

MINISTRY OF TOURISM
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DIRECTORATE GENERAL
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Minutes of the Meeting to Review Project Briefs for the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE)

October 2012

On Monday, October 15, 2012, the meeting to review projects briefs slated to be submitted for financing to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as part of the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE), was held at the Directorate General for the Environment and chaired by Mr. Grégoire Nkeoua, Director General for the Environment and the GEF Operational Focal Point.

The following officials participated in this meeting:

- **Marie Agathe Makelola**, Environmental Inspector;
- **Gaston Mfoutou**, Director of Natural Ecosystem Conservation;
- **Roger Mpan**, Director of Pollution and Hazard Prevention;
- **Gabriel Bindoma**, Director of Environmental Law and Education;
- **Joseph Ganongo**, Focal Point, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;
- **Edmond Makimouha**, Project Coordinator, Regional Center for Disaster Prevention;
- **Léon Samba**, Head of the Forestry Department, Directorate of Forests;
- **Jean Nanga Maniane**, Consultant, NPFE Program/Republic of Congo.

In his introduction, the meeting Chair noted that this meeting was the second to be held in the context of preparing the NPFE since the meeting of September 20, 2012. Its goal was to review the briefs for projects to be financed through the GEF/CONGO allocation.

Subsequent to the September 20 meeting, Mr. Jean Nanga Maniane, the national NPFE/CONGO Consultant, was charged with modifying the briefs, taking the working group's comments and recommendations into account. Four of the seven project briefs presented were selected. These four modified briefs were the focus of this meeting and consisted of the following projects:

- Environmental protection of the Djoua Ivindo, Jua Ikie, and Talatala zone;
- Development of forest plantations, agroforestry systems, and orchards in the departments of Bouenza and Pool;
- The impact of climate change on agriculture and the hydrological resources in the Republic of Congo; and
- Awareness raising in schools and universities, and of the general public, about land degradation, chemicals management, climate change, and biodiversity conservation.

After this introduction, the Chair opened the floor so that participants could offer their contributions. The project proposals were reviewed one by one. The following key amendments were revised:

a) Brief No. 1

- The project title was amended to specify the location of the project, namely, the department of Sangha;
- With respect to the context and rationale, the document had to be supplemented with the following information:
 - The weak capacity of the forestry administration, which cannot fulfill its mission of wildlife protection;
 - Wildlife poaching;
 - The development of alternative activities to the illegal exploitation of forestry resources;
 - Timber offsets through the implementation of forest management programs under the REED initiative.
- The key pillars of the project must be reformulated as follows:
 - Creation of the Messok protected area;
 - Preparation of a land use plan for the Djoua-Ivindo forest;
 - Preparation of a deforestation reduction project;
 - Development of income-generating activities for citizens as alternatives to hunting.
- The overall objective was reworded as follows: contribute to environmental protection;
- The specific objectives were reduced to five and addressed the following: classification of the Messok massif, management of the Djoua-Ivindo massif, the development of activities to mitigate deforestation, the promotion of alternative activities to hunting, contributing to wildlife protection with the involvement of local communities and nongovernmental organizations;
- The Ministry of Handicrafts and the Ministry of Fisheries were added as stakeholders;
- The actions were revised as follows:

- Preparation of a REED project based on the promotion of forest plantations and orchards, and the assessment of the amount of carbon sequestration;
 - Development of income-generating activities through the promotion of alternatives to hunting (agriculture, livestock production, handicraft, and trade);
 - Classification of the Messok Dja zone as a protected area;
 - Completion of a baseline study on biodiversity and, in particular, on large mammals;
 - Completion of a baseline socioeconomic study of the area;
 - Preparation and adoption of a zoning plan;
 - Support for the implementation of forest concession management plans
- The project cost and its components were modified as follows:
- Creation of the Messok protected area: **CFAF 1,000,000,000**, or **US\$2,000,000**, instead of **CFAF 500,000,000**, or **US\$1,000,000**;
 - Completion of studies and preparation of a land use plan for the Djoua-Ivindo forest: **CFAF 960,000,000**, or **US\$1,920,000**, instead of **CFAF 480,000,000**, or **US\$960,000**;
 - Development of plantations, support for the implementation of forest concession management plans, and carbon inventory: **CFAF 1,000,000,000**, or **US\$2,000,000**, instead of **CFAF 500,000,000**, or **US\$1,000,000**;
 - Wildlife protection (citizen involvement, creation of the Surveillance and Anti-Poaching Unit [*Unité de Surveillance et de Lutte Anti -Braconnage* USLAB]), and development of alternative income-generating activities to hunting for citizens: **CFAF 1,000,000,000**, or **US\$2,000,000**, instead of **CFAF 500,000,000**, or **US\$1,000,000**;
 - The total cost increased from **CFAF 1,980,000,000** to **CFAF 3,960,000,000**, or **US\$7,920,000**.
- Financing will be provided by the Congolese Government and forestry and mining companies, with 50 percent cofinancing from the GEF.

b) Brief No. 2

- The context was supplemented with data from the study conducted by the World Bank during the 1990s under the National Environment Action Plan (NEAP). It was determined that fuelwood is used by 95 percent of households. The city of Brazzaville obtains fuelwood primarily from timber from the small forests or gallery forests of the department of Pool. In the department of Bouenza, the small towns of Nkayi, Madingou, and Loutété require firewood. For this reason, it is critical that community plantations be established in these two departments. Moreover, agroforestry could be an alternative, which would help put a stop to shifting cultivation;
- Two new specific objectives were inserted: "halt shifting cultivation" and "promote sustainable land management";
- The project location was modified. The project will be implemented in the departments of Pool and Bouenza;
- The National Reforestation Service and the National Afforestation and Reforestation Program were added to the list of stakeholders;
- Two planned actions were completed: the production of plant material and the evaluation of carbon to be captured;
- The three following actions--establishment of village plantations, maintenance of plantations and orchards, and management of plantations and orchards--were merged into one action entitled "establishment and maintenance of plantations and orchards;"
- The project cost was estimated to be twice the amount originally proposed by the Consultant: **CFAF 1,000,000,000**, or **US\$2,000,000**, instead of **CFAF 500,000,000**, or **US\$1,000,000**;
- Financing will be provided by the Congolese Government, with 50 percent cofinancing from the GEF.

c) Brief No. 3

- The rationale was modified. The consequences of the greenhouse effect, in particular, the decrease in rainfall, agricultural production, and river levels, should be emphasized. The dearth of precise data on the impact of climate change on agriculture and hydrology is also highlighted in order to be able to take the appropriate measures after analysis of this data.
- The overall objective was revised as follows: "contribute to climate change adaptation."
- The specific objectives were reduced to three, namely:

- Analyze meteorological, agricultural, and hydrological data,
 - Compile a database on the climate, agriculture, and hydrology, and
 - Assess the impact of the current climate on agricultural activities and hydrological resources.
- The planned actions were also amended to take into account the selection of observation sites; the collection of agricultural, climate, and hydrological data; the purchase of equipment and materials for the meteorological stations; the setup of a hydrometeorological database based on daily readings of climate data; the analysis of data on agricultural output and hydrology in relation to climate change in order to propose specific measures for a number of scenarios;
 - The project cost was increased to **CFAF 720,000,000**, or **US\$1,440,000**.
 - Financing will be provided by the Congolese Government and forestry and mining companies working in the project zone, with 50 percent cofinancing from the GEF.

d) Brief No. 4

- The project title should be expanded to include the location, namely "in Brazzaville;"
- In the context and rationale, data on current environmental conditions was added with respect to land degradation, chemicals management, climate change, and biodiversity conservation, which are characterized by unhygienic conditions in cities and degradation and destruction of ecosystems resulting from citizens' ignorance of environmental requirements. For this reason, it is necessary to educate citizens about the importance of protecting the environment;
- The overall objective deals with awareness raising among citizens with respect to the environment, particularly in the areas of climate change, land degradation, biodiversity protection, and chemicals management;
- The specific objective relating to educating schoolchildren, students, and citizens was revised as follows: "train, inform, and educate schoolchildren, students, and citizens;"
- The planned actions were modified. The following actions were withdrawn: target a pilot region and expand training gradually at the secondary and university levels and across the country. The following actions were inserted: production and dissemination of advertisements,

broadcasting of radio and television programs, production of posters and billboards;

- The project cost was revised upward, from **CFAF 500,000,000**, or **US\$1,000,000** to **CFAF 1,000,000,000**, or **US\$2,000,000**;
- Financing will be provided in equal parts by the Congolese Government and the GEF.

After reviewing the project briefs, the participants examined the draft order establishing the GEF National Committee. This draft legislation was amended. The following changes were made:

- The nature of the legislation was modified. Instead of an order, a decree was chosen;
- It was indicated that the committee would function as a consultative body, charged with supporting the Government with implementation of the GEF strategy and approval of the projects submitted for GEF financing;
- The list of committee members was modified;
- The unremunerated nature of the function of GEF national committee member was highlighted.

The Chair requested that the Consultant expedite amendment of the documents as these had to be submitted as quickly as possible to the GEF Secretariat, specifically to Mr. Jean Marc Sinnasamy, who is expected to arrive within the week to take part in the workshop to establish the GEF-CONGO National Committee, planned for October 22, 2012.

Before closing the meeting, the Chair thanked the participants for their contribution.

The meeting to review project briefs for the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise began at 11:40 a.m. and ended at 1:12 p.m.

Done at Brazzaville, October 20, 2012

Meeting Chair,
Grégoire Nkeoua

Meeting Secretary,

Joseph Ganongo