



# Project Information Document/ Identification/Concept Stage (PID)

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Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 22-Dec-2019 | Report No: PIDC175023



**BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)	Environmental and Social Risk Classification	Project Name
P169610		Moderate	Support to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for Sustainable Resources Management
Region	Country	Date PID Prepared	Estimated Date of Approval
AFRICA	Congo, Republic of	22-Dec-2019	
Financing Instrument	Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency	
Investment Project Financing	Ministry of Forest Economy	DGM National Steering Committee	

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

**SUMMARY**

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	4.50
<b>Total Financing</b>	4.50
<b>Financing Gap</b>	0.00

**DETAILS**

**Non-World Bank Group Financing**

Trust Funds	4.50
Strategic Climate Fund Grant	4.50

**B. Introduction and Context**

Country Context

The Republic of Congo is 342,000 km<sup>2</sup> in size and straddles the equator at the heart of Congo Basin, the second largest forest area in the world estimated at 21 million ha. The vast forest covered area in the Republic of Congo accounts for 65.4% of the land surface. Although the net rate of change in forest cover remain low with a gross annual deforestation rate of 0.047%, GHG emissions from deforestation and forest



degradation are the main source of national emissions, reaching 19.2 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e/year in 2015, according to the Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL).

The Congolese economy had remained on a trajectory of strong growth for almost a decade (on average 5%). This growth however was strongly dependent on oil which accounted for 65% of the GDP until 2014, 75% of state revenue and 80% of exports, and is now seeing a sharp decline linked to the fall of oil prices. The GDP growth rate is estimated at around 3.5% over the 2015-2017 reference period. Moreover, the business climate has remained disadvantageous for the development of the private sector: The Republic of Congo ranks 185th out of 189 countries in the 2014 World Bank Doing Business table.

Globally, the strong dependence on oil halted the development of other lines of business, such as agriculture and forestry (9% of GDP in 2016). Despite its small participation to the GDP, the forestry sector is of particular economic and social importance and contributes around 5% of GDP: creation of 11,000 direct formal jobs and about 22,000 indirect formal jobs, is the second largest provider of jobs after the public administration, it has established economic and social structures (including rehabilitation of departmental and national roads, schools, sanitary structures, drinking water, etc.). Almost all these jobs do not require significant qualifications and are often in isolated areas where there are few other economic alternatives. It is estimated that 575,000 Congolese live in forest areas and that some 84.5% of Congolese depend on wood products for their energy needs.

In addition, the recorded growth has not had the same effects across all segments of the population; close to half of the population lives under the poverty line. The poor productivity outside the oil sector and the low development of the private sector have not allowed for a sufficient reduction of poverty levels, which remain high especially in rural areas (69.5%, compared to 40.5% at the national level). In this context, the evolution of Human Development Index has been slower than the indicators of economic growth: 0.591, placing the country in the 136th out of 188 countries in 2014.

The general population and housing census estimated the Congolese population at around 5,5 million inhabitants in 2017, with approximately 51% of women and 49% of men. With 12 departments, the Republic of Congo is a strongly urbanized but sparsely populated country with one of the least dense rural spaces in Africa, is one of the least dense in Africa, with 12.8 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. It is estimated that close to 74 percent of the Congolese population is below 35 years of age, and concentrated in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, the two urban centers in the country, and where over 50% of the population also lives. Although almost two thirds of the population live in the country's five main towns, it remains largely dependent on forests for its vital needs (food, energy, pharmacopeia, etc).

Forest ecosystems are essential – at varying but significant levels – for the entirety of the population, and are vital for indigenous people, in terms of food and socio-cultural subsistence, as well as monetary economy. The continuation ecosystem services are crucial for future development, limiting the impact of climate change and offering adaptation possibilities to a part of these rural populations.

The country is characterized by weak institutions, which have slowed progress on social and economic transformation. The country's administration and accountability are significantly weakened, as is the publicly



funded services. Additionally, the Congo's administration has been historically centralized, and this has limited the benefits of decentralization as well as the role of local communities in improving service delivery

#### Sectoral and Institutional Context

### **Deforestation and Forest Degradation**

As a result of the various drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, the Republic of Congo since 2008, has engaged in the process of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, together with conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon. The main direct drivers are: (i) shifting subsistence agriculture, which occupies 81% of cultivated land, but is generally of low productivity; (ii) forestry, both industrial and artisanal, which contributes significantly to emissions from degradation due to the substantial size of the country's forests, in spite of sustainable forest management policies; (iii) fuelwood production, which provides some 90% of the country's energy needs, drives forest degradation primarily in the supply basins of urban centers, where transformation and utilization of these resources are generally inefficient; and (iv) road and urban infrastructure, which have expanded into forest areas.

The indirect (or underlying) drivers include (i) a weak governance due to weak institutional capacity, particularly in terms of control of the sectors influencing deforestation; (ii) weak intersectoral coordination and lack of land use planning, leading to overlapping and incompatible land uses; (iii) poverty and lack of financing and access for economic and technological alternatives (approximately 40.9% of the population lives below the national poverty line and 69.5% in rural areas); and (iv) a population growth of 2.6%, leading to an increase in domestic demand for agricultural land, fuelwood and infrastructure.

It is estimated that, should the development of the industrial agriculture not be managed in a sustainable manner, emissions will reach 35.5 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e in the 2015 to 2020. Industrial agriculture has primarily been concentrated in the oil palm sector, in which concessions have been attributed in the past, although these have not had significant production so far. When it comes to mining, this sector has been mostly dormant while metals and minerals prices are globally low. In recent years, numerous exploration permits have been allocated in forest areas, where the primary risks relate to mine site and infrastructure development, as well as population influx. After agriculture, the mining sector could become the third leading cause of deforestation at national level.

For centuries, Congo's indigenous peoples have lived in dense humid forests where for a long time they would have lived solely by hunting and gathering. The term "indigenous peoples" covers a large number of ethnic groups with distinct identities and languages. The different groups are found in other countries of the sub-region as well. Indigenous Peoples in the Republic of Congo live along the coast of to the north of the Atlantic coast, in the region of Kouilou, live the Babongos. They also populate Niari, Bouenza and Lékoumou and they extend to the south-east of Gabon, beyond the Chaillu Massif. It is estimated that there are a total number of 43,378 IPs, representing approximately 1.17% of the national population. 76% of these



populations are concentrated three (3) Departments: the Likouala (13,476), the Lékoumou (11,456) and the Sangha (7,885). In the Pool area, the areas of Vinza, Kimba, Mayama, Kindamba, are inhabited by the Babis. They are also found in Cameroon around Kribi and Lolodorf, where they are called Bagyeli. The Batéké plateaux in central Congo are inhabited by the Tswa. This name is close to that of the indigenous people of the center of the Democratic Republic of Congo, called the Batchua or the Cwa, terms that are found in the ancient Kuba kingdom, and which is not far from Twa from Burundi, Rwanda, or and Uganda.

In the Western Cuvette, the Bakola natives live in Mbomo. They extend to Gabon and take other names such as Bakolo, Bibayak, or Mambenga in the Sangha, north of Congo, there are other groups, including the Mikayas and Mbenzeles, which extend to Likouala. In the extreme north of the Congo, we find the Baaka whose name means: those who live in trees or leaves.

From the Ndoki valley and all the region of Likouala is inhabited by Baakas or Bakas. They extend to Cameroon and the Central African Republic, in the region of Lobaye or Labaye or Mbaki, which are border areas of the Congo. All these communities, in Congo, in Lingala, are called Bambenga in the north. To the south, they are called Babongos. The list of these appellations is not exhaustive and they are subjective, including the French term PYGMEES which has a Greek origin meaning small man.

The distribution of IPs in the Republic of Congo points to a very young population (41% of the indigenous population is under 15 years of age), with a high fertility rate and a high rate of infant-youth mortality (10-14 age group has a large deficit). In contrast, IPs over 60 represent only less than 5% of the population. This situation reflects important health problems. Moreover, the gender imbalance in favor of women for the population between 15 and 39 years, shows that the phenomenon of migrations (seasonal, for employment, and rural exodus) of young men is also frequent among the indigenous populations.

### **Legislation Protecting IP Rights**

At the national level, the Republic of Congo has made a strong commitment in protecting the rights of indigenous populations by promulgating the Law No. 5-2011 of 25 February 2011 on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous populations. The purpose and intent of this law is to provide for and ensure effective respect for the rights of indigenous peoples (rights to culture, education, justice, health, property with a focus on consultation and access to benefits exploitation of natural resources, etc.).

Law n ° 05-2011, guarantees the establishment of IP consultation before considering any measure and / or project that affects them. Amongst other, it guarantees: cultural rights and a collective and individual right to property, the delimitation of land on the basis of the customary right of land occupation and a right to income from the exploitation and use of their lands and natural resources. Moreover at the national level, the law equally stipulates that any commitment or resettlement of IP lands requires their free, informed and prior consent (FPIC); and that the IPs (including local communities) concerned have a right to income and profits from REDD+ commitment.

Nevertheless, despite the presence of the law and policies, there is an absence of implementing legislation, particularly on the modalities and level of IPLC participation, and more broadly civil society, in the forest



resource management and forest classification process. Overall, there are serious challenges with social inequalities in the treatment of IPs in the Republic of Congo. Many live in extreme poverty and are subject to land chiefs where they live and work under difficult circumstances.

#### Relationship to CPF

The proposed ROC DGM project is consistent with the World Bank Country Partnership's (CPS) 2012-2016 strategic theme of environmental protection to enhance the sustainable. Moreover, the 2020 CPF (under preparation) is expected to expand its support to the REDD+ initiatives as a driver of forest-smart and sustainable agriculture and will look at ways in which to prioritize the use community driven development projects, support to transparency, voice and accountability.

#### **Relationship to National Laws and Policy**

The economic growth of the Republic of Congo remains far below the 8.5% necessary to achieve the objectives fixed for 2025 as part of the 2012-2016 National Development Plan (NDP). The FIP/DGM project is therefore in line with the Republic of Congo Government that has made a commitment to diversify its economy, with a view on sustainable growth.

The forest policy (2014-2025), which aims to ensure that "Congoese forests contribute to the emergence of the green economy, to poverty reduction, to the well-being of the country's present and future generations and help fight against climate change, if managed sustainably. " (Also see Section 1.2 on the state and governance of forest resources for the Government's commitments and achievements in the sustainable forest management arena.)

The Republic of Congo's National Strategy for Sustainable Development,<sup>8</sup> validated in September 2014, which designates REDD+ as a key tool for nature protection and conservation. the National REDD+ Strategy presents an ambitious strategy that aims to (i) establish a multi-sectoral action framework that will align and influence sectoral policies and strategies, (ii) harmonize action programs and (iii) align the action programs' budget with the Republic of Congo's development priorities beyond the forest sector.

#### **Relationship with the National REDD+ Strategy and Forest Investment Plan**

The DGM program is closely linked with the REDD+/Forest Investment Plan for the Republic of Congo. The Investment Plan aims to centralize, channel and coordinate international, national, public and private funds to support the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy. This involves structuring a programmatic framework to accommodate both sector-based and enabling REDD+ related investments.

The National REDD+ National Strategy is based on:



- A cross-cutting lever focused mainly on improving governance and putting in place appropriate policies and measures. This lever is an indispensable enabling support that directly targets the indirect causes of deforestation and forest degradation;

- Programmatic or sectoral levers (forest, agriculture, mining and energy) for the implementation of activities that will reduce emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and maintain/increase forest carbon stocks and sustainable forest management.

The areas of intervention of the National REDD+ Strategy are:

**Strategic Option 1:** Strengthen governance and sustainable financing

**Strategic Option 2:** Sustainable development and management of forest resources

**Strategic Option 3:** Improve agricultural systems

**Strategic Option 4:** Rationalize production and use of fuelwood and promote other clean energy sources

**Strategic Option 5:** Develop a green mining sector

The Investment Plan is the reference framework for actions implemented over the 2018-2025 period and for emission reductions linked to deforestation, forest degradation and carbon stock increase throughout the national territory. It identifies ongoing activities as well as a portfolio of complementary and diversified activities to support the implementation of the National Strategy.

These activities will be financed through existing bilateral and multilateral funding (AFD, EU, IDA-WB, GEF, etc.), and proposed for funding from climate funds including the Forest Investment Program (FIP), the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other multilateral, bilateral donors and private sector sources.

The Investment Plan identifies 5 enabling programs and 6 geographically integrated programs for the 2018-2025 period. By creating the necessary regulatory, technical and capacity frameworks, enabling programs will provide favorable conditions for forest preservation and the emergence of a green economy. Deforestation drivers in priority ecosystems will directly be addressed by geographically integrated programs.

Furthermore, the DGM is also implemented in parallel to the Forest Investment Plan (P166189, Northern Agroforestry Project) whose objective is *“to strengthen climate smart agriculture and conservation practices in Community Development Zones in the departments of Sangha and Likouala”*. The project is intended to address shifting agriculture as a driver of deforestation, while allowing small farmers to partake in the ER-Program benefits. To do so, the project will work with communities to promote climate-smart agriculture practices that consume less area, generate higher yields and diversified crops that are resilient to climate change. The project will be divided into two main components to provide adequate and comprehensive support to the implementation of the model described above.



**Component 1: Support to climate smart agricultural production (USD 9 million).** This component would promote the adoption of CSA practices and improving access to inputs that enable both improved subsistence crop production for household consumption and cash crop production for income generation, including through cocoa. Specific attention will be paid to include women and especially young women in this component as it will enable them to get access to agricultural education, skills training, agricultural technology, improved seeds, agricultural advice, and entrepreneurship training and will then contribute to address gender inequality in the project area.

**Component 2: Payments for conservation (USD 4 million).** Payments for conservation to smallholders consist of incentives for the conservation of local community forests (located in the community development zones and the buffer zones of protected areas), in line with the Simple Management Plans developed.

### Relationship to Regional Initiatives

The DGM is in line with the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) 2014-2025 Convergence Plan's priority axis 4 on fighting the effects of climate change and desertification. It highlights efforts to combat deforestation and forest degradation and supports the development and implementation of measures to mitigate the effects of climate change. The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) is mandated with the guidance, coordination, and alignment of policies and decision-making in conservation and sustainable management of the forest ecosystems of its ten member-states. COMIFAC is supported in its mandate by the Conference on Dense and Humid Ecosystems of Central Africa (CEFDHAC) which aims to promote the conservation and sustainable management of the Central African forests and serves as a sub-regional forum promoting dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration between all stakeholders involved in the sector. CEFDHAC has been the joint platform for facilitating the coordination of forest policies in Central Africa and includes governments, parliamentarians, public administration, private sector actors, NGOs, and civil society organizations (including organizations representing FDCs).

CEFDHAC also formally recognized and coordinates seven specialized networks, including the Regional Network of Local and Indigenous Populations for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC by its French acronym). Established in 2003, REPALEAC represents over 200 FDC organizations from eight Central African countries. It acts as a platform for the coordination of eight national-level member networks. REPALEAC's represents FDCs' interests at the sub-regional level and promotes the work done by its national networks. REPALEAC aims to highlight the critical role played by FDCs in sustainable forest management. REPALEAC recently validated its 2018-2025 *Strategic Framework for an inclusive development of the Indigenous Peoples* as a tool for Indigenous Peoples and other FDCs to enhance their leadership and control on their own development. The strategy is supporting a vision of a comprehensive and inclusive development for the FDCs that is drawn upon sectoral approaches (biodiversity protection, REDD+, sustainable forest management, etc.). The ROC DGM will closely work and collaborate with REPALEAC, specifically under Component 1 of the project (capacity building) and will also collaborate with the National Steering Committee, RENAPAC and the NEA in the advocacy for land rights for IPLCs.



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

#### Proposed Development Objective(s)

The project objective to support and increase participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in the Forest Investment Plan and REDD+ policies and programs.

#### Key Results

The project's key outcomes are expected to be:

- Increased participation in forest management and local decision making of IPLCs, including participation in land use planning and local governance bodies;
- Increased participation and contribution to the FIP and REDD+ processes;
- Increased share of sustainable forest management on territories occupied by IPLCs;
- Improved capacity of IPLCs, local community leaders, associations and representatives to support IPLC rights and priorities in sustainable forest management.

### **D. Preliminary Description**

#### Activities/Components

#### **Component 1: Capacity Building**

The objective of the component is to ensure the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in the Republic of Congo by IPLC through the FIP project (climate-smart agroforestry) and REDD + Process. More specifically, the component will finance activities related to: (i) Strengthening IPLC members, representatives and civil society organizations; administrative and managerial capacities for investment preparedness ; (ii) building entrepreneurial capacities including financial management skills of the IPLCs; and (iii) strengthening the capacity of RENAPAC and its umbrella organizations in advocacy and securing of IPLC land rights and resources as well as ensuring the implementation of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).

#### **Component 2: Implementation of IP and Local Community led grants in FIP areas**

The component aims at promoting economic development and improving rural livelihoods through practices that emphasize mitigation and adaptation to climate change and are consistent with the values of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs).

Grants for subprojects will be selected on the following criteria: (i) activities that promote sustainable management and development of natural forests, as well as restoration and natural regeneration of previously degraded or converted forests; (ii) creation of agroforestry plantations; (iii) creation of community protected areas for the promotion of ecotourism; (iv) promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, enhancement and preservation of medicinal and aromatic species and agricultural practices contributing to local agrobiodiversity; (v) Promotion of traditional knowledge for preserving and improving the quality of water and soil; and (vi) Promotion of indigenous practices in landscape management.



Moreover, activities in this component will aim at supporting investments in the sustainable management of forest landscapes, including timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs), for efficient use of energy, mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The sub-activities selected will include: (i) Traditional management and use of forests that maintain carbon stocks at a high level and preserve biodiversity; (ii) Restoration of the forest landscape, agroforestry production systems, practices in agroecological plowing, reforestation and plantations within areas where availability of community and individually owned lands permits this; (iii) Promotion of forest plantations for the sustainable production of wood energy on community lands; (iv) Promoting the production of improved stoves, briquettes replacing fossil fuels; (v) Promotion of the production of renewable energies (cogeneration, solar, biogas and other renewable energies); (vi) Value addition of resources other than wood (medicinal plants, essential oils, etc.); (vii) Promotion of the domestication of non-timber forest products (gnetum africanum, cocoa, honey, etc).

**Component 3: Project management, Monitoring and Evaluation**

This component will support project management. It will ensure that the NEA is operational and that it successfully and efficiently implements the project in conformity with the Project Document. This component will finance: (i) NEA staff (non-civil servant) salaries including operational costs at the regional levels; (ii) equipment and operating costs for NEA directly linked to the daily management of the project (office space, utilities and supplies, bank charges, communications, vehicle operation, maintenance and insurance, building and equipment maintenance costs, travel and supervision costs, etc.); (iii) regular internal audits and annual external audits (as per Bank legal requirements audits of financial and procurement aspects); and (iv) training of personnel of NEA and NSC members.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) remains a key part of the activities to be implemented by the NEA in order to analyze and regularly inform of the impact and benefits of the project. A system will be put in place to ensure data collection, processing and information management to facilitate the operation of project components through the entire implementation period, and across all levels (NEA and NSC), to follow the program’s progress and measure its results.

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**Environmental and Social Standards Relevance**

**E. Relevant Standards**

ESS Standards		Relevance
ESS 1	Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant
ESS 10	Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant
ESS 2	Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant
ESS 3	Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Relevant



ESS 4	Community Health and Safety	Relevant
ESS 5	Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Relevant
ESS 6	Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Relevant
ESS 7	Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Relevant
ESS 8	Cultural Heritage	Relevant
ESS 9	Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant

**Legal Operational Policies**

**Safeguard Policies**

**Triggered**

**Explanation (Optional)**

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50

No

Project proposed interventions are not expected to involve international waterways.

Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60

No

The area in which the ROC DGM will be implemented is not known to include any disputed areas.

**Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

The project has been screened environmental and social moderate risks. No irreversible risks or impacts are expected. Potential risks and impacts are expected from the implementation of activities under component 1. and will be related more to quality of water because of activities related to agriculture and agroforestry, waste management, community safety. requires environmental and social documents will be prepared with mitigation measures to manage all the risks and impacts.

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Borrower : Ministry of Forest Economy

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**Implementing Agencies**

Implementing Agency : DGM National Steering Committee

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