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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT

IDA-51210, TF A4666

ON A

CREDIT

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

IN THE AMOUNT OF SDR 6.50 MILLION

(US\$10 MILLION EQUIVALENT)

AND A GRANT

FROM THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$6.51 MILLION

TO THE

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

FOR THE

CONGO: FOREST AND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PROJECT

December 21, 2022

Environment, Natural Resources, and the Blue Economy Global Practice
Western and Central Africa Region

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CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS
(Exchange Rate Effective June 30, 2022)

Currency Unit = CFA Franc (CFAF)

CFAF 631 = US\$1

US\$1. 327780 = SDR 1

FISCAL YEAR
July 1–June 30

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AF	Additional Financing
AFD	French Development Agency (<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>)
AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use
CBA	Cost-Benefit Analysis
CEA	Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
CGDC	Community Development Management Committee (<i>Comité de Gestion et de Développement Communautaire</i>)
CIB-Olam	Congolese Industrial Wood (<i>Congolaise Industrielle des Bois</i>)
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CRMS	Criminal Records Management System
DDEF	Departmental Directorate of Forest Economy (<i>Direction Départementale de l'Economie Forestière</i>)
DEP	Directorate of Studies and Planning (<i>Direction des Etudes et Projets</i>)
DGDD	General Directorate for Sustainable Development (<i>Direction Générale du Développement Durable</i>)
DGE	General Directorate of Environment (<i>Direction Générale de l'Environnement</i>)
DGEF	General Directorate of Forest Economy (<i>Direction Générale de l'Economie Forestière</i>)
ERPA	Emission Reductions Purchase Agreement
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
EU	European Union
EX-ACT	EX-Ante Carbon-Balance Tool
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FEDP	Forest and Economic Diversification Project
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FM	Financial Management
FMU	Forest Management Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility

GEPRS	Growth, Employment, and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoC	Government of the Republic of Congo
GPS	Global Positioning System
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IMCC	Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
ISR	Implementation Status and Results Report
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MEF/MFE	Ministry of Forest Economy (<i>Ministère de l'Economie Forestière</i>)
MEFDD	Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development (<i>Ministère de l'Economie Forestière et du Développement Durable</i>)
MSDFEE	Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy, and Environment (<i>Ministère du Développement Durable, de l'Economie Forestière et de l'Environnement</i>)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NPV	Net Present Value
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PANC	Northern Congo Agroforestry Project (<i>Projet d'Agroforesterie dans le Nord du Congo</i>)
PDO	Project Development Objective
PEDU	Water and Urban Development Project
PF	Process Framework
PIN	Project Idea Note
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PNNN	Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park (<i>Parc National Nouabalé-Ndoki</i>)
PNNP	Ntokou-Pikounda National Park (<i>Parc National Ntokou-Pikounda</i>)
PMP	Pest Management Plan
PRONAR	National Programme for Afforestation and Reforestation (<i>Programme National pour l'Afforestation et le Reboisement</i>)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSG	Simplified Management Plan (<i>Plan simple de gestion</i>)
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RMF	Results Management Framework
SEDP	Support to Economic Diversification Project
SIL	Specific Investment Loan
SIPSE	Integrated Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System (<i>Système intégré de Planfication, Suivi et Evaluation</i>)
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRC	Social Responsibility Contract
TAL	Technical Assistance Loan
TGCBP	Transparency and Governance Capacity Building Project
TTL	Task Team Leader
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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DATA SHEET

BASIC INFORMATION

Product Information

Project ID	Project Name
P124085	Congo: Forest and Econ. Diversification Project
Country	Financing Instrument
Congo, Republic of	Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category	Revised EA Category
Partial Assessment (B)	Partial Assessment (B)

Organizations

Borrower	Implementing Agency
Congo, Republic of	Ministry of Forest Economy

Project Development Objective (PDO)

Original PDO

The project development objective is to increase the capacity of the Republic of Congo to: (i) promote better implementation of its forestry legislation; and (ii) enhance the policy environment for participation of local communities and the private sector in sustainable forest management and reforestation.

Revised PDO

To increase the capacity of the forest administration, local communities, and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests.

**FINANCING**

	Original Amount (US\$)	Revised Amount (US\$)	Actual Disbursed (US\$)
World Bank Financing			
IDA-51210	10,000,000	9,999,889	9,230,753
TF-A4666	6,509,761	6,509,761	6,433,311
Total	16,509,761	16,509,650	15,664,064
Non-World Bank Financing			
Borrower/Recipient	22,600,000	7,000,000	7,000,000
Total	22,600,000	7,000,000	7,000,000
Total Project Cost	39,109,761	23,509,650	22,664,064

KEY DATES

Approval	Effectiveness	MTR Review	Original Closing	Actual Closing
24-May-2012	27-Mar-2013	24-Jun-2015	30-Nov-2017	30-Jun-2022

RESTRUCTURING AND/OR ADDITIONAL FINANCING

Date(s)	Amount Disbursed (US\$M)	Key Revisions
02-Oct-2015	2.59	Change in Project Development Objectives Change in Results Framework Change in Components and Cost Reallocation between Disbursement Categories Change in Safeguard Policies Triggered Change in Implementation Schedule Other Change(s)
17-Nov-2017	7.87	Change in Loan Closing Date(s)
29-Jun-2021	14.22	Change in Loan Closing Date(s)
04-Mar-2022	14.90	Change in Loan Closing Date(s)

KEY RATINGS

Outcome	Bank Performance	M&E Quality
Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Substantial



RATINGS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN ISRs

No.	Date ISR Archived	DO Rating	IP Rating	Actual Disbursements (US\$M)
01	20-Mar-2013	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	.36
02	03-Nov-2013	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	.93
03	28-Jun-2014	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	1.75
04	13-Feb-2015	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	2.04
05	18-Aug-2015	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	2.53
06	26-Nov-2015	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	2.66
07	11-Mar-2016	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	2.89
08	27-Jul-2016	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	3.79
09	24-Jan-2017	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	5.45
10	24-Jul-2017	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	6.72
11	23-Jan-2018	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	8.51
12	02-Apr-2018	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	9.11
13	05-Nov-2018	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	9.77
14	21-May-2019	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	10.56
15	23-Dec-2019	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	11.43
16	12-Jun-2020	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	12.42
17	10-Dec-2020	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	12.86
18	30-Jun-2021	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	14.22
19	17-Dec-2021	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	14.64
20	29-Jun-2022	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	15.17



SECTORS AND THEMES

Sectors

Major Sector/Sector (%)

Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry 100

Agricultural Extension, Research, and Other Support Activities 3

Public Administration - Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry 77

Forestry 20

Themes

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

Social Development and Protection 0

Social Inclusion 16

Participation and Civic Engagement 16

Urban and Rural Development 0

Rural Development 26

Rural Markets 9

Land Administration and Management 17

Environment and Natural Resource Management 0

Climate change 51

Mitigation 51

Renewable Natural Resources Asset Management 13

Biodiversity 13

Environmental policies and institutions 45

Private Sector Development 100

Jobs 100

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I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

A. CONTEXT AT APPRAISAL

Country Context

1. **When the Forest and Economic Diversification Project (FEDP) was appraised in 2012, the Republic of Congo had recently regained political stability after a long period of civil conflict.** Buoyed by strong oil prices and increased production, gross domestic product (GDP) growth rebounded to 8.8 percent in 2010. The approval of a full debt relief program under the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative had reduced the debt-to-GDP ratio from 89 percent in 2008 to 30 percent in 2011. Oil sector dominance (70 percent of GDP, 85 percent of government revenue, and 90 percent of exports) increased during the civil unrest because it was not directly targeted during the fighting, while other businesses were destroyed. Therefore, economic diversification, private sector-led growth, and employment creation became the key priorities for the Government of the Republic of Congo (GoC).¹ Strong growth potential was identified around four major sectors: transport, agriculture, forestry, and mining. Among these four, agriculture and forestry had the main potential for employment creation. One major challenge, however, was the poor enabling environment for private sector investment and growth.² On the positive side, the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy, and Environment (*Ministère du Développement Durable, de l'Économie Forestière et de l'Environnement, MSDFEE*)³ adopted a number of ambitious policy reforms aimed at improving the operating environment for forest sector enterprises. These included, for example, increasing the transparency in the attribution of timber concessions, strengthening environmental and social impact requirements, and giving local people and indigenous communities more voice in the establishment of forest reserves and protected areas.⁴ The FEDP aimed to consolidate and implement this ambitious policy agenda.

Sector Context

2. **The Republic of Congo lies in the heart of the Congo Basin, and its rainforests cover around 22 million ha, 65 percent of the country's land area.** In 2010, the forestry sector provided 11,000 formal direct jobs—the largest source of formal sector employment after the Government—and a large number of indirect jobs. The official contribution of the forestry sector to national GDP, 4 percent in 2010, did not take into account the many forest products that are harvested for self-consumption and informal trade, including bushmeat (essential for the nutrition of the rural poor), fuelwood and charcoal, building materials, and a wide range of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) used for food and medicine, among

¹The Republic of Congo's 2012–2016 Growth, Employment, and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GEPRS) had ambitious objectives in this regard.

²The country was rated 181 out of 183 countries in the 2012 Doing Business Report in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. 2012. *Doing Business 2012 — Doing Business in a More Transparent World* (<https://archive.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/media/Annual-Reports/English/DB12-FullReport.pdf>, accessed 10/28/2022).

³Note that the ministry in charge of forestry went through various name changes and reorganizations during project preparation and implementation. For the sake of simplicity, the term 'Ministry/Minister of Forest Economy' (MFE) is used in the document, unless the respective statement refers to a specific point in time or institutional arrangement. For an overview of the changes in name and responsibility, refer to annex 6.

⁴See the International Monetary Fund and World Bank 2010 HIPC Completion Report for further details on these policy reforms at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/199261468247277516/pdf/526350PCD0P087101Official0Use0Only1.pdf>.



other uses. Nor were local and global environmental services included. The Republic of Congo led Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of sustainable forest management indicators, with low annual deforestation rates (0.07 percent), 50 percent of forest concessions with approved management plans, and 2.5 million ha certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, enhancing access to the attractive European Union (EU) timber market. The Republic of Congo is not densely populated and afforestation of low-productivity savannah lands, which are of limited interest for biodiversity conservation, can serve regional charcoal and other wood product markets. Agroforestry technologies (planting trees among food crops) were to be expanded to enhance soil fertility and food production, both important in a country that imports most of its food.

3. **The forest sector in its wider land use context.** With 65 percent of the country covered by rainforests, there were—and still are—trade-offs between forestry and other land uses, especially with agriculture and mining.⁵ At the time of project preparation, the Republic of Congo had started positioning itself as a provider of environmental services in emerging global markets resulting from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) mechanism for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) and was actively involved in the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF).⁶ The MSDFEE, the parent ministry for the proposed forestry project, appeared well-placed to play a key role in the management of these land use trade-offs, combining its responsibility for forestry and nature conservation with its statutory role in environmental impact assessment—with regulations strengthened under HIPC—and in the development of environmental services provision. MSDFEE was also to play a leading role in the recently created Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee (IMCC) for resolving issues related to conflicting land uses in natural ecosystems, under the aegis of the Presidency's Land Use Planning Agency.⁷

4. **FEDP.** The World Bank approved a Technical Assistance Loan (TAL) of US\$10 million for the FEDP in April 2012. According to the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), TALs are used to build capacity in entities directly concerned with implementing policies, strategies, and reforms that promote economic and social development. They also build capacity related to public sector reform and preparation, implementation, and maintenance of investments. The combination of capacity-building and technical assistance activities with the policy reform elements in the project made the FEDP particularly suitable for a TAL. The only other lending instrument considered, a Specific Investment Loan (SIL), was discarded because the operation did not invest money directly in forest management and reforestation but focused on capacity building and technical assistance. Originally, the FEDP had a considerable government counterpart contribution of US\$22.6 million, accounting for nearly 70 percent of the project budget.⁸

⁵ In the Republic of Congo, the potential deforestation due to mining is considerable, especially in the later exploitation phases of planned large iron mines, which tend to rely on hydropower development, see Hund, Kirsten, Carole Megevand, Edilene Pereira Gomes, Marta Miranda, and Erik Reed. 2013. *Deforestation Trends in the Congo Basin: Reconciling Economic Growth and Forest Protection*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16617>.

⁶ The FCPF is a World Bank-hosted program that enables developing countries to be paid for conserving or restoring forests that store carbon and help mitigate the impact of climate change.

⁷ The IMCC was established under the authority of the Prime Minister, but his office was subsequently abolished, which blocked the operationalization of the IMCC.

⁸ This reflected the ample fiscal space available to the Government due to high oil prices and was common practice for the World Bank portfolio at the time. For example, the Water and Urban Development Project (PEDU), approved in March 2010, had a US\$100 million government contribution for a US\$25.5 million loan, equivalent to nearly 80 percent of the total PEDU budget.



5. **Government strategies.** The FEDP was aligned with a number of the Republic of Congo's forest sector strategies, including the National Program for Afforestation and Reforestation (*Programme National pour l’Afforestation et le Reboisement*, PRONAR) launched in 2010, the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process with the EU,⁹ the independent nongovernmental organization (NGO) observer for the forest sector (Resource Extraction Monitor/Forest Monitor), and the ministry's support program for developing and implementing sustainable forest management plans with the French Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement*, AFD). In its promotion of cross-sectoral land use planning, the FEDP was also in line with the Regional Program on REDD+ of the Central African Forest Commission, which focused on improving capacities for forest carbon stock measurements and counted the Republic of Congo among its most active members, and with the country's evolving national climate change (including REDD+) strategy.¹⁰

Rationale for Bank Involvement

6. **The World Bank has considerable experience working in post-conflict countries with a high level of risk with weak institutions and capacity.** Therefore, it appeared to be well-placed to provide an integrated set of support to promote improved sector governance, institutional strengthening, and private sector development, drawing on global sound practices and experiences in other countries. The potential for the forest sector to contribute to economic growth and diversification as well as employment creation responded to key priorities of the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS). Moreover, the World Bank's support to the development of other sectors with strong impacts on the forest sector, such as mining and agriculture, and the World Bank's strong interest in supporting forest-based emission reduction programs in the Republic of Congo made the World Bank's involvement particularly desirable. Finally, the World Bank had considerable experience supporting governments in the preparation and implementation of large forest and environmental programs that require coordination and integration of projects from several development partners (for example, AFD, EU, and Food and Agricultural Organization [FAO]).

Higher Level Objectives to which the Project Contributes

7. **In addition to the CPS, the proposed project was to contribute to the goals of the Republic of Congo's 2012 GEPRS Paper, which included pillars for improved governance, promotion of growth, and creation of employment.** As stated in the GEPRS Paper and CPS at the time, "a key policy challenge for the Republic of Congo is to use its oil wealth to build a more diversified and competitive economy, thereby improving social outcomes and reducing poverty." The project was also designed to build on the momentum created by the completion of the HPIC reforms, which included actions for improved, more transparent forest management, in two specific ways: (a) by generating forest sector reform proposals for the High-Level Forum for Public-Private Sector Dialogue established under the World Bank's Support to

⁹ A key element of the FLEGT Action Plan is a voluntary scheme to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported to the EU from countries agreeing to take part in this scheme. The FLEGT process leads to a voluntary partnership agreement (VPA) between the supplier country and the EU that describes country-specific processes for legality verification. The VPA came into effect from March 1, 2013. See, for example, <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/flegt.htm>. Congo's and <https://flegtvpafacility.org/countries/republic-congo/background/>.

¹⁰ See, for example, the Republic of Congo's second national communication to the UNFCCC, submitted in 2009, at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/SNC_Republic%20of%20Congo.pdf.



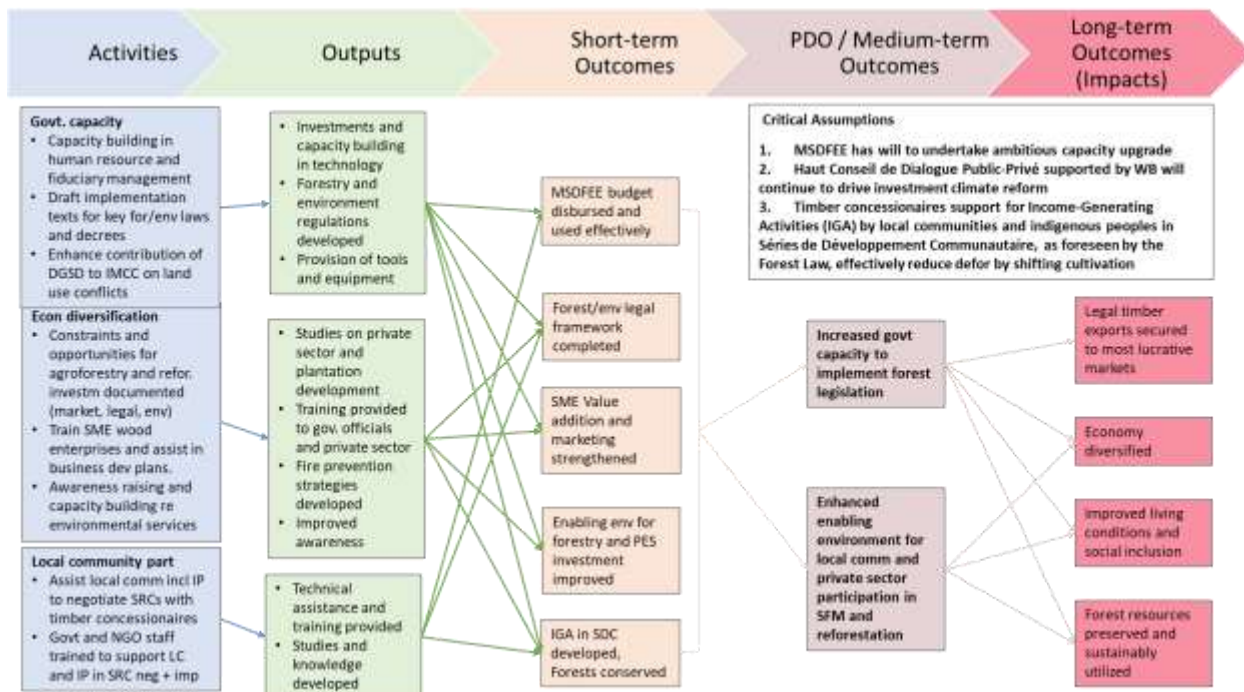
Economic Diversification Project (SEDP) and (b) by improving public expenditure management, building on the achievements of the Transparency and Governance Capacity Building Project (TGCBP).¹¹

Theory of Change (Results Chain)

8. The project’s initial Theory of Change (Figure 1) was not made explicit in the PAD, but can be derived from the Project Development Objective (PDO), outcomes, components, and description of activities in the PAD. The project was designed to achieve two medium-term outcomes (that is, the two parts of the PDO, paragraph 0 below): (a) increased government capacity to implement the Republic of Congo’s forest legislation and (b) an enhanced enabling environment for participation of local communities and the private sector in sustainable forest management and reforestation.

9. These two medium-term outcomes were to be achieved through five short-term outcomes: (a) full disbursement and effective use of the MSDFEE budget; (b) completion of the forestry and environment legal framework; (c) strengthening of value addition and marketing of timber small and medium enterprises (SMEs); (d) improvement of the enabling environment for investment in sustainable forestry and payment for environmental services; and (e) development of income-generating activities in local community zones in forest concessions and forests conserved. The revised Theory of Change following the Level 1 restructuring in 2015 is discussed in section I.B.

Figure 1. Implicit Theory of Change at Appraisal



Note: SDC = Community Development Zones (*Séries de Développement Communautaire*)

¹¹ The SEDP (P118561) was approved by the World Bank Board for a loan of US\$19 million in December 2010 while the TGCBP (P101981) was approved in March 2007 for a credit of US\$7 million.



Project Development Objectives (PDOs)

10. The PDO was “to increase the capacity of the Republic of Congo to: (i) promote better implementation of its forestry legislation; and (ii) enhance the policy environment for participation of local communities and the private sector in sustainable forest management and reforestation.” The indirect wording of the PDO (“increase the capacity to” rather than achieving forest sector objectives directly) was in line with the nature of the project, funded through a TAL rather than a SIL.

Key Expected Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

11. The key indicators linked to the outcomes specified in the PDO statement above were as follows:

- (a) Promote better implementation of forestry legislation
 - (i) Percentage of timber exports covered by a Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) legality license (measured annually, based on reports from the Independent Observer for the FLEGT initiative).¹²
- (b) Enhance the policy environment for local community and private sector participation in forestry
 - (i) Number of forest-related policy reform proposals tabled in the High-Level Forum for Public-Private Sector Dialogue (measured annually based on published reports of the High-Level Forum)¹³
 - (ii) Number of communities having participated in the elaboration of participatory development plans for the community development zones inside forest concessions (number of communities)
 - (iii) Direct project beneficiaries (number), of which are female (%) (World Bank Core Indicator).

Components

12. The project was organized in three components as follows:

Component 1: Capacity building and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy, and Environment (MSDFEE), (original allocation: US\$20.1 million IDA, actual cost: US\$12.2 million), including the following activities:

- Upgrade the MSDFEE’s financial and human resource management systems and train staff to use new systems as well as in results-based management.
- Strengthen the Forestry and Nature Conservation Regulatory Framework.

¹² The independent observer function of the forestry sector in Congo was ensured by the NGOs Resource Extraction Monitor and Forest Monitor, funded by the EU.

¹³ The Government was committed to publish the reports of the High-Level Forum as part of the World-Bank-funded SEDP. see paragraph 7.



- Strengthen environmental management (regulatory framework. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment [ESIA] guidelines for sectors other than forestry) and train General Directorate of Environment (*Direction Générale de l'Environnement*, DGE) staff in the ESIA and Environmental Management Plan monitoring.
- Strengthen the General Directorate for Sustainable Development (*Direction Générale du Développement Durable*, DGDD), including carrying out studies to enable an active and effective role for the MSDFEE in the IMCC on conflicting land uses in natural ecosystems.
- Support the project's management and coordination and build its capacity regarding procurement, financial management (FM), safeguards, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) through technical advisory services, training, acquisition of goods, and payment of operating costs.

Component 2: Improving the enabling environment for private sector and smallholder activities in the forest sector (original allocation: US\$8.6 million IDA; actual cost: not applicable, component dropped), including the following activities:

- **Afforestation and reforestation.** Diagnostic studies to identify constraints to investments and appropriate legislative and regulatory measures, market studies, development of a national afforestation and reforestation program based on economically viable plantation models, and development of procedures and criteria for consultations with local communities and indigenous peoples.
- **Support to forest SMEs.** Reinforcement of the timber artisans training program in Pointe-Noire (followed by extension of the program to Brazzaville); implementation of a participatory study with artisans and SMEs to identify opportunities for technical and marketing improvements and formalization; and design of an environmentally sustainable strategy for the development of endangered NTFPs that are in high demand, such as *Gnetum africanum*¹⁴ and rattan canes.
- **Environmental services.** Capacity building of both private sector and NGO environmental services project developers and government agencies to oversee such projects; technical assistance to local communities for engaging in environmental services project proposals, and studies and consultations necessary to finalize the Republic of Congo's REDD+ strategy and implementation framework.

Component 3: Enhancing the participation of local and indigenous communities in forest management (original allocation: US\$3.9 million IDA; actual cost: US\$5.0 million), including the following activities:

- **Technical assistance to communities** in the design of social responsibility contracts and management plans for community development zones within forest concessions and to enhance the capacity of community development councils to conduct negotiations of such contracts and plans.

¹⁴ *Gnetum africanum* (English: eru; French: koko) is a native tree species in tropical coastal Western Africa and is widely used for food, medical, and cultural purposes. https://apps.worldagroforestry.org/treedb/AFTPDFS/Gnetum_africanum.PDF.



- **Conducting of information campaigns**, designed to promote awareness among local communities of their rights and responsibilities relating to participation and benefit sharing in forest management, and enhancement of negotiation skills of said communities.
- **Training of government and NGO staff** in forest management planning procedures and negotiations and monitoring of social responsibility contracts and forest management plans.
- **Conducting of a study** to review and clarify the forest regulatory framework with regard to local community participation, as needed.

B. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES DURING IMPLEMENTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

13. **The project underwent one Level 1 restructuring in 2015 and three Level 2 restructurings in 2017, 2021, and 2022 (Table 1).** After initial experience with project implementation with low disbursements and implementation progress ratings, a Level 1 restructuring was approved in October 2015, changing the PDO and some of the PDO indicators and eliminating the fixed ratio between IDA and government counterpart funding of 30.7/69.3 percent.¹⁵ Additionally, the 2015 restructuring (a) simplified the project, (b) cancelled the economic diversification component, and (c) dropped the activities planned for the DGE (which had moved to a different ministry).¹⁶

14. **When additional financing of a US\$6.5 million grant was obtained from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in May 2017, a protected areas management component and a project management component were added and the closing date was extended.**¹⁷ This led to a Level 2 restructuring in November 2017. The PDO was not changed. The two main reasons for the decision to process the GEF grant as an AF rather than a new, free-standing project were (a) the FEDP Project Implementation Unit (PIU), which at that time had strong FM and procurement capacity, was playing a key role in the implementation of the FCPF REDD+ Readiness grant process and this allowed synergies between the two and (b) World Bank management discouraged new small projects at the time.¹⁸ Two more Level 2 restructurings (closing date extensions) were completed in June 2021 and March 2022 to enable the Government to complete implementation of the delayed project activities.

Table 1. Restructuring Timeline

No.	Date	Type	Main Changes	Comments
1	October 2015	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New PDO • New indicators • Changes in financing structure • Components revised 	This restructuring aimed at simplifying the project structure and better aligning the project activities with changes in the Government structure.
2	September 2017	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date extension to March 2018 	To allow completion of remaining IDA-funded activities
3	November	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AF from the GEF 	Scope of the project changed from

¹⁵ The Financing Agreements of most World Bank projects in the Republic of Congo prepared from 2010 to 2012 had fixed ratios with larger counterpart funding than IDA contributions, reflecting the ample fiscal space afforded to the Government by high oil prices and the desire of the Government to ensure that its funds would be used effectively and efficiently, using the World Bank's procurement and FM rules. After oil prices declined in 2014, the World Bank's Country Management Unit engaged in project restructurings to eliminate these ratios to allow projects to continue to disburse.

¹⁶ See additional details in section 'Rationale for Changes', in paragraphs 23 and 24.

¹⁷ The GEF grant was provided under the Global Wildlife Program.

¹⁸ Assessment based on personal communication of the ICR team with the task team leader at the time.



No.	Date	Type	Main Changes	Comments
	2017		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of habitat and biodiversity conservation and project management components • Closing date extension to July 2021 	forest sector business development to protected areas management; the emphasis on supporting livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities remained unchanged.
4	June 2021	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date extension to March 2022 	To allow completion of remaining project activities.
5	March 2022	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing date extension to June 2022 	To allow completion of remaining project activities.

15. **The nature of the FEDP changed notably with the November 2017 restructuring, changing it from an IDA-funded forest sector project focusing on improving forest concession management and forest-related business development to a GEF-funded protected area management project, albeit with a similar emphasis on income-generating activities for local communities.** Therefore, it is helpful to think of the FEDP as consisting of two distinct phases: (a) the first phase covering the IDA-funded forestry sector investment, including support for local communities in forest concessions, which was implemented from 2013 to 2018, with a Level 1 restructuring occurring in 2015 to simplify the project and eliminate the government counterpart funding obligation; and (b) the second phase, implementing a protected areas management investment, including income-generating activities for local communities and indigenous peoples, from 2018 to 2022. The commonalities between the two phases were the investments in (a) institutional strengthening (equipment, information and management systems, and training) benefiting the forest authorities at the central and departmental levels in the first phase and the wildlife authorities during the second phase; and (b) income-generating activities of local communities and indigenous peoples near forest concessions and protected areas in both phases. The details of the respective restructurings and the underlying reasons for carrying them through are summarized in the following paragraphs (see also Table 1).

Revised PDOs and Outcome Targets

16. **The PDO was simplified in 2015 to read “to increase the capacity of the forest administration, local communities, and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests.”** The reference to improving the enabling environment for private sector investment was eliminated. The outcome targets and indicators of the project were also revised in line with the PDO change, as detailed in the next section.¹⁹

Revised PDO Indicators

17. **As part of the 2015 Level 1 restructuring, the Results Framework was also revised: two of the four PDO indicators were dropped, two were slightly modified; and two new PDO outcome indicators were added, both related to the restructured Component 1 (Error! Reference source not found.).** It should be noted that the two new PDO indicators are not really ‘outcome’ indicators, as they refer to some of the means by which the client ministry attempts to achieve its sector objectives (access to up-to-date information and field missions) rather than to the ends that it tries to reach, formulated as quantitative or qualitative targets related to these sector objectives.

¹⁹ <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/802341468188954681/congo-republic-of-forest-and-economic-diversification-project-restructuring>.



Table 2. PDO indicators - 2015 Revision

Original Indicator	2015 Indicator	Comment
Percentage of timber exports covered by a Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) legality license	Dropped	Activities related to the formal private sector development were dropped and the indicator became moot.
Number of forest-related policy reform proposals tabled in the High-Level Forum for Public-Private Sector Dialogue	Dropped	Activities related to the formal private sector development were dropped and the indicator became moot.
Number of communities having participated in the elaboration of participatory development plans for the community development zones inside forest concessions	Forest area with simplified management plans under implementation	Simplified indicator
Direct project beneficiaries (number), of which are female (%)	(a) Direct project beneficiaries (b) Female project beneficiaries	Corporate-level guidance on the formulation of core indicators had changed.
n.a.	New indicator: Percentage of agents of the decentralized forest administration with access to up-to-date information and data	Introduced to measure the revised focus of the component.
n.a.	New indicator: Increase in field missions for control and sensitization purposes by the departmental forestry directorates, including by brigades	Introduced to measure the revised focus of the component.

18. **Extensive changes were made to the intermediate results indicators**, as summarized in annex 4. Many of the new intermediate results indicators covered similar issues, but were less specific than the original intermediate results indicators, for example, ‘Local communities and indigenous peoples in forest concession areas are aware of their legal and customary rights and obligations under the forest code’ was replaced with a new indicator ‘People sensitized during information campaigns’. The dropping of the indicator on Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) was necessitated by the transfer of the DGE to a different ministry.

Revised Components Subsequent to Level 1 Restructuring in 2015

19. **In the Level 1 restructuring in 2015, the project components were revised as follows:**

- **Component 1**, originally named ‘Capacity building and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment’ was renamed ‘Capacity building of the Forest Administration’. A number of activities were dropped, including the strengthening of environmental management (following the transfer of the General Directorate of Environment from the MSDFEE to a different ministry) and the DGDD.²⁰

²⁰ The DGDD was to play a leading role in the IMCC on conflicting land uses in natural ecosystems, see paragraph 3.



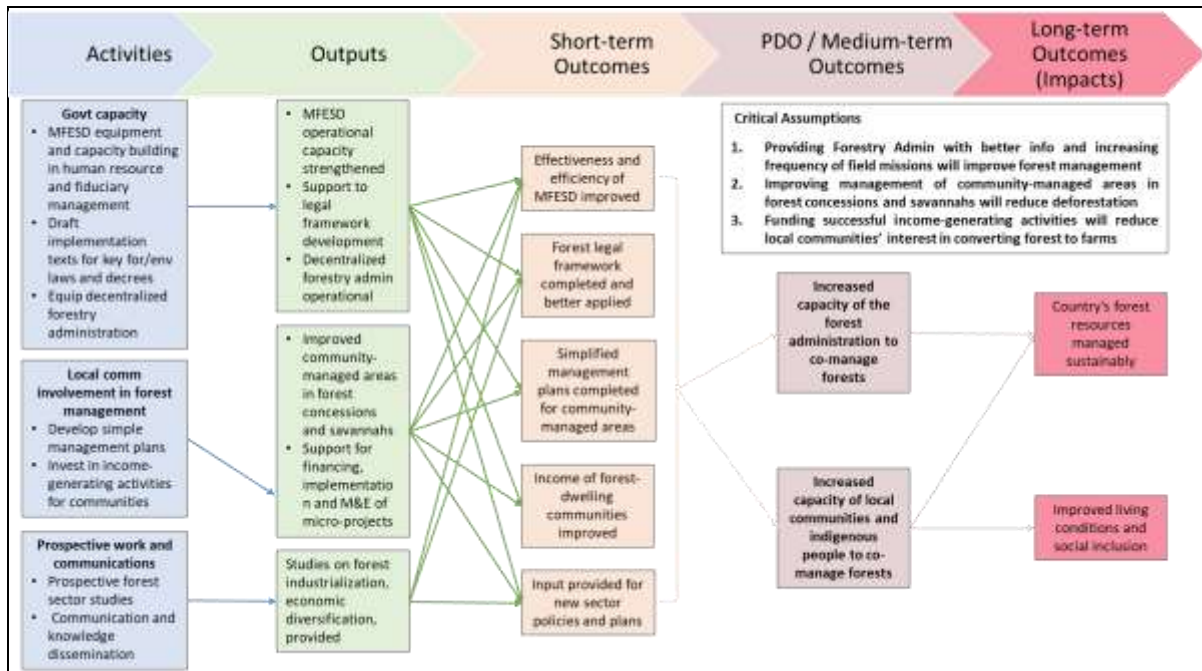
- **The original Component 2**, ‘Improving the enabling environment for private sector and smallholder (forestry) investment and operations’, was dropped, though some prospective studies related to this topic were included in the new Component 3.
- **The new Component 2**, ‘Involvement of local communities and indigenous people in forest resource management’, covered issues similar to those included in the original Component 3, ‘Enhancing the participation of local and indigenous communities in forest management’, but instead of promoting the co-management of local community development zones in forest concessions by facilitating the negotiation of Social Responsibility Contracts²¹ (SRC) with the concessionaires, the project switched to implementing income-generating activities in these zones directly—effectively turning the project from a TAL into a SIL. This change also triggered changes in safeguards (see paragraphs 71 to 73).
- **The new Component 3** ‘Prospective work and communications’ focused on ‘producing strategic knowledge for reorientation of forest sector development as a key input to the country’s economic diversification strategy, and rethinking the ministry’s internal and external communications’. The topics for the prospective studies under Component 3 covered some of the themes of the original Component 2 (now dropped), including improving the contribution of the forestry and wildlife sector to the economy, industrialization of the forest sector, and the involvement of the forest sector in national land use planning.

20. **Figure 2 presents an implicit Theory of Change based on project documentation.** The revised Theory of Change was not presented in the restructuring paper.

²¹ SRCs were a key element in the forest policy and legal reforms promoted by the World Bank in various Central African countries, including Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the 1990's and 2000's, with encouraging results in terms of private forest concessions' contributions to local socio-economic development. See: Topa, Giuseppe, Alain Karsenty, Carole Megevand, and Laurent Debroux. 2009. *The Rainforests of Cameroon: Experience and Evidence from a Decade of Reform*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/134871468010898097/The-rainforests-of-Cameroon-experience-and-evidence-from-a-decade-of-reform>."



Figure 2. Implicit Theory of Change after Restructurings



Changes Made during the Second and Subsequent Level 2 Restructurings

21. The following additional changes were made during the second and subsequent restructurings:

- **New Components 4** ‘Habitat and biodiversity conservation’ and 5 ‘Project management’ were added, funded by a US\$6.51 million grant provided by the GEF in May 2017 (see paragraph 14). A new PDO indicator ‘Area brought under enhanced biodiversity protection’ and two intermediate indicators were added (see annex 1).
- **Closing date extensions.** (a) September 2017: extension to March 2018 to allow for implementation of delayed activities funded by the IDA grant, (b) November 2017: extension to July 2021 (with the GEF-funded AF), (c) June 2021: extension to March 2022, and (d) March 2022: extension to June 2022.

Other Changes

22. To support the Government in project implementation given its low capacity, the project recruited service providers (mostly local NGOs) to implement specific activities, particularly at the community level. These service providers played a key role particularly in implementing the GEF AF, most notably in the form of agreements with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to support their management of two national parks.

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

23. According to the 2015 restructuring paper, the rationale for the Level 1 restructuring was threefold: (a) the overall project design was complex, (b) numerous activities were outside the mandate



of the Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development (MEFDD), and (c) some of the project's PDO results indicators were beyond the control of the project. It was argued that the dropping of the original Component 2, 'Improving the enabling environment for private sector and smallholder (forestry) investment and operations' was necessary 'because it was largely focused on the private sector—a sector the MEFDD has no purview over'.²² The latter change eliminated the economic diversification element of the project. Nevertheless, the project remained relevant to the Government's forestry sector policy objectives. The restructuring paper did not mention the elimination of the Government's obligation to disburse the remainder of the counterpart funding (CFAF 7.8 billion or about US\$15.6 million, almost half of the original project budget), in the rationale for the restructuring—though this reduction of the budget by itself would have necessitated the elimination of many activities. For the Theory of Change, see Figure 2.

24. **The 2017 GEF AF gave rise to the addition of Component 4 'Habitat and biodiversity conservation' and Component 5 'Project management' as well as a new PDO Indicator 'Area brought under enhanced biodiversity management (hectares)'**. Other PDO indicators were left unchanged. While the project shifted its attention from forest concessions to protected areas management, its emphasis on supporting the livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities remained.

II. OUTCOME

A. RELEVANCE OF PDOs

Assessment of Relevance of PDOs and Rating

Rating: Substantial

25. **The project's development objective was highly relevant for achieving the Government's development goals at appraisal (see section I.A.).** After the Level 1 restructuring in 2015 eliminated the economic diversification element, the project's relevance remained substantial until completion. The FEDP contributed to the sub-program 'Management of Production Forests' of the Republic of Congo's National Development Plan for 2012–2016 and for 2018–2022.²³ As noted in the PAD, the country's 2012–2016 GEPRS included ambitious objectives for economic diversification, private sector-led growth, and employment creation, with forestry being one of four sectors prioritized (see paragraph 0 above). The PAD also noted that the Republic of Congo has rich forests and large areas of savannah land suitable for re-/afforestation, creating opportunities for growth and poverty reduction from sustainable management of these resources, but that poor resource management jeopardizes long-term development in the forest sector.

26. **The project objectives also contributed significantly to the World Bank's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for the Republic of Congo for FY2020 to FY2024.**²⁴ The CPF highlights the need for reducing vulnerability through stronger economic management and economic diversification and notes that the forest sector, which has historically played an important role in the Republic of Congo's economy,

²² <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/802341468188954681/congo-republic-of-forest-and-economic-diversification-project-restructuring>.

²³ *Gouvernement du Congo 2022, Rapport de Clôture et de capitalisation du projet forêt et développement économique* (PDFDE).

²⁴ World Bank. 2019. Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for the Republic of Congo for the Period FY20–FY24, Report No. 126962-CG. World Bank: Washington, DC.



offers great potential for growth and poverty alleviation. CPF Objective 2.4 (Improved Sustainable Management of Natural Resources) emphasizes the contribution of the FEDP to better manage forest resources and improve livelihoods, as well as better protect biodiversity of global importance across 427,000 ha.

B. ACHIEVEMENT OF PDOs (EFFICACY)

Overall Rating: Substantial

Assessment of Achievement of Each Objective/Outcome

27. **The initial PDO was “to increase the capacity of the Republic of Congo to: (i) promote better implementation of its forestry legislation; and (ii) enhance the policy environment for participation of local communities and the private sector in sustainable forest management and reforestation.”** While the focus of the initial PDO was on strengthening government capacity, these are two clearly distinct objectives, which need to be assessed separately.

28. **The 2015 Level 1 restructuring led to a revised PDO, and the project changed from a TAL to a SIL.** The revised PDO was “to increase the capacity of the forest administration, local communities, and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests.”²⁵ The revised PDO can also be construed as comprising two distinct objectives: one focusing on strengthening government capacity and the other on strengthening the capacities of local communities and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests. The extent to which these objectives were achieved because of project activities is evaluated separately based on evidence collected through the Results Framework and additional information. A split rating is calculated in paragraph 36 on page 21 for the efficacy before and after the Level 1 project restructuring. Details on the individual indicators of the Results Framework are provided in annex 1. In summary, the FEDP reached 22,781 direct beneficiaries by project completion, significantly surpassing its target of 15,000. Project beneficiaries include ministerial staff at the policy decision-making level, technical staff, scientists, civil society groups, and communities in forest concession areas and savannah areas where income-generating activities were supported. Around 50 percent of the beneficiaries in local communities were women. Details on the achieved results are available in Annex 1, including in the comment section of each indicator.

Initial PDO Objective 1: Promote better implementation of forestry legislation

Rating: Modest

29. **At appraisal, the Government had just adopted a number of ambitious policy and regulatory reforms to increase transparency and law enforcement in the forestry sector.** However, there was still a need to further amend the forestry legal framework to add implementation decrees and codify the Government’s commitments under the VPA, among other activities. Under the initial PDO, the scope of this objective was cross-sectoral, recognizing that the threats to sustainable use of forest resources and the risk of increasing forest-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mainly originated outside the forestry sector, especially from mining and agriculture. These objectives were achieved only partially;

²⁵ Note that the second PDO abandons the notion of enhancing the enabling environment for private sector forestry, which was a key part of the Government’s and the World Bank’s economic diversification agenda.



largely due to changes in the counterpart organization (see section B. KEY FACTORS DURING IMPLEMENTATION).

Revised PDO Objective 1: Increase the capacity of the forest administration to co-manage forests

Rating: Substantial

30. **After the Level 1 restructuring, the pace of implementation and disbursement picked up.** The scope of PDO objective 1 was reduced to three areas of focus: (a) establishment of information and project management systems, (b) enhancement of the regulatory framework for forests, and (c) supply of equipment to the forest administration field offices. Significant investments were made from the IDA loan in the establishment and training for new information management systems in the ministry. Unfortunately, none of these systems appears to be operational any longer, although they had been designed with the full participation of ministry staff and some of them had provided encouraging results early on.²⁶ The second set of activities concerned the enhancement of the forest regulatory framework. In 2015-16, the project funded a consortium of two international service providers to support the formulation of a new forest law, which included emerging themes like climate change, REDD+, and the VPA-FLEGT, as well as new sustainable forest management rules. Furthermore, the FEDP supported the elaboration of implementation texts for the new forest law, as well as procedure manuals for various agencies, through a consultative process involving the government, civil society organizations, and financial and technical partners. Despite the validation of the forest law and its implementation texts by the ministry in charge of forests in April 2016, none of these legal texts were promulgated at the time, and the forest law was only adopted by the Government in July 2020. Under the third set of activities, the project provided new or rehabilitated buildings and equipment to the Departmental Directorates (for example, 4 x 4 vehicles and motorbikes, as well as IT, office, and field equipment). According to the Government's project completion report,²⁷ the increased mobility of the Departmental Directorates led to significant increases in revenue collection, totaling almost CFAF 236 million (US\$480,000).²⁸ Unfortunately, many of the vehicles appear to be no longer usable, as there has been no government budget for maintenance and repairs.

31. **A new Component 3 was formulated as part of the 2015 restructuring to carry out prospective forest sector studies and strengthen the ministry's communications.**²⁹ The prospective studies included, among others, a study on the operationalization of PRONAR, an analysis of the institutional capacity strengthening needs of the MEFDD³⁰ at the central and local levels (including an implementation plan), a REDD+ Project Idea Note (PIN) for northern Congo, and a study on the constraints faced by timber companies in applying the new forest regulatory framework adopted as part of the implementation of the VPA with the EU. Of these studies, only the analysis of institutional capacity strengthening needs was translated into activities financed by the FEDP. Additionally, the REDD+ PIN for northern Congo led to the formulation of an Emission Reductions Purchase Agreements (ERPAs) with the FCPF, which were signed

²⁶ See discussion under the Lessons Learned and Recommendations section.

²⁷ MEFDD. 2022. *Rapport de Clôture et de Capitalisation du Projet Forêt et Diversification Economique (PFDE)*.

²⁸ These revenue increases were spread over eight Department Forest Economy Directorates (DDEFs), with the two DDEFs of Niari and Cuvette accounting for almost two-thirds of the total increase (see Government of Congo 2022, page 73). However, the Government report does not clarify the time periods or baselines for the data provided.

²⁹ Some of these studies concerned topics that were formerly included as project-funded activities under the government capacity strengthening activities of Component 1, for example, the operationalization of PRONAR and innovative institutional arrangements to take into account sustainable management of forest resources in cross-sectoral land use planning.

³⁰ The MSDFEE was renamed in 2014.



in April 2021 for 8,359,000 tCO₂e at a price of US\$5 per ton with a potential gross revenue of US\$41.8 million.³¹

32. **After the AF of US\$6.5 million from the GEF in 2017, the emphasis of the FEDP activities switched from forest administration to wildlife and protected areas management, including systems and tools to combat wildlife crime.** Implementation of the GEF grant started in March 2018. As a result, the management effectiveness of the Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park (*Parc National Nouabalé-Ndoki*, PNNN) and the newly established Ntokou-Pikounda National Park (*Parc National Ntokou-Pikounda*, PNNP), covering 427,000 ha, was significantly improved, thus enhancing biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration.³²

33. **The project financed delegated management contracts with the WWF in the PNNP and the WCS in the PNNN for the management of these national parks.** It also funded the building or rehabilitating of park rangers' dwellings as well as control posts and storage rooms, and reinforced the capacity of the park authorities to control poaching. This was achieved through the provision of field equipment and training in wildlife law enforcement, elaboration of wildlife legal and regulatory texts, and establishment of a Criminal Records Management System (CRMS) and a specialized sniffer dogs team to find illegal wildlife produce hidden in vehicles and buildings. As a result, the population of gorillas has increased in the PNNP and substantial quantities of carbon are expected to be sequestered in both parks.

Initial PDO Objective 2: Enhance the policy environment for local community and private sector participation in forestry

Rating: Negligible

34. **The activities planned under this part of the PDO included support for the implementation of PRONAR, for small- and medium-scale forest enterprises, and for the development of environmental services.** These activities were never implemented, though some of them were recast after the Level 1 restructuring in 2015 as prospective studies under the revised Component 3 (see paragraph 31 above).

Revised PDO Objective 2: Increase the capacity of local communities and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests

Rating: Substantial

35. **Under this objective, there were two sets of activities: (a) preparation of simplified management plans (*Plans simples de gestion*; PSGs) for the community development zones (*'Séries de Développement Communautaire'*) in forest concessions and for community-controlled areas (*'terroirs villageois'*) in the savannah and (b) priority investments for income-generating activities.**³³ For activity (a), the NGO 'Terre sans Frontières - Twitézimbéré' was recruited to work with the communities to

³¹ See the signed ERPA at https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/system/files/documents/Revised%20ER-PD_English_0.pdf.

³² The score of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) for the newly established PNNN increased from 26 at the start of the AF to 73 at the end, largely surpassing the target of 40. A GHG analysis carried out with EX-ACT applied at completion suggests that the project would help reduce emissions of about 23.8 million tCO₂e over 20 years—nearly 15 times the quantity expected at the AF stage (1.6 million tCO₂e), see details in annex 4.

³³ Before the restructuring, the formulation of PSGs was included in Component 3. The original Component 3, however, did not include direct investment in income-generating activities for local communities and indigenous peoples. Rather, it focused on strengthening the capacity of local communities and indigenous peoples to negotiate the social responsibility contracts (SRCs) of the forest concession contracts stipulated by the new forest regulatory framework and to manage the sums due to them as part of these SRCs.



develop PSGs through a participatory process. A total of 15 PSGs were developed and subsequently validated by the forestry administration, covering a total area of 117,500 ha. The PSGs, which are both land use planning and socioeconomic development tools, also serve the elaboration of development plans at a higher departmental level. Under activity (b), the capacities of government services and NGOs were strengthened to support local communities and indigenous peoples in preparing and implementing the PSGs and income-generating activities. Local communities and indigenous peoples were also trained to operationalize the Community Management and Development Committees established in the project area, negotiate and monitor social responsibility contracts with forest concessions,³⁴ and implement income-generating activities. There was a strong interest in the community investments, including honey production and cocoa cultivation in areas where it was impossible to cultivate staple crops such as bananas due to repeated wildlife damage. The cost-benefit analysis (CBA) (see paragraph 41) confirmed that these activities were highly profitable for the 1,200 households involved.³⁵

Justification of Overall Efficacy Rating

36. **The FEDP achieved nearly all of its planned results and exceeded quite a few of them, sometimes by a substantial margin, for example, for the number of direct beneficiaries, the protected area management effectiveness scores, and carbon sequestration.**³⁶ Efficacy is therefore rated Substantial. However, the overall outcome rating needs to take into account the first, less successful phase of project implementation before the Level 1 restructuring, by calculating a ‘split rating’. Knowing that the project disbursed US\$2.59 million before the Level 1 restructuring, when the project was rated Moderately Unsatisfactory (3), and US\$13.0 million after the restructuring, when the project was rated Moderately Satisfactory (4), gives a weighted average score of 3.83, which is rounded up to 4, Moderately Satisfactory, for the overall Outcome Rating (see Table 6).

37. **The project contributed to improving the institutional capacity of the forestry and wildlife administration at both central and decentralized levels, improved biodiversity protection in two national parks (one of which was newly established) covering 427,000 ha, and supported income-generating activities that were enthusiastically adopted by local communities and indigenous peoples.** The long-term development outcome, especially of institutional capacity strengthening activities, however, appears to be uncertain. Due to a lack of government funds for maintenance and repair, the vehicles and the computerized management systems established through the project seem to have been abandoned since.³⁷ Similar concerns exist about the sustainability of some of the institutional strengthening results in the wildlife sector. For example, no exit strategy was devised for maintaining the wildlife crime sniffer dog brigade after the project, despite many efforts by the project and the World Bank team to find a solution.

C. EFFICIENCY

Rating: Substantial

³⁴ As noted earlier, at appraisal, because the project was a TAL and not a SIL with direct investments, it focused on enabling local communities to increase the benefits derived from SRCs of forest concession contracts.

³⁵ Though no formal beneficiary survey was carried out, this was also confirmed during implementation support missions.

³⁶ See details in annex 1.

³⁷ It has to be noted here that due to the GEF AF obtained in 2017, the FEDP Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) parts on the IDA investments has the (unusual) benefit of hindsight, being written almost five years after the IDA-funded capacity strengthening activities were concluded.



38. **The project efficiency is assessed based on two criteria:** economic analysis and aspects of design and implementation.

Economic Analysis

39. **Partial economic analyses of the project were conducted at the appraisal and AF stages.** At appraisal, the PAD estimated only the potential gains for the MSDFEE due to assumed reductions in procurement inefficiencies and qualitatively described other economic benefits, for example, enhanced tax revenues due to the establishment of a timber certification system, increased value added from existing timber production, and improved timber exports to European markets. At the AF stage, a CBA showed that certain agroforestry practices (for example, cocoa-bananas and other mixed systems) were beneficial for farmers. At completion, the wide variety of practices adopted and the lack of data for many of them prevented a full economic analysis of the entire project. This section presents: a cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) of the project, the results of a CBA for representative land uses, and an estimation of the carbon benefits provided by the project. Annex 5 provides a description of the project benefits, the assumptions for the CBA, and an incremental cost analysis of the GEF funds.

40. **CEA.** Table 3 presents the results of a CEA conducted at the project level and for different activities. Overall, the project disbursed US\$22.8 million³⁸ and reached 22,781 direct beneficiaries—which provides a unit cost of about US\$1,000 per beneficiary. This is substantially lower than the unit cost estimated at appraisal and AF stages; however, it is also at the high end of comparable costs per beneficiary in other countries of the region. Similarly, the actual GEF contribution was more cost-effective at project completion compared to previous stages because it reached a higher number of beneficiaries than the number previously targeted. However, it still remains less cost-effective than in a sample of other countries. A more detailed analysis shows that some relevant activities were particularly cost-effective, for example, support to micro-projects for income generation and conserving biodiversity in national parks (Table 3).

Table 3. Results of the CEA (US\$, 2022 prices)

CEA	Current Project			Other Projects
	At Appraisal	At AF	At Completion	
Total project cost (US\$/beneficiary)	2,200	2,400	1,000	40 in Burkina Faso, 150 in Niger, 170 in Sudan, and 1,100 in Mali
GEF contribution (US\$/beneficiary)	n.a.	2,000	790	30 in Mauritania and 470 in Ghana
• Cost of micro-projects (US\$/household)	n.a.	n.a.	520	290 in Mali and 620 in Cameroon
• Cost of conserving biodiversity (US\$/ha)	n.a.	n.a.	4 ^a	2 in Côte d'Ivoire and 15 in Guinea

Sources: Based on data derived from World Bank projects: Burkina Faso Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project (P143993, ICR, 2022); Niger Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (P125669, ICR, 2022); Sudan Sustainable Natural Resources Management (P129156, Implementation Status and Results Report [ISR], March 2022); Mali Natural Resources Management in a Changing Climate Project (P145799, ICR, 2020); Mauritania Sustainable Landscape Management Project (P144183, ICR, 2021); Ghana Sustainable Land and Water

³⁸ This includes US\$6 million Government counterpart funding that is not included in the system-generated data tables.



Management Project (P098538, ICR, 2021); Cameroon Adaptive Safety Nets and Economic Inclusion Project (P175363, PAD, 2022); Côte d'Ivoire Protected Area Project (P111290, ICR, 2015); and FEDP PAD (2012), AF Paper (2017), and Borrower's ICR (2022).

Note: a. Estimated at US\$1 per hectare in PNNP and US\$7 per hectare in the PNNN.

n.a. = not applicable or not available.

41. **A CBA was conducted for a few practices introduced by the project (cocoa-banana agroforestry) and previous land uses (cassava), based on data provided by the PIU.** The economic analysis considered all project costs, including investments, labor, and maintenance costs, and on-site benefits (sales of bananas, cocoa, and cassava). The results, summarized in Table 4, indicate that the agroforestry practices introduced by the project were more economically attractive than the production system applied before. These results may also be underestimates, as they do not account for other benefits such as fruits, increased water availability, and erosion control. In addition, these activities were also financially attractive, with net present values (NPVs) substantially higher than for cassava. It is important to note that the incentives provided during the first project year covered the up-front costs (for example, purchase of plants, establishment of plantation, training, materials, and equipment) that would otherwise have been a financial burden for the beneficiaries. A sensitivity analysis indicates that the selected activities remain attractive also for a decline in cocoa yields by 60 percent (high-density agroforestry) and by 20 percent (low density agroforestry).

Table 4. NPV of Selected Land Use Practices (US\$/ha, 6% discount rate, 20 years)

	Economic	Financial
Previous practice: cassava	< 4,600	4,600
New practice: cocoa-banana agroforestry (1,100 plants/ha)	10,600–18,100	15,000–22,500
Previous practice: cassava	< 4,600	4,600
New practice: cocoa-banana agroforestry (800 plants/ha)	6,000–10,000	11,600–15,600

Note: The financial results reflect the project's support in the first year for the agroforestry practices (that is, cost of plants purchase, plantation establishment, materials and equipment, training, and operation and maintenance). The economic results do not account for off-site benefits (for example, reduction of sediment yield) and global benefits (for example, carbon and biodiversity).

42. **Carbon benefits.** The project generated global benefits due to reduced GHG emissions. Results of the Ex-Ante Carbon-Balance Tool (EX-ACT) applied at completion indicate that the project would generate net GHG emissions reductions of about 23.8 million tCO₂e over a 20-year period (see Annex 7). This is substantially higher than the 1.6 million tCO₂e estimated at the AF stage. The considerable difference between the two estimates is primarily due to the improved forest management in the PNNP. The economic valuation is based on the shadow price of carbon, based on the World Bank (2017) guidance and adjustment to 2022 prices by the GHG team. Accordingly, the shadow price of carbon is US\$44 per tCO₂ (low scenario) and US\$88 per tCO₂ (high scenario) for 2017, with an annual increase of 2.25 percent. Using these data, the present value of carbon benefits from the project during 2017–2036 is estimated between US\$695 million (low scenario) and US\$1.4 billion (high scenario). Table 5 presents the results of a sensitivity analysis to changes in the discount rate at project completion. It should be noted that, as the measures used for carbon valuation (welfare-based, Table 5) are different from those employed for the valuation of tangible products issued from the project activities (market-based, Table 4), the results of these estimations are neither additive nor comparable.

43. **Moreover, there is potential for future trade of carbon due to emission reductions in the project area.** This can be done by selling emission reductions from eligible project activities at US\$5 per ton under



the FCPF Emission Reductions Program in Sangha and Likouala. However, it is not possible at this stage to estimate the financial worth of emissions reductions from the FEDP in the Republic of Congo. This will depend on (a) the eligibility of the project areas under the contract between carbon buyers and the Government; (b) the quantity of emission reductions expected; and (c) the agreed price of carbon, less the costs related to monitoring, reporting, and verification, and those related to other needs (for example, building a buffer reserve).

Table 5. Carbon Benefits Derived from the Project during 2017–2036 (US\$ million)

	Base Analysis (r = 6%)	Sensitivity Analysis to Discount Rate (r)		
		r = 2%	r = 8%	r = 10%
Present value (low scenario)	695	1,060	575	481
Present value (high scenario)	1,388	2,117	1,147	961

Sources: EX-ACT model application in 2022 for emissions reductions quantities; World Bank (2017) for carbon shadow pricing, adjusted to 2022 constant prices.

44. **Overall, the analysis shows that some key relevant project activities—for example, micro-projects and supporting biodiversity conservation in national parks—were cost effective.** Specific activities, such as agroforestry with cocoa and banana plants, were particularly beneficial for society and the farmers. Moreover, investing in the two national parks brought significant global benefits, such as improved biodiversity³⁹ (for example, increased populations of gorillas in the PNNP and substantial carbon sequestration). However, it should be noted that the impacts of other project activities could not be estimated either due to insufficient data (for example, agroforestry with acacia and beekeeping), or due to their late implementation (for example, setting up revolving funds for local communities to sustain microprojects). For future interventions, it is important to develop more effective ways to monitor the effects of interventions (for example, changes in on-site productivity over time, reduced erosion, and permanence of activities at project completion) to better understand and estimate their economic impacts in the future.

Aspects of Design and Implementation

45. **While the original design had certain shortcomings that led to the restructurings discussed earlier, project implementation did generally not face major problems.** For example, project management costs were reasonable, major procurement issues did not appear, and generally project management from both the PIU and World Bank followed good established practices.

Assessment of Efficiency and Rating

46. **Based on the economic analysis after project completion and the qualitative assessment of implementation efficiency, the project’s efficiency is rated Substantial.**

D. JUSTIFICATION OF OVERALL OUTCOME RATING

Rating: Moderately Satisfactory

³⁹ The METT score for biodiversity protection increased from 26 at the beginning to 73 at the end of the project—compared to an end target of 40.



47. **The overall outcome rating is based on the relevance of the project objectives, the efficacy of the project as measured by its indicators and considering additional evidence and interviews with stakeholders, and the efficiency of the project.** The project demonstrated substantial relevance, achieved a substantial outcome rating, and is considered substantial in its efficiency. The overall outcome is therefore considered Moderately Satisfactory, which means that there were moderate shortcomings during project implementation. However, these did not jeopardize achieving the expected development outcomes of the project.

Table 6. Project Ratings before and after Restructuring

	Before Restructuring	After Restructuring
Relevance of objective	High	Substantial
Efficacy (PDO)		
PDO Objective 1	Modest	Substantial
PDO Objective 2	Negligible	Substantial
Efficiency	Substantial	
Outcome rating	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory
Numerical value of the outcome rating	3	4
Share of disbursement before and after restructuring (%)	16.6	83.4
Final outcome rating	Moderately Satisfactory (16.6% x 3 + 83.4% x 4 = 3.83, rounding to 4)	

E. OTHER OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS (IF ANY)

Gender

48. **The participation of women, while of interest to project objectives and results, did not receive much dedicated emphasis during project implementation.** There are no systematic gender data on the households supported through FEDP-funded micro-projects—the Government’s project completion report suggests that women constitute 50 percent of all project beneficiaries, but the basis for this assumption is not made explicit.

Institutional Strengthening

49. **Institutional strengthening was a key area in the beginning of the project, but in the Level 1 restructuring its scope was reduced to administrative and operational issues.** The management capacity of the target protected areas clearly improved with the GEF-financed activities. The sustainability of the other institutional strengthening activities, particularly in the government institutions, is more questionable (see also paragraph 37). The community-based organizations that collaborated with the project clearly benefited from the project activities and were able to build their capacity.

Mobilizing Private Sector Financing

50. **While the original project design included activities to improve the enabling environment for formal private sector investment in forest management and reforestation, there was no specific objective to mobilize private sector financing for project activities.** This issue became moot after the



Level 1 restructuring in 2015, when the objective of improving the private sector enabling environment (and the economic diversification agenda) was abandoned.

Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity

51. **While the Republic of Congo is a major exporter of hydrocarbons and is not, on aggregate, a poor country, poverty rates in rural areas are high and were increasing in recent years even as urban poverty rates were falling.** Therefore, the impact of the income-generating activities that the FEDP funded in remote rural areas is highly relevant. Unfortunately, there are no systematic data available for the income effects of all micro-projects. But the economic analysis shows that income-generating activities, such as agroforestry, are economically viable.

Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

52. **No unintended outcomes have been reported.**

III. KEY FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME

A. KEY FACTORS DURING PREPARATION

Adverse Factors

53. **Level of ambition.** At the time of appraisal, the Ministry of Forestry had become ‘a super ministry’ called the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy, and Environment (MSDFEE), including not just the forestry and wildlife administration but also the DGE and DGDD, and was also leading the Government’s efforts on REDD+. The ministry had great ambition to address many cross-sectoral impacts on forest resources under the project, but this led to a project design that was, no doubt, too complex to manage for a sector ministry that had no experience with implementing World Bank-funded projects. In addition, the DGE having been moved to another ministry shortly after project effectiveness made it hard to implement the activities assigned to it.

54. **Changes in donor priorities.** The World Bank had intense consultations with other forestry sector donors during project preparation, especially with AFD and the EU, which was supporting the development of a VPA under the FLEGT initiative. For various reasons, the priorities of these donors changed and their planned contributions did not materialize, affecting the expected impact of the FEDP activities on these themes.⁴⁰

55. **Identification and mitigation of risks.** The risk of nonavailability of government counterpart funds, which accounted for more than two-thirds of the original project budget, was probably underestimated. Mitigation of this risk could have taken the form of phasing/sequencing of different sets of project activities, thus also helping manage the problems related to the level of ambition (see paragraph 53).

⁴⁰ See table 2, Donor Activities in the Forest Sector, on page 5 of the 2012 FEDP PAD.
<https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P124085>.



Favorable Factors

56. **Long-term World Bank engagement on forest resource management in the Congo Basin.** The project design benefited from the World Bank's long-term engagement on forest resource management in the Congo Basin countries through sector investment, development policy operations, and—as in the Republic of Congo—through the inclusion of forest regulatory reforms in the HIPC completion process, which the FEDP could build on. The World Bank-managed carbon trust funds (for example, FCPF) were active in the Republic of Congo, which also deepened the dialogue between the Government and World Bank.

B. KEY FACTORS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Adverse Factors

57. **Challenging institutional environment:** The MSDFEE was not in a good position at the start of the project, with 45 percent of the university-trained forest engineers of its General Directorate of Forest Economy (*Direction Générale de l'Economie Forestière*, DGEF) about to retire during the FEDP implementation period and with a limited complement of young, well-trained staff to take over the baton from the older generation. This situation also had direct practical consequences for project implementation, for example, the difficulties in managing the new M&E system due in part to the absence of qualified staff in the Directorate of Studies and Planning (*Direction des Etudes et Projets*, DEP). A further problem was caused by the transfer of the DGE, which was part of the MSDFEE at appraisal, to the ministry responsible for tourism.

58. **Challenging macroeconomic environment, reducing counterpart funds.** The drop in oil prices that occurred in 2014 made it impossible for the Government to disburse the remaining CFAF 7.8 billion out of the CFAF 11.3 billion counterpart funds that it had committed at project agreement in 2012. This reduced the overall project budget by almost half.

59. **The project experienced significant delays and changes, especially early in its implementation.** This was partly due to the implementing ministry's unfamiliarity with World Bank procedures leading to major delays in the recruitment of the PIU in 2013 and challenges faced in mobilizing government counterpart funding starting in 2014. The delays were also due to the number and complexity of the activities to be implemented. From the effectiveness of the IDA credit in March 2013 until the Level 1 restructuring in October 2015, only US\$2.59 million were disbursed, equivalent to less than half of the around US\$6 million disbursement forecast for that period. After the elimination of the requirement for counterpart funding and simplification of the project design by the Level 1 restructuring in 2015, ISR ratings have been 'Moderately Satisfactory' most of the time with no negative ratings since November 2018.

60. **In addition to the abovementioned problems, the project experienced implementation delays as many service providers operating in remote rural areas (see paragraph 22 above) were unable to respect contract deadlines due to the difficult conditions of access to the project area.**⁴¹ This was a reflection of both the difficult operating environment and insufficient planning by the PIU and the

⁴¹ Government of Congo 2022, 73.



contractors. Almost all service providers, however, performed well and contributed considerably to the achievement of key project results.⁴²

61. **Unforeseeable external events.** The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted the FEDP implementation in its final stages from 2020 to 2022.

Favorable Factors

62. **Timely adjustments to implementation arrangements.** The increased reliance on service providers after the Level 1 restructuring to implement activities for which the Government did not have a comparative advantage worked well, with nine out of ten service providers achieving the full results contracted and one having been quickly replaced after having been found wanting (see paragraph 22).

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

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

M&E Design

63. **The initial project design was overly ambitious and complex, and this was consequently also true of the Results Framework.** In addition, some of the PDO indicators were not fully under the control of the project, creating problems for attribution of the results. In view of the unfamiliarity of the MSDFEE with World Bank procedures and M&E requirements, the project design included M&E capacity strengthening activities for the DEP. These were programmed right at the start of the project, and the beneficiaries also included M&E focal points in other MSDFEE units at the central and decentralized levels. These capacity strengthening activities would have been essential for starting project implementation in an organized and coherent way, but were held up by, among other factors, delays in recruiting the PIU staff.

64. **Most of these problems in the M&E design highlighted above were addressed, in principle, by the Level 1 restructuring in October 2015.** A new M&E information system, the Integrated Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System (*Système intégré de Planification, Suivi et Evaluation*, SIPSE), was introduced and M&E training for MSDFEE staff was organized in 2016 (see also paragraphs 65 to 67). Changes implemented under the 2015 restructuring strengthened the results matrix by improving the adequacy of indicators to capture the results and ensured effective project and financial management. However, this restructuring also created some new problems as some of the PDO indicators introduced measured inputs and outputs rather than results. For example, the indicator ‘Increase in field missions for control and sensitization purposes by the departmental forestry directorates, including by brigades’, introduced as part of the 2015 restructuring, does not measure a concrete result, such as improved forest revenue collection, but rather a means to achieve such a result. Therefore, it would have been more suitable as an implementation progress indicator than as a PDO outcome indicator.

⁴² The one service provider that was found wanting, the Centre for the Valorization of Non-Timber Forest Products (CVPFNL), was quickly replaced by another one, which performed satisfactorily. See Government of Congo 2022, 73.



M&E Implementation

65. **The unit in charge of M&E in the MSDFEE was the DEP, which also had a reporting line to the Ministry of Planning.** This enabled coherent planning and implementation of expenditure by the line ministries. The DEP worked from September 2015 to March 2016 with ADA Consulting, a Canadian firm, to establish a new M&E information system and get it up and running. The firm led the participatory elaboration of the Results Management Framework (RMF) of the MSDFEE; the elaboration of a procedures manual; the conception of the planning and M&E system (SIPSE) and its official launch; user training; and technical backstopping. However, the new M&E system was not adequately aligned with the ministry's existing RMF, which led to subsequent problems.⁴³ During elaboration of SIPSE, ADA Consulting realized that most MEFDD staff who were expected to execute M&E activities did not master results-based management, which is a key requirement for effective engagement in M&E. As results-based management training was not part of the firm's contract, the PIU's M&E specialist stepped in and provided a three-day results-based management training to the relevant staff just before the firm started its M&E training program.

66. **After the training sessions, it became clear that the new M&E system had not been fully appropriated by the staff.** This was caused, in part, by dysfunctional or nonexistent internet connections. This was solved by the purchase of VSat connections for the Departmental Forestry Directorates and of fiber optic cables for the central MSDFEE services. More fundamental, however, was the fact that there were no dedicated forest engineers at the DEP who would have mastered the necessary technology.⁴⁴ In later years, when it became clear that many staff who had benefited from M&E and other training had retired or were about to do so, a decision was taken to enroll younger staff in the training programs as much as possible to ensure that the MSDFEE would derive maximum benefit from the new staff. By the end of the project, over 900 government staff were trained in the use of M&E and other information systems.

67. **Overall, the M&E capacity of the MEFDD and its central and decentralized services was significantly improved by the FEDP.** Finally, the METT was completed at the start, updated at the midterm, and the final results submitted at completion.

M&E Utilization

68. **There were some challenges with the appropriation of the new M&E system by the government staff.** In addition, the project's M&E effort was handicapped by the limited and/or late information received from the service providers on their implementation results. Generally speaking, however, data on institutional performance and results achieved generated by the M&E system were used continuously to inform decision-making and to adjust project management as required. The PIU was able, particularly toward the end of the project, to prepare the required M&E data in time and accurately.

69. **More comprehensive collection of baseline data would have allowed assessment of the project impact.** The focus of the project activities shifted after the restructurings and additional finance from the GEF. As a result, there were no adequate baseline studies, for example, on rural incomes. Lack of data on

⁴³ The ministry's RMF is essential for making the link between planning, implementation, and M&E of sectoral activities and the implementation of the country's National Development Plan. Government of Congo 2022, 20.

⁴⁴ During appraisal, it was calculated that 45 percent of all the university-trained forest engineers of the DGEF would retire during the five-year implementation period of the FEDP.



the situation at the start of project intervention does not allow a comprehensive assessment of the project impact at the household level.

Justification of Overall Rating of Quality of M&E

70. **The overall quality of the project's M&E is rated Substantial.** This is because there were only moderate shortcomings with regard to the Results Framework indicators—especially after the Level 1 restructuring in 2015—and implementation of the new M&E system was largely successful, though after some teething problems early on.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FIDUCIARY COMPLIANCE

Environmental and Social

71. **Based on a social and environmental screening at appraisal, the project was categorized as a Category B operation.** As a result, it required a partial assessment given the site-specific nature of the potentially negative impacts of some of its activities. It triggered the following safeguards policies:

- Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01
- Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04
- Forests OP/BP 4.36
- Pest Management OP 4.09 (after the Level 1 restructuring in 2015)
- Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11
- Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10
- Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12

72. **The Government prepared all necessary safeguards instruments:** Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Pest Management Plan (PMP) (after the Level 1 restructuring in 2015), Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), and Process Framework (PF). The safeguards instruments required an update after the Level 1 restructuring in October 2015, which effectively turned the project from a TAL into a SIL. The safeguards instruments were again updated in 2016. Before the update, the MSDFEE officials received environmental and social safeguards training in 2015. The FEDP hired a consultant firm based in Côte d'Ivoire in 2021 to carry out a social and environmental audit verifying the effective application of the abovementioned safeguard instruments. The audit found that most of the measures contained in the safeguards documents (ESMF, RPF, PMP, PF, and IPP) and the Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) for the income-generating activities ('micro-projects') were implemented. All micro-projects were subjected to an environmental and social screening (Category B) or guideline (Category C), public consultations, and monitoring of the implementation of environmental and social measures, with the participation of local stakeholders.⁴⁵ In 2021, the IPP was updated with particular reference to the functioning of the revolving fund established by the project for local communities to maintain the income-generating activities that the project initiated. The project's overall safeguards performance was rated Satisfactory for the last two ISRs.

⁴⁵ Government of Congo 2022, 76–77.



73. **The project encountered some challenges in safeguards implementation.** These were due to (a) the absence of an environmentalist in the team of partner NGOs involved in implementing the micro-projects; (b) the lack of specific reports on the implementation of environmental and social safeguards measures by the service providers; (c) the weak capacity of local committees to enforce the ESMPs, for example, for the community wells and the compensatory reforestation for warehouses; (d) an information deficit with the communities on the national park management activities, including the social issues linked to the park establishment; (e) the absence of a micro-finance institution in some areas where workers needed to be paid; and (f) the recruitment of local experts for activities requiring specific qualifications that were absent at the local level.⁴⁶

Financial Management

74. **After a difficult start, due to slow recruitment of the PIU personnel and the MSDFEE's unfamiliarity with World Bank procedures, FM performance improved.** The project complied with FM procedures during most of its duration, with the area mostly rated Moderately Satisfactory, including in the last two ISRs. The final ISR noted mostly adequate performance, but with subpar performance in the areas of budget monitoring, compliance with tax laws, and accounting records extractions, and noted that these were surprising weaknesses for an experienced PIU. Budget monitoring was inadequate: there was still—at the time of the final ISR—an unresolved financial gap between the cost of project activities and the available funds at the end of the project.

Procurement

75. **The project was generally in compliance with procurement procedures, with procurement mostly rated Moderately Satisfactory.** During the first two years of implementation, progress was slow, and documents were submitted for World Bank approval with delays and were of insufficient quality. As for FM, the PIU performance improved after these initial shortcomings with support from the World Bank procurement team and as the PIU gained more experience.

C. BANK PERFORMANCE

Quality at Entry

76. **In preparing the FEDP, the World Bank built on its long engagement in forest policy and regulatory issues in the Republic of Congo through the HIPC completion process and on lessons learned from forest sector operations in other Congo Basin countries.**⁴⁷ Legal experts involved in the HIPC completion process supported the inclusion of forest regulatory reforms in the project design and drafted some legal covenants for the lending agreement to ensure that the forestry reform achieved under the

⁴⁶ Government of Congo 2022, 77.

⁴⁷ See for example, Topa, Giuseppe, Alain Karsenty, Carole Megevand, and Laurent Debroux. 2009. *The Rainforests of Cameroon: Experience and Evidence from a Decade of Reform*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/134871468010898097/The-rainforests-of-Cameroon-experience-and-evidence-from-a-decade-of-reform>.



HIPC would be maintained and consolidated.⁴⁸ In close collaboration with the Government and various other technical and financial partners, the World Bank ensured that the project design was aligned with the Government's and World Bank's development priorities, especially regarding economic diversification, and commensurate with the considerable ambition of the MSDFEE and availability of ample government counterpart funds.⁴⁹ Special efforts were made to coordinate with other development partner-supported investments and programs in the forest sector. These included PRONAR, which AFD intended to finance, and the VPA with the EU. While the World Bank team assessed the development challenges correctly and identified adequate activities to help address them, it overestimated the capacity of the MSDFEE to implement a complex cross-sectoral project and the likelihood that the Government would be able to continue to provide counterpart funding covering more than two-thirds of the project budget.

77. The World Bank fulfilled its fiduciary role through FM and procurement assessments and ensured that environmental and social safeguards policies were applied correctly.

78. The 2015 project restructuring paper noted that the original project design was overly ambitious. Considering the limited experience and modest capacity of the government institutions involved to work with the World Bank and the planned project duration of five years, the scope of the activities could have been reduced during appraisal—with the option of applying later on for an AF to fund an increased project scope, should this be justified by rapid implementation progress. The Results Framework also exhibited some weaknesses, for example, the inclusion of PDO indicators that were not fully under the control of the project.⁵⁰

Quality of Supervision

79. The World Bank conducted a total of 20 implementation support missions during the nine years and three months of implementation.⁵¹ The four missions conducted in the first two years were probably too few in the light of the problems faced by the Government, especially considering the inexperience of the MSDFEE with World Bank-financed projects. Comprehensive Aide Memoires and ISRs were produced following best practices. Field visits were conducted as appropriate. The fact that World Bank TTLs changed frequently (six TTLs in ten years) and that none of the TTLs was based in the country office, was highlighted as a hindrance to timely problem solving by the Government.⁵² Specialists of all relevant disciplines, including environmental and social safeguards, FM, and procurement, participated adequately.

⁴⁸ The two legal covenants are in the Finance Agreement Article IV, 4.01 (a) "The World Bank determines that the Recipient has failed to apply sound environmental or social standards or practices in its management of natural forests and plantations or carrying out natural forest or plantation related activities" and Article IV, 4.01 (b) "The World Bank determines that the forestry Legislation has been amended, suspended, abrogated, repealed or waived in such manner as to affect materially and adversely the ability of the Recipient to perform any of its obligations under the Financing Agreement or to achieve the Project's objective."

⁴⁹ As noted earlier, the DGE moved to another ministry soon after the FEDP became effective, making it more difficult to implement the institutional capacity strengthening and regulatory reform activities planned for the DGE.

⁵⁰ Two PDO indicators were dropped following the Level 1 restructuring approved in October 2015, as detailed in section I.B.

⁵¹ This includes the launch mission in March 2013 and the final implementation support mission in June 2022, which also served as ICR mission.

⁵² Government of Congo 2022, *Tableau 14, Analyse des Forces, Faiblesses, Opportunités, Menaces*, 78–79.



80. **The World Bank team demonstrated proactivity and, for the most part, contributed effectively to resolving implementation challenges.** In addition to regular implementation support missions, the task team regularly reviewed progress reports, provided ‘no-objections’, updated risk assessments, and arranged for PIU training where required. The team supported a Level 1 restructuring of the project in 2015 that helped adjust to the non-disbursement of government counterpart funds and address the overly complex initial project design. Key actions that contributed to the project achieving its results included reducing the number of themes and activities in the project and increasing the use of competent service providers in remote rural areas to implement activities for which the MSDFEE did not have a comparative advantage. The task team also supported necessary closing date extensions, which enabled the project to implement key activities that were delayed largely by factors partly or wholly outside the control of the project. These included, for example, a community conflict that broke out about the construction of the new PNNP ranger station and the COVID-19 pandemic.

81. **Even though the World Bank’s supervision record was mostly positive, there were some weaknesses.** First, the restructurings, while necessary and effective measures, did not resolve all issues identified at the time, particularly with regard to the Results Framework as some of the new indicators that were introduced measured inputs and outputs rather than results. Also, the relatively frequent changes of the task team leader and ‘remote management’ may have reduced opportunities for frequent interactions with the client and accumulation of institutional memory in the World Bank team.

Justification of Overall Rating of Bank Performance

82. **Overall, the World Bank’s performance is rated Moderately Satisfactory to reflect the adequacy of project preparation and supervision, particularly the high relevance of the project design, the generally proactive, solution-oriented implementation support, and adaptive project management.** The rating also considers the moderate shortcomings, particularly with regard to the overly ambitious initial scope of the project, the frequent changes in TTLs and their absence from the country office, and the M&E arrangements that were not entirely suitable for measuring results of some of the indicators in the Results Framework.

83. **Despite the shortcomings, it is notable that the project was able to ensure a smooth transition to a follow-up operation, the Northern Congo Agroforestry Project (PANC), financed by the Forest Investment Program (FIP).** Starting timely preparations for PANC helped retain key project staff and avoid disruption in the support for income-generating agroforestry activities by local communities and indigenous peoples that were started under the FEDP but are not mature yet.

D. RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

84. **Project implementation highlighted several risks to the development outcomes achieved or expected to be achieved (that is, to their sustainability).** First, the MSDFEE’s institutional capacity limitations pose a risk to the consolidation of project results. Already, the management information systems that were elaborated and operationalized during the implementation of the IDA credit appear to have been abandoned by the administration. In addition, the retirement of most of the MSDFEE’s university-trained forest and wildlife engineers and the lack of replacement by a next generation of well-trained people poses a grave risk to the Government’s capacity to manage forest resources and wildlife sustainably, with or without functioning management information systems. Some of the income-generating activities supported by the FEDP (including cocoa agroforestry and apiculture) for local



communities and indigenous peoples in Community Development Zones inside forest concessions and in *'territoires villageois'* in the savannah zone may well be able to stand on their own legs, but others still need further support, for example, in market development and local processing or from financial service providers. Such activities may well continue to rely on external support in the short to medium term.

85. **While the abovementioned risks have the potential to undo some of the progress made under the FEDP, the continuation of the World Bank's engagement in the forest sector in Congo provides a basis for sustaining a large part of project results.** These follow-up operations include the PANC (2022 onward) and the Emission Reductions Program in Sangha and Likouala, financed by the FCPF Carbon Fund. These will enable the consolidation of important FEDP-supported activities, including the improved management of the PNPN and PNNP and the income-generating agroforestry activities in the Community Development Zones of nearby forest concessions.

V. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

86. **In a complex sector reform project, apply an incremental approach to adjust the level of ambition to match a changing project context.** The FEDP was an ambitious project aiming to transform the MSDFEE, a ministry with a wide range of responsibilities, including forest and parks management, reforestation, environmental assessment and management, and land use emission reductions programs, among others. The FEDP was also designed to consolidate significant forest and land use policy reforms achieved as part of the Republic of Congo's HPIC completion point the year before the project was approved. When the counterpart funds, which accounted for over two-thirds of the project budget, dried up during the second year of implementation, this ambition had to be reduced drastically through a Level 1 restructuring in 2015. In addition, some responsibilities, such as environmental assessment and management, were transferred to other ministries soon after project approval. But even without these major negative changes, the original project design would have been too complex, covering too wide a range of activities at one go. Given the MSDFEE's lack of experience with the implementation of World Bank-funded projects, the project should have focused on a narrower range of activities, at least initially.⁵³ Phasing/sequencing of some of the more challenging activities at a later stage could also have been considered. This lesson is particularly relevant for projects providing support to other government ministries with wide-ranging mandates. Phasing/sequencing may also help a project adjust more easily to changes when government counterpart funding is available.

87. **Working with local champions helps achieve operational effectiveness and efficiency, particularly in remote locations where Government capacity is weak.** It also provides an exit strategy for the project. The capacity of government agencies in the Republic of Congo is generally weak. Therefore, the FEDP mobilized other actors to support project implementation. The results of the FEDP could not have been achieved without the involvement of several non-public sector partners that were already active in the remote areas where the project operations took place. Local NGOs were mobilized to support livelihood activities, international NGOs were contracted to strengthen park management, and private sector enterprises were also mobilized (for example, forest companies for road rehabilitation). The expertise and experience of these partners in such remote, low-capacity areas was indispensable. Working with local champions also helped in achieving sustainability of project results after project closure. While

⁵³ At the start of the implementation phase, 30 major terms of references had to be developed, which turned out to be a major stumbling block for the ministry.



the mobilization of local champions was essential for achieving the project results, it also carries a risk of 'crowding out' or disengaging government agencies.

88. Investments in technology are necessary but not sufficient when improving government efficiency; also staff incentives and organizational culture need to be addressed. The project made a considerable investment in helping the MSDFEE develop information management systems, covering human resources management, FM, and archiving of documents, among other activities. Even though these systems were developed in a participatory manner, closely aligned with the operational needs, and with considerable numbers of staff trained to use the systems, they have all been abandoned since. From the Government's project completion report, it is not clear what the deeper causes of this were. Was it the additional effort required to get all the information into the system and keep it updated? The fact that many MSDFEE staff were older and not fully computer-literate? Or the fact that the website was often down because the ministry failed to pay its subscription with the website host? Or was it simply that there were no incentives (positive or negative) to ensure staff compliance with the new systems' requirements?

89. Well-planned local community engagement is essential for achieving results. The effective engagement of local communities contributed to the following positive outcomes: (a) the grievance redress mechanism (GRM) was effective at least in part because the GRM focal points were chosen based on criteria agreed with the communities; and (b) initial income-generating activities were successful because they built on what people knew (honey). For cocoa, locally a less well-known value chain, the project demonstrated the benefits to local communities by working with early adopters, which then created more demand for support. Cocoa turned out to be a life saver for communities near the parks as it attracts less wildlife compared to the bananas and cassava that they were growing earlier. This in turn led to reduced crop damage. Some other activities were less successful because of insufficient community engagement, including the conflicts that arose around the Pikounda Ranger station due to insufficient engagement with local residents as well as nonresidents. Also, the project-supported community wells ceased working because the water committees were not functional and communities did not collect the fees required for maintenance. More awareness-raising and capacity building would have been needed up-front to avoid this. A key recommendation would be to devise and implement a community engagement strategy for all project activities requiring local support.



ANNEX 1. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND KEY OUTPUTS

A. RESULTS INDICATORS

A.1 PDO Indicators

Objective/Outcome: Increase the capacity of the forest administration, local communities, indigenous peoples to co-manage

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Increase in field missions for control and sensitization purposes by the departmental forestry directorates, including by brigades	Number	300.00 31-Dec-2011	3,000.00 30-Nov-2017		4,256.00 06-Mar-2018

Comments (achievements against targets):

The target was 142 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. While the baseline was set to 0 in the Restructuring Paper, it was corrected to 300 in the Implementation Status and Results Report of July 2016 (Sequence number 8). At indicator completion in March 2018 (which is when indicators for IDA-financed activities that were not continued under GEF were locked in the World Bank’s Operations Portal), 4,256 field missions had been conducted, with the purpose of supervising activities at work sites (e.g. log cutting, wood transformation into planks), reducing poaching and other illegal activities (e.g. identify infractions, seize bushmeat, reduce illegal wood cutting), and raising awareness (e.g. regarding hunting rights and importance of protected areas). These field missions were made possible via the new equipment bought by the project, such as vehicles, motorcycles, and boats (See Section B for details) [1]. At project completion in June 2022, the number of field missions was most likely higher than 4,256, however, it is not known by how much, due to the lack of data collection after 2017.



[1] See next section B. Key outputs by component, for more details on the equipment bought by the project.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Forest area with simplified management plans under implementation	Hectare(Ha)	200.00	15,000.00		117,196.00
		28-Jul-2015	30-Nov-2017		06-Mar-2018

Comments (achievements against targets):

The target was 781 percent achieved. It was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. A simplified management plan was defined as one that has been validated by the Committees of Community Management and Development (*Comités de Gestion et de Développement Communautaire*, CGDCs), implemented through microprojects, and monitored by the CGDCs. At indicator completion in March 2018, 15 simplified management plans have been developed for an area of 269,747 ha. Of this total, FEDP has implemented plans that cover 117,196 ha of forest in the northern part of the country: Kabo Forest Concession (26,950 ha), Pokola Forest Concession (7,600 ha), Ngombé Forest Concession (48,966 ha) and Loudoungou-Toukoulaka Forest Concession (33,680 ha). The implementation of these plans was supported through microprojects during the additional financing (AF) stage.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Percentage of agents of the decentralized forest administration with access to up-to-date information and data	Percentage	0.00	75.00		91.00
		27-Mar-2013	30-Nov-2017		06-Mar-2018

Comments (achievements against targets):



The indicator was introduced with the 2015 restructuring. It reflects the share of the agents of the decentralized forest administration (12 Departmental Directorates of the Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development) which gained internet access due to the project. At indicator completion in March 2018, 557 out of a total of 611 agents had internet access provided by the project, i.e. 91 percent. Specifically, the project provided the necessary IT equipment, i.e. computers, scanners, internet connection, and electricity generators.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Area brought under enhanced biodiversity protection	Hectare(Ha)	0.00	427,000.00		427,000.00
		23-Jun-2017	26-Jul-2021		30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

The target was 100 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2017 AF stage. It reflects the area of PNNP (Republique du Congo. 2013. Journal Officiel de la Republique du Congo. 55e année. No. 11. 14 mars 2013). Enhanced biodiversity protection is measured through the METT score, which increased from 26 at the beginning to 73 at the end of the project - compared to an end target of 40 (according to the Government's project completion report).

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Direct project beneficiaries	Number	0.00	15,000.00	16,000.00	22,781.00
		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017	26-Jul-2021	30-Jun-2022
Female beneficiaries	Percentage	0.00	40.00	40.00	50.00



Comments (achievements against targets):

Original target 152 percent achieved and revised target 142 percent achieved. Project beneficiaries include ministerial staff at the policy decision-making level, technical staff, technical scientists, civil society groups, and communities in forest concession areas where social contracts are applied and in savannah areas. At the AF stage, the target was revised upward, from 15,000 to 16,000, to reflect the additional micro-project activities financed under the AF. At project completion, there were 22,781 direct project beneficiaries. Women accounted for around 50 percent of them.

A.2 Intermediate Results Indicators

Component: Capacity building of the forest administration

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Percentage of MEF staff and managers trained	Percentage	0.00	50.00		79.00
		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017		06-Mar-2018

Comments (achievements against targets):

The target was 158 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced with the 2015 restructuring. At indicator completion in March 2018, 79 percent of the MEF staff was trained in the use of systems related to administrative and financial management, monitoring and evaluation, archiving, procurement, Geographic Information System (GIS), and website management.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Share of MEFDD activities in	Percentage	0.00	50.00		0.00



the annual work plan that are planned in the monitoring and evaluation system		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017		06-Mar-2018
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Comments (achievements against targets):
The target was not achieved. The indicator was introduced with the 2015 restructuring. It reflects the share of the Ministry’s activities that are part of the monitoring and evaluation system. Although the system was functioning in 2016, it was not used anymore at indicator completion in March 2018.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Share of referrals in new forestry law for which application texts have been drafted	Percentage	0.00 31-Dec-2011	100.00 30-Nov-2017		0.00 06-Mar-2018

Comments (achievements against targets):
The target was not achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. The project supported a forestry law and its application texts. However, they were not adopted by the Government at indicator completion in March 2018.

Component: Involvement of local communities and indigenous people in forest resource management.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Households that benefited	Number	0.00	1,000.00	1,200.00	2,671.00



from micro-projects		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017	26-Jul-2021	30-Jun-2022
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): Original target 267 percent achieved, and revised target 223 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring, with a target of 1,000 households. At AF stage, the target was revised to 1,200 to reflect the additional number of households benefitting from micro-projects. At completion, 2,671 households benefitted from support to micro-projects. Project support targeted the following activities: agro-forestry with fruit trees, food crops, and acacia (125 beneficiaries), beekeeping (875 beneficiaries), agro-forestry with cocoa, bananas, and fruit trees (661 beneficiaries), and planting forest trees (1,010 beneficiaries).</p>					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Functioning local governance structures established to oversee simplified management plans	Number	0.00 31-Dec-2011	30.00 30-Nov-2017		25.00 30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):
Target was 83 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. At completion, 48 governance structures (Community Development Management Committees; *Comité de Gestion et de Développement Communautaire*; CGDCs) received support, but only 25 were considered functional. It should be noted that although these structures were functional in administrative terms, not all of them were operational on the ground, e.g. able to actively oversee the implementation of the simplified management plans. The number of local governance structures that were operational at completion is not known. The challenges under this indicator were related to the shortfall in counterpart funds, which reduced the project's ability to provide continuous capacity building.

Component: Prospective work and communications



Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Validated prospective studies including recommendations	Number	0.00	12.00		10.00
		31-Dec-2011	31-Mar-2018		30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Target was 83 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. It refers to studies that provide a long-term vision for the investments conducted by the MFE. Ten prospective studies were conducted and uploaded on the MFE's website (<http://economie-forestiere.gouv.cg/accueil/>). In addition, five studies related to environmental and social safeguards were conducted and published on the same website.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
People sensitized during information campaigns	Number	100.00	200,000.00		163,307.00
		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017		30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Target was 82 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. It covers the number of people that saw the eight documentary videos on forest issues produced by the MFE, supported by the FEDP, and broadcasted on national television (i.e. TeleCongo and DRTV channels), as well as those that benefitted from information campaigns during field missions. Overall, the total number of people sensitized at project completion is estimated at 163,307.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
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Visits to MEF website	Number	0.00	60,000.00		298,505.00
		31-Dec-2011	30-Nov-2017		30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Target was 498 percent achieved. The indicator was introduced during the 2015 restructuring. It covers the number of visits to the MFE website at completion (<http://economie-forestiere.gouv.cg/accueil/>). By the end of 2017, there were 298,505 visits to MFE website. Since then, the number most likely increased, however, it is not known by how much due to lack of monitoring.

Component: Habitat and biodiversity protection

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Tools deployed to combat wildlife crime	Number	0.00	2.00		2.00
		03-Oct-2016	26-Jul-2021		30-Jun-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Target was 100 percent achieved. The indicator was added during the 2017 AF stage. It covers two tools: canine units to detect wildlife crime. and the CRMS to record wildlife crime. The project implemented both tools.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Wildlife/wildlife product	Number	0.00	100.00		939.00



seizures at program sites	03-Oct-2016	26-Jul-2021	30-Jun-2022
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): Target was 939 percent achieved. The indicator was added at the 2017 AF stage. At completion, the number of seizures of poached animals or animal parts (e.g. elephants or other protected species) was estimated at 939.</p>			



B. KEY OUTPUTS BY COMPONENT

Objective/Outcome 1 : To increase the capacity of the forest administration to co-manage forests	
Outcome Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in field missions for control and sensitization purposes by the departmental forestry directorates, including by brigades 2. Percentage of agents of the decentralized forest administration with access to up-to-date information and data
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of MEF staff and managers trained 2. Share of MEFDD activities in the annual work plan that are planned in the monitoring and evaluation system. 3. Share of referrals in new forestry law for which application texts have been drafted
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacities reinforcement on the use of computer equipment, forestry equipment, GIS, website, and the 4 computerized systems (archiving system, monitoring-evaluation system, finance system, or forest information management). 2. Development of 2 manuals of procedures for the technical services of the forestry administration (General Inspectorate and General Directorates). 3. Renovation of the offices of 8 departmental directorates (DDEFs). 4. Provision of equipment to the 12 DDEFs and to the central forestry administration (Internet and IT equipment, 33 cars, 118 bikes, 30 boats, binoculars, digital cameras, forest compasses, tents, and so on). 5. Uniforms for 872 MEF agents. 6. Technical inputs to the forest code. 7. New Wildlife Law and implementing regulation proposed. 8. Training of magistrates on the new provisions of the wildlife law.
Objective/Outcome 2 To increase the capacity of local communities and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests	
Outcome Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forest area with simplified management plans under implementation 2. Area brought under enhanced biodiversity protection
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Households that benefited from micro-projects



	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Functioning local governance structures established to oversee simplified management plans3. Validated prospective studies including recommendations4. People sensitized during information campaigns5. Visits to MEF website6. Tools deployed to combat wildlife crime7. Wildlife/wildlife product seizures at program sites
<p>Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 3)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 1,417 micro-projects (technical assistance and financial support).2. Training for 2,561 peoples working on cocoa, agroforestry, and beekeeping livelihoods.3. Support for 76 Community Economic Interest Groups (IPCC).4. 15 Simple Management Plans.5. 5 warehouses constructed/rehabilitated.6. A range of communications support to PNNN (books, short movie, leaflets, and so on).7. Guides training.8. Rehabilitation road connections access to PNNN (78 km)9. Training for CGDC members to improve the development local management10. Operating costs for PNNP11. Realization of a regional workshop on regional law enforcement with Interpol12. Promotional videos on MEF activities13. Investments in infrastructure, equipment, and wildlife in the national parks, including<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. 2 headquartersb. 4 miradorsc. 1 vehicled. 7 motorcyclese. 2 boatsf. 5 drillsg. Equipment (internet, GPS, tents, cameras, binoculars, and so on).14. Communication materials for MEF (complete filming unit, editing unit, mobile sound unit, and presentation unit).15. Official website for the MEF.



16. Prospective studies:

- Feasibility study on the operationalization and implementation of PRONAR
- Analysis of the institutional capacity-building needs of the MEFDD and the agencies under its supervision and Capacity Building Plan and Implementation Plan
- Study on the constraints of forestry companies in the face of the requirements of the FLEGT action plan on the application of forest regulations and governance and trade in the Republic of Congo
- Develop an Idea Note on Reducing Emissions in Northern Congo (ER-PIN NORD CONGO).
- Study on the place of the forestry sector in land use planning
- Environmental and Social Management Framework
- Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF)
- Update of the pesticide management plan (PGP)
- Guidelines for good pesticide management practices
- Functional framework
- Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP)
- Communication strategy for the MEF and capacity building for staff and managers

17. Canine team (sniffer dog unit) implemented.

18. Development of the Criminal Management Records System (CMRS).

19. Field information campaigns against poaching.



ANNEX 2. BANK LENDING AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT/SUPERVISION

A. TASK TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Role
Preparation	
Simon Rietbergen	Task Team Leader(s)
Clement Tukeba Lessa Kimpuni	Procurement Specialist(s)
Bella Diallo	Financial Management Specialist
Etienne Benoist	Team Member
Karine N. MOUKETO-MIKOLO	Team Member
Loic Jean Charles Braune	Team Member
Antoine V. Lema	Social Specialist
Antoine V. Lema	Team Member
Simon A. P. Rietbergen	Team Member
Paul Jonathan Martin	Social Specialist
Virginie Anne Marie Vaselopoulos	Team Member
Supervision/ICR	
David Maleki, Julian Lee, Jean-Christophe Carret, Juha Seppälä, Aurelie Rossignol	Task Team Leaders
Lanssina Traore	Procurement Specialist(s)
Francis Tasha Venayen	Financial Management Specialist
Aurore Simbananiye	Team Member
Josiane Maloueki Louzolo	Procurement Team
Albert Francis Atangana Ze	Environmental Specialist
Mundele Wavelellah	Team Member
Erwan Jean Georges Morand	Team Member
Charlie Foyet Sonkeng	Environmental Specialist



Issiaka Traore	Team Member
Fabena Divine Babindamana Nee Niemet Gampika	Social Specialist
Lelia Croitoru	Team Member (Economist)
Sara El Choufi	Team Member (Greenhouse Gas Analysis)
Tuukka Castren	Team Member (ICR)

B. STAFF TIME AND COST

Stage of Project Cycle	Staff Time and Cost	
	No. of staff weeks	US\$ (including travel and consultant costs)
Preparation		
FY11	20.575	131,315.54
FY12	10.882	150,242.67
FY13	0	0.00
Total	31.46	281,558.21
Supervision/ICR		
FY13	11.100	96,477.86
FY14	10.625	91,629.77
FY15	22.098	167,960.96
FY16	23.726	138,941.15
FY17	28.341	118,681.14
FY18	23.288	143,050.25
FY19	3.369	32,376.61
FY20	11.267	63,242.47
FY21	24.390	120,530.43
FY22	5.737	58,374.16
FY23	2.553	27,756.85
Total	166.49	1,059,021.65



ANNEX 3. PROJECT COST BY COMPONENT

Components	Amount at Approval (US\$, millions)	Amount at Restructuring, 2015 (US\$, millions)	Amount at AF, ^c 2017 (US\$, millions)	Actual at Project Closing (US\$, millions)	Percentage of Approval
Capacity building and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment/Capacity building of the forest administration ^a	20.1	18.1	18.1	12.2	60%
Improving the enabling environment for private sector and smallholder activities in the forest sector	8.6	Dropped	Dropped	Dropped	n.a.
Enhancing the participation of local and indigenous communities in forest management/Involvement of local communities and indigenous people in forest resource management ^b	3.9	11.5	13.8	5.0	128%
Prospective work and communications	n.a.	3.0	3.0	1.3	n.a.
Habitat and biodiversity protection	n.a.	n.a.	3.9	3.7	n.a.
Project management	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	0.6	n.a.
Total	32.6	32.6	39.1	22.8	70%

Sources: For the amount at approval: PAD, page xi. For the amount at restructuring: Restructuring Paper of 2015, pages 9–10. For the total amount at AF 2017: AF paper, pages 12–13. For the actual amount at project closing: World Bank Client Connections, accessed November 18, 2022 (for IDA and GEF disbursements); Restructuring Paper, page 8 (for the counterpart disbursements); and communications with the counterpart for the distribution of the total disbursements among the components (September 2022). The totals might not add up exactly due to rounding.

Note: a. The component name changed at restructuring from ‘Capacity building and institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment’ to ‘Capacity building of forest administration’.

b. The component name changed at restructuring from ‘Enhancing the participation of local and indigenous communities in forest management’ to ‘Involvement of local communities and indigenous people in forest resource management’.

c. Represents the total amount (IDA, Government contribution, and GEF).

n.a. = not applicable, either because the component did not exist at that project stage or was dropped.



ANNEX 4. INTERMEDIATE INDICATORS - 2015 REVISION

Original Indicator	2015 Indicator
Government staff trained	Percentage of MSDFEE staff and managers trained
n.a.	Share of MSDFEE activities in the annual work plan that are planned in the M&E system
n.a.	People sensitized during information campaigns
n.a.	Visits to MSDFEE website
n.a.	Functioning local governance structures established
n.a.	Households that benefited from micro-projects
n.a.	Share of application texts in new forestry law for which application texts have been drafted
Sustainable Development, Forestry and Environment Budget Execution (relative to plans)	Dropped
n.a.	Ministry operations which the PM&E system has been applied to (% of total Min operations)
Env and Social Impact Assessments conducted to international standards and conforming to national laws done for new projects impacting on forests	Dropped
Forest concessions awarded through a public bidding mechanism as required by forest law	Dropped
Action Plans based on project-financed studies validated by stakeholders and adopted by MSDFEE	Dropped
Trainees who completed woodworking training center programs	Dropped
Investment proposals in forestry submitted (disaggregated by afforestation, reforestation, REDD+, PES ^a)	Dropped
SMEs accessing training courses at woodworking training center	Dropped
Environmental services project proposals supported by the project having obtained financing	Dropped
Local communities and indigenous peoples in forest concession areas are aware of their legal and customary rights and obligations under the forest code	Dropped
Local communities involved in the elaboration of social responsibility contracts, management plans for community development zones and other activities financed by forest revenues	Dropped
Number of management plans for community development zones elaborated and implemented with the participation of local communities and IP	Dropped
Successful community micro-projects implemented within Community Development Zones	Dropped

Note: IP = Indigenous Peoples; PES = Payment for environmental services.



ANNEX 5. EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

1. This annex provides (a) description of the project benefits, (b) the assumptions and results of an economic and financial CBA of agroforestry plantations, and (c) an incremental cost analysis of the GEF funds.

(a) **Project benefits.** The project generated several types of benefits, including the following:

- **Local benefits.** For example, increased production of bananas and cocoa due to the adoption of agroforestry activities, honey production due to the project's provision of beehives, and increased revenues due to the adoption of other income-generating activities (for example, cultivation of fruit trees). In addition, the tree plantations on 950 ha are expected to result in increased wood production (for example, Ayous, Fraké) and increased supply of nutritional products (for example, moringa and wild soursop plantations).
- **National benefits.** For example, improved ecosystem services due to adoption of improved land management practices. These include water retention and erosion control benefits due to the reforestation of degraded land with different species (for example, Sapelli, Padouk, Azobe, and so on) and increased economic value of protected areas due to the project's support in strengthening the control against poaching activities. However, the lack of data regarding the changes in ecosystem services due to the project makes it hard to quantify the actual magnitude of these benefits.
- **Global benefits.** Through its interventions in capacity building, agroforestry, and reforestation, the project also provided benefits with global significance: promoting reversal of current land degradation trends (for example, by reforesting 950 ha of degraded land); stimulating conservation of biodiversity (for example, by increasing the populations of gorillas and chimpanzees in the PNNP through surveillance and anti-poaching measures); and net carbon sequestration, estimated at 23.8 million tCO_{2e}.⁵⁴

(b) **CBA.** An ex post CBA was conducted to estimate the NPV of representative land uses introduced by the project ('with project' situation: cocoa-banana-fruit trees agroforestry) and of other land uses that would have continued to exist had the **project** not been there ('without project' situation: cassava). The analysis considers a timeframe of 20 years and a discount rate of 6 percent.⁵⁵ The paragraphs below describe the assumptions used for the analysis, which are based on communications with the PIU, if not otherwise specified.

With Project

- **Financial CBA.** From the farmers' perspective, costs relate to the operation and maintenance of the plantations and materials and equipment, starting in Year 2. Benefits include local sales of bananas (Years 1 to 5) and cocoa (Years 5 to 20). The valuation considers an observed post-harvest loss of 10 percent for both products and

⁵⁴ Results of the ex post EX-ACT calculations for the FEDP. The analysis covers 4 years of capitalization and 26 years of implementation.

⁵⁵ World Bank. 2016. *Discounting Costs and Benefits in Economic Analysis of World Bank Projects*. Washington DC: World Bank.



partial sales of bananas⁵⁶ due to inefficient transportation and perishability. The economic valuation uses the average local prices of bananas (US\$2.3 per regime) and of cocoa in formal markets (US\$1.1 per kg) and in informal markets (US\$1.8 per kg). As a result, table 5.1 presents the financial NPV for the high-density and low-density agroforestry. The results are conservative, as they do not include the value of fruits (for example, *safou*) that are not yet in production but are expected to be harvested and traded in the market in a few years.

- Economic CBA.** From the social perspective, the costs include all the expenses reported above and the costs supported by the project in the first year (for example, purchase of plants, establishment of plantations, materials and equipment, and training). Estimated benefits cover the returns to farmers from sales of bananas and cocoa. The results, shown in table 5.1, represent conservative estimates, as they do not account for the value of ecosystem services expected to be generated by improved vegetation cover (for example, soil conservation) compared to the land use that would have been in place, had the project not been there (that is, cassava).

Without Project

- Had the project had not been there, it is most likely that the land would have remained under cassava cultivation. Based on the data drawn from the PACN, the farmer’s annual net benefits average about US\$400 per hectare of cassava. Accordingly, the financial NPV under base analysis is estimated at US\$4,600 per year. The economic NPV is most likely lower, due to negative off-site effects of land degradation associated with lack of soil conservation practices (table 5.1).
- Overall,** the above analysis shows that the selected agroforestry practices are more attractive than the alternative land use, both economically and financially. A sensitivity analysis to changes in different parameters demonstrates that these practices remain profitable also for an increase in the discount rate to 10 percent and a decline in cocoa yields by 60 percent (for high-density agroforestry) and by 20 percent (for low-density agroforestry). However, the practices are not attractive for a scenario with zero banana sales (which could happen, for example, due to damages from wildlife).

Table 5.1. Results of Financial and Economic CBA

	Economic NPV (US\$/ha)	Financial NPV (US\$/ha)
Base analysis: 20 years, 6% discount rate		
Previous practice: cassava	< 4,600	4,600
Practice 1: cocoa-banana-fruit (high density)	10,600–18,100	15,000–22,500
Practice 2: cocoa-banana-fruit (low density)	6,000–10,000	11,600–15,600
Sensitivity analysis: 20 years, 10% discount rate, same cocoa yields		
Previous practice: cassava	< 3,400	3,400
Practice 1: cocoa-banana-fruit (high density)	7,700–12,700	12,000–16,900
Practice 2: cocoa-banana-fruit (low density)	4,300–9,700	9,700–12,300
Sensitivity analysis: 20 years, 6% discount rate, cocoa yields decline		

⁵⁶ Estimated to increase from 50 percent of the post-harvest quantity in Year 1 to 90 percent in Year 5 (for FEDP 1) and from 70 percent of the post-harvest quantity in Year 1 to 90 percent in Year 5 (for FEDP 2).



	Economic NPV (US\$/ha)	Financial NPV (US\$/ha)
Previous practice: cassava	< 4,600	4,600
Practice 1: cocoa-banana-fruit (decline by 60%)	4,600–7,500	9,100–12,000
Practice 2: cocoa-banana-fruit (decline by 20%)	4,500–7,600	10,100–13,200

Source: Communications with the PIU and other project data, 2022.

Note: High density = 1,100 banana plants and 1,100 cocoa plants per hectare. Low density = 800 banana plants and 800 cocoa plants per hectare.

- (c) **Incremental cost analysis (GEF).** The analysis conducted at the AF stage considered a baseline scenario with a cost of US\$33.2 million, which covered the GoC's and IDA's contributions to the agroforestry and project management components and the WCS support for the management of the PNNN and other wildlife management in the project area (table 5.2, second column). In addition, it considered the following incremental funding: the project's GEF support and the expected contributions from the FIP, FCPF, and AFD projects aiming to promote agroforestry approaches and conservation agriculture and develop a sustainable cocoa sector. The AF paper suggested that by investing an incremental US\$6.5 million, the GEF would leverage an additional US\$16 million from the FIP, US\$60 million from the FCPF, and US\$14.6 million from AFD, thus enabling a total incremental investment of US\$97.1 million. Using the baseline and incremental funding, the ratio co-financing/GEF funds is estimated at 19:1 for the AF stage.

Table 5.2. Baseline and Incremental Funding (US\$, millions)

Funding Source	Original Amount (expected during the AF lifetime)	Actual Amount (disbursed during the AF lifetime)
Baseline Funding		
GoC	8.1	0.0
IDA	3.5	4.4
WCS	21.6	21.2
WWF	0.0	1.5
<i>Total baseline funding</i> ^(a)	<i>33.2</i>	<i>27.1</i>
Incremental Funding		
GEF ^(b)	6.5	6.4
FIP	16.0	0.0
FCPF	60.0	0.0
AFD	14.6	2.7
<i>Total incremental funding</i> ^(c)	<i>97.1</i>	<i>9.1</i>
Total co-financing ^(a+c-b)	123.8	29.8
Ratio co-financing/GEF	19:1	4.6:1

Sources: For the original amounts, see World Bank (2017) Project Paper on a Proposed Additional Grant from the GEF Trust Fund in the Amount of US\$6.5 million to the Republic of Congo for the Forestry and Economic Diversification Project, annex 5, page 49.

Actual amounts: for GEF and IDA, see World Bank Client Connection.

<https://ebizprd.worldbank.org/wfa/ccloginpage.html>; for AFD: communications with the project coordinator for Congo, related to the projects *Appui à la lutte anti braconnage Nord Congo*, *Projet Paysage Nord Congo*, and *Projet de relance de l'Agriculture*; for WCS: communications with the finance manager of the Wildlife Conservation Society; for the WWF: estimate based on an average investment of US\$0.3 million per year, based on communications with the project team; for GoC: all borrower's disbursements occurred during 2012 to 2013,



hence zero disbursement during 2017 to 2022; for the FIP and FCPF: the projects are under preparation, with effectiveness expected in 2023, hence zero disbursement till 2022.

2. At completion, the GEF disbursements amounted to US\$6.4 million, corresponding to 99 percent of the estimated GEF cost at appraisal (table 5.2, third column). Actual expenses related to the baseline funding include the amounts disbursed from 2017 to 2022 from IDA (capacity building and support of micro-projects), from the WCS (investments in the PNNN), and from the WWF (cost of management of the PNNP). Moreover, the disbursements related to the incremental funding outside the GEF cover only the expenses related to the AFD projects, because the FIP and FCPF are under preparation. Overall, considering the total baseline and incremental funding from non-GEF sources, the ratio of co-financing/GEF funds is estimated at about 4.6:1. Although this is much lower than that expected at the AF stage, it is substantially higher than that reported for other similar GEF projects in the region, such as the West Africa Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication, and Knowledge Services Project (P130888), with a ratio of 2.9:1, and Mauritania Sustainable Landscape Management Project under the Sahel and West Africa Program (P144183), with a ratio of 4:1 at completion.⁵⁷

3. The project contributed to the focal areas of Land Degradation, Sustainable Forest Management, and Biodiversity, through the following achievements and global environmental benefits:

- **Sustainable forest management.** The project provided technical assistance to support the sustainable forest management through capacity building for the preparation, planting, and maintenance of agroforestry fields and development of management plans for the forests located in the North of the Republic of Congo. In addition, the GEF funds supported concrete investments in improving forest management, such as expansion of agroforestry plantations, primarily relying on cocoa and banana (506 ha in total); reforestation with fast-growing species for wood production (for example ayous, fraké, and moringa) and with slow-growing species (for example padouk, azobé, tali, and doussié) for forest restoration purposes (950 ha in total); and investments in the infrastructure needed for improved management of PNNP, for example, watch towers, camping equipment, and supervision vehicles.
- **Biodiversity.** The GEF funds supported the conservation of biodiversity, particularly related to forest ecosystems. The investments in the needed infrastructure in the PNNP resulted in improved biodiversity through increased populations of rare fauna, for example, Western lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, elephants, and hippos. To attest this development, the METT score for biodiversity protection increased from 26 at the beginning to 73 at the end of the project—compared to an end target of 40⁵⁸.
- **Land degradation.** The GEF support contributed to reducing land degradation through several actions: planting trees on degraded areas (950 ha); investing in improving the management of two protected areas; and introducing a wide range of sustainable land management practices, such as agroforestry on degraded agricultural land. However, it is important to note that the country suffers from deforestation and forest degradation due

⁵⁷ See World Bank. 2019. Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication, and Knowledge SVC. ICR and World Bank. 2021. Mauritania Sustainable Landscape Management Project under the Sahel and West Africa Program. ICR.

⁵⁸ *Ministère de l'Economie Forestière du Développement Durable et de l'Environnement. 2022. Rapport de Clôture et de Capitalisation du Projet Forêt et Diversification Economique (PFDE).*



to overexploitation for wood and charcoal, particularly around major cities.⁵⁹ It is expected that in the long run, some project activities will help satisfy a part of the demand for wood—thus reducing forest degradation, while others (for example, developing income-generating activities) will help increase the communities' income and reduce pressure on forests.

4. The project also supported climate change mitigation by enhancing carbon sequestration through plantations and improved management of protected areas. A GHG analysis through EX-ACT, applied at completion, suggests that the project would help reduce emissions of about 23.8 million tCO₂e over 20 years⁶⁰—nearly 15 times the quantity expected at the AF stage (1.6 million tCO₂e).⁶¹ Moreover, by improving the management of two protected areas (PNNP and PNNN), and by reducing carbon emissions, the project contributed to the conservation objectives of the Global Wildlife Program of the World Bank, specifically to “supporting the improved management of 59 million hectares of land, including improved management effectiveness of over 135 protected areas” and “preventing the emission of 58 million tons of CO₂ equivalent.”⁶²

⁵⁹ *Ministere de l'Economie Forestiere du Developpement Durable et de l'Environnement. 2022. Rapport de Clôture et de Capitalisation du Projet Foret et Diversification Economique (PFDE).*

⁶⁰ Results of the ex post EX-ACT calculations for the FEDP.

⁶¹ Results of the ex ante EX-ACT calculations for the FEDP.

⁶² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-wildlife-program/overview>.



ANNEX 6. BORROWER, CO-FINANCIER AND OTHER PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

The World Bank received a detailed ICR, in French, from the client in July 2022, which was prepared by a consultant specifically recruited for this purpose. The main conclusions and recommendations of this report are summarized in English below. They are well-aligned with the conclusions of the ICR.

The ICR was shared with the client, but no comments were provided to the World Bank. However, throughout the ICR drafting process, the client, particularly through the PIU, provided inputs to the ICR. The ICR team took these, as appropriate, into account in the final version of the ICR.

Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development

Completion Report: Forest and Economic Diversification Project (FEDP)

2013–2022

October 2022

Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations (translated from French)

Between 2010 and 2012, the GoC and World Bank prepared the FEDP. The project became effective in March 2013, the original IDA credit was extended by five months, and implementation was completed in March 2018. By that time, an AF was secured in the form of a grant from GEF-6, for improving protected area management, including livelihood support for local communities and combating poaching. Originally, the GEF grant was to close in July 2021, but it was extended for almost a year to allow for the completion of delayed activities. The GEF grant finally closed on June 30, 2022.

This is the final report of the project, providing information and analyses on the implementation and key results achieved, difficulties encountered, and lessons learned.

During its implementation, the FEDP incurred many delays. The project was slow to get off the ground, though the pace of implementation increased after the Level 1 restructuring approved in 2015. The closing date of the IDA credit was postponed by five months to allow for implementation of delayed activities. The closing date of the GEF grant was postponed by almost a year to June 2022, but this was partly due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project did achieve a disbursement rate of nearly 100 percent.

Following the 2015 restructuring, the PDO of the FEDP was “to increase the capacity of the forest administration, local communities and indigenous peoples to co-manage forests.” Globally speaking, in terms of its results, the FEDP contributed to the strengthening of the forest administration and improvement of the regulatory framework and working conditions of forestry officials through (a) the establishment of information and management systems; (b) the elaboration of implementation decrees for the forest law and procedures manuals for the DGEF and the Inspectorate-General of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development; (c) the provision of equipment for central and local forestry institutions; (d) the integration of the central Services of the Forest Ministry in a single network; (e) the installation of



VSAT antennas and internet connections in the DDEF and the Central Forestry Administration; and (f) the rehabilitation of the DDEF buildings in Pointe-Noire, Sangha, Niari, and Cuvette Departments.

The involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples in forest management was strengthened by the elaboration of PSGs. The financing of priority income-generating activities for local communities and indigenous peoples, which started after the 2015 restructuring, was continued during the implementation of the GEF grant from 2018 onward—through delegated management contracts concluded with the timber company Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB-Olam) (160 households and 105 smallholder cocoa producers), the Centre for the Valorization of Non-Timber Forest Products (CVPFNL) for apiculture support to 625 households, and (PRONAR for agroforestry support to 120 households. The interventions provided support to 2,671 households, through employment, income-generating activities, and community projects, 34 percent of which were women.

Owing to the support provided through the GEF grant, with this AF approved in 2017 and implemented from March 2018, the management effectiveness of the PNNN and the newly established PNNP, covering a total area of 427,000 ha, was significantly improved, thus enhancing biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration.⁶³

The project financed delegated management contracts with the WWF (PNNP) and the WCS (PNNN) for the management of these national parks, funding the building or rehabilitating of park rangers' dwellings as well as control posts and storage rooms, and reinforcing the capacity of the park authorities to control poaching, by providing equipment (for example GPS and cameras) and training in wildlife law enforcement, elaboration of wildlife legal and regulatory texts, and establishment of a CRMS and a specialized sniffer dogs team to find illegal wildlife produce hidden in vehicles and buildings.

While the completion rate of the project's activities was 100 percent, this should not mask the fact that a number of difficulties were encountered, the main one of which was the inability of the Government to continue to finance the counterpart funds committed initially—leading to a restructuring in 2015. Some of the challenges faced during implementation of the project included (a) the number and ambition of the project's initial activities in relation to the capacity of the Government to adequately manage a complex project and provide the agreed counterpart funding (addressed by a reduction of scope and ambition in the 2015 restructuring); (b) the frequent changes in key project personnel (four coordinators) and World Bank TTLs; (c) the lack of experience in managing international financial transactions of the Congolese postal bank; (d) the isolation of the project area, making field operations difficult and costly; and (e) the difficulties faced by communities with little schooling, such as indigenous peoples, in complying with World Bank procedures.

Despite all the challenges mentioned above, the FEDP was able to overcome many problems and achieve commendable results. This was due to the judicious choice of field implementation partners; the dynamism of certain local community leaders; the strong engagement of the forestry institutions, both at central and local levels; and finally the sacrifices made by the project personnel, who were not covered by medical insurance despite facing tough conditions in the field.

⁶³ The score of the GEF METT for the PNNN increased from 26 at the start of the AF to 73 at the end, largely surpassing the target of 40.



ANNEX 7. GREENHOUSE GAS ANALYSIS

- To assess the impacts of World Bank agricultural and forestry investments on GHG emissions and carbon sequestration, the World Bank has adopted EX-ACT by FAO.
- EX-ACT allows project teams to assess the net carbon balance of a project compared to a without project scenario. Net carbon balance is defined as the net balance of CO₂ equivalent GHGs that were emitted or sequestered as a result of project activities/implementation.
- Basic assumptions.** For the GHG analysis, the selected soil type is low activity clay soil, which is the dominant soil type in the Republic of Congo. The project's implementation period and the GHG analysis is for four years, and the project capitalization is for 16 years.
- Inputs to the analysis.** The project interventions directly targeted 427,200 ha of forest land for sustainable management in the newly established PNNP, where the predominant forest types are tropical moist deciduous forests. In addition, the project intervention included land use change to 950 ha of degraded lands for agroforestry and 415 ha of degraded lands for annual tree crops (perennial/annual cropland). The project interventions resulted in improved management of forested lands and land use change of degraded lands into
 - 427,200 ha of land under sustainable forest management;⁶⁴
 - 950 ha under agroforestry ; and
 - 415 ha of perennial trees/annual crops (cocoa, banana, and fruit trees).
- The project additionally resulted in the purchase and operation of a number of road vehicles, motorcycles, and two-stroke engine boats. The energy use from the introduction of which was also used as an input for the GHG analysis.⁶⁵
- Outcomes.** The project is expected to reduce or avoid **23,789,023** tCO₂e over 20 years.

Table 7.1. Total GHG Mitigation Potential of the Project

Project Components		Gross Fluxes		
		In tCO ₂ e over the whole period analysis (positive = source / negative = sink)		
		Without	With	Balance
Land use changes	Other land use	0	-158,787	-158,787
Forest management		0	-23,637,111	-23,637,111
Inputs and investments		864	7,740	6,876
Total emissions, tCO ₂ e		864	-23,788,159	-23,789,023
Total emissions, tCO ₂ e/ha		0.0	-55.5	-55.5
Total emissions, tCO ₂ e/ha/year		0.0	-2.8	-2.8

⁶⁴ The PNNP is assumed to have about 20–30 percent of degraded lands. The project interventions improved management and reduced the area of degraded land in the park to 10 percent or less.

⁶⁵ Only vehicles associated directly with the projects were used as inputs for this part of the GHG analysis.



Table 7.2. GHG Average Annual Emissions and Mitigation Potential of the Project

Project Components		Gross Fluxes		
		In tCO ₂ e over the whole period analysis (positive = source / negative = sink)		
		Without	With	Balance
Land use changes	Other land use	0	-7,939	-7,939
Forest management		0	-1,181,856	-1,181,856
Inputs and investments		43	387	344
Total emissions, tCO₂e		43	-1,189,408	-1,189,451

Table 7.3. Share Per GHG of the Balance

Project Components		Direct and Indirect Contributions under Project Components				
		In tCO ₂ e (positive = source / negative = sink)				
		CO ₂ biomass	CO ₂ soil	N ₂ O	CH ₄	All non-afolu emissions*
Land use changes	Other land use	-12,327	-146,461	0.0	0.0	—
Forest management		-23,637,111	0.0	0.0	0.0	—
Inputs and investments		—	0.0	0.0	—	6,876
Total emissions, tCO ₂ e		-23,649,438	-146,461	0.0	0.0	6,876
Total emissions, tCO₂e/ha		-55.2	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total emissions, tCO₂e/ha/year		-2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: AFOLU = Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use



ANNEX 8. CHANGES IN RESPONSIBILITY AND NAME OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREST ECONOMY

Year	Title Ministry		Minister
	French	English	
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère de l’Economie Forestière et de l’Environnement (MEFE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Forest Economy and Environment (MFEE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M. Henri Djombo
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère du Développement Durable, de l’Economie Forestière et de l’Environnement (MDDEFE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment (MSDFEE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M. Henri Djombo
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère de l’Economie Forestière et du Développement Durable (MEFDD) Ministre du Tourisme et de l’Environnement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Forest Economy and Sustainable Development (MFESD) Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M. Henri Djombo M. Josué Rodrigue Nguonimba
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère de l’Economie Forestière, du Développement Durable et de l’Environnement (MEFDDE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment (MSDFEE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mme Rosalie Matondo
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère de l’Economie Forestière (MEF) Ministère du Tourisme et de l’Environnement (MTE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Forest Economy (MFE) Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mme Rosalie Matondo Mme Arlette Soudan Nonault
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministère de l’Economie Forestière (MEF) Ministère du Ministre de l’Environnement du Développement Durable et du Bassin du Congo (MEDDBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Forest Economy (MFE) Ministry of the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Congo Basin (MESDCB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mme Rosalie Matondo Mme Arlette Soudan Nonault