

# INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC12093

**Date ISDS Prepared/Updated:** 05-May-2015

**Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed:** 07-Dec-2015

## I. BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

<b>Country:</b>	Liberia	<b>Project ID:</b>	P154114
<b>Project Name:</b>	Liberia Forest Sector Project (P154114)		
<b>Task Team Leader(s):</b>	Paola Agostini, Neeta Hooda		
<b>Estimated Appraisal Date:</b>	30-Nov-2015	<b>Estimated Board Date:</b>	29-Feb-2016
<b>Managing Unit:</b>	GEN07	<b>Lending Instrument:</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>Sector(s):</b>	Forestry (80%), General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (20%)		
<b>Theme(s):</b>	Environmental policies and institutions (30%), Other environment and natural resources management (30%), Climate change (20%), Biodiversity (20%)		
<b>Financing (In USD Million)</b>			
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	37.50	<b>Total Bank Financing:</b>	0.00
<b>Financing Gap:</b>	0.00		
<b>Financing Source</b>			<b>Amount</b>
Borrower			0.00
BioCarbon Technical Assistance Trust Fund			37.50
Total			37.50
<b>Environmental Category:</b>	B - Partial Assessment		
<b>Is this a Repeater project?</b>	No		

### B. Project Objectives

Improved management of and increased benefit-sharing in targeted forest landscapes. (Targeted forest landscapes will be defined during preparation)

### C. Project Description

Under the leadership of FDA, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Environment Protection Agency, the Land Commission and the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, the project

will finance technical assistance, works, goods, workshops, training, services, and operational costs to support the implementation of the REDD+ strategy; focusing on investments for early implementation of strategic land use options in selected sites. The project will also support the development of institutional capacities, which will strengthen the enabling environment for effective decentralized implementation of forest sector management, and particularly the REDD+ Strategy, which is developed currently through FCPF, with the engagement of local communities. As part of the enabling environment, the proposed project will also include the design of a Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system that will allow for credible measurement, reporting and verification of REDD+ activities.

The project will include investments for on-the-ground activities as well as capacity building for the stakeholders and communities engaged directly in the implementation of the selected options. Both investments and capacity building strategies will target both women and men supporting their engagement in forest management, exploring and understanding gender-specific roles, needs and dynamics. The early implementation of results-based activities will provide lessons to enrich the national strategy enabling the people of Liberia to make informed decisions about the best land use options for the country. The early implementation of the land use options in target areas will build on the analysis that will be conducted with FCPF's support including the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and draft Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The activities to be conducted by the project will be thus phased so that studies, consultations and sources of specific land conflicts and proposed resolutions will be conducted before initiating on-the-ground activities related to community, commercial, conservation and carbon use of forests.

The analysis of REDD+ options will involve the participation of private and public representatives of the mining, agriculture, energy and forest sectors in the discussions around land allocation, especially considering the overlap in proposed concessions between forest, agriculture, mining, and protected areas.

The project is developed and will be implemented through multi-stakeholder processes. The draft project concept note has been reviewed by various stakeholders and has integrated their comments. Detailed preparation and implementation of the project will be coordinated with ongoing activities, including those related to REDD+ that have been supported by other development partners such as FLEGT/VPA, USAID, GIZ, LEITI, KfW, SDI, FERN, CI, etc.

Specifically, the project will support the following components (see Annex 3 for more details by subcomponent and main activities).

- Component 1. Strengthened Regulatory and Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of REDD+ (US\$10 million)
- Component 2. Strengthened Management of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$31 million)
- Component 3. Forest Monitoring Information System(US\$4 million)
- Component 4. Project Monitoring and Management (US\$5 million)

Component 1. Strengthened Regulatory and Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of REDD + (US\$10 million)

This component will finance technical assistance, works, goods, workshops, and operational costs to support strengthening capacity in institutions at national and subnational levels (public, private,

CSOs) for improved management of forest landscapes and to complete the process of legal reform and enforcement. The capacity building activities will be conducted for the duration of the project for key stakeholders (central and decentralized public agencies, private sector, CSOs and communities) to deliver on the legal/regulatory and institutional governance components of the project, and to develop forest information systems and mapping, M&E, outreach and communications activities, sound financial management and fiduciary processes, with particular support for benefit sharing/ social agreements, gender equality and community forest management. The support to legal reform and enforcement to guarantee success of REDD+ strategy implementation will focus on the Community Rights Law (CRL 2015- to be approved by Parliament) and its regulations; and the harmonization of the Forest Law (2006) and the Community Forestry Law (2009) and their regulations.

### Component 2. Strengthened Management of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$31 million)

First, this component will finance technical assistance, works, goods, workshops, and operational costs for land use planning, conservation, community forestry, sustainable agriculture and forests management. The Land use planning activities will be implemented in close relation with the Land Administration Project and will consider different economic sectors (ie. agriculture, mining, etc.) that have an impact on the forest sector. The Land Commission will be engaged in the implementation of this component.

Second, based on the proposed land use management and planning, the component will support the strengthening and management of protected areas and community forests areas in targeted forest landscapes. Third, it will support the development of sustainable public-private partnerships to strengthen sustainable agriculture development, forest-based enterprises, and biodiversity offset from mining. For protected areas, the component will contribute to the enlargement, performance and functioning of Liberia's protected area network, detailing adequate resources necessary to safeguard existing and future protected areas. For community forestry, the component will support forest communities and their organizations to manage forests using sound sustainability principles by strengthening community governance structures and institutions, developing internal regulation and responsibilities for improving the use of their common pool resource, identifying capacities, needs and development alternatives to improve the productive potential of their natural resources, developing and formalizing community enterprises and promoting third party certification of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) using international standards, as a best practice tool for sound forest. The component will finance alternative models of agriculture investment including identification of land areas/commodities that are suitable for deforestation-free supply chain investments based on agroforestry systems and will assist with the implementation of the roadmap for biodiversity offsets from mining. The component will also support the establishment of a public-private coalition with micro-small-medium enterprises (MSMEs) committed to zero deforestation policies. Finally, the project will support investments for small and medium scale initiatives involving specific products such as palm oil, cocoa, paper, pulp, wood and climate smart rice, charcoal, wood processing, etc.

### Component 3. Forest Monitoring Information System(US\$4 million)

The component will finance technical assistance, works, goods, workshops, and operational costs for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems; Reference Level Development; and Development of Safeguards Information System (SIS). The initial MRV and SIS are in the process of

establishment under Phase I with FCPF, and this component will support their implementation and regular update. The MRV system will need to comply with UNFCCC guidelines for operational data collection, synthesis, analysis, and reporting, allowing for the monitoring, estimation, and accounting of emissions and removals of carbon in comparison to the projected reference scenario. The SIS will cover all measures proposed in the REDD+ Strategy and relevant activities, in accordance with the Warsaw Framework on REDD+ and international best practice, including the World Bank safeguard policies. Independent civil society forest monitors who operate under the auspices of an NGO coalition are an important potential actor in the SIS, and its capacity will be developed through the REDD+ technical working group.

#### Component 4. Project Monitoring and Management (US\$5 million)

This component will finance technical assistance, works, goods, workshops, and operational costs for a Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system to report on the expected project's results (disaggregating by gender where appropriate) and systematizing the project's lessons learned. The project level M&E will be integrated into Liberia's M&E Framework for the national REDD+ readiness process that has been designed to track readiness progress and be able to report comprehensively at national and international level including to the different donors and implementing partners supporting Liberia's REDD+ process. Support will also be provided for FDA's day-to-day project implementation and management including, procurement, financial management, environmental and social safeguards, preparation of annual work plans and organization of audit reports. The component will provide support for office operating costs for the existing FDA REDD+ Implementing Unit, the NCCSC, EPA and county level functionaries relevant to the project, as well as the hiring of technical specialists (consultants) that will support the civil servants' work at the FDA's departments/units involved in REDD+. Capacity building of existing institutions will be conducted in close collaboration with the VPA Support Unit (VPA SU).

#### **D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

Project locations are not yet known and will be selected based on the outcome of the analysis of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), and the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA). The process of preparing these documents and selecting project intervention sites will involve extensive stakeholder consultations. The selected project sites will comprise protected forest areas, community forests, and commercial forest areas. Because the project locations are not yet known, an ESMF is under preparation and will be disclosed in-country and in the Bank's InfoShop (public information center) prior to appraisal. The SESA will be completed during Project Year 1.

#### **E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies**

The World Bank has been engaged with the forest sector in Liberia for the past 10 years. Over this period there has been progressive capacity building for the implementation of Bank Safeguard Policies as well as national environmental standards. The managers and some staff of Liberia's Forest Development Authority (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are broadly familiar with the Bank's environmental and social safeguards requirements. Nonetheless, both of these agencies will require further strengthening to effectively address the environmental and social safeguards-related issues that could arise under this project. Accordingly, the project would support additional safeguards capacity building for FDA, EPA, and other relevant national- and local-level

Liberian institutions as needed, including the contracting of specialized environmental and social staff where appropriate.

#### **F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Demba Balde (GSURR)

George Campos Ledec (GENDR)

Gloria Malia Mahama (GSURR)

Nicholas Meitiaki Soikan (GCCFL)

Robert A. Robelus (GENDR)

## **II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY**

<b>Safeguard Policies</b>	<b>Triggered?</b>	<b>Explanation (Optional)</b>
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>Although the project would be implemented within environmentally and socially sensitive areas (Liberian forests), project interventions are designed to be environmentally very positive overall. None of the planned project investments or activities are expected to generate significant adverse environmental impacts.</p> <p>Liberia's forests comprise the world's largest remaining area of the biologically rich and unique Upper Guinean Rainforest ecosystem. These forests face numerous threats and challenges, including land use conflicts; uncertain land and forest ownership; overlapping concessions for mining and other non-forest land uses; the spread of large-scale commercial agriculture (particularly oil palm); smallholder agricultural expansion; illegal logging and fuel-wood harvesting; and widespread bush-meat hunting that is depleting the wildlife in many areas. This project will therefore be situated in a context that poses many environmental and social challenges and risks. However, the project interventions themselves will be designed to be beneficial and sustainable from an environmental and social standpoint.</p> <p>The proposed project is expected to have environmental and social impacts that are highly positive overall. Consistent with the intent and approach of the REDD+ program, this project seeks to reduce deforestation and forest degradation within Liberia. It would do this by promoting improved planning of forests and adjacent landscapes, long-term conservation of protected forest areas, and sustainable management of community forests and</p>

		<p>other wooded landscapes. The project would finance a variety of planning, capacity building, and on-the-ground interventions to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Liberian forests. The project would support sustainable forest management and environmentally compatible agricultural activities that are intended to reduce the ongoing pressures for deforestation and forest degradation. It would not finance any large-scale civil works (such as roads) that could be environmentally problematic.</p> <p>From a social standpoint, the project is intended to benefit forest-based communities by strengthening their capacity to manage designated Community Forests, promoting improved benefits-sharing from different types of forest-based activities, and supporting the development of more sustainable forest-based livelihoods.</p> <p>This would be a nationwide project, with specific areas for on-the-ground interventions not yet definitively identified. Accordingly, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared and publicly disclosed (in-country at publicly accessible locations and through the Bank's InfoShop) prior to appraisal. There is also a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) of Liberia's forested areas under preparation, with completion expected no later than Year 1 of project implementation. The SESA is expected to provide detailed information that will facilitate land use planning and other project-supported activities. Project implementation will also include the establishment of a Safeguards Information System (SIS), which will monitor compliance with the World Bank Safeguard Policies (among other criteria).</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	The project would affect natural habitats—native forests and associated ecosystems—albeit in a positive manner. It is designed to reduce ongoing patterns of loss and degradation of natural habitats, notably forests.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	Yes	The project is intended to bring about positive changes in the protection, management, and sustainable utilization of Liberian forests.
Pest Management OP 4.09	TBD	Limited pest management activities might be needed to protect forest tree nurseries. This will be addressed in the ESMF.

Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	Liberians living around forested areas recognize various physical cultural resources, including sacred forest areas as well as individual sacred trees and bushes. The ESMF will provide criteria and procedures to ensure the appropriate treatment of physical cultural resources; this will include Chance Finds Procedures for (generally small-scale) civil works contracts.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	There are no communities in Liberia who meet the specific Indigenous Peoples criteria of OP 4.10.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/ BP 4.12	Yes	<p>Expansion of Liberia's protected areas network is likely to involve new restrictions of access to natural resources (such as wood or bush-meat harvest) in specific areas. In accordance with OP 4.12, a Process Framework (PF) will be prepared to avoid or minimize any adverse impacts upon local livelihoods and to support the development of alternative livelihoods as needed.</p> <p>Owing to the low human population densities around Liberia's proposed protected areas, it will not be necessary to relocate villages or households in order to establish new protected areas. The creation of new protected areas would deal with established, pre-existing human settlements through boundary adjustments and internal park zoning, rather than by requiring their relocation. This was also the approach used in the previous World Bank-supported EXPAN Project in Liberia. Accordingly, a Resettlement Policy Framework or Resettlement Action Plan will not be needed for this new project.</p>
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	There are no dams involved in the project.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The project would not take water from, or otherwise affect, international waterways.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/ BP 7.60	No	There are no disputed areas involved in the project as defined in OP 7.60.

### III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

**A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 30-Sep-2015**

**B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing<sup>1</sup> should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:**

<sup>1</sup> Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.

Preparation of the ESMF and SESA is underway. The required ESMF will be completed and publicly disclosed prior to project appraisal. The SESA will be completed no later than Year 1 of project implementation, in order to guide certain project activities. Preparation of the PF will begin shortly and the PF will be completed and publicly disclosed before project appraisal.

#### IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader(s):	Name: Paola Agostini, Neeta Hooda	
<b><i>Approved By:</i></b>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name: Johanna van Tilburg (SA)	Date: 03-Dec-2015
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Timothy H. Brown (PMGR)	Date: 07-Dec-2015