the REDD+ mechanism, but the mechanism had not become operational.
4. Thus, at the time of project concept and appraisal, Congo Basin countries were facing the following situation:

¹ United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit.

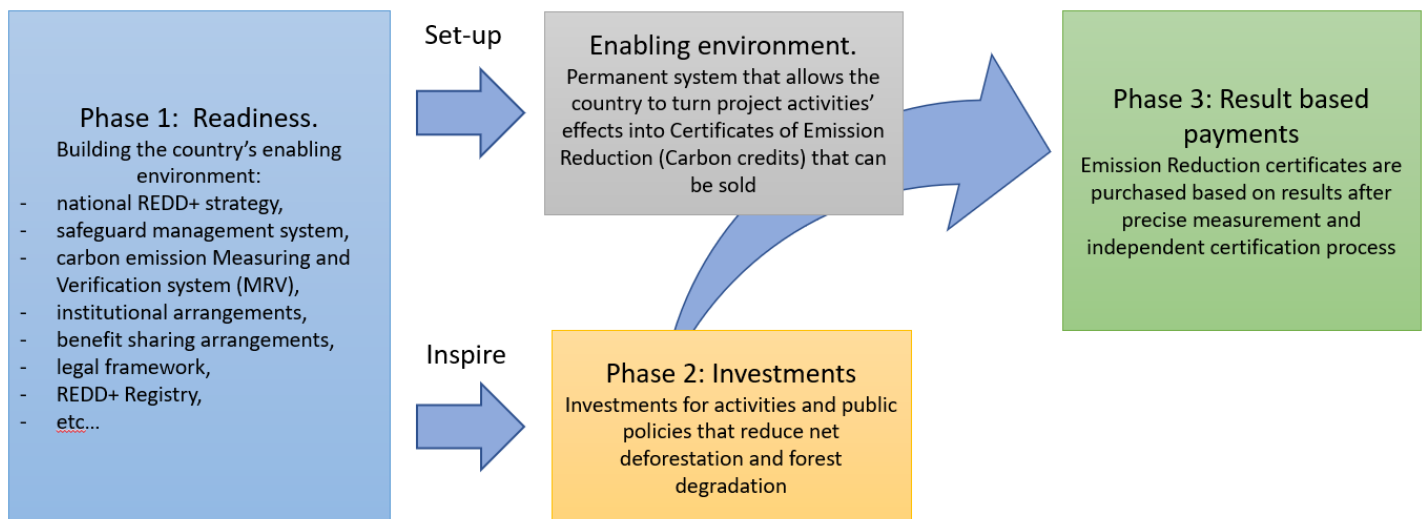
² Reforestation is the natural or intentional restocking of existing forests and woodlands (forestation) that have been depleted, usually through deforestation.

³ Afforestation is the establishment of a forest or stand of trees (forestation) in an area where there was no previous tree cover.

⁴ REDD+ stands for countries' efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and foster conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.



- a. They had achieved significant success in the international negotiations as UNFCCC agreed to include avoided deforestation in the future climate finance framework;
- b. They had to advocate in the subsequent negotiations to ensure that the REDD+ mechanism, under development, would be tailored to their situation and that it would value their efforts despite their low deforestation. This was seen as a strong challenge as the delegations to UNFCCC from the Congo Basin countries were not comparable, neither in size nor in resources, to those of more developed countries.
- c. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)⁵ is an initiative spearheaded by the World Bank, set up as a first step to pioneer how a REDD+ mechanism could work before the official UNFCCC system is operational. They were expecting to gain significant expertise and experience from the newly created FCPF initiative to test a REDD+ mechanism– but they were not yet benefiting from any support at the time of project design.



Box 1: REDD+ mechanism

5. The idea for the Regional REDD+ Project (PREREDD) came from a Global Environment Facility (GEF)⁶ sponsored meeting in February 2008 in Libreville, Gabon. There, the six Congo Basin countries decided to propose a regional REDD+ project to the GEF to access specific climate change funding available for group allocation from the Tropical Forest account (in the order of US\$2 million) aimed at strengthening capacities in these countries to complement the activities that were supposed to take place under the auspices of the FCPF.

⁵ <https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/> - FCPF is composed of two funds (the Readiness Fund and the Carbon Fund). The "readiness fund" was intended to provide grant funding to the countries interested in becoming prepared for the future mechanism (phase 1), with the possibility, for the most advanced countries, to transition into results-based payments for REDD+ outcomes (Phase 3) through the "carbon fund".

⁶ The World Bank is an implementing agency of the GEF.



6. Indeed, FCPF was seen an initiative supporting the development of national strategies for REDD+ and preparations of Reference Emission Levels (RELS⁷). However, the FCPF did not provide support for the long term process that should lead the countries toward an official REDD+ mechanism under the UNFCCC– in particular scientific research and long term capacity building, especially for the international negotiations (see Table 1 below). The proposed submission to the GEF was discussed and agreed upon by the six countries during a consultative process under the GEF initiative 'Support for sustainable management of forest ecosystems in the Congo Basin'.⁸

Country	FCPF Readiness activities	PREREDD
RoC, DRC, CAR, Cameroon	Establishment of a Roadmap toward Readiness (R-PP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design of the institutional arrangements (REDD+ cross-sectoral coordination, REDD+ Readiness implementation, set-up of the enabling conditions for future large REDD+ investment programs involving private sector, Indigenous peoples and civil society); Design of National REDD+ Strategy after a thorough analysis of the drivers of deforestation; Clarification of the legal framework; Identification of the major social and environmental impacts and set-up of a safeguard management framework for REDD+; Set-up of a national Emission Reference Level and a system to Measure, Report and Verify the future emission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for regional cooperation in addressing REDD+ matters and harmonization of positions; Support to increase the influence of the Congo Basin countries at the UNFCCC COP to design the future REDD+ system; Building capacities for the future actors of a REDD+ mechanism, in particular the private sector, civil society, research institutions and Indigenous Peoples; Provide technical guidance and scientific knowledge in anticipation of future country needs for their national REDD+ systems and when there are economies of scale.
Gabon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After an initial interest, Gabon stopped participating in FCPF activities in 2011 - it reactivated its engagement in 2018. 	
Equatorial Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a participant in FCPF. 	

Table 1: Comparison of FCPF readiness and PREREDD

Sectoral context at the time of appraisal

7. **For the World Bank:** At the time of project appraisal, the World Bank was strongly in support of regional cooperation, and the resulting economies of scale, as evidenced by the Regional Integration Assistance Strategy (RIAS) for Sub-Saharan Africa⁹, aiming to strengthen collaboration across borders. In addition, forestry as a sector was mentioned in the Country Assistance Strategies (CAS) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) of five of the countries, except for Equatorial Guinea, which did not have a country strategy document and was covered only in the regional integration strategy for Africa. Taking steps to mitigate climate change had started to gain momentum in the Bank in the late 90s with the creation of the first carbon fund, the Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF), to fund mitigation activities. REDD+ (and the FCPF) were an evolution of this development. REDD+ was specifically mentioned in the CAS/CPS of Cameroon, CAR and DRC¹⁰ as an interesting approach to explore to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources as well as the access to future carbon finance resources.

8. **For the Countries:** Five of the six countries (except for Equatorial Guinea) had indicated their interest to develop national REDD+ mechanisms to anticipate the future UNFCCC mechanism and to join the FCPF initiative. All five had submitted an initial request to the FCPF as of August 2008. The five countries had further committed themselves to prepare a regional readiness plan idea note (R-PIN), highlighting the regional dimension they would

⁷ A REL (also known as the baseline) is one of the elements to be developed by countries implementing REDD+ activities. RELs are expressed as tons of CO₂ equivalent per year for a reference period against which the emissions and removals from a results period will be compared based on a simple average.

⁸ <https://www.thegef.org/project/cbsp-strategic-program-sustainable-forest-management-congo-basin>.

⁹ See PAD para 13-14.

¹⁰ CAR: Report 48514-CF; DRC: Report 41474-ZR; Cameroon: 52997-CM.



like the FCPF to cover. This did not ultimately materialize, however, as developing a REDD+ program was more complicated than expected and could not even be done at national level (implementation currently is at sub-national level only).

9. **For the GEF**, the project fell under the larger framework of the GEF Strategic Program for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in the Congo Basin during the GEF's 4th replenishment cycle. At appraisal, the GEF had not yet articulated how it would support carbon finance specific activities but the need for strengthening of basic forest management practices and increasing knowledge of potential benefits and obligations of engagement with a REDD mechanism was in alignment with the subsequent GEF-5 Strategy for Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+.

10. **For COMIFAC**: The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) was established in 2005 as the regional body to guide, monitor and coordinate conservation and sustainable management of the Central African forest ecosystems. This coordination takes place following a ten pillar "Convergence Plan" ("*Plan de Convergence*"¹¹) – the first one was adopted in February 2005 by the heads of state to provide a joint vision and implementation plan for sustainable forest management in the region for the period 2005-2014. This plan provided for the coordination for all interventions in the field of conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystems in Central Africa. A second phase of the Convergence Plan was adopted in July 2014 to cover the years 2015-2025¹², with a stronger focus on REDD+.

Theory of Change (Results Chain)

11. The concept of Theory of Change (ToC) was not explicitly mentioned in the project documents or Project Appraisal Document (PAD).

12. As mentioned above, the Congo Basin countries had been promoting, since the early 2000s, the avoided deforestation agenda, which was not taken into account by the Kyoto Protocol. To move forward on this agenda, the countries identified several issues, such as the need for increased influence during the negotiations, and the need for increased visibility and credibility for potential carbon investors – which included the need for improved scientific knowledge on forest carbon measurements and technical operating framework of the REDD+ instrument.

13. Thus, the project aimed to improve capacities in the project countries (i) to increase their influence in international climate negotiations as the REDD+ mechanism was being developed and the FCPF was taking its first steps and (ii) to lay some of the building blocks needed to create an enabling environment for the development of REDD+ activities.

14. For that purpose, the following needs had been identified:

- a. The country delegations needed a regional coordination/collaboration platform to increase their influence in the international negotiations. While it was not for the project to decide nor get involved in the formulation of the positions that the countries would present, the project would increase their chances to be heard by ensuring that the delegations' staff were trained before the UNFCCC technical meetings of the subsidiary bodies or the official negotiations (COP) and that common positions were

¹¹ <https://comifac.org/convergence>

¹² https://pfbc-cbfp.org/docs/key_docs/Plan_de_Convergence_COMIFAC_2015-2025_02072014_fr.pdf



reached in advance. It also supported COMIFAC leadership and helped the countries to pool their expertise during the COPs.

- b. Civil society and indigenous peoples needed to increase their voice and participation in the REDD+ negotiations as well as in the development of the FCPF. For that purpose, civil society and indigenous peoples needed (i) better technical knowledge, (ii) the capacity to attend international meetings and (iii) stronger coordination and governance.
- c. Estimation of carbon content in tropical forests carries substantial uncertainty. As REDD+ was already facing opposition from some civil society groups because of suspicion that the mechanism could restrict access to resources, and to avoid any further mistrust regarding the level of emission reductions generated in the Congo Basin, data collection and scientific coordination had to be strengthened. The need for improved knowledge of the carbon stocks and deforestation dynamics was identified to increase the credibility of the efforts in the Congo Basin. Moving from default values to data based on field measurements would increase the value and the precision of the allometric equations¹³ used to derive carbon content of the forests in the region regardless of the model or system used to quantify the emission reductions.¹⁴
- d. As REDD+ activities were expected to proliferate, the countries identified the need to prime actors from the private sector. The needs were identified both at the individual level (for example skills pertaining to quantification of carbon in forests were expected to be in high demand) and at the firm level (experience in designing a forest carbon project was expected to become valuable and the governments wanted to increase the number of local entrepreneurs familiar with the carbon schemes, such as REDD+).
- e. Finally, the governments wanted to be able to reach economies of scale by supporting the harmonization of technical issues (legislation, mapping requirements, etc.) as needed – depending on the outcomes of climate negotiations.

15. The project sought to finance regional and national level activities that contribute to overcoming these challenges allowing for the countries to be ready for REDD+ alongside parallel work supported by the FCPF, the Forest Investment Program (FIP), as well as the UN-REDD+ Program (a joint program of UNEP, UNDP, and FAO), and the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF). The CBFF supported early action in the region, such as pilot payments for ecosystem services, community forest initiatives, and other capacity building.

¹³ Biomass estimation equations, also known as allometric equations or regression models, are used to estimate the biomass or volume of aboveground tree components based on diameter at breast height (DBH) and height data, which can be used to derive the carbon content.

¹⁴ Allometric equations available at the time to estimate tree biomass could induce variation of above-ground carbon stocks and stock changes of about 40% in tropical rainforest.

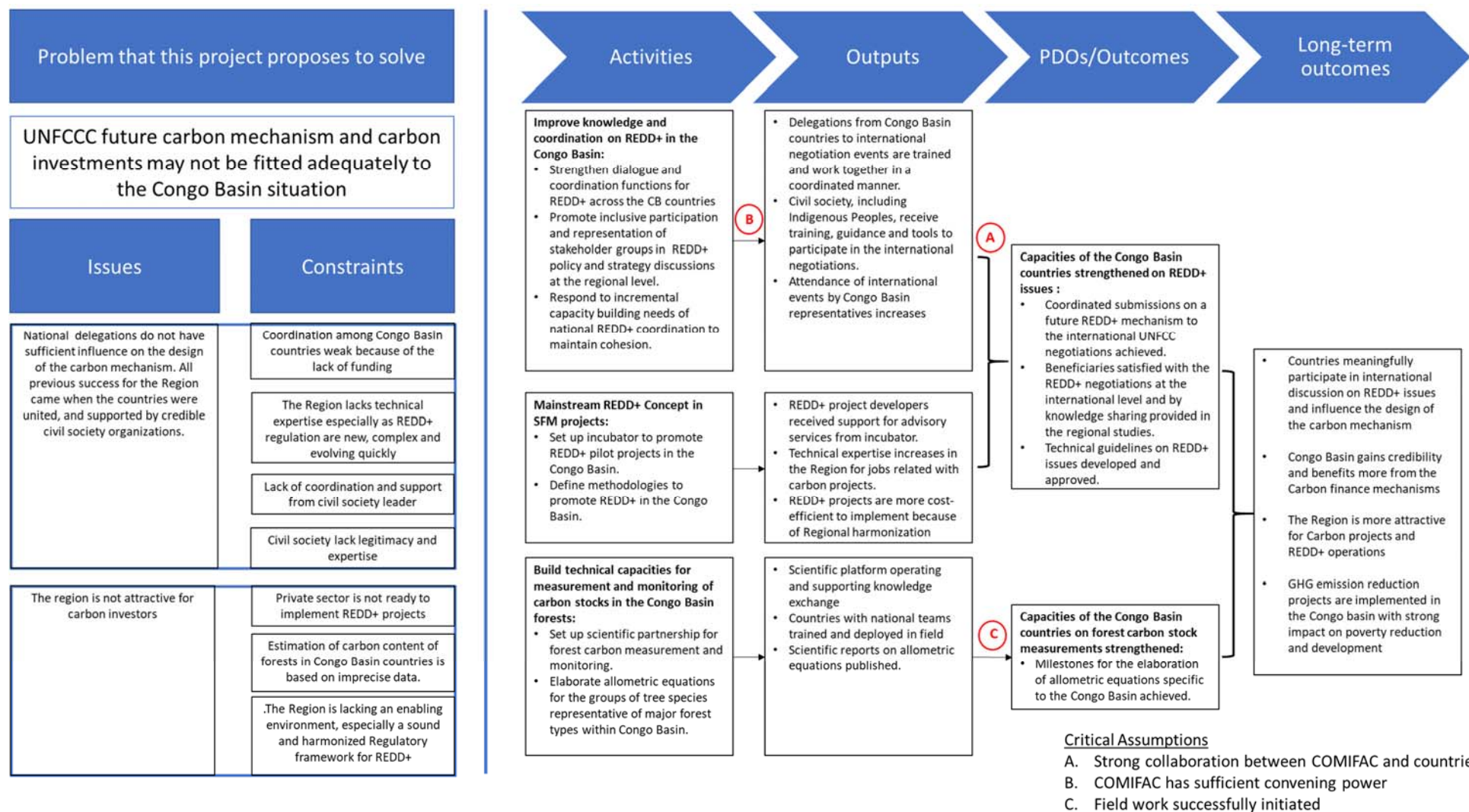


Figure 1: Problem statement and Theory of Change



Project Development Objectives (PDOs)

16. To strengthen the capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues and on forest carbon stock measurements, in particular.

Key Expected Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

17. At project approval, the project had two main outcomes “to strengthen the capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues” and “to strengthen the capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements” and three PDO level indicators.

18. PDO outcome 1: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues strengthened

- *PDO outcome indicator 1: Coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism to the international UNFCCC negotiations.*
- *PDO outcome indicator 2: Technical guidelines on prioritized REDD+ issues have been developed and approved by the Project Steering Committee.*

19. PDO outcome 2: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements strengthened

- *PDO outcome indicator 3: Milestones for the elaboration of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin achieved.¹⁵ (Note: Defining allometric equations for the Congo Basin forests requires a step-by-step approach. Reaching the different milestones in this process serves as a proxy for assessing the increased technical capacity for carbon measurements.)*

Components

Component 1: Improving Knowledge and Coordination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin: (at appraisal US\$4.7m, actual US\$4.7M)

20. This component was aiming to support knowledge sharing, capacity building and policy dialogue and build on the findings of analytical work carried out under Component 3. The two components were designed as closely linked in the sense that technical guidelines and recommendations from analytical work would provide substance for policy and technical dialogue on REDD+.

21. **Sub-component 1a:** Strengthening the regional dialogue and coordination functions for REDD+ across the Congo Basin, to enhance learning, knowledge exchange and regional coordination at the policy and technical levels, through the provision of services, equipment, training and operating costs.

22. **Sub-component 1b:** Promoting inclusive participation and representation of stakeholders in REDD+ policy and strategy discussions at the regional level to enhance connection between regional representative networks and local constituencies. This component was to be implemented through a facilitating agency, which was to be selected in

¹⁵ The 4 milestones were: The defined milestones are: 1= Methodology defined; 2=National teams operational and Field works initiated; 3=Field work completed by national teams; 4= Analysis completed, data available and scientific publication prepared for submission.



consultation with the Conference on Dense Humid Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa (CEFDHAC) on a competitive basis.

23. **Sub-component 1c:** Strengthening capacity of Congo Basin Countries' national REDD+ coordination units to maintain regional cohesion, through the provision of services, equipment, training and operating costs in support to each country-specific envelope.

Component 2: Building Technical Capacities for Measurement and Monitoring of Carbon Stocks in the Congo Basin Forests: (at appraisal US\$4.0M, actual US\$4.5M)

24. This component was aiming to build technical capacities to help the Congo Basin countries in the longer-term process of establishing systems to measure and monitor forest carbon stocks which are in line with principles of transparency, comparability, completeness, and accuracy as expected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).¹⁶ More specifically, this component intended to address the uncertainties of carbon stock estimates in the Congo Basin through the creation of a detailed and accurate database of tree measurements representative of the different forest types of the Congo Basin. The database would serve to define allometric equations for estimation of above- and below-ground biomass and carbon stocks and significantly reduce the error for carbon stock estimates for the Congo Basin forest.

25. **Sub-component 2a:** Setting up a scientific partnership among the relevant institutions for forest carbon measurement and monitoring at the regional and national levels, to improve collaboration, foster knowledge exchange and maximize REDD+ impact, through the provision of services, training and operating costs.

26. **Sub-component 2b:** Elaborating allometric equations for groups of trees species representative of major forest types within the Congo Basin, to develop a reliable database and lay the foundation for a Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system, through the provision of services.

Component 3: Mainstreaming REDD+ Concept in SFM Projects (at appraisal US\$3.0m, actual US\$2.5M)

27. This component had the aim of serving private REDD+ practitioners at the local level, on one hand, and national policy-makers, on the other hand. Building on a preliminary inventory of REDD+ pilot projects in Central Africa, this component was to support private developers of REDD+ pilot projects with targeted capacity building and information exchange. This component also sought to compile experiences from pilot projects on the ground, facilitate dialogue between practitioners in the field and policy makers and thus stimulate a learning process. A Regional Environmental and Social Assessment (RESA) was also to be undertaken under this component.

28. **Sub-component 3a:** Supporting help-desk ("Incubator") services for REDD+ project developers in the Congo Basin countries to strengthen the network of practitioners and promote knowledge exchange and learning, through the provision of services.

¹⁶ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.



29. **Sub-component 3b:** Defining methodologies and carrying out analytical works to provide guidance on REDD+ in the Congo Basin, including, inter alia, the preparation and adoption of the RESA, through the provision of services and operating costs.

Component 4: Project management (at appraisal US\$1.3M, actual US\$1.3M)

30. Supporting overall project management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, supervision and implementation, through the provision of services, equipment, training and operating costs.

B. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Revised PDOs and Outcome Targets

31. No change in the PDO was made during the life of the project.

Revised PDO Indicators

32. In the March 2016 restructuring, a fourth PDO level indicator ("Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the REDD+ negotiations at the international level and by the knowledge sharing provided in the regional studies") was added. No changes to indicators were made in the 2018 restructuring.

Original Indicator (as in PAD)	Modified or New Indicator (from 1st restructuring) ¹⁷	Comments
A. PDO Level		
Coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism to the international UNFCCC negotiations.	Revised – end date and target value	Change in the "end target date". The objective was to reach the end target by COP22 (December 2016). Also, the target for submissions was increased from 4 to 8.
Milestones for the elaboration of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin achieved.	Revised – end date	Change in the "end target date". This result was expected to be reached by the end of the project (new closing date).
Technical guidelines on prioritized REDD+ issues have been developed and approved by the PSC.	Revised – end date and target value	Change in the "end target date" and "end target value". This component was downsized. The result was expected to be reached by the end of the project (new closing date).
Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the REDD+ negotiations at the international level and by the knowledge sharing provided in the regional studies.	New	The indicator was added to assess the perception by beneficiaries of the improved capacity brought about by the project.
B. Intermediate Result Levels		
GTC meetings for strengthened policy-level coordination of REDD+ at regional level.	No change	
South-South exchanges for strengthened knowledge exchange with other regions.	Revised – end date and target value	Change in the "end target value" from 3 to 2. This activity was downsized. Other capacity building activities besides group trips were deemed more efficient to allow for more tailored support.??

¹⁷ 2nd Restructuring did not revise any of the indicators, only extended closing date and resource allocation.



Consultative meetings on REDD+ under the CEFDHAC umbrella.	No change	
Direct project beneficiaries.	Revised – end date and target value	Change in the "end target date". Also, the target was increased from 600 to 1000.
A scientific platform is operational and supporting knowledge exchange amongst scientists.	Revised – end date	Change in the "end target date". The scientific platform was to remain in place for the rest of the project, until the last trimester of implementation.
People active on the Scientific Platform.	New	New indicator to complement the previous one and measure the quality of the scientific platform. The target was set for 60 persons.
Scientific reports on defined allometric equations for the Congo Basin have been produced.	Revised – end date	Change in the "end target date" to align with the new project end date.
Students - Master level or higher - participating in the field work.	New	Targets set based on 6 students in 5 countries.
Countries, in which national teams that have been trained and deployed to the field for data collection as per agreed.	Revised – end date	Change in the "end target date" to align with the new project end date.
REDD+ pilot project Incubator in place and operational.	Dropped	The Incubator had fulfilled its purpose and was no longer needed for the project extension. The contract for support services was extended until December 2015 and then ended.
REDD+ Project Developers that received support or advisory services from the incubator.	Dropped	The Incubator has fulfilled its purpose and is no longer needed for the project extension. The contract was extended until December 2015 and then ended.

Table 2: Revisions to Indicators

Revised Components

33. Under component 2, especially the core research activity for the allometric equations, the budget was increased by re-allocating US\$0.5 million from component 3. The changes were introduced during the first restructuring on March 31, 2016.

Component name	Cost at appraisal (US\$ millions)	Revised cost at restructuring in 2016 (US\$ millions)
1. Improving Knowledge and Coordination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin	4.70	No change
2. Building Technical Capacities for Measurement and Monitoring of Carbon Stocks in the Congo Basin Forests	4.00	4.50
3. Mainstreaming REDD+ Concept in SFM Projects	3.00	2.50
4. Project management	1.30	No change
Total	13.00	13.00

Table 3: Cost comparison between appraisal and revisions at 2016 restructuring.



Other Changes

34. Targets for the indicators in the results framework were revised to reflect the new closing date, schedule and project priorities. As a consequence of the Mid-Term Review (MTR), the team started working on a project restructuring, which kept all the components and sub-components in place but proposed changes to indicators and a closing date extension (19 months). A second restructuring extended the closing date once more until July 31, 2018 (i.e. 4 months) for a total extension of 23 months. A reallocation of US\$0.5 million was made from component 3 to component 2b (allometric equations) which was facing additional cost increases due to logistical challenges. It was also decided to support sub-regional knowledge management with gratuities for PhD and MSc students that were getting specialized in carbon measurements. Grants were provided to subsidize their field work.

35. Two intermediate results indicators were added (“People active on the Scientific Platform¹⁸” and “Students – Master level or higher – participating in the field work”). Two intermediate indicators (“REDD+ pilot project Incubator in place and operational”, “REDD+ Project Developers that received support or advisory services from the incubator”), were discontinued.

36. Gabon was reluctant to implement the country-specific activities supporting the national REDD+ Readiness (sub-component 1c) to complement FCPF Readiness grants, as the country had paused its collaboration with the FCPF. Gabon later signed the Implementation Agreement¹⁹ authorizing the project components to be conducted in the country (especially the scientific research activities) but with the exception of the country envelope of US\$350,000 for national REDD+ Readiness, which was reallocated between disbursement categories and other project components.

Rationale for Changes and Their Implication on the Original Theory of Change

37. Extensions of closing dates were necessary to make up for the time lost during the start-up phase of the project and the longer than expected time needed to launch the field activities under component 2 in six countries. With a reduced focus on REDD+ negotiations following COP21 and a shift towards support under the Paris Agreement and empowering Congo Basin Countries to access the Green Climate Fund, funds were reallocated from component 3 to component 2. This also supported field work on allometric equations with an updated budget and a revision of the results framework. Two intermediate results indicators were designated to be discontinued as the activities had run their course and provided the support to REDD+ project developers to the extent feasible and there were no further activities planned under component 3 until the end of the project.

38. **Governments' capacities on REDD+ Readiness (Sub-component 1a and 1c).** The project had actively supported the governments with the UNFCCC climate negotiations leading up to Paris (COP21) and the REDD+ agenda. The project had a special focus on the Paris Agreement to help the delegations prepare for the implementation of the agreement. The South-South exchanges were downsized from three to two as the efficiency of this type of activities

¹⁸ The target for this indicator is given as 80 in the text of the Restructuring Paper, but 60 in the results framework of the PAD. Also, the Restructuring Paper mentions the need for the people to be “registered” on the platform, but this requirement is not addressed during implementation.

¹⁹ Implementation Agreements regulated implementation support and collaboration of the Congo Basin countries with COMIFAC to achieve the objectives of the project and ensure timely implementation of project activities, more specifically the development of the allometric equations and country-specific envelopes.



(mostly study tours and guests for workshops) for regional delegations had been questioned by the client. Indeed, the countries were at various stages of REDD+ “readiness” and did not necessarily share the same interests.

39. **Strengthening civil society capacities on REDD+ (Sub-component 1b).** The project successfully helped sub-regional civil society prepare a regional message for COP 21 and actively participate in the climate negotiations. This subcomponent was initially expected to be implemented with the support of a firm (IUCN had been selected). However, after 18 months, it was decided not to renew the contract and to implement the sub-component directly with the regional organizations of civil society actors. This sub-component continued its focus on three objectives in order to support civil society integration at regional level: (i) support to the governance of CEFDHAC networks by supporting the renewal of mandates in order to strengthen the legitimacy and representativeness of civil society leaders; (ii) support to sub-regional collaboration within REDD+ specialized platforms, in order to capitalize on the creation, by the FCPF national projects, of multiple civil society platforms for REDD+; and (iii) support for timely initiatives highlighting the capacities of the civil society at regional level, in particular the indigenous peoples network (REPALEAC).

40. The support to the private sector (**The "Incubator" - financed under sub-component 3a**) was successful despite only a handful of REDD+ projects identified in the region. Component 3a had achieved its target with the Incubator in place and operational. A total of 26 REDD+ project developers received training through the Incubator. The sub-component was phased out and a completion analysis commissioned. This change did not impact the ToC, as the activity had run its course.

41. Support to the **Regional framework (Subcomponent 3b)**: the project aimed at supporting a number of analytical studies that would facilitate the implementation of REDD+ projects by reducing the cost through harmonization of practices. After a first set of studies (RESA), the level of ambition was scaled back as concrete REDD+ projects were initiated in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo (ROC) only. The number of Policy Notes (also sometimes referred to as “technical guidelines”) were decreased from six to two considering the existing work already launched in the various countries or the existing regional/global initiatives that already supported knowledge sharing and guidance.

II. OUTCOME

A. RELEVANCE OF PDOs

Assessment of Relevance of PDOs and Rating

42. **Relevance is rated as High.** The PDO remained relevant. The efforts made to operationalize REDD+ have supported the readiness of countries toward climate finance in general, as well as strengthened the influence of Congo Basin countries in the international climate negotiations. Today, ten years after the initial request to the GEF, REDD+ remains the main instrument for encouraging sustainable forest management and one of the only potential sources of climate finance that will become available for tropical forest countries in the coming years.



43. The obligation under the Paris Agreement (which entered into force in November 2016), for all countries to report on their nationally determined contributions for reducing emissions, shows that building scientific know-how as well as reference databases was a relevant anticipation in 2010 of future needs.

44. The project objectives and approaches were aligned with WBG priorities at the time of appraisal. A review of the WBG strategies²⁰ as well as those of the GEF during appraisal and completion was undertaken. As highlighted in the Africa Regional Integration Assistance Strategy, the Bank supported regional cooperation, and the resulting economies of scale to address forest degradation and deforestation. The main outputs of the project, i.e. the allometric equations, can be regarded as regional public goods. From the review of WBG strategies, at appraisal, REDD+ was specifically mentioned in the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) or Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) of Cameroon, CAR and DRC. The CAS for DRC was extended until the end of calendar year 2017. The launching of the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) will be done after the anticipated elections. At completion, REDD+ was mentioned in Cameroon, DRC, and ROC. The project was specifically mentioned (at appraisal or completion) in the CAS/CPS of Cameroon, CAR and ROC. These are presented in table 4 below.

45. This project was consistent with the GEF-4 policy framework and in line with the GEF's mandate of protecting global environmental goods and promote sustainable forest management, which has carried over to the current 7th GEF replenishment. The project supported Sustainable Forest Management, encompassing protection of people's livelihoods, conservation of biodiversity and other global environmental benefits. The project was also highly relevant to the Bank's Africa Climate Business Plan (ACBP), which aims to raise \$16 billion in climate finance for Africa by 2020 including the climate and forest agenda in Africa. After the Paris Agreement, one of the important engagements under the ACBP was with the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), helping them sharpen Africa's negotiating positions and spur climate action on the ground. The AGN is an alliance of African Member States. The AGN represents the region in the international climate change negotiations with a common and unified voice.

Country	Validity (Fiscal Year)	Document number	Project mentioned?	CAS/CPS themes relevant to project	
				At Appraisal	At Completion
ROC	1. 2010-2012; 2. 2013-2016	1. 48404-CG 2. 71713-CG	Yes	Regional integration, NRM strengthening	Project mentioned under competitiveness and Employment > Regional integration > GEF Congo Basin REDD+
DRC	1. 2008-2011 2. 2013-2016 (extended until 2017)	1. 41474-ZR 2. 66158-ZR	No	Forests: "engaging in emerging markets that reward carbon storage and forest protection"	National REDD+ strategy, FCPF, FIP.
Cameroon	1. 2010-2013 2. 2017-2021	1. 52997-CM 2. 107896-CM	Yes	FCPF readiness; Project referenced as GEF Congo Basin REDD+; National REDD+ Strategy; CC data collection, dissemination, building in-country capacity on CC	Strengthened government capacity in REDD+ issues.
CAR	1. PSRP 2009 2. CAS 2009-2012 3. CAS Progress	1. 48514-CF 2. 49583-CF 3. 59674-CF	Yes	Project referenced as REDD+ project for Congo Basin; development of carbon estimation methodologies; carbon measurements.	No CAS/CPS active.

²⁰ This includes Country Assistance Strategies (CAS); Country Partnership Strategies (CPS); Country Partnership Framework (CPF); Africa Climate Business Plan (ACBP); GEF Focal Area Strategies; Regional Integration Assistance Strategy (RIAS)



	report				
Gabon	1. CAS 2005-2009 2. CPS 2012-2016	1. 31882-GA 2. 67343-GA	No	No explicit mention of REDD+ or climate change in relation to forests. CAS focuses on EITI and nature tourism promotion. REDD+ and tourism promotion are connected.	Creation of Climate Change council. Support for attending COPs.
Equatorial Guinea	1. RIAS for Central Africa 2003 2. RIAS for Sub-Saharan Africa	1. 25328 2. 43022-AFR	No	No CAS/CPS, but Regional integration strategy promoting closer cooperation between Central and Sub-Saharan African countries.	No CAS/CPS, but Regional integration strategy promoting closer cooperation between Central and Sub-Saharan African countries.

Table 4: CAS/CPS themes in Congo Basin countries

B. ACHIEVEMENT OF PDOs (EFFICACY)

Assessment of Achievement of Each Objective/Outcome

46. The overall efficacy is rated as **Substantial**. The capacities of Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues were strengthened as evidenced by the following outcomes:

47. **PDO outcome 1: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues strengthened**

48. **PDO outcome indicator 1: Coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism to the international UNFCCC negotiations. Target 137% achieved.**

49. The indicator surpassed expectations with 11 submissions compared to a target of eight. The submissions indicate a successful outcome of the countries being brought together to debate and coordinate their positions. The project actively supported the governments with the UNFCCC negotiations in Paris (COP21) and the REDD+ agenda, including by financing the finalization of various studies and key REDD+ documents (Readiness Preparation Proposals (RPPs), Emission Reduction (ER) Program Documents). The project helped the countries to understand the legal implications of the Paris Agreement and prepare their technical and legal framework for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. COMIFAC successfully helped CAR to get "Readiness" resources from the Green Climate Fund²¹ (GCF), which demonstrated that the capacity building activities ultimately bore fruit. The project also supported civil society organizations to submit a GCF proposal.

50. **Linked intermediate indicators²²:**

- GTC meetings for strengthened policy-level coordination of REDD+ at regional level. Target 130% achieved.
- South-south exchanges for strengthened knowledge exchange with other regions. Target partially (50%) achieved.
- Consultative meetings on REDD+ under the CEFDHAC umbrella. Target 125% achieved.

51. The Climate Working Group (GTC) is composed of the Climate Focal Points of the Congo Basin countries and the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat (ES). It is the main driving force for the political agenda on REDD+. However, the GTC was constrained by limited facilitation support and by inadequate technical input, since no formal REDD+ regional

²¹ The Green Climate Fund is a fund established within the framework of the UNFCCC as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change.

²² Linking of indicators was not a requirement at the time of appraisal. Thus this list is only indicative and a "best guess" effort.



working group existed. The indicator captures the strengthened capacity on REDD+ issues of the GTC and their joint negotiating power within the UNFCCC negotiations through a number of well-prepared, coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism.²³ The intermediate indicators linked to the PDO indicator tracked the number of GTC meetings, South-South exchanges and consultative meetings under CEFDHAC as the interim steps and concrete discussions leading to the ultimate submissions to the UNFCCC.

52. PDO outcome indicator 2: Technical guidelines on prioritized REDD+ issues have been developed and approved by the Project Steering Committee. Target not achieved.

53. Linked intermediate indicators: [No intermediate indicators directly support the PDO outcome indicator]

54. Technical guidelines were to be developed based on the findings of the analytical work conducted under the project. Focus of the analytical work was on the social and environmental dimensions of REDD+. Resulting technical guidelines were expected to cover: social standards of REDD+, consultation approaches for REDD+ and methodologies for participatory mapping. After a first set of studies (RESA) was completed, the ambition was reduced as each country was by that time already forging ahead with its own approaches, and, for those countries actively seeking REDD+, had already implemented what the technical guidelines would have supported. While concrete REDD+ programs were pioneered in a few countries only, it was decided not to be best use of project resources to support creation of regional guidelines for Strategic Environmental and Social Assessments (SESA²⁴), as the countries most interested in engaging with the FCPF Carbon Fund already had SESAs prepared.

55. PDO outcome indicator 3: Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the REDD+ negotiations at the international level and by the knowledge sharing provided in the regional studies. [NEW indicator] [No linked intermediate indicators]. Target 100% achieved.

56. The project supported regional cohesion between the countries on REDD+ matters and helped engage the civil society and various indigenous peoples' organizations into the process. A new PDO indicator was introduced at the 2016 restructuring to capture the impact of the project beyond facilitation of submissions and meetings of the GTC and civil society. Percentage of satisfactory beneficiaries was reported as 80%. This was measured through a beneficiary survey²⁵ conducted by an individual consultant interviewing 24 key beneficiaries, including the national climate change focal points and national REDD+ coordinators, which was on par with the target. A total of 19 beneficiaries were satisfied or very satisfied with the preparation sessions prior to the international events, the logistical support provided to the official delegation and civil society, as well as the increased participation to the REDD+ discussions that the project allowed. The project successfully helped sub-regional civil society prepare a regional message for COP 21 and actively participated in the negotiations, as conveyed by the head of CEFDHAC. The project successfully supported REPALEAC²⁶ design and validate its 2017-2025 strategy, which was presented to the technical partners in October 2017. The REDD+ Incubator provided support to project developers in getting ready to launch REDD+ projects.

57. PDO outcome 2: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements strengthened

²³ Submissions ranged from inputs on experiences with the Safeguards Information System in REDD+, non-carbon benefits to indigenous peoples' considerations, for example.

²⁴ SESA is the instrument for conducting the Environmental Assessment under the FCPF Readiness phase.

²⁵ Fobissie, K. EVALUATION FINALE DU PROJET REGIONAL REDD+ (PREREDD+). Rapport Final. July 2018.

²⁶ Network for Indigenous People and Local Stakeholders for Sustainable Management of Forests in Central Africa.



58. ***PDO outcome indicator 4: Milestones for the elaboration of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin achieved. Target 100% achieved.***

59. ***Linked intermediate indicators:***

- A scientific platform is operational and supporting knowledge exchange among scientists. Target 100% achieved.
- Countries, in which national teams that have been trained and deployed to the field for data collection as per agreed methodology for definition of allometric equations. Target 100% achieved.
- Scientific reports on defined allometric equations for the Congo Basin have been produced. Target not (12.5%) achieved.

60. Having dedicated allometric equations for the Congo Basin countries was identified as a key need in order for the countries to derive maximum benefit from the future REDD+ mechanism. Reaching the different milestones in the process of defining allometric equations for the Congo Basin serves as a proxy for increased technical capacity for forest carbon measurements. The defined milestones were: (i) methodology defined; (ii) national teams operational and field work initiated; (iii) field work completed by national teams and (iv) analysis completed, data available in publicly accessible database and scientific publication prepared for submission. Regional and national workshops were conducted, and regional collaboration has started to rise, and future work will depend on available continued funding. Additional funding is currently being sought by COMIFAC from external partners such as the US Forest Service. The project supported a study in the six countries to produce new allometric equations for each of the countries and a sub-regional one for the Congo Basin. After some delays, work on the ground was conducted and completed in all six countries. The project was highly successful in producing the high-fidelity datasets that will allow future REDD+ projects to use ground-truthed data to accurately capture the magnitude of emission reductions achieved. Scientific papers are being distilled from the data gathered and the first published article appeared in the journal *Forest Ecology and Management* in July 2018. The equations constitute a regional public good which can be utilized in the future -- if and when -- any of the Congo Basin countries enters into carbon transactions under the mechanisms foreseen by the Paris Agreement or through the FCPF. In fact, DRC has now signed an Emission Reductions Payment Agreement (ERPA) with the FCPF and the RoC is planning to negotiate one shortly. The other studies from the wealth of data gathered are planned to be published on the following topics:

- Analysis of tree diameter vs height estimation
- Analysis on the variability of tree density in the Congo Basin
- Allometric equations for below-ground biomass

Justification of Overall Efficacy Rating

61. The PDO indicators provided a good measure of strengthened capacity for Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues. They were able to politically engage better in REDD+ at the international level and influence the development of REDD+ rules. The targets were achieved or exceeded, except for PDO indicator #2, which became redundant over the course of implementation.

62. Overall efficacy is rated **Substantial**.



C. EFFICIENCY

Assessment of Efficiency and Rating

63. As the project was *Technical Assistance*, no economic analysis was undertaken during preparation. However, a GEF incremental cost analysis was prepared per the requirement for GEF financed projects. The GEF alternative provided financing for activities that were not covered by any other donor. The incremental value added in the GEF alternative with comparison to the outcome at closing is provided in table 5 below:

Incremental value added foreseen at PAD stage	Results achieved at closing
Strengthened institutions at regional and national levels through targeted capacity building for REDD+ readiness thus setting the stage for a future financial incentive mechanism to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and promote SFM.	COMIFAC and CEFDHAC have seen their capacities and understanding of REDD+ increase on a regional level. With increased participation in the UNFCCC negotiations process, national level climate change focal points have seen their capacities increased to better influence the international processes and ultimately have them better fit to the Congo Basin context.
Enhanced enabling environment for sustainable forest management through policy dialogue within the forest sector and across other relevant sectors (i.e. agriculture, mining, infrastructure, etc.)	By supporting COMIFAC leadership during the international events, the project indirectly supported COMIFAC and promoted the “Plan de Convergence”, which aims at developing Sustainable Forest Management thorough the forest sector and in coordination with the other sectors.
Increased partnerships and coordination for SFM at all levels, but particularly at the regional level, thus providing opportunities for strategic impact, multiplier effects, and harmonization of country positions.	
Regionally relevant guidance on the social dimension of REDD+ particularly as it relates to forest-dependent and indigenous peoples (i.e. fair and equitable benefit distribution, land tenure aspects, etc.)	The RESA was prepared. Further work on benefit sharing and land tenure were addressed under FCPF and other Bank projects.
Increased South-South Cooperation on REDD+ issues between the countries of the three major global forest ecosystems (i.e. Amazonia, South-East Asia, and Congo Basin).	One South-South collaboration visit was initiated with Costa Rica, but materialized only in DRC.
Contribution to the establishment of a scientifically credible, consistent and accurate methodology for measuring and monitoring carbon stocks through the elaboration of allometric equations specific to the tropical forest of the Congo Basin. Further strengthened technical capacities for measuring and monitoring forest carbon stock.	Allometric equations for the Congo Basin produced and have been published in an internationally recognized peer-reviewed scientific journal
Development of a regional approach to establish Monitoring Reporting and Verification systems for forest carbon stock and fluxes across the Congo Basin, reflecting the transboundary nature of Congo Basin forest ecosystem (dependent on financing from the Congo Basin Forest Fund).	Upon further analysis, a regional approach for the MRV system was not the optimal approach. Each country will prepare their own MRV systems compatible with international rules on REDD+.



A strengthened network of practitioners developing and implementing REDD+ pilot project on the ground, thus accelerating learning, knowledge exchange, scaling up of successful SFM approaches.	A REDD+ incubator was established and capacities and understanding on REDD+ increased for 26 existing project developers.
Improved feedback mechanisms between local initiatives and national REDD+ Strategy development efforts, thus ensuring policy makers take into considerations valuable feedback and knowledge from practitioners on the ground.	Upon further analysis, too little local REDD+ initiatives were identified, and most of them were in early stages. Thus, little valuable feedback could be drawn from those early initiatives.

Table 5: Incremental cost analysis

It is difficult to quantify the efficiency of the project, as much of the work, especially on the allometric equations, was groundbreaking. Similar work had only been conducted in the Amazon and detailed costs for those studies were not readily available to compare. Further cost efficiencies could have been achieved by using the same equipment sequentially in each of the six countries, but this would have inevitably prolonged the duration of the project. The measuring equipment also ultimately benefited the research institutions in each of the six countries at the end of the project.

Implementation efficiency

64. Implementation is considered to have been fairly efficient, with no cost overruns encountered. Implementation efficiency was hampered in the beginning by lack of capacity (unfamiliarity with Bank procedures, especially regarding procurement), which were overcome over time. The need for capacity building was under-estimated during preparation, hence forecasting for disbursement was too optimistic (particularly since the contracts were large and complex). This led to procurement delays. Disbursement rates were initially low due to longer time needed to evaluate the proposals for main work packages. By and large, the preparation was led by one TTL and implementation by another, which reduced inefficiencies. Project management costs of 10% of the project amount were lower than for regional projects in general.

65. Due to the lack of an initial economic analysis and initial delays, efficiency is rated **Modest**.

D. JUSTIFICATION OF OVERALL OUTCOME RATING

66. Relevance is rated a High, achievement of objectives as Substantial, and efficiency as Modest, therefore the overall outcome rating is **Moderately Satisfactory**.

E. OTHER OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Gender

67. Women were targeted in the outreach and the target was 30% of all beneficiaries, which included ministerial staff at the policy making level, technical staff and scientists and civil society groups. Based on discussions with former Project Management Unit (PMU) staff, indeed the pool of women at the level of government involved with COP negotiations was low and thus a higher share of women beneficiaries was not feasible to achieve through the project. Similarly, even in activities involving the civil society or the private sector, it was observed that the share of women



for each activity was high, but, since the pool of women was small (the same women were coming to the various activities), their overall share of the beneficiaries is lower (multiple attendance only counted for one).

68. Women were, however, as pointed out by the Network of African Women for Sustainable Development (REFADD), the regional network of CEFDHAC on gender, able to participate in two COPs with the support of the project, including participation by its members to COP side events, such as the UNFCCC gender working group. REFADD also participated in the Women Leaders' Summit at COP22. For COP23, REFADD had had more time to prepare, and the experience was more fruitful, including achieving to submit a position paper on Central African women's role in climate change and host a side event with COMIFAC. According to REFADD, a total of 46 women benefited from participation in workshops and attended meetings, such as the COP. However, a REFADD representative interviewed lamented on the limited collaboration between the PMU and REFADD as a whole and expressed regret that the other four member countries of COMIFAC (Burundi, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Chad) did not benefit from the project.

Institutional Strengthening

69. Component 1 specifically targeted the strengthening of COMIFAC and the GTC as well as the beneficiary countries' participation in COPs, where countries promoted SFM and obtained agreement on REDD+ issues. The project mobilized support staff to accompany the negotiators. Altogether 80 participants were funded by the project to join various climate negotiation meetings. After reaching the desired outcomes, efforts were moved to addressing REDD+ issues under the Paris Agreement and to support the access of countries to the GCF.

70. Under Sub-Component 1b, support was also given to strengthen the regional civil society networks organized under CEFDHAC²⁷ (see Annex 7). Project support focused on addressing issues related to the representativeness of regional networks. Together with the German Cooperation (GIZ), the project supported the legitimization of the network leaders through elections, as well as promoted improved governance. The project had a special focus on REPALEAC, the regional network representing indigenous peoples, which received support to attend international events and prepare its 2018-2025 strategy. Finally, the project tried to solve the issues related with the duplication of networks created when the national FCPF projects supported the creation of national platforms without coordination involving CEFDHAC. A process was started to bring the REDD+ Network created under FCPF under CEFDHAC, but this ultimately failed.

71. Under Component 2, the Central African Forest Observatory (OFAC), COMIFAC's technical body for data management, coordinated knowledge exchange and scientific partnerships.

Mobilizing Private Sector Financing

72. Private sector financing was not sought under the project. Had the global infrastructure for REDD+ been ready, REDD+ projects implemented (and funded) by the private sector could have taken off. During the project preparation phase, a detailed inventory of potential REDD+ pilot projects in Central Africa was carried out and identified more than 50 pilot REDD+ projects at different stages of development. According to the former PMU staff interviewed, only three REDD+ projects ultimately advanced beyond concept stage.

²⁷ Regional networks representing different fractions of civil society are organized under the regional umbrella of CEFDHAC. Networks under CEFDHAC comprise amongst other: REPALEAC (Indigenous Peoples), REFAD (Women), REJEFAC (Youth), REPAR (Local Parliamentarians), and RIFFEAC (Training Institutes for Forestry).



Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity

73. The project aimed at strengthening regional collaboration and the body of knowledge on REDD+ in the Congo Basin region, and the project was not specifically designed as a poverty reduction operation. However, better management of forest resources and shaping an enabling environment would have contributed to poverty reduction through the shaping of benefit sharing plans which are a critical element of any formally recognized REDD+ program under the FCPF carbon fund.

Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

74. A Bank Executed Trust Fund for US\$420,000 was provided from the Africa Catalytic Growth Fund to support the inclusive development of Indigenous Peoples at sub-Regional level. This grant supported a value chain analysis to identify the economic sectors with the most potential for Indigenous peoples in Cameroon and DRC. It also helps REPALEAC design its 2018-2025 strategy for inclusive development in coordination with GIZ. This support was praised by the beneficiaries (COMIFAC, CEFDHAC and REPALEAC) and is considered as a best practice as a participative strategy definition and as a work to strengthen Indigenous Peoples organizations' governance.

III. KEY FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME

A. KEY FACTORS DURING PREPARATION

75. All six countries had indicated their interest to develop national REDD+ programs. Having all Congo Basin countries participate in the project (and in REDD+) was critical to avoid "leakage" of detrimental activities to those countries that might have stayed outside. It was critical to provide support for the GTC to better be equipped to represent the interests of the Congo Basin countries in international climate negotiations. Prior to the project, each country could afford to send a couple of delegates to the UNFCCC meetings, which meant that even by pooling their resources, the countries could not attend all sessions and discussions pertinent to REDD+. A strong focus on civil society engagement was based on the experiences from FLEGT²⁸, by e.g. providing assistance for civil society members to attend international REDD+ meetings. COMIFAC was committing to contribute \$3,000,000 in kind.

76. **Institutional set-up and coordination.** With six countries, multiple collaborating development partners and national and regional organizations – including civil society, the project would have challenges in coordination. Thus, high-level regional representation at the level of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) was important. The PSC was chaired by a representative of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) and composed of the national climate change focal points. The COMIFAC Executive Secretariat (COMIFAC ES) was responsible for project coordination, while a PMU was set up for day-to-day functions (also housed in the COMIFAC ES). As an effectiveness condition, the COMIFAC ES would enter into Implementation Agreements with at least three countries. The COMIFAC ES would take on the roles of the PMU while the PMU was being set up. Civil society was largely involved in preparation through various workshops.

77. From the beginning of project implementation until full establishment and operation of the PMU, the COMIFAC ES would be directly responsible for project implementation. Once the PMU was fully staffed, the COMIFAC ES would hand over the responsibility of the project management to the PMU. This interim arrangement was expected to not

²⁸ FLEGT stands for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade. It aims to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber.



exceed three months from effectiveness. This interim arrangement was considered appropriate, since the fiduciary team (procurement and financial management) was already put in place during preparation.

78. The formal engagement of the Congo Basin countries was key for the implementation of the project. Implementation Agreements regulated implementation support and collaboration of the Congo Basin countries with COMIFAC to achieve the objectives of the project and ensure timely implementation of project activities -- more specifically the development of the allometric equations and country-specific envelopes. Such agreements also ensured the obligation of the Congo Basin countries to abide by internationally approved safeguards policies, such as the World Bank safeguards framework and established the responsibility in case of misuse of funds by local entities. The Implementation Agreements were to be signed between the COMIFAC ES and each of the Congo Basin countries, more specifically the respective ministries responsible for REDD+. They would further ensure that countries collaborated on the development of the RESA and that the Congo Basin countries applied the provisions of the RESA for purposes of project implementation. To ensure the regional commitment of the Congo Basin countries to the project, effectiveness of the project was subject to the execution of Implementation Agreements with at least three of the Congo Basin countries, representing a sizeable part of the Congo Basin forest.

79. **Underpinning analytical work.** Regarding enhancing knowledge on drivers of deforestation, a comprehensive assessment of potential future trends of deforestation in the Congo Basin was conducted as part of the preparation of the project with PROFOR²⁹ funding. Academic work at the time of project identification demonstrated the research gaps related to knowledge on carbon stocks in the Congo Basin forest ecosystems. Allometric equations available at the time to estimate tree biomass could induce a variation of above-ground carbon stocks and stock changes of about 40% in tropical rainforest in the Congo Basin. But calibrated allometric equations are only part of the picture. An MRV system is needed to observe changes in carbon stocks and report on them if emission reductions are to be claimed. FAO was preparing a regional project on MRV, which would have dovetailed with this project for optimal results. However, the collaboration between the Bank and FAO appears to have been limited.

80. **Project financing.** While some needs were common to all Congo Basin countries and could be covered at the regional level, there were others that are country-specific. Accordingly, moderate envelopes (referred to as “country-specific envelopes”) were allocated to each of the national REDD+ coordination teams (\$350,000) to ensure that they received the needed technical support to fully engage and contribute to the regional processes. This, however, brought its own challenges, as the PMU was not responsible for the envelopes, but each envelope needed its own additional capacity in-country to effectually implement.

81. **Risks.** The risks identified in the PAD can be summarized as: (i) potential power struggles between Congo Basin countries; (ii) lower than expected convening power by COMIFAC; (iii) interim implementation arrangements and low implementation capacity of COMIFAC and (iv) safeguards approach not being able to fully address risks with REDD+. In hindsight, a risk not identified in the PAD was the risk for prolonged procurement challenges, challenges with delays in launching of the scientific work in all six countries (including challenges with transporting equipment from one country to another), one of the partner countries not joining the project until towards the very end and staff turnover in the project, including the delays in hiring of a critical PMU team member, the REDD+ Technical Assistant. Also, there was a risk observed that Components 2a (strengthening regional dialogue) and 3a (support for Incubator Services for REDD+) would end up as a series of workshops without concrete outputs or results. To mitigate risk (i), the National

²⁹ The Program on Forests (**PROFOR**) is a multi-donor partnership that provides knowledge, tools and in-depth analysis to facilitate forests contribution to poverty reduction.



Climate Change Focal Points were assigned a significant role in the decision-making process of the project as together they held the majority on the PSC. To mitigate risk (ii) the CEEAC was assigned chairmanship of the PSC. To mitigate risk (iii), technical assistance was provided to advise on technical aspects, strengthen capacities at national and regional level, and support knowledge transfer within the region. To mitigate risk (iv) the RESA would serve to prevent and mitigate potential downstream social impacts that may result from policy changes that may have been influenced indirectly by the project. The risk-mitigation measures were effective in reducing negative impacts, but the procurement delays could not be fully mitigated even with the procurement team in-place already prior to project implementation start. In addition, the introduction of the country budget envelopes probably lessened further the risk of power struggles amongst the different countries.

B. KEY FACTORS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Factors subject to government and/or implementing entities control

82. The Financial Management (FM) specialist and procurement specialists were hired by the project within the first 2.5 months of Board approval and a Tender Board was established. Early on, the selection of firms was launched to provide services for priority activities: (i) facilitation of inclusive participation of stakeholder groups; (ii) research work leading to allometric equations; (iii) running of the “Incubator” and (iv) preparation of the RESA.

83. The PMU was envisioned to be operational in February 2012 and staffed with a Project Coordinator, a Deputy Project Manager/M&E Specialist, a Procurement Specialist, a Financial Manager, and an Accountant. The selection process was launched following the negotiations of the project in May 2011, finalized in June 2012 and PMU was fully operational in July 2012. COMIFAC ES performed PMU functions in the interim. In addition, two technical assistants were needed: REDD+ Policy Specialist (within PMU) and REDD+ Technical Specialist (in OFAC). The REDD+ Technical Specialist was hired and operational in October 2012. The policy specialist initial tender was not successful after two failed attempts and cancelled. The PSC then decided for this function to go to a firm instead. Thus, for a long time there was no support for the GTC. Perhaps due to the lack of this key element, the GTC was not very active outside regional working sessions and preparedness for COP 21 in Paris was suffering. The Policy Specialist Terms of Reference needed to be revised to take into account the changes in the operating environment and the Policy Specialist was finally in place at the beginning of 2015.

84. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was hired to provide support to the civil society engagement efforts. Reports from some of the beneficiaries came through to the task team that they were not satisfied with IUCN’s work and corrective actions were put in place, but they failed in rectifying the situation leading to the termination of the contract. The main causes for the contract termination were: (i) the lack of consultation between IUCN and the beneficiaries when establishing the work program, (ii) poor contract management (absence of deliverables, as most of them were planned in the last three months of the contract), (iii) low added value of the technical assistance (absence of long term vision to consolidate CEFDHAC or help in creating basic network management tools), (iv) poor skills to anticipate, avoid or mitigate the conflict between CEFDHAC and some civil society organizations in Cameroon, (v) absence of efforts to integrate the regional activities in the national REDD+ consultation in the six countries.

85. Due to the disbursement lag, implementation progress was downgraded to Moderately Satisfactory and upgraded to Satisfactory after the completion of the four major procurement packages totaling \$4.5 million. Activities on the ground started 1.5 years after effectiveness. In 2014, delays induced by procurement procedures and lack of proactivity put the project at risk.



86. Implementation was mainly smooth. The PSC met every 6 months. Regular meetings were held to adopt the annual work programs. A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) manual was prepared and in use by the PMU. The financial assistant needed to be re-hired for a third time, though, as the FM assistants found more lucrative work elsewhere.

87. The main materialized risks are related with the absorption capacity and the regional design. These were not fully anticipated in the PAD during the preparation phase. Integrating the regional actions into the national agendas was challenging, as well as managing the regional fiduciary responsibility when implementing national actions. Equipment had to be shipped from Cameroon to other countries, with many logistical issues that affected the schedule. For example, in Congo and DRC field work was delayed due to delays in receiving the necessary equipment. Field work in DRC only started in 2016. During preparation, country representatives opinioned during appraisal³⁰ that three years' time allocated for Component 2 for the allometric equations was too long and that this time be reduced. However, the project was extended twice by altogether 23 months to specifically allow more time for Component 2 to reach completion. Thus, it would seem in hindsight that the task team should have held on to their view that this component would require more time due to the complexities of undertaking such research in several countries in difficult field conditions to avoid the extensions towards the end of the project.

88. The project did not materialize as a fully regional project, as countries became eager to retain some of their country allocations, and thus it was decided to introduce country envelopes for country-specific purposes. However, this required an additional layer of FM and procurement capacity in-country, which proved to be cumbersome to manage.

Factors subject to World Bank control

89. The project was highly technical as it required an extensive understanding of the climate finance instruments and negotiations, as well as on the principles of the MRV. Also, the components on capacity building required a very good knowledge of the institutional context. The change of Task Team Leaders (TTLs) could have threatened the project (four TTLs in six years) considering the specific knowledge that was needed. Fortunately, the TTL supervising the second half of the project had been part of the preparation team, which allowed to avoid the loss of information.

90. The Bank agreed to a 19-month extension of the closing date to March 31, 2018 after a request by COMIFAC. The timeframe was chosen as the activities under components 1b and 2b, as per the Restructuring Paper "...launch the last phases of implementation...which cannot be shorter than 18 months". However, in a second restructuring, the closing date was extended once more until July 31, 2018 (i.e. 4 months) "to allow the project to complete the last activities, in particular the election with sub-component 1b". Also, COMIFAC needed to take back the responsibility of the project's day-to-day operations. Had the project been planned originally for seven years or if only one extension had been sought, this could have improved efficiency. With over 2,000 files in the project files, a majority of which have to do with procurement, some of the procurement delays referred to in previous sections could have been partially due to Bank delays. The Bank's procurement system was at times burdening the TTL with duplicate requests for clearance over numerous packages (mostly for workshops).

91. The Implementation Status and Results reports (ISRs) and Aide Memoires were of satisfactory quality, complete, and presented a logical chain of events as they unfolded. Due to the ISRs being in English and Aide Memoires in French, there was at times some confusion as to which activities were being referred to. For example it was difficult to follow

³⁰ Aide Memoire Feb-March, 2011



whether the recruitment of the REDD+ consultant was referring to the individual consultant supporting the GTC or the team providing the services under Component 2b.

Factors outside the control of government and/or implementing entities

92. Some factors were clearly unexpected and not under the influence of the governments or implementing entities. For example, during a period of unrest in the Central African Republic, a large part of project equipment was reportedly stolen.

93. Other COMIFAC countries (Chad, Rwanda, Burundi and Sao Tome) were also keenly interested in joining the project but were ultimately excluded from the design as countries should have committed a part of their GEF country allocations to be part of the project (the project was created when all six countries decided to pool US\$ 2 million from their GEF allocation).

94. Gabon signed an Implementation Agreement towards the end of the project in 2017. However, this agreement did not cover the national envelopes for REDD+ readiness as the REDD+ objective is not applicable to Gabon. Thus, Gabon did not benefit from the US\$350,000 national envelope. The Implementation Agreement covers the rest of the project, including the field work for the study on carbon measurement and the capacity building support for the international negotiations. However, this did not materially influence the results of the project.

IV. BANK PERFORMANCE, COMPLIANCE ISSUES, AND RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

A. QUALITY OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

M&E Design

95. Overall, the M&E framework for the project was well designed, but did not establish strict criteria for how the increased capacity in REDD+ issues would be determined. It should be noted, that objectively capturing increased capacity on REDD+ issues would have subjected the key beneficiaries (key climate change negotiators and focal points) to rigorous surveys which would not have been feasible, or even appropriate. At the project design phase, it was not yet clear how REDD+ issues would evolve over time and what increased capacity would, in fact, look like. Thus, in some cases, proxies had to be used to capture the increase in capacity. As this was a Technical Assistance (TA) project without physical or communal investments at scale, the indicators were set up to measure mostly activities such as number of workshops held, sequence of milestones achieved or number of REDD+ pilot developers assisted, for example. The indicator on satisfaction was based on a perception survey included at the 2016 restructuring to better capture capacity strengthening and how the output-type of indicators capture/reflect improved capacity. The importance of the submissions to the UNFCCC captured the background efforts required to prepare these submissions, and the increasing capacity and collaboration that ensued. Capturing the increased capacity on carbon measurements, however, was to be measured by the milestones³¹ achieved resulting in publication of results from field studies, which provides a more tangible approach for evaluating eventual success. A question can be raised why the preparation of the RESA was not included as an intermediate results indicator, since the RESA would have identified the themes needing Technical Guidelines (which were included as indicators).

96. **Project design, including results framework.** The PDO was worded in a way which leaves it open for interpretation what the “REDD+ issues” are and where specifically capacities of the Congo Basin countries were to be strengthened. From the PDO indicators, it becomes clearer that the “issues” refer to coordination between countries,

³¹ See para 60 for details.



scientific knowledge on forest carbon measurements and technical operating framework of the REDD+ instrument in order to prepare participating countries for international climate negotiations. Submissions to the UNFCCC process resulted from improved collaboration of the Congo Basin countries. Field work in all six countries resulted in increased knowledge of carbon content in species of trees in the region and technical guidelines would have helped the countries better prepare and execute projects under the REDD+ mechanism.

97. There seems to be a slight disconnect with the Component 3 activities and the respective PDO indicator. Component 3 is given as Mainstreaming REDD+ concept in SFM projects, but the activities supported under the component leading to the PDO indicator “Technical guidelines issued on prioritized REDD+ issues” are the establishment of the REDD+ incubator and number of REDD+ project developers receiving support from the Incubator. This appears to be a design logic carried over from an earlier iteration of the project design, where the objective under this component was to support to several concrete REDD+ pilot projects (see, for example the Project Identification Form (PIF) submitted to the GEF). Indeed, the Incubator (“help desk”), would work to further identify REDD+ pilots and “a portfolio of pilot projects in each country”. The RESA would in turn serve as a tool to identify the specific themes and topics for technical guidelines on social and environmental REDD+ issues to support REDD+ pilot projects that comply with internationally recognized standards. With the RESA being a critical element to the technical guidelines (i.e. the PDO indicator), the RESA itself should have been considered as an additional intermediate results indicator.

M&E Implementation

98. The project provided technical assistance for capacity building with outputs that were measured by completion of mostly intangible activities such as number of meetings held, number of submissions made, technical guidelines issued, as well as results from field studies. Thus, the various data gathered were limited to tallies of such activities taking place since no concrete results on the ground were produced. The PAD did not provide for a means to objectively measure the increase in capacity on REDD+ issues (and this would have been rather difficult to implement), save for the technical component on allometric equations, where results could objectively be determined by the publication of results of field activities. The PMU had an M&E officer in Yaoundé in place for almost the entire duration of the project. She was responsible for, among others, notes of the activities to the project coordinator, defined the method for calculating activity completion rates, ensuring reports were sent to the World Bank, COMIFAC and participating countries, the reports of the workshops were posted on the websites of COMIFAC and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), and that communication materials were produced and disseminated at major events such as COPs and workshops.

99. The PMU prepared quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports. These reports were sent to the World Bank, COMIFAC, and focal points in the six countries. The reports of all the workshops as well as the final communiqués of the workshops were sent to all the participants and heads of the national REDD coordinators. Some reports were posted on the COMIFAC website as soon as this site was made available to project staff. A project website was also created for the publication of all the documents of the project concerning the development of allometric equations. However, the project had poor visibility because the project results were initially not displayed on the COMIFAC website. Furthermore, not all deliverables are available from the COMIFAC nor PREREDD project websites. COMIFAC prepared two reports at the end of the project; one report on achievements prepared in-house and one final evaluation prepared by an independent consultant.



100. Some discrepancies were found in the ISRs. For example, ISR #6 gave the number of trainings provided under indicator “REDD+ Project Developers that received support or advisory services from the incubator” as 15, whereas ISR #8 gives the result as 13. ISR #5 states that “S-S exchanges and country level exchange and training workshops have been organized” but gives the value as zero (corrected to “1” in ISR #6). Direct project beneficiaries are given as 155 with explanation: Contract for allometric equations finalized” (ISR #5).

101. Technical guidelines on prioritized REDD+ issues had failed to yield results and this indicator was planned to be dropped. With technical guidelines preparation halted, the savings were channeled into the field work under Component 2 as well as to fund scholarships for students. It was also decided to introduce an indicator to capture the satisfaction of beneficiaries including Focal Points, REDD+ Coordinators, 10 civil society representatives at national level, four at regional level as well as COMIFAC with 27 in total. South-south indicators were reduced from 3 to 2 exchanges. Once the Incubator had fulfilled its purpose and with 26 project developers (target 15) having received support from the Incubator, these indicators were marked for deletion at mid-term.

M&E Utilization

102. The M&E system was used to collect information on the progress on reaching the targets of the indicators. The first level of monitoring was done by the technical leaders of the activity and the second level was done by the M&E specialist. The reports were used by the PSC, World Bank team and PMU to monitor implementation progress. The M&E data were used to record the achievements, feed the discussions at strategic level to adapt the project for upcoming challenges and provide feedback on the operational issues. For example, it reported operational problems that required high level actions (the progress reports helped the PSC identify early and solve the tax exemption issues that were delaying the import of the scientific equipment; also the progress reports also helped detecting the issues with the operator that supported the civil society). M&E data were also used to feed the discussions on the project evolution at Mid-Term Review and for the subsequent restructuring. Finally, in the case of the carbon measurement study, the M&E data helped reporting in a synthetic way on a very complex process, showing progress (and delays) with regular milestones, and allowing the PSC to be proactive in case of issues (see the cases mentioned above).

Justification of Overall Rating of Quality of M&E

103. Overall M&E rating is **Substantial**, based on adequate M&E design, implementation and utilization.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FIDUCIARY COMPLIANCE

104. **Environmental and Social Safeguards** -- The project was considered technical assistance (TA) with no investments on the ground and classified as Category B -Partial Assessment. It was decided that the OP/BP 4.01 on Environmental Assessment be triggered, to ensure that the potential environmental and social adverse impacts caused by second-generation activities are adequately prevented and/or mitigated. Considering the type of financing instrument (i.e. TA) as well as the regional nature of the project, the RESA was identified as the appropriate safeguards instrument for the project. The RESA contract was signed in August 2013. From discussion with the last environmental specialist on the team and the TTL, the RESA was prepared and it was presented locally via a workshop, but it was not officially disclosed via the World Bank. Thus, the project has not fully complied with this requirement.



105. Safeguards team composition was adequate and no implementation issues with safeguards compliance were encountered during project implementation, because the project did not finance physical investments on the ground, nor did it fund policy reform, except indirectly by financing participation in the UNFCCC negotiations process.

106. While five of the Congo Basin countries are members of the FCPF and thus committed to conduct a SESA as part of their readiness process, the intent was for the RESA not to duplicate aspects that were anticipated to be covered by the national-level SESAs (including diagnostic work) but rather focused on environmental and social issues of regional relevance, i.e. issues that:

- result from macro-level effects in the region or globally and have impact beyond the national (e.g. commodity price variations with impact on regional markets);
- relate to trans-boundary issues (i.e. trans-boundary migration, leakage of timber and/or wildlife trade);
- result from cumulative impact (i.e. impact that is minor at a local or national scale, but significant at the regional scale (i.e. scattered small-scale slash-and-burn agriculture); or
- relate to issues that are common to all six Congo Basin countries (i.e. land-tenure aspects, lack of benefit sharing arrangements for forest carbon revenue, etc) for which guidelines could be sought at the regional level. Consultations in all six countries would support the process of identifying such regionally relevant environmental and social issues.

107. **Financial Management.** During preparation, the FM risk was rated as High with mitigation measures bringing it down to Medium – Impact. During the implementation period, the FM performance of the project was mostly rated moderately satisfactory. The penultimate review conducted in 2017 ended with an FM rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory due to the lack of the update of the procedures manual and the significant delays encountered in the justification of mission advances. This was improved to Moderately Satisfactory for the last review conducted in 2018 based on the improvement noted with the justifications of the advances. Interim Financial Reports (IFRs) were submitted on time and were deemed acceptable. The 2017 external audit issued a qualified opinion pointing out the delay in the justification of the advances while the internal control revealed some issues pertaining inter alia to the lack of systematic annual asset inventories, the deficiencies in the supervision of the records and the lack of proper follow up and justification of mission advances. Audit and FM supervision recommendations were followed up appropriately despite not all of them were implemented in a timely manner.

108. **Procurement.** Procurement of equipment needed for the project was managed centrally from COMIFAC with equipment subsequently shipped to where it was needed. This caused considerable delays, as getting a vehicle to DRC, for example, also needed levies to be paid. Capacities with procurement were initially limited within the PMU but improved over time with Bank support. Procurement support training was given over several months in September 2013.

C. BANK PERFORMANCE

Quality at Entry

109. Quality at Entry was **Satisfactory**. The project was designed to support the Congo Basin countries' REDD+ ambitions and complement parallel advancements under the FCPF as part of the GEF Strategic Program for SFM in the Congo Basin (CBSP). The project did not have a direct poverty reduction objective, but sought to support the aims of the Congo Basin countries in achieving recognition of the REDD+ mechanism under the various UNFCCC frameworks, which would provide a new revenue stream for avoided deforestation and sustainable forest



management – parts of which would be expected to benefit forest dwelling communities and indigenous peoples. To establish adequate safeguards to guard against negative impacts, a RESA was commissioned and prepared to guide the preparation of possible REDD+ projects. The project would be implemented by COMIFAC. An assessment of Financial Management capacity of the Central Africa Forests Commission (COMIFAC) was conducted in Yaoundé and Brazzaville in February-March 2011, in accordance with the newly adopted Financial Assessment Principles. On procurement, an assessment of the capacity was carried out on March 12, 2009 and updated on December 15, 2010. A Project Preparation Grant (PPG) for US\$399,000 was sought from the GEF and executed as a Recipient Executed Trust Fund (RETF) by COMIFAC with the Grant Agreement signed on August 24, 2009. In mid-2010 project preparation activities were delayed, and the Grant Agreement expired, due to conditions precedent not having been reached. Four studies were finally launched mid-2010. The following studies: (i) monitoring and evaluation; (ii) institutional arrangements; and (iii) implementation manual were awarded to a firm. The communication strategy was agreed to be developed as part of a separate GEF medium-size project. In October 2010 preparation was already well underway. As the establishment of the PMU was delayed, the management responsibility of the project rested with COMIFAC ES, which has acquired experience with the World Bank under the PPG phase of the project.

110. The project was declared effective in a timely manner. The project was approved by the Board on July 14, 2011, signed on August 12, 2011 and declared effective on November 30, 2011, i.e. 3.5 months from signature.

Quality of Supervision

111. Quality of supervision was **Satisfactory**. The Bank in general undertook two supervision mission per year (no Aide Memoires prepared in 2013 and 2017, though). The team was adequately staffed with the TTL, safeguards specialists, FM and Procurement specialists. In 2017, the team was doing the “Douala” workshops, and thus no regular supervision missions were conducted. ISRs were prepared biannually. The ISRs candidly disclosed issues that the project encountered in terms of procurement delays, FM turnover and matters needing client and management attention. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted with a delay (January 2015) due to the slow start of the activities. There was some turnover of staff at the Bank side, with four TTLs, but this did not affect continuity of leadership on the World Bank side. One interim TTL was needed to bridge the period when another TTL was waiting for HR matters to be resolved.

Justification of Overall Rating of Bank Performance

112. Overall rating of Bank performance is rated **Satisfactory** considering the effort that went into preparation: four preparation missions, workshops, coordination as well as the positive results and outcomes reached at the end of the project considering the coordination challenges of a six-country regional project. Implementation support was adequate and was carried out regularly.

D. RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

113. The main development outcomes (Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues strengthened and Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements strengthened) were both achieved.



114. For the first outcome, capacities of REDD+ negotiators were strengthened, with 30-40 participants joining international climate meetings as part of official delegations. This has reportedly now declined back to 6-8 participants, increasing the risk that the achievements reached cannot be maintained as funding dried up. However, COMIFAC is identifying other sources of funds to allow this to continue. Gabon remained outside the project for most of the project lifetime, but the country did eventually agree to a partial Implementation Agreement, though this did not allow the country to benefit from the country envelope. COMIFAC had succeeded in being a convening entity and bringing different country negotiators together to develop joint positions and strategies for the COPs. The risk on implementation capacity was evident in the beginning of the project, which contributed to delays of over a year and a half in getting the major activities implemented. However, this capacity grew steadily during project implementation. COMIFAC has also started identifying potential sources of funds that could support the phasing out of the project and the consolidation of the main achievements - especially regarding civil society and indigenous peoples. The project has proven to be a good vehicle to process just-in-time additional resources to support REDD+ initiatives at Sub-Regional level. In parallel, COMIFAC is consolidating support from the beneficiary countries on a regional GCF proposal that could build on this successful operation.

115. For the second outcome, the field work on the allometric equations was carried out satisfactorily. The first published article on the allometric equations came out in July 2018 in the journal *Forest Ecology and Management*.³² The data collected can be further distilled into more publications, and there are plans for three more articles to be written and published. External funds are being sought for this purpose.

V. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

116. **Complex coordination needs to be carefully anticipated.** The coordination between national and regional activities remained a challenge. With four national level FCPF REDD+ readiness activities implemented at the same time as the project, the project was often subject to solicitation for funding for activities that were already declined financing by FCPF. In addition, extra work was needed to avoid duplication and ensure alignment with FCPF. After some challenges in the first year, some internal Bank process (and even with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Eq. Guinea) were established to ensure that the regional and national activities were better coordinated.

117. **Including small budget envelopes for country-specific activities in regional projects can increase buy-in of countries.** The work with the US\$350,000 national envelopes was both administratively cumbersome but also very useful and flexible. As all the FCPF national operations faced difficulties at some point during the seven years of implementation, the project was able to provide solutions and quick answers. These envelopes helped the project keep direct discussions with the national FCPF teams; they both helped the regional team better understand the challenges and be perceived as a service provider. Even if the coordination was complex, this arrangement can be seen as a strong success that could be replicated.

118. **National projects need to be designed with close attention to the regional context.** This was observed with the support provided by FCPF to civil society and indigenous peoples, which reshuffled the distribution of power within the civil society organizations within the countries. Meanwhile, leaders at regional level were not involved nor in control of the events at national level, which led to a disconnect between the national and the regional levels. This

³² A regional allometry for the Congo Basin forests based on the largest ever destructive sampling. *Forest Ecology and Management* 430 (2018) 228–240.



was identified during the project implementation and triggered the work on Component 1b on the legitimacy of the civil society groups working on climate change.

119. **REDD+ was and still is an emerging concept where capacity building is critical.** Capacities in the individual countries were increased through the project. The capacity building was evident, again, both at the governmental and civil society levels and most concretely by the preparation of the allometric equations. Having the increased capacities in place in the respective countries allows them to be ready to engage in future REDD+ opportunities when they emerge. This capacity should not be allowed to wither even at a period when REDD+ projects have been slow to get off the ground.



ANNEX 1. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND KEY OUTPUTS

A. RESULTS INDICATORS

A.1 PDO Indicators

Objective/Outcome: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues strengthened

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism to the international UNFCCC negotiations.	Number	0.00 15-Dec-2010	4.00 31-Aug-2016	8.00 31-Mar-2018	11.00 13-Nov-2017
Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (137%). Indicator measures the number of position papers prepared jointly by the six Congo Basin countries and submitted to the various UNFCCC meetings. By proxy this indicator also measures the processes and joint meetings by countries in arriving at the position papers, by which they contributed to the evolution of the REDD+ mechanism to better accommodate the special circumstances of Congo Basin countries. Bank team has received copies of submissions and verified them.					
Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Technical guidelines on	Number	0.00	6.00	2.00	0.00



prioritized REDD+ issues have been developed and approved by the PSC.		15-Dec-2010	31-Aug-2016	31-Mar-2018	13-Nov-2017
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Comments (achievements against targets): Not achieved (0%). A decision was taken at Mid-Term not to continue with the preparation of technical guidelines as countries had already progressed beyond the stage where the guidelines would have been useful.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the REDD+ negotiations at the international level and by the knowledge sharing provided in the regional studies	Percentage	56.00 31-Jan-2015	0.00 31-Aug-2016	80.00 31-Mar-2018	80.00 13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (100%). This indicator measures whether beneficiaries felt that the project had a meaningful impact. The workshops in preparation of the COP and SBSTA meetings were attended by the team negotiating at the COP and the regional experts (Country UNFCCC Focal Points). Attendance and requests for those meetings was high, and the independent survey conducted at closing showed that they were deemed useful for the participants with 19 out of 24 respondents (national climate change focal points and national REDD+ coordinators) being satisfied or very satisfied. Source: survey conducted by independent consultant. Survey available in project files,

Objective/Outcome: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements strengthened

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Milestones for the	Text	0	4	4	4



elaboration of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin achieved.		15-Dec-2010	31-Aug-2016	31-Mar-2018	13-Nov-2017
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (100%). The results of the field studies were completed and publication on allometric equations submitted for publication on May 8, 2018. The milestones were: (1) methodology defined; (2) national teams operational and field work initiated; (3) field work completed by national teams and (4) analysis completed, data available in publicly accessible database and scientific publication prepared for submission. Three more scientific papers are being finalized. Source: published paper.</p>					

A.2 Intermediate Results Indicators

Component: Improving Knowledge and Coordination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
GTC meetings for strengthened policy-level coordination of REDD+ at regional level	Number	1.00 14-Jul-2011	10.00 31-Aug-2016	10.00 31-Aug-2016	13.00 13-Nov-2017
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (130%). Number of Climate Change Working Group meetings exceeded the planned number by 30%. The workshops of the GTC allowed participants to discuss outcomes of the CoPs and prepare coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism. The workshops also allowed for countries to strengthen their capacities by sharing experiences in their efforts towards achieving their NDC targets. Source: PMU monitoring tools, meeting documents, Project management accounting, COMIFAC end of project reports.</p>					
Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion



South-South exchanges for strengthened knowledge exchange with other regions	Number	0.00	3.00	2.00	1.00
		14-Jul-2011	31-Aug-2016	31-Mar-2018	13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Partially achieved (50%). There was one South-South Exchange that took place in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The project team questioned the usefulness of S-S Exchanges for regional delegations as every country was in a different stage of REDD+, and thus it was hard to build homogenous delegations or with the same objectives. In addition, national FCPF grants could also pay for national delegations, thus S-S Exchanges were more relevant at national level than at regional level. Source: COMIFAC end of project report, PMU quarterly reports.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Consultative meetings on REDD+ under the CEFDHAC umbrella	Number	0.00	16.00	16.00	20.00
		14-Jul-2011	31-Aug-2016	31-Aug-2016	13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (125%). These meetings formed the interim steps and concrete discussions leading to the ultimate submissions to the UNFCCC. Source: PMU quarterly project reports, end of project survey.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Direct project beneficiaries	Number	0.00	600.00	1000.00	1780.00
		14-Jul-2011	31-Aug-2016	31-Mar-2018	13-Nov-2017
Female beneficiaries	Percentage	0.00	30.00	30.00	21.00



		14-Jul-2011	31-Aug-2016	31-Mar-2018	13-Nov-2017
Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (178%). Source: COMIFAC achievement report and M&E specialist report & excel table to ensure no double counting.					

Component: Building Technical Capacities for Measurement and Monitoring of Carbon Stocks in the Congo Basin Forests

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
A scientific platform is operational and supporting knowledge exchange amongst scientists.	Yes/No	N 14-Jul-2011	Y 31-Aug-2016	Y 31-Dec-2017	Y 13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (100%). A scientific platform was established and operational at the end of the project. This platform was key in enabling the close collaboration of researchers conducting field studies and distilling the results into scientific publications. Source: website of platform at <https://www.pcarbhone.comifac.org/index.php/le-reseau-scientifique2-2>.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
People active on the Scientific platform	Number	0.00 01-Jan-2015	0.00 31-Aug-2016	60.00 31-Mar-2018	65.00 13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (108%). 65 people were active on the scientific platform at the end of the project. Source: end of project report & PMU quarterly reports.



Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Scientific reports on defined allometric equations for the Congo Basin have been produced.	Number	0.00 14-Jul-2011	8.00 31-Aug-2016	8.00 31-Mar-2018	1.00 13-Nov-2017
Comments (achievements against targets): Partially achieved (12.5%). One scientific report on the allometric equations for the Congo Basin was submitted for publication and three other reports were being finalized at the end of the project. One report submitted was published. Source: Article "A regional allometry for the Congo basin forests based on the largest ever destructive sampling" published in "Forest Ecology and Management", July 2018.					
Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Students - Master level or higher - participating in the field work	Number	0.00 01-Aug-2015	0.00 31-Aug-2016	30.00 31-Mar-2018	37.00 13-Nov-2017
Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (123%). At the end of the project, 37 students (Masters and PhD level) had been participating in field studies. Number of students was monitored by the operator (ONFI), in coordination with the National Research Institutions that implemented the field work. Source: PMU quarterly reports.					
Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Countries, in which national	Number	0.00	6.00	6.00	6.00



teams that have been trained and deployed to the field for data collection as per agreed methodology for definition of allometric equations.

14-Jul-2011

31-Aug-2016

31-Mar-2018

13-Nov-2017

Comments (achievements against targets): Achieved (100%). National teams were deployed for field data collection in all six Congo basin countries participating in the project. Source: published scientific report in Forest Ecology and Management, July 2018, as a result of the data collection.

Component: Mainstreaming REDD+ Concept in SFM Projects



B. KEY OUTPUTS BY COMPONENT

Objective/Outcome 1: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on REDD+ issues strengthened	
Outcome Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinated submissions on a future REDD+ mechanism to the international UNFCCC negotiations. 2. Technical guidelines on prioritized REDD+ issues have been developed and approved by the Project Steering Committee. 3. Percentage of beneficiaries satisfied with the REDD+ negotiations at the international level and by the knowledge sharing provided in the regional studies
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GTC meetings for strengthened policy-level coordination of REDD+ at regional level 2. South-south exchanges for strengthened knowledge exchange with other regions 3. Consultative meetings on REDD+ under the CEFDHAC umbrella
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 1)	<p><u>Component 1: Improving Knowledge and Coordination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>13 GTC meetings held</u> • <u>One South-South exchange held</u> • <u>20 consultative meetings on REDD+ held</u> • <u>1,780 direct project beneficiaries reached</u> • <u>30% of beneficiaries female</u> <p><u>Component 3: Mainstreaming REDD+ Concept in SFM Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>RESA prepared to identify themes for technical guidelines</u> • Incubator for REDD+ established and functioning <p>4.</p>



Objective/Outcome 2: Capacities of the Congo Basin countries on forest carbon stock measurements strengthened	
Outcome Indicators	1. Milestones for the elaboration of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin achieved.
Intermediate Results Indicators	1. A scientific platform is operational and supporting knowledge exchange among scientists 2. Countries, in which national teams that have been trained and deployed to the field for data collection as per agreed methodology for definition of allometric equations 3. Scientific reports on defined allometric equations for the Congo Basin have been produced
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 2)	<u>Component 2: Building Technical Capacities for Measurement and Monitoring of Carbon Stocks in the Congo Basin Forests</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scientific platform operational• 65 people active on the platform• One scientific report published, 3 publications being worked on• 37 students participating in field work• All six countries have national teams trained and deployed on field work



ANNEX 2. BANK LENDING AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT/SUPERVISION

A. TASK TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Role
Preparation	
Carole Megevand	Task Team Leader
Timothy H. Brown	Task Team Leader
Loic Jean Charles Braune	Task Team Leader
Mohamed El Hafedh Hendah	Procurement Specialist
Kouami Hounsinou Messan	Procurement Specialist
Enagnon Ernest Eric Adda	Financial Management Specialist
Leonard Ewang Ngumbah Wolloh	Financial Management Specialist
Ananie Cyrille Ekoumou Abanda	Team Member
Andre Rodrigues de Aquino	Team Member
Bernadette Djapa Nyanjo	Team Member
Chrystelle Isabelle Mfout Tapouh	Team Member
Daniela Anna B. D. Junqueira	Team Member
Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna	Environment Specialist
Francis Tasha Venayen	Financial Management Specialist
Helene Simonne Ndjebet Yaka	Team Member
James Michael Acworth	Team Member
Jeanne d'Arc Edima	Team Member
Lydie Madjou	Team Member
Mohammed A. Bekhechi	Social Specialist
Nina Doetinchem	Team Member
Virginie A. Vaselopoulos	Team Member
Supervision/ICR	
Loic Jean Charles Braune	Task Team Leader(s)



Ibrah Rahamane Sanoussi, Monique Ndome Didiba Epse Azonfack	Procurement Specialist(s)
Celestin Adjalou Niamien	Financial Management Specialist
Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna	Environmental Safeguards Specialist
Jeanne d'Arc Edima	Team Member
Roger Muchuba Buhereko	Team Member
Leonard Ewang Ngumbah Wolloh	Team Member
FNU Owono Owono	Social Safeguards Specialist
Bertille Gerardine Ngameni Wepanjue	Team Member
Juha Antti Kalevi Seppala	Team Member
Asha Johnson	Team Member
Nevena Ilieva	Team Member
Virginie A. Vaselopoulos	Team Member
Aurore Simbananiye	Team Member

B. STAFF TIME AND COST

Stage of Project Cycle	Staff Time and Cost	
	No. of staff weeks	US\$ (including travel and consultant costs)
Preparation		
FY09	14.218	71,925.73
FY10	10.276	63,471.17
FY11	29.047	128,420.63
FY12	0	0.00
Total	53.54	263,817.53
Supervision/ICR		
FY12	13.873	62,652.62
FY13	8.995	50,554.60
FY14	5.091	28,034.51
FY15	11.899	60,280.74



FY16	10.953	54,551.16
FY17	10.690	232,607.03
FY18	1.845	326,887.90
FY19	4.313	33,063.43
Total	67.66	848,631.99

**ANNEX 3. PROJECT COST BY COMPONENT**

Components	Amount at Approval (US\$M)	Actual at Project Closing (US\$M)	Percentage of Approval (US\$M)
Improving knowledge and coordination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin	4.70	4.70	100
Building technical capacities for measurement and monitoring of carbon stocks in the Congo Basin Forests	4.00	4.50	112.50
Mainstreaming REDD+ Concept into sustainable forest management projects	3.00	2.50	83.33
Project Management	1.30	1.30	100.00
Total	13.00	13.00	100.00



ANNEX 4. EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

1. Cost effectiveness was one of the key underlying principles that guided project design. By applying a regional approach, with a view to technical aspects, knowledge generation, and regional information sharing, this project sought to achieve significant economies of scale. Cost effectiveness was particularly significant for Component 2, i.e. the joint definition of allometric equations specific to the Congo Basin that would help to define carbon stocks. Countries were joining forces to invest in a single methodology to be applied across all the Congo Basin countries, rather than trying to individually invest in multiple national-level methodologies. A regionally applied methodology allows for a reduced number of field samplings as well as for joint training sessions. This regional approach was anticipated to cut cost by approximately one third in comparison to a country-by-country approach. A regional approach further allowed better comparison of results across the different Congo Basin countries. Similar cost efficiencies were expected with analytical work of regional importance, i.e. on social and pro-poor aspects of REDD+ that are relevant and applicable to all six countries. Improved information and knowledge sharing across the region would further ensure that knowledge and experiences from front-runners are shared with slower advancing countries in the region, thus helping slower countries to move up faster on the learning curve thereby ensuring regional cohesion.

2. Throughout the preparation period, a close partnership was established and maintained with AfDB/CBFF. Preparation missions and stakeholder workshops were organized and carried out jointly with the CBFF and FAO. However, during implementation, the collaboration between the project and other development partners, including FAO, AfDB and AFD appears to have been more limited and the close coordination envisioned between the research undertaken for the allometric equations and the MRV system to be developed by FAO, seems to have been more limited in scope.



ANNEX 5. BORROWER, CO-FINANCIER AND OTHER PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

1. In the final evaluation of the project commissioned by COMIFAC, the following observations were noted:
 - The sustainability of the project was given high marks due to the creation of the platforms on REDD+, the preparation of the allometric equations and the strengthening of capacities.
 - The project achieved both its high-level and specific objectives. This was especially true for the REDD+ platform as well as capacities to carry REDD+ projects in the future.
 - However, it was noted that the impact of the project varied from one country to another.
2. In terms of recommendations, the main wish from COMIFAC is for a phase two of the project, which would allow for continuation of the process of support for country negotiators to join the UNFCCC meetings in larger numbers as well as for funding to ensure further publication of results derived from the field work. Also, a small satellite office for the project in each of the countries would, according to COMIFAC, be beneficial to integrate the work on the country envelopes better into the overall project.



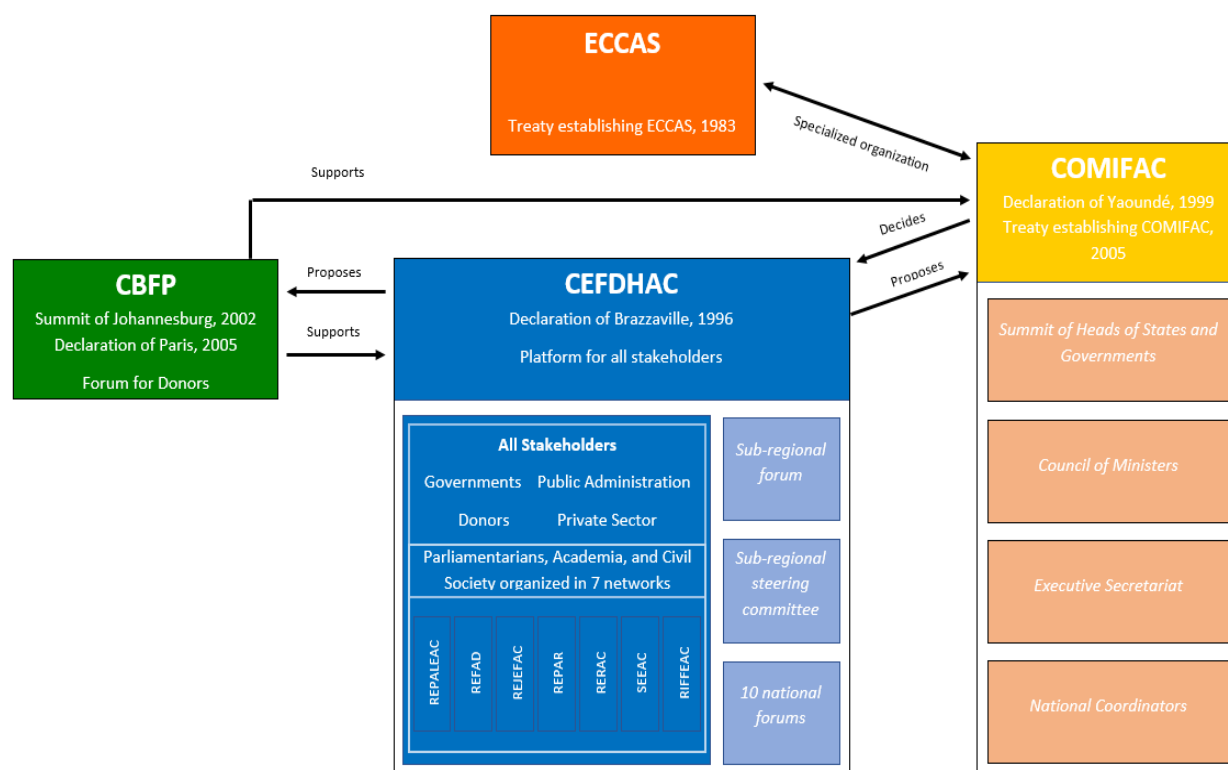
ANNEX 6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Project Appraisal Document, Report Number 59404-AFR. World Bank 2011
- Implementation Status Reports 1-13
- Aide Memoires
- Country Assistance Strategies, Country Partnership Frameworks and Country Partnership Strategies
- RAPPORT D'ACHEVEMENT. Draft. COMIFAC 2018
- Fobissie, K. EVALUATION FINALE DU PROJET REGIONAL REDD+ (PREREDD+). Rapport Final. COMIFAC. July 2018.



ANNEX 7. SECTORAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: EXISTING COORDINATION MECHANISMS OF FOREST- RELATED POLICIES FOR GOVERNMENTS, DONORS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SUB-REGION

Figure 1: Relationships and composition of the main coordination bodies for forest-related policies in Central Africa



1. **The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC)** was formally established in 2005 by an international treaty³³. COMIFAC is mandated with the guidance, coordination, and alignment of policies and decision-making in conservation and sustainable management of the forest ecosystems of its ten member-states³⁴. All its members have adopted a “Convergence Plan” (2015-2025)³⁵, which is a framework of reference and coordination of all interventions related to the conservation and sustainable management of Central African forest ecosystems. COMIFAC includes a Council of Ministers of COMIFAC and an Executive Secretariat, based in Yaoundé, Cameroon. In 2007, COMIFAC was recognized as the specialized agency of the Economic Community of the Central Africa States (ECCAS) for all activities related to forests and the environment.

2. **The Conference on Dense and Humid Ecosystems of Central Africa (CEFDHAC)** was established 1996. CEFDHAC aims to promote the conservation and sustainable management of the Central African forests and serves as a sub-regional forum promoting dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration between all stakeholders involved in the sector. CEFDHAC has been the joint platform for facilitating the

³³ Treaty on the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa and to Establish the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC), 2005.

³⁴ Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, and Rwanda.

³⁵ https://comifac.org/images/documents/Plan%20de%20convergence%202015-2025_Fr.pdf



coordination of forest policies in Central Africa and includes governments, parliamentarians, public administration, private sector actors, NGOs, and civil society organizations (including organizations representing FDCs).

3. **The Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)** was launched at the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 to encourage the international community to provide financial and technical assistance to Central African countries in their endeavor to protect the forests. In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness³⁶, the CBFP is also charged with the mission to help COMIFAC execute its Convergence Plan.

4. **CEFDHAC also formally recognized and coordinates seven specialized networks³⁷**, including the Regional Network of Local and Indigenous Populations for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC by its French acronym). Established in 2003, REPALEAC represents over 200 FDC organizations from eight Central African countries³⁸. It acts as a platform for the coordination of eight national-level member networks. REPALEAC's represents FDCs' interests at the sub-regional level and promotes the work done by its national networks. REPALEAC aims to highlight the critical role played by FDCs in sustainable forest management.

5. **REPALEAC recently validated its 2018-2025 *Strategic Framework for an inclusive development of the Indigenous Peoples*** (see Annex 2) as a tool for Indigenous Peoples and other FDCs to enhance their leadership and control on their own development. The strategy is supporting a vision of a comprehensive and inclusive development for the FDCs that is drawn upon sectoral approaches (biodiversity protection, REDD+, sustainable forest management, etc.). The ambition of REPALEAC and its members is to propose common targets, a coordination framework, and reporting tools to all policies and program in the Congo Basin that support FDCs – with the objective to render investments better coordinated, more efficient, and accountable to the strategy. Importantly, REPALEAC is expected to benefit from the leverage of CEFDHAC and COMIFAC to get an endorsement from the various governments through COMIFAC's Council of Ministers, which would pave the way for a broader coordination of Indigenous Peoples' related activities at the national level.

³⁶ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/34428351.pdf>

³⁷ Women (REFADD), Indigenous Peoples (REPALEAC), Youth (REJEFAC), Parliamentarians (REPAR), Community Radios (RERAC), Environmental Evaluation Specialists (SEEAC), and Training institutes (RIFFEAC). Other networks are under creation but not officially registered as CEFDHAC's.

³⁸ Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic republic of Congo, Gabon, Republic of Congo, and Rwanda.