

September 19, 2013

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

Dear Patricia

We appreciate the opportunity to review the revised *Gazetted Forests Participatory Management Project for REDD+ (PGFC/REDD+)*, submitted by the Government of Burkina Faso and the AfDB, as well as the *Burkina Faso: Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project*, submitted by the Government of Burkina Faso and the World Bank.

We are providing our comments on both submissions through this one e-mail in recognition that some central aspects of both projects depend on the other in order to meet project goals. As a general comment, we would appreciate, before either project moves forward, a clarification of how and on what activities the projects will be working with each other, and how implementation on related projects will be coordinated.

With respect to *Gazetted Forests Participatory Management Project for REDD+ (PGFC/REDD+)*, we appreciate the additional information provided by the AfDB in response to issues raised on our recent telephone call, as well as in previous written comments. This information has been helpful in understanding the project better. However, we believe additional information is still required with respect to the analysis of the feasibility of alternative livelihood strategies at a disaggregated level. We would therefore request that the AfDB share its analysis of issues including: the reduction in income expected through the activity to be curtailed, a detailed assessment of the particular alternative proposed and its income potential, as well as the barriers to implementation of such alternative livelihood, and the attitudes of the community (if known) of adopting the alternative. Some of this information has already been provided in aggregated form, but it would be helpful to understand how the numbers were derived for each alternative, as well as a narrative assessment of the feasibility of implementing the alternative livelihood, including barriers to uptake and how they will be overcome. In particular, we would appreciate it if the AfDB could share more of its analysis on the curtailment of fuelwood collection and how other sources of wood or increased efficiency (through improved cookstoves, etc) will make up for the shortfall caused by reduced collection. Since we understand the *Burkina Faso: Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project* will support activities, such as woodlot creation, that are integral to the success of this aspect of the *Gazetted Forests* project, information that includes the activities of both projects would be welcome.

We would also like to make sure we understand the rationale for and design of the proposed PES system. What particular activities do you expect the PES will be required in order to incentivize, and to what extent is the rationale for the PES system to compensate for reduced incomes caused by the adoption of alternative livelihoods?

With respect to *Burkina Faso: Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project*, our questions center mainly around component two. There is little detail in the document about the activities to be supported under this component, and we were unsure of the extent to which analysis of the feasibility of, and community consultations on, the different alternatives has already been conducted. Communities must be involved in decisions on alternative livelihoods, and some analysis that could guide communities in their evaluation of alternatives would seem to be helpful. In addition, it is difficult to advance a “theory of change” under this component as the list of potential activities is so broad. Could more information be provided, including any analysis of: a description of the current situation that is driving deforestation in the communities in which the project will work, the possible alternatives that could be supported by the project, attitude of the communities toward these alternatives, barriers to implementation, and how the project hopes to overcome those barriers with FIP financing, as well as sustainability of project activities after the FIP project is over? For example, we note that the drivers of deforestation identified in the document include weak access to markets which makes it difficult for farmers to intensify production, as well as overharvesting of non-timber forest products. How would these issues affect the success of activities under component two, and how would they be addressed?

Outside of component two, we noted the inclusion of an independent evaluator who will monitor social dynamics and livelihood changes through annual assessments. We agree that this is an innovative and interesting concept, and should allow for more informed reporting of intermediate results, which we appreciate. Do we understand correctly that this individual would also have responsibility for acting as a mediator in case of local conflicts? Does it make sense for the same individual to undertake both roles?

Thanks once again for the opportunity to review these interesting projects.

Best,

Katie Berg
U.S. Treasury Department