

September 18, 2013

Comments from United Kingdom on the Gazetted Forests Participatory Management Project for REDD+ (PGFC/REDD+) and the Burkina Faso: Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project

Dear Patricia

Very many thanks for providing the opportunity to comment on the revised proposal of the ***Gazetted Forests Participatory Management Project for REDD+ (PGFC/REDD+)*** submitted by the Government of Burkina Faso and the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the ***Burkina Faso: Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project***, submitted by the Government of Burkina Faso and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)

We very much appreciate all the hard work that has gone into preparing these project documents by all concerned and commend the programmatic approach taken whereby the two projects are entirely complementary. We also acknowledge the efforts made by the AfDB to respond to some of our questions and concerns raised during the teleconference on the 5th September.

Both projects set out some interesting and innovative ideas to address the drivers of deforestation in state managed forests and in the broader landscape. In particular we welcome the targeting of the neglected topic of forest-livestock interactions, the proposal to develop monitoring systems for biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the concept of joint forest management between the state and community in state owned forests. The projects are also clearly well aligned with government priorities and reinforce the decentralisation process that hands over increasing responsibility for natural resource management to the local level.

Having now had the opportunity to review both projects together, it is evident that they rely one upon the other to meet their objectives. Furthermore, the consequences of the interventions in one, are dealt with in the other. This is exemplified in the treatment of the fuel wood issue (see below). It is precisely because the two projects are so interlinked, that we would like to request a reworking of both proposals in order to provide more evidence in the following areas:

Coordination and communication

1. Given that the two projects are so complementary, it is essential that the coordination, oversight and communication methods are clear, at all levels of implementation, particularly at field level. It would be helpful if the two project teams could work together to produce an overview or summary for both projects, submitting the two projects at the same time, outlining the coordination mechanisms, and also setting out clearly and visually how the activities inter relate to deliver on objectives.

Livelihood strategies

2. Fundamental to the success of the two projects is a good understanding of the current livelihoods strategies of the communities that live in the project areas. We expect that this analysis has already been carried out as part of project preparation and request that this be confirmed. It will help to answer some key questions that we have for both projects:

- a. To what extent are households in the project areas dependent upon the gazetted forests (unregulated activity) for their livelihoods? In the event of a reduction in these activities in the gazetted forests, to what degree will households lose? Are there certain groups that will be more affected than others? And in the short term, where and how might these losses be made up?
- b. How will the projects ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable are not disproportionately disadvantaged by the new management arrangements?
- c. How open are the communities to adjusting their livelihood strategies in the sorts of ways set out in the project proposals? , and how big an adjustment is this likely to be?.

These questions are important to help design the PES and understand the level of resources that might be required (see point below). Whilst we welcome the idea of community led demand driven land use and development plans, we think that it should be possible to provide some indication of what activities are likely to be most critical, and others that may be needed whether communities identify them or not.

Specifically on Fuel wood

3. We are still not convinced that the fuel wood issue has been adequately addressed. There is an assumption that the reduction in fuel wood collection from the gazetted forests will be made up for from improved management and woodlots in the broader landscape and the distribution of cook stoves etc and that these initiatives will be developed mainly by the IBRD project. Has there been any analysis regarding the extent to which need will be met from these sources, particularly in the short/immediate term? This fuel wood issue cuts across both projects and we would expect to see some shared analysis of how it will be dealt with by them both.

PES

4. We appreciate the clarifications on the funding arrangements for the PES mechanism in the revised AfDB proposal. However, we are still not clear on how it will work in practice.

- a. How will the payment values per hectare be set?
- b. Will they be the same across the project or vary from place to place depending on the degree of opportunity cost experienced by communities in stopping their unregulated activities?

c. What is the link, if any, between the PES mechanism and the land use planning and Community Development Plans process?

These questions are clearly linked to points 2 and 3 above since much will depend on the levels of dependency that communities have on the unregulated activities in the gazetted forests

In summary, we would like to suggest that AfDB and IBRD work together to address these points and that they resubmit their project proposals with a joint covering note summarising in particular how the projects fit together and how implementation will be communicated and coordinated between all partners involved. We would be happy to discuss this over the phone further with the MDBs.

We will send specific comments relating to the IBRD project proposal separately

With best wishes

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