



Forest Cover Recovery and Resilience Improvement Project in the Center of Côte d'Ivoire

Country / Region: **Cote d'Ivoire** | Project Id: **XFIPCI030A** | Fund Name: **FIP** |

Comment Type	Commenter Name	Commenter Profile	Comment	Date
Comment 1	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	The UK welcomes this proposal and many aspects of its design, including the participatory approach, how transferable learnings from previous similar projects have been incorporated, and the overall integration of the project with the Integrated Development and Climate Change Adaptation in the Niger Basin Program.	Jul 20, 2018
Comment 2	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	Could you please provide some further information on how the project will be actively working with the development partner group Agriculture, Rural Dev and Environment Group to ensure cooperation and shared learnings, maximise effectiveness?	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[AfDB]: As part of the REDD + process in Côte d'Ivoire, a framework of collaboration between partners has been established defined in order to ensure the harmonious coordination of the various technical and financial support mobilized to relevant activities and projects. The Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment Development Group has semi-annual meetings during which synergies between the projects of the different partners in the sector are discussed. As such, all development partners will be informed about the implementation of the project with the objective of considering lessons learned, build complementarity with other projects and formulate recommendations that will be taken into account (to the extent possible) so that the benefits and effectiveness of the project are maximized.	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 3	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	Component 1. Development of agricultural value chain – Given that this component is about resilience, could you please explain how these sub-projects will be designed and developed in a way that is taking into account climate adaptation and mitigation, and the impacts of weather and climate shocks referred to in the proposal? Risks Climate risks, particularly recurring droughts is identified here as high. As per question above, what existing evidence for previous technologies and climate-smart agriculture solutions that you know have been tested and were successful in similar conditions to the ones you will be working in to ensure transferability? Will any trials be done before you go to scale in your project?	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[AfDB]: The project will develop and disseminate guidelines on the use of best practices and Climate-smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies (e.g. improved seeds, climate risk management, sustainable water and soil management, greenhouse gas reductions, etc.). CSA technologies and practices will be selected from those already tested by the Research Centers in Côte d'Ivoire and in the region (e.g. CGIAR, AGRYMET, ACMAD, etc.). All sub-projects will therefore integrate CSA practices and technologies (i.e. adapted seeds, adapted technical itineraries, climate information, sustainable soil management, prevention of deforestation, agroforestry, conservation and, among others, restoration of biodiversity) to ensure their resilience to climate change and to minimize the risk of greenhouse gas emissions. A network of 20 technical agents will ensure extension of these CSA best practices and technologies by supporting the implementation of all sub-projects.	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 4	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	How will it be chosen who will directly benefit (ie. Which producers) from the sub-projects and training, and how have the negative impacts (e.g. economic) of this on those in the communities who are not directly benefitting been considered and mitigated? Social impact and risk – you correctly identify that a significant risk could here be the negative social impact of conflict between actors involved in land development. However, no further information is given in the proposal on how this will be	Jul 20, 2018



monitored and managed, as the support for communities in building awareness capacity on sustainable management of forest resources' does not appear to directly address this issue. 'Outreach and facilitation actions' currently appears vague as a mitigation measure. Can you please provide further information on how this risk will be managed. Is capacity building not needed for this, and the other risk mitigation measure identified of managing conflicts between actors in use of forest resources?

Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>During the due diligence process, a full Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) was developed. The ESMP identifies all risks (including social conflict) and proposes measures to mitigate these risks that can negatively impact the project. The proposed mitigation measures to mitigate this particular risk include: i) development and dissemination of a sub-project funding manual, including eligibility criteria such as project area, volunteering, land availability, land use, lack of previously identified examples of land conflict, commitment to use resilient technologies, priority for youth and women; ii) support for land clarification of sub-project sites, iii) training of communities on conflict management; iv) support for the operationalization of existing conflict management mechanisms and litigation at the local level; and v) establishment of a complaints management mechanism in each region.</p> <p>In addition, a Rural Land Agency (AFOR) is currently being rolled out throughout the country by the Government. AFOR's activities will directly contribute to mitigate the impact of any potential land conflicts.</p> <p>In addition to the above and as per our Integrated Safeguards Policy, AfDB will periodically monitor the implementation of the ESMP and will make any necessary adjustments during the project implementation phase.</p>	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 5	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	<p>Component 1: Capacity building - To help with the longer-term sustainability of this programme, could a 'training the trainers' component be added to the training programmes and manuals? This question also applies to capacity building and training across the project (beyond at the public service level that you mention, but at community level).</p> <p>Will these manuals be accessible to all the targeted beneficiaries, and should other mediums also be considered, e.g. video/audio.</p> <p>6 training sessions appears relatively small given the number of target groups and projects – is this sufficient?</p>	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>[AfDB]: A "Training the Trainers" component activity is already considered in the design. The project foresees the training of 20 Technical Agents (public servants) that shall be responsible for the training of the farmers as well as targeted communities. A total of six training sessions (2 per year during 3 years) are planned and shall discuss various topics such as agroforestry, climate resilient technologies, climate information, etc.). The agents will be responsible for relaying the concepts learned to communities through accessible training materials / tools (video, audio, leaflets, flyers, etc.). In addition, it is expected that the agents organized monthly awareness / training campaigns for communities over an extended period of 5 years and beyond the scope of this project. During the implementation phase, the project is expected to disseminate a total of 10,000 copies of training manuals to the beneficiaries.</p>	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 6	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	<p>Risks: Non-sustainability of facilities – one aspect of this is the capacity building for maintenance, but has the aspect of ongoing maintenance costs and funding been considered (beyond the lifetime of this project) and how that will be supported?</p>	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>[AfDB]: The project will establish a management and maintenance committee for each infrastructure or facility built. The capacity of these committees will be strengthened matters related to infrastructure management and maintenance and will be equipped with maintenance equipment.</p> <p>The project will then facilitate the establishment of a revolving fund to cover maintenance costs. These funds will be fed by each beneficiary as a result of the royalty to be paid based on the the sale of their productions.</p> <p>This is a model used by AfDB in other projects with the aim of ensuring the future sustainability of these type of community-based projects.</p>	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 7	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	<p>At scale – the proposal states that 'the model and the approach have a great potential for replication at local, national, regional and international levels', and you state the aim to generate some knowledge learning products, which look good; could you please share further information on your strategy towards enabling future scaling-up and replication, such as in how you will be working with other stakeholders to share your learnings.</p>	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>This project is part of a regional program in the Niger River Basin which is planned to be implemented in 4 phases over a period of 5 years.</p>	Jul 24, 2018



A knowledge development plan based on the learned experiences of the 9 targeted countries will be implemented by the Niger Basin Authority which will organize annual meetings to capitalize on experiences and best practices of the project implementation. All 9 countries will therefore benefit from the knowledge and lessons learned generated in every country. Three other future phases of the program will be considered at a later stage depending on the outcomes.

Comment 8	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	Results/M&E – could you please confirm the historical emissions as the reference level/business as usual for the project areas? And the deforestation rates/forest cover for these areas? How do these two variables compare to other areas in the country?	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>Historical emissions can be considered as reference level with a business as usual approach for the project areas. The data is currently being refined for the specific areas of the project as it was done in the southern area of the country in the past. For example, for the FIP activities in the Southern Zone (World bank), the reference period was 2000-2015.</p> <p>The center of the country was once the most productive area in the country and was home to the former cocoa belt. However, through overuse and unsustainable exploitation of resources, the area lost its attraction for both agriculture and forestry as trees gradually disappeared from the landscape and soil quality and biodiversity became impoverished. Many people in the region’s rural population joined the heavy migration towards the Abidjan from the 1970s onwards.</p> <p>Today the Center region has major potential for regenerating its forest cover (once primarily consisting of semi-deciduous trees). By developing a local economy, focused to a greater extent, on forest resources, the medium-term goal would be to incentivize the population native to this area - currently facing increasing land-related conflicts in the southern region of the country - to return. This could have a positive effect in both the revitalization of economic sectors in the central region as well as reducing pressure in the south where many have settled illegally in gazetted forests.</p> <p>[Note: We are unable to upload into the platform an image with three maps showing how the central region is the one that suffered the most from deforestation since 1990. If need be we can provide it through the CIF AU or directly if an email is provided].</p>	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 9	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	Financing – to what extent as private sector involvement been considered for the sub-projects (where appropriate), including to as a potential long-term financing source beyond the lifetime of the project?	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[AfDB]: The project plans to set up a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) mechanism as a potential long-term financing solution. The study for the implementation of the PES will focus in particular on a sustainable financing scheme to be led by the private sector, particularly those in the coffee and cocoa sectors.	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 10	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	<p>You identify in 2.2 how the TDA identified loss of biodiversity as a major transboundary environmental problem, and of medium priority. However, addressing the loss of biodiversity does not appear to be integrated in the design of the project – could this be more explicitly integrated within components 1 and 2?</p> <p>Component 2.</p> <p>Developing the resilience of natural resources and ecosystems – It would be good to know how this project will be taking into account the causes of the deforestation that is happening in the design of how the reforestation work will be done, to ensure the sustainability of this work; i.e. what measures will be taken to ensure that this forest will be valued and conserved.</p>	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[AfDB]: Actions addressing the loss of biodiversity are mainly developed by the second FIP project of Côte d'Ivoire which will be implemented by the World Bank. Their project will intervenes in protected areas and gazetted forests. The proposed project intervenes mainly in the rural area. That said, actions in favor of biodiversity are foreseen in component 2 and include: i) the rehabilitation of gazetted, communal and village forests, and ii) the expansion of forest cover through the promotion of voluntary natural reserves.	Jul 24, 2018
Response 2	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	<p>[Continuation from previous response]</p> <p>[AfDB]: The main reasons for deforestation in the country are agriculture (mostly itinerant), logging and bush fires. These were taken into account during the design of the project through the use of innovative and climate resilient technologies for agricultural development. The using of these technologies will increase agricultural yields and contribute to limit the extension of agricultural areas and deforestation. Reforestation and agroforestry will also increase the availability of wood and non-timber forest products which will in turn contribute to reduce pressure on natural resources while increasing the forest cover in the project areas.</p>	Jul 24, 2018



Reforestation will be based on a participatory approach and driven by demand of the communities. Around each reforestation site the communities will be organized into a forest management committee that will work to ensure maintenance and a sustainable management of forest resources. The focus will be on the valuation of non-timber products. On the other hand, the PES mechanism that will be operationalized by the project will encourage communities to maintain and enhance forests.

Comment 11	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	Technical area – how will the project work effectively across the two selected zones to ensure maximum efficiencies, communications and shared learnings and use of resources throughout the project where possible?	Jul 20, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[AfDB]: The project will be piloted by one Steering Committee and managed by one Project Coordination Unit based in Yamoussoukro. The Steering Committee will include representatives from the national and local authorities as well as communities' representatives from the targeted regions. All envisaged activities will be planned, implemented and reported together by the Project Coordination Unit within the budget estimated for the project. A Technical Monitoring Committee will be established at the local level to undertake local monitoring activities. AfDB believes that this arrangement will ensure a smooth, effective and efficient implementation of the project.	Jul 24, 2018
Comment 12	Jenny Lopez	United Kingdom	The UK welcomes the responses received, and is pleased to approve this proposal.	Jul 25, 2018
Comment 13	Katie Berg	United States	Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. We have a few questions before moving forward with a decision. 1. The cover note says that FIP financing will go toward component 1 (Forest Cover Recovery and Resilience Improvement in the Center Region). Can we assume that no FIP financing will go toward other components? What is the total amount of financing going toward component 1 (FIP and co-financing)? 2. Will the inclusion of the FIP project in a regional program (PIDACC/NB) create any delays in the FIP project going to the AfDB board? 3. The project document contains a list of activities to be supported, but lacks a detailed description of the current situation that the FIP project would address and how the FIP project would improve the situation – i.e., a theory of change. We would like to understand better which activities will be supported and how, which groups will be involved, how they will be selected, and how the FIP intervention will lead to lasting change. We would also like additional information on financial management and implementation. 4. The project is classified as environment category 1, but there is little description of the potential impacts and mitigation measures. Is component 1 category 1 as well? The document references an ESMP. Is this available? We could not find it on the web site. 5. The AfDB's answers to the UK reference a PES mechanism. How would the PES mechanism work? Are the proposed activities economically and financially viable in themselves, and how do they compare to current alternatives? Will additional support for these activities be required in order for them to be sustainable? The answer to these questions could be included in the response to our question 3 above. 6. It would be helpful if AFDB could provide more information on the connection between this project and the project described in the investment plan. Is the investment plan concept still valid? 7. What is the size of any dams supported under component 2 (we assume there are none under component 1)?	Jul 26, 2018
Response 1	Leandro Azevedo	AFDB	[Note AfDB]: A number of supporting documents to the below responses were circulated to the CIF AU for further circulation to the members of the FIP SC. [US]: The cover note says that FIP financing will go toward component 1 (Forest Cover Recovery and Resilience Improvement in the Center Region). Can we assume that no FIP financing will go toward other components? What is the total amount of financing going toward component 1 (FIP and co-financing)? [AfDB]: FIP resources will finance Component 1 (90%) and Component 3 (10%). The total budget for Component 1 equals USD 14.20 million and will be funded as follows: (i) FIP USD 8.1 million, (ii) AfDB USD 3.8 million, (iii) Government of Côte d'Ivoire USD 1.5 million, and (iv) USD 0.8 million by the beneficiaries. [US]: Will the inclusion of the FIP project in a regional program (PIDACC/NB) create any delays in the FIP project going to the AfDB board? [AfDB]: FIP inclusion in the PIDACC regional program is not expected to affect the timeframe for AfDB's Board approval currently scheduled for September 2018. [US]: The project document contains a list of activities to be supported, but lacks a detailed description of the current situation that the FIP project would address and	Aug 06, 2018



how the FIP project would improve the situation – i.e., a theory of change. We would like to understand better which activities will be supported and how, which groups will be involved, how they will be selected, and how the FIP intervention will lead to lasting change. We would also like additional information on financial management and implementation.

[AfDB]: A number of documents were submitted to the CIF AU. These include:

- i. Annex B1: Theory of Change;
- ii. Annex B3: Activities and Beneficiary Groups;
- iii. Annex B5: Institutional Arrangements; and
- iv. Annex B6: Financial management.

With regards to the implementation approach please note that beneficiaries will be associations, cooperatives or producer groups, particularly those including youth and women who will develop and carry the targeted sub-projects.

The project's support to communities for a sustainable management of forest plantations and the development of agriculture value chains will be assessed based: (i) the availability of suitable land for plantations or targeted crops; (ii) the commitment of the Communities to protect these reforestation / plantations against fire; (iii) the accessibility of the land to be planted in any season especially during the planting period; (iv) local ecological characteristics adapted to the requirements of species to be planted; (v) the interest of reconstituting a forest stand; and (vi) availability of local labor.

For agricultural value chains sub-projects, the criteria will include the organization of beneficiaries into groups / cooperatives.

A demand-driven approach will be put in place in the project to ensure the sub-projects developed by the beneficiaries are funded. For this purpose, a manual for financing of these sub-projects financing will be prepared and disseminated by the Project Information Unit. Up to a total of 20 trained individuals will support the beneficiaries in the development and implementation of their sub-projects.

[US]: The project is classified as environment category 1, but there is little description of the potential impacts and mitigation measures. Is component 1 category 1 as well? The document references an ESMP. Is this available? We could not find it on the web site.

[AfDB]: As per AfDB's Integrated Safeguards, the project was classified as category 1. The AfDB shared with the CIF AU summaries for both the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Please consult Annex B8.

[US]: The AfDB's answers to the UK reference a PES mechanism. How would the PES mechanism work? Are the proposed activities economically and financially viable in themselves, and how do they compare to current alternatives? Will additional support for these activities be required in order for them to be sustainable? The answer to these questions could be included in the response to our question 3 above.

[AfDB]: The activities for supporting the operationalization of the Payment for Environmental Services (PSE) mechanism are described in Annex B3 (also shared with the CIF AU). A feasibility study for the national PES mechanism has been conducted by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. Through the implementation of this activity the project will carry out a complementary study for the operationalization of PES in the project area to ensure the sustainability of the project investments within the framework of forest and agroforestry plantations. The target is to have at least 20,000 ha of forest and agroforestry under the PES contracts as part of the project. The economic and financial analysis of the project are detailed in Annex B7 which demonstrates the profitability and sustainability of the project with an internal rate of return of 12.8% and an economic rate of return of 28.5%.

[US]: It would be helpful if AfDB could provide more information on the connection between this project and the project described in the investment plan. Is the investment plan concept still valid?

[AfDB]: Component 1 of the proposed project corresponds to the project described in the investment plan (see Annex B2) and therefore the concept note is still valid. One of the key reasons to include the FIP project in a wider program is to allow for swifter implementation and smaller implementation costs.

[US]: What is the size of any dams supported under component 2 (we assume there are none under component 1)?

[AfDB]: Component 1 does not include small dams among its sub-activities. The dams funded under Component 2 have a capacity of ranging from 500,000 to 1 million cubic meters that will be managed by communities to develop agropastoral activities.

Comment 14 Katie Berg

United States

We appreciate the additional information provided by the AfDB on this project. Aug 13, However, we still have concerns that a clear theory of change -- specific to the 2018 activities of this project -- that includes identification of specific actors, as well as



barriers to change and how they will be addressed, has not been included. For example, Annex 1 of the Investment Plan describes a number of drivers and underlying causes as well as identification of specific actors. We would like to see this sort of detail included in the description of the project and its activities. We would also like some more information on how the project will support land security. In addition, the documentation suggests that the sustainability of the project investments will require a PES mechanism, yet there is very little information on what this activity might look like. We would also appreciate more information on the community consultation for this project.

Thank you,
Katie Berg

Response 1 Leandro Azevedo AFDB

[US]: "However, we still have concerns that a clear theory of change -- specific to the activities of this project -- that includes identification of specific actors, as well as barriers to change and how they will be addressed, has not been included. For example, Annex 1 of the Investment Plan describes a number of drivers and underlying causes as well as identification of specific actors. We would like to see this sort of detail included in the description of the project and its activities. [AfDB]: The Center region of Côte d'Ivoire (Component 1 FIP/Region) - the former cocoa belt - is facing multiple issues including: (i) high deforestation, (ii) an increased impoverishment of the grounds, (iii) an unproductive agriculture, (iv) exodus populations towards the south forest, (v) insufficiency of land security which does not encourage the sustainable investments, (vi) unsustainable mining extraction, and (vii) high GHG emissions due to deforestation and wood energy. The main constraints to change in this region are: (i) insufficient regional planning / support to regional technical actors, (ii) insufficient technical support from government departments for capacity building, (iii) inadequate community organization, (iv) land insecurity, and (v) lack of funding funding. Component 1 of the project will focus on: (i) restoration of soil fertility with agroforestry reforestation, (ii) reduced pressure on forests with the accessibility of wood energy by reforestation, (iii) increase agricultural production with good ecological practices and income generating activities, and (iii) capacity building, support to land security and against bush fires. The main objective is to contribute to carbon sequestration and more productive agriculture in the region so that community resilience can be improved. By restoring the health of soils and the environment, the project will encourage cocoa producers who migrated to the southwest to return to the central zone (the former cocoa belt). This would be a significant step towards reducing the pressure on national park and southwest forests. The population of the Niger river sub-basin in the North – West is very vulnerable to climate change because of the recurrent drought periods, land degradation, silting, bush fire, deforestation and overgrazing, soil erosion, soil depletion, poorly productive agriculture, insufficient land security. The main constraints in this region are (i) an insufficient regional planning,(ii) an insufficient technical support from government departments, (iii) inadequate community organization, (iv) limit access to hydraulic infrastructure, (v) land insecurity and (vi) limited access to financing. The projects' activities will focus on (i) soil and water conservation, (ii) erosion control, (iii) hydraulic infrastructure building, (iv) dissemination CSA technologies and best practices, (v) land tenure, (vi) construction of communities adaptation infrastructure, and (vii) building communities adaptive capacity. The main objectives are to (i) restore and promote a sustainable natural resource management and (ii) secure and improve the agricultural value chain in the region. It will so contribute to improve the resilience of the population and the ecosystems in the sub-basin. [US]: We would also like some more information on how the project will support land security. [AfDB]: To be owner of rural land in Côte d'Ivoire, one needs to obtain a land registration in the Land Registration Office opened for this purpose by the national administration. The 2 main phases of the process entail obtaining the rural land certificate and then the land title. The process for getting land title includes the following 8 steps: (i) Step 1: the technical file: The owner of rights granted has to order to authorized surveyor, having first opened the boundaries of his property land with neighbors agreement. The surveyor sets the boundaries during a contradictory procedure gathering the opinions of the neighbors and gives the applicant his technical file; (ii) Step 2: establishment of a development report; (iii) Step 3: filing the registration request; (iv) Step 4 control and transmission request to the registrar; (v) Step 5: Acceptation and publication of the request; (vi) Step 6: dispute resolution; (vii) Step 7: validation by a special departmental disputes resolution committee and the establishment of the land certificate; and (viii) Step 8: the registration of the parcel by the land title attribution.

Aug 17, 2018



The project will support beneficiaries in obtaining the Rural Land Certificate, which will be required before any sub-project is funded. Holders are expected to complete the final stage of the process through land registration and land titling will be a prerequisite for the payment of 2nd year incentives under the PES contract. To this end, the project will sign an agreement with the competent services of the Ministry of Agriculture in charge of Rural Land. With this agreement, the beneficiaries will be supported in the process from the stage of the establishment of the technical file until the validation by the special departmental dispute resolution and thus the establishment of the land certificate.

[US]: In addition, the documentation suggests that the sustainability of the project investments will require a PES mechanism, yet there is very little information on what this activity might look like.

[AfDB]: The sustainability of the project's investments will be based on the following actions: (i) land tenure security, which will be a prerequisite for any financing; (ii) contribution of the beneficiaries from 10 to 25% to the subproject financing that will guarantee the ownership; (iii) agricultural production (intercropping of forest seedlings during the 2 years of taungya planting) that guarantee income, and (iv) payment of incentives for plantation maintenance through a PES contract.

A feasibility study for the implementation of a national PES was carried out in 2015 by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire in the implementation of the REDD + strategy. This study identified four activities eligible for PES in Côte d'Ivoire: reforestation, natural forest conservation, assisted natural regeneration and agroforestry. To ensure the implementation at national level of PES, a practical guide has been developed. The proposed national PES aims at ensuring the sustainability of investments in the forest sector in Côte d'Ivoire. This will involve providing cash or in-kind payment in exchange for a commitment to reforestation, natural forest conservation, assisted natural regeneration or agroforestry. The provision of PES are preceded by community awareness. The project provides forest seedlings to growers.

As part of the project, PES contracts will be signed with beneficiaries of reforestation / plantation and agroforestry activities for 3 years. The first year of the contract will deal with the planting of tree species. The 2nd and 3rd years will be based on the maintenance of the plots. The PES will be based on the result after verification of the survival rate of the plants linked to good maintenance of the plots. For ecological conditions of Cote d'Ivoire, if the stand is maintained 2 years after year of planting, the plot can develop properly. Incentive payments over 3 years will therefore ensure maintenance of parcels planted during the crucial period for their development.

At the national level, Côte d'Ivoire plans to operationalize a national PES that will continue funding environmental and forestry activities. This mechanism will be financed by a National Climate Fund that is yet to be created. The feasibility study for this fund is underway with UE support. This fund will house a window on national PES and will be operational in early 2020. So in addition, the National Climate Change Fund will take over from the PES initiated under the project, thus contributing to strengthening the sustainability of the investments.

[US]: We would also appreciate more information on the community consultation for this project.

[AfDB]: Participatory approach served as the basis for the project formulation. It was adopted for discussions and consultations with communities. This approach made it possible to gather as much information as possible, coming from the communities themselves, on the identification, design and implementation strategy of the project. The identification and design of the project were based on the information gathered from these interviews. All region involved in the project were visited by the mission, where they conducted interviews and exchanges with rural communities. Thus, in each of the departments of the project area, working sessions with in-depth discussions on the projects problematic took place with NGOs, village communities, women associations, young people, landowners, associations, cooperatives. This approach has deepened the debates on the identification, design and implementation strategy of the project. Field visits were also organized, which made it possible to discuss with the grassroots communities the real problems to be addressed and to appreciate the local initiatives already under way. Following these missions, mini local workshops were organized bringing together representatives groups but also the customary chiefs. The minutes and reports the different meetings held are available.

From all these consultation meetings, the following main needs and suggestions emerged: (i) the required synergy of the project with the other ongoing projects in the region, (ii) the preliminary land security of the project plots; (iii) gender mainstreaming in the planning and implementation of activities; (iv) taking into account biodiversity in the choice of cropping systems to be implemented (mono or



polyculture); (v) the management of bushfires; (vi) the sustainability of the PES mechanism; (vii) the choice of species to be used in consultation with the populations; and (viii) the contribution of the populations in the success of the project. All of these proposals and suggestions have been incorporated into the project activities or considered in the mitigation or enhancement measures of the project impacts.

The implementation of the project will be done in a participatory way. Communities are the owners of the sub-projects. Requests for sub-projects will be generated through social intermediation actions that will be conducted by the technical development agents. At each project site, a management committee will be set up through which communities will decide the investments to be carried out as well as maintenance actions to ensure sustainability. A regional technical monitoring committee will be set up in each for participatory monitoring of activities.