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Niels Hedegaard Jørgensen
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark -
DANIDA
Asiatisk Plads 2
DK-1448 Copenhagen K
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3 August 2016

Dear Mr. Jørgensen,

I am pleased to submit for your attention the IUCN's management response to the midterm review of the Towards Pro-poor REDD+ Phase II project, which was conducted under the leadership of DANIDA in March 2016.

IUCN welcomes the report conclusions and recommendations of the midterm review of the "Towards Pro-poor REDD+ Phase II" project that DANIDA led, jointly with IUCN. This report provides insightful and very constructive reflections that not only form the base for prioritizing interventions of the project in the remaining timeframe, but also motivates and strengthens the vision and approach of IUCN on REDD+ broadly, and human rights-based approaches in forest conservation and climate change mitigation particularly. The project's Global Learning Workshop, that IUCN organized in May 2016 after the midterm review, generated insights on how the current progress, lessons and experiences of the project across the five countries can help more effectively repackage or consolidate interventions in ways to address the recommendations of the midterm review.

The table enclosed outlines the IUCN's response to the specific recommendations formulated in the midterm review report.

On behalf of IUCN, I would like to express the gratitude of our organization for the continuous support provided by DANIDA to advance conservation and sustainable natural resources management.

Our entire team remains available to provide any clarifications you may need.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Buss
Deputy Director, Operations



IUCN Management Response to the conclusions of the Midterm Review of the Towards Pro-poor REDD+ Phase II project

Name and year of evaluation or review: 2016 Unit/person responsible for ensuring follow up: George Akwah (George.akwah@iucn.org), GFCCP	Date created: July 2016 Date updated:	Actors and units involved in follow up (full and abbreviated names): IUCN's Global Forest and Climate Change Programme Team
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Recommendation of the Midterm Review	Response (agree/disagree)	Intended Result	Pending/planned Actions (responsibility, timeframe)
		<i>What will change as a consequence of the actions taken to respond to the recommendation?</i>	
1 "To increase the focus on results at the landscape level": A number of livelihood options have been identified for the landscape sites and proposals for supporting these have been prepared. Achieving tangible benefits at the community level in the selected landscapes is important. The IUCN teams and partners need to increase the focus on providing capacity development through key partners operating at the landscape level, including implementing partners, service providers and local level institutions (government and non-government) such as the NFA in Uganda and the CREMAs in Ghana, to "fast-track" effective CBNRM and enhanced livelihoods on the ground. It would also be useful to capture the lessons learned and evidence that the pro-poor principles and HRBAs can deliver tangible benefits at community level.	<p>AGREE: From the beginning, the project has adopted an implementation approach through which i) in-country implementing partners are empowered not only to deliver the project and support mainstreaming of HRBAs, but also to understand, take ownership of and promote results and lessons of the project within their organizational strategies and future actions: i.e. in Cameroon, Ghana and Uganda, the national project implementing partners have seen their understanding of concept and practice of HRBA broadened, and IUCN has organized sessions to train them on the concept and practice of HRBAs and their meaning for REDD+ and sustainable forest management.</p> <p>IUCN has also engaged with, and is enabling and deploying grassroots organizations to understand and foster rights-based approaches, and undertake actions that will benefit them and member communities: CREMAs in Ghana, FUNDALACHUA in Guatemala, Farmers associations and landscape implementing partners in Uganda.</p> <p>The process recommended under this recommendation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lessons from experiences with implementation of HRBAs by IUCN and partners are captured and promoted within national and sub-national policies and strategies to support effective deployment of national REDD+ and forest conservation programmes; 	<p>From 2016, the project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initiate the process for documentation and consolidation of lessons on demonstration and mainstreaming of HRBAs; - The project will upscale and intensify policy outreach and communication actions to ensure that emerging lessons and outcomes from landscape demonstration are effectively delivered as inputs to national policy and action through appropriate and most effective channels at landscape, sub-national and national levels

		of the midterm review is in line with IUCN's implementation of the project. Capturing lessons and building on field evidence and experiences to build landscape, sub-national and national capacity for HRBA based decision was planned to start from the second year of the project. The remaining period of the project will thus be dominated by actions of such nature.		
2	<p>“That partnerships and strategic engagements are further clarified”: Some strategic partners remain loosely associated with the project at country level. In order to benefit from the range of stakeholders and the depth of expertise, it would make sense to track contributions by relevant stakeholders in each country, to define and document the nature of their stakes (in REDD+ and landscape improvements, etc.) and their relevance to the project. A stakeholder engagement framework is useful for determining the nature, depth and timing of partnerships. The framework also helps to clarify how different stakeholders are involved in REDD+ both at the national and landscape levels as well as the linkages that could be established between the two levels. In many cases, contracts and agreements are required to formalise engagements, indicating clear roles and expectations from each stakeholder in line with the overall project goal.¹</p>	<p>PARTIALLY AGREE: At this stage mapping of relevant stakeholders may not lead to the result intended by this recommendation, and it is proposed to concentrate on the consolidation of ownership/group dynamic of existing partnerships in order to best achieve the intended results. The roles and benefits of project partners, including implementing partners and key actors, were specified at the beginning of the project. For implementing partners, agreements were signed with the project, with specification of resources involved and modalities for deployment of these resources for activity implementation. Some partners, particularly governments and other key organizations involved in REDD+ and forest management in each country, are seen as strategic partners or key stakeholders to involve. These strategic partners or key stakeholders participate intensively in the project both as beneficiaries and actors in implementation of some key actions. However, they don't have a standard defined role with the project based on an agreement.</p>	<p>- Stakeholder engagement enhanced by developing clearer knowledge uptake pathways by ensuring that lessons and outcomes of the project are more effectively communicated through effective channels of decision making and influence at landscape, subnational, national and international levels</p>	<p>As per the initial delivery timeline, in 2016 the project will upscale and intensify policy outreach and communication actions to ensure that emerging lessons and outcomes from landscape demonstration are effectively delivered as inputs to national policy and action through appropriate and most effective channels at landscape, sub-national and national levels.</p>
3	<p>“To sharpen the communications and advocacy efforts”: A number of studies and analyses on REDD+ related themes such as benefit sharing options, land tenure reforms and natural resource management arrangements have been undertaken. In addition, some lessons have been learned from the work at the landscape level which could be of relevance at the policy level. Reports have been prepared from these activities and shared with stakeholders. A number of meetings have been held to present and validate the results of the analyses that have been done. While some of the information has contributed to national level REDD+ strategy development and other policy and planning processes, it would seem that useful information and findings may not have been fully captured. The difficulties may be due to the way the information is packaged and/or the channel for sharing the information.</p> <p>Moving forward it would be worthwhile to: i) reconsider if information should be packaged differently to suit different stakeholders' needs; ii) identify the specific department (within the</p>	<p>AGREE: We agree with recommendations #3 and #4, that the global component needs to consolidate the lessons – this is/was the current plan for Years 3 and 4 as currently outlined in the proposal, and also page 14 of the mid-term review here (“yet to be captured and communicated”). The key here is that the accepted proposal from the donor required that we limit the global component investment in Year 1 and Year 2 (including core costs against framework contribution), ramping up global component funds from year 1 through 4, focusing on the latter half once lessons are generated. Planned activities from proposal stage are consistent with page 17 regarding outcome/intermediate stories focus and page 16 regarding policy briefs, video clips and documentaries.</p>	<p>IUCN is already in the process of repackaging project interventions and resources in a way to increase and intensify outreach, policy and communication actions in response to the midterm review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2016 the project will upscale and intensify policy outreach and communication actions to ensure that emerging lessons and outcomes from landscape demonstration are effectively delivered as inputs to national policy and action through appropriate and most effective channels at landscape, sub-national and national levels. - Some reallocation of budget between components and budget lines is under consideration in other provide more, as needed, to communication and outreach actions.

¹ The RT recognises that partnerships with key stakeholders in each country underpin much of the work that has been done by the IUCN on REDD+ since phase I. The purpose of this recommendation is to stress the value of well-defined partnerships.

	<p>stakeholder institution) that will use the information and make that the target audience; iii) formalise and institutionalise information sharing to make it relevant not only to individuals but to the overall stakeholder institution. In addition, making use of the media to propagate key messages of policy importance and to get policy actors into dialogue is critical, as IUCN experience in other contexts illustrates.</p>			
4	<p>“That efforts are intensified to ensure that pro-poor principles and HRBAs underpin national REDD+ strategies, action plans and guidelines”: This can be undertaken in conjunction with the improved communications and advocacy.</p>	<p>AGREE: We agree with recommendations #3 and #4, that the global component needs to consolidate the lessons – this is/was the current plan for Years 3 and 4 as currently outlined in the proposal, and also page 14 of the mid-term review here (“yet to be captured and communicated”). The key here is that the accepted proposal from the donor required that we limit the global component investment in Year 1 and Year 2 (including core costs against framework contribution), ramping up global component funds from year 1 through 4, focusing on the latter half once lessons are generated. Planned activities from proposal stage are consistent with page 17 regarding outcome/intermediate stories focus and page 16 regarding policy briefs, video clips and documentaries.</p>	<p>IUCN is already in the process of repackaging project interventions and resources in a way to increase and intensify outreach, policy and communication actions in response to the midterm review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2016 the project will upscale and intensify policy outreach and communication actions to ensure that emerging lessons and outcomes from landscape demonstration are effectively delivered as inputs to national policy and action through appropriate and most effective channels at landscape, sub-national and national levels. - - Some reallocation of budget between components and budget lines is under consideration in other provide more, as needed, to communication and outreach actions.
5	<p>“To streamline project reporting, thereby ensuring better communication on progress and results”: Clear communication of results is essential. A number of improvements in reporting could be made: i) Clarifying interventions and projected end results by identifying and linking the activities and milestones; ii) Actively documenting the outcome of all engagements to bring out significant changes that could be reported on; iii) Focusing not only on the overall expected outcome, but also on intermediary outcomes (milestones); iv) Ensuring that reporting is on actual progress vis-a-vis plans. Each report should be a key communication tool. This means reporting clearly and succinctly on the current status of the project.</p>	<p>AGREE:</p>	<p>A streamlined reporting format that integrates different types of evidence (donor mandated reporting, outcome stories, timelines, maps, stories from the field) to better demonstrate our contribution to change.</p>	<p>During 2016 and 2017, the project collect and package the following information types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - donor mandated indicators/information - outcome stories - timelines - maps - stories from the field <p>Into a streamlined reporting format that better demonstrates our contribution to change.</p>
6	<p>“To intensify efforts to capture key lessons learned for REDD+”: During the review various suggestions were made concerning issues and topics which are important for the design of the national and global REDD+ mechanism.² The IUCN and partners have a considerable interest in ensuring that the “nature based solutions” proposed through REDD+ are effective and equitable. In this connection at least two pieces of analytical work have been identified for further consideration:</p>	<p>AGREE: We agree on the need of the two proposed policy briefs. This could be encouraged as a FCPF/UN-REDD joint policy brief as the previous three country experiences on benefit sharing that IUCN white-papered in the past.</p>	<p>Lessons and outcomes of the project are more effectively communicated through effective channels of decision making and influence at landscape, subnational and international levels</p>	<p>A set of policy and technical briefing will be produced at country and global levels to i) to make knowledge and lessons from the project more widely accessible and understandable to a variety of audiences, and ii) to each out more effectively to key decision makers and advocacy networks.</p> <p>During the annual project meeting video interviews were conducted with key project partners and staff, which will be used for a variety of purposes including outreach to increase understanding/uptake of the lessons from applying HRBA within REDD+ -- in line with</p>

² Several briefing notes and other papers on REDD+ were prepared in the course of phase I.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a policy brief on CBNRM with REDD+ potential. This would include an overview of the engagements in different types of community based natural resource management. The brief would include policy options depending on land tenure system and/or formal status of forests and landscapes (e.g. customary land, forest reserves and national parks, cross border landscapes, etc.). The brief would also include policy options vis-a-vis different types of management: community, joint, collaborative.• a policy brief on benefit-sharing arrangements with REDD+ potential. This would include an overview of the mechanisms and models analysed and tested to date in connection with the project. The brief would provide policy makers with a menu of benefit-sharing options that could be used at sub-national and national levels. <p>Other issues and topics could also be taken up.</p>			Recommendations 1 and 3.
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