

Factsheet on the Sustainable Forest Management Program

The process

The DRC National REDD+ Strategy adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2012, the National REDD+ Investment Plan endorsed by CAFI in 2016 and, the [Letter of Intent](#) signed between CAFI and the Government of DRC have together determined the priority sectors where CAFI investments are targeted. Based on these documents, the National REDD+ Fund (FONAREDD) in Kinshasa launched calls for proposal to illicit a response from eligible international organizations – in partnership with DRC stakeholders (government or non-state actors) - with funding proposals in priority sectors. These proposals go through a rigorous assessment process, including technical review by independent experts, technical committee readings and recommendations, until they are presented to the Steering Committee of FONAREDD for approval. One such sector is forestry, for which FONAREDD [launched a call for proposals](#) in 2016. The proposal by AFD was selected from the submissions, which has since been revised twice following technical evaluation and discussions by the technical committee on two occasions. The current version was prepared for the third reading by the technical committee before its submission to the Steering Committee for approval; with the date to be confirmed at a later stage. The document is thus still in the technical evaluation phase, no approvals will be made at this stage. Furthermore, currently [the funding to CAFI projects is suspended](#) until the illegal logging concessions have been canceled.

The Challenges

- Deforestation rates are steadily increasing in DRC, estimated to have reached 1.7M ha per year between the period 2010 – 2014¹
- Deforestation is mainly driven by slash-and-burn agriculture and related fuel wood collection
- Wood harvesting in DRC is more than 90% for fuel wood (more than 80 million m³/year), the remaining for timber²
- More than 90% of timber is harvested informally without formal management plans or with little control by the authorities, leaving a tiny percentage to attribute to logging concessions (200-300,000 m³/year)
- Logging is practiced in DRC under different modalities: 1) logging concessions, 2) artisanal permits and 3) Community or communal concessions
- Logging concessions can impact forests through degrading them or by opening them up to populations to practice slash-and-burn agriculture and fuelwood collection. The latter does not have a serious impact in countries with low population densities (e.g. Gabon or Rep. of Congo – where both surface areas under concession and volumes exploited are many times higher than in DRC, while they have the lowest levels of deforestation in tropical countries). In DRC, population densities are higher and increasing: the country has the World's 3rd largest population growth and is expected to exceed 379 million people by 2100
- Foreign companies that have historically undertaken logging in DRC practice selective logging (meaning less than one tree per hectare) and are moving out of the region because of decreasing margins. It has been recently observed that many have sold their holdings to Asian companies while timber exports to Asia and the Middle East increase at the expense of the EU. The former do not have legality requirements in place such as the EU timber regulation

¹ [As per the submission of the first FREL](#). A revised FREL is expected on 28 May 2018.

² For sources, see [“Complex and Nuanced”](#)

- The largely informal artisanal sector is supplying a domestic market (more than 3 million m³/year) with low purchasing power, thus making it hard for the sector or the buyers to bear the costs of formal exploitation (paperwork, taxes, sustainable management practices)
- The country has no forest policy, a forest code that is in contradiction with the country's constitution and still needs several implementing provisions to make it fully operational.
- The forestry administration is weak making the implementation and enforcement of the fragmented regulatory framework almost impossible. Each forest warden covers a territory equivalent to Switzerland.

The proposal

The sustainable forest management program is indispensable for addressing these challenges, if we want to preserve this forest. Its objectives are aligned with the strategic documents mentioned above and include the following objectives:

1. Contribute to better forest governance
2. Adopt a forest policy in a participative and transparent manner
3. Based on the forest policy adapt the regulatory framework, in particular the Forest Code;
4. Support the professionalization and compliance of artisanal logging;
5. Support the development of community-based and communal forest concessions;
6. Ensure compliance of logging concessions with the law;
7. Strengthen the capacities of the forestry administration.

According to the current draft, key activities to achieve this include (with a total funding of US\$ 12M from CAFI/FONAREDD):

1. Support the improvement of forest governance (US\$ 1.88 M)
 - Set up a multi-stakeholder platform to guide and monitor forest governance
 - Redefine and strengthen the role of the Independent Observer³ and support it
 - Develop and implement the plan to fight illegal forestry
2. Support the development and adoption of a sustainable forest regulatory framework (US\$ 1.91M)
 - Development of the forest policy
 - Development of the forest code
 - Regulatory text development
 - Forest zoning (where CAFI provincial programs are in operation)
 - Environmental and social impact assessment of the program and the pilots
3. Making artisanal logging more sustainable (US\$ 2.35M)
 - Improving knowledge on the sector
 - Improving the planning and monitoring of the sector
 - Support the transition of informal forest companies to formal artisanal logging
 - Support companies identified above to implement agreements with local populations
 - Support wood processors
 - Support the marketing of wood products including increasing demand for legal wood
4. Participatory forest management (US\$ 4.18M)
 - Identification of communities and local authorities interested in sustainable forest management

³ Currently undertaken by the ONG OGF – see <http://ogfrdc.cd/2017/10/03/603/>

- Testing rational resource use on pilot sites including improving performance of artisanal loggers
 - Monitoring of community-based and communal forest concession and replication beyond pilots
5. Sustainable management of forest concessions (US\$ 0.74M)
- Development of sector strategy to improve governance
 - Support the monitoring of forest concessions' management plans
 - Support the implementation of social clauses of management plans
 - Support the establishment of rural development zones through sustainable agricultural practices
 - Support to defining land use options for concessions returned to the state
 - Support to fulfill the legal conditions of lifting the moratorium
 - Agreements between artisanal loggers and concessions
6. Support local forest administration to monitor and control loggers (US\$ 0.95M)
- Training of administration staff (training needs assessment, development of tools, implementation of training verification of training results)
 - Knowledge transfer and capacity building