



REDD+ for the Guiana Shield

Technical and regional development of REDD+ in the Guiana Shield

Project coordination : Office National des Forêts (ONF) of French Guiana

Collaborators : ONFI (France), GFC (Guiana), IEF (Brazil), SBB (Suriname)

Donors : Program INTERREG Caraïbes of the European Union, French Global Environment Facility (FFEM), Conseil Régional de la Guyane (Région Guyane) and ONF.

The **REDD+ for the Guiana Shield** Project intends to bring into operation a regional and technical platform for developing REDD+ in the Guiana Shield. It is a regional project funded with approximately 2.7 million euros by the European Fund for Regional Development (FEDER), the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and the Regional Council of French Guiana.

CONTEXT

On the occasion of the fourteenth Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which took place in 2008 in Poznan, the REDD+ for the Guiana Shield project was begun, initially by Guyana, Suriname and France, followed shortly afterwards by the State of Amapá in Brazil.

The tropical forest in the Guiana Shield has enormous biodiversity. With approximately 90% of its forest cover untouched, it plays a crucial role in mitigating climate change and in hydric regulation of the river basins in this vast region that extends from the Amazon to the Orinoco. Because they belong to the same ecoregion, the countries of the Guiana Shield share a common environmental responsibility in the eyes of the international community.

The forests of the Guiana Shield present deforestation rates that are still not very high in relation to other tropical forests (especially the southern Amazon). However, very strong economic and demographic growth among countries in the region means that today there are rising pressures on the natural ecosystems. In that context, governments – with a view to promoting sustainable development – have expressed great interest in REDD+ as a mechanism that will allow them to financially valorize their efforts related to reducing climate change.

OBJECTIVES

The project seeks to improve the environmental capital of the Guiana Shield. The results of the project should allow the countries to draw up policies and measures for fighting deforestation and degradation, within the framework of the REDD+ mechanism.

Cooperation is a key element in this project. Even though they are in the same ecoregion, the countries of the Guiana Shield have different histories and have developed their priorities in distinct ways. Because of that there is an opportunity for mutual learning based on sharing information and good practices in the region. The project encourages cooperation among these neighboring countries thanks to a technical platform that seeks to improve methodologies for inventory of forest resources (carbon stocks and forest cover), improve the understanding of deforestation and forest degradation drivers and also of modeling the evolution of forest cover. Regarding this last aspect, the intention is to make available to policymakers an instrument that will help them to evaluate the impact of their policies and measures on the evolution of forest cover and on social and economic development. This instrument should offer a solid basis for developing REDD+ strategies and land use planning.

By allowing the countries to analyze their options and take into account their impacts on the environment, the project responds to a strong political desire that the countries have regarding sustainable development and reinforces consideration of the region in global efforts for reducing climate change.

ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT

The project is based on carrying out three main activities.

ACTIVITY 1 : Forest resource inventories and monitoring

The objective of this activity is to create an atmosphere of cooperation to share data and methodologies for inventory of forest carbon stocks and for monitoring forest cover. It is expected that this activity will help the countries to formulate their forest carbon inventories according to the IPCC format and to evaluate the emissions caused by deforestation and forest degradation.

ACTIVITY 2 : Quantify and locate the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation

The objective of this activity is to improve understanding of the national and transnational dynamics of deforestation and forest degradation. This activity will offer the methodologies and data for quantifying the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and for analyzing the spatial distribution of those drivers.

ACTIVITY 3 : Model to aid in decision-making for future development

The objective of this activity is to develop a tool that will aid decision-makers in assessing the impacts of development policies related to forests and land use, whether on forest carbon emissions or on social and economic development. Thanks to economic models and to models for future deforestation, it is expected that decision-makers will be able to fully integrate REDD+ into the decision-making process.

The three main activities are intimately related. The modeling activity will use the results of the other activities as its basis. All of these activities should result in instruments for supporting local and national policies and for making decisions regarding making offsets for forest carbon emissions and to begin concrete measures for responding to REDD+ recommendations at a local, national and international level.

INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION RELATED TO PROJECT EXECUTION

The project is coordinated by the regional office of ONF in French Guiana, which has delegated part of the execution to its ONF International (ONFI) affiliate.

The project is coordinated by a group of specialists from ONFI, which includes a project manager and an administrative assistant based in Cayenne, three focal points, respectively placed in Georgetown, Paramaribo and Macapá with the collaborating forest services, and by thematic specialists who contribute technical support from the ONFI head office in Paris. This team also receives support from a doctoral student.

The collaborating forest services actively participate in the project working in collaboration with the national focal point located within their administrative structure. The forest services are members of the steering committee and participate in the technical working groups. The steering committee is made up of one representative of the forest service and one representative of the state agency for environment or REDD+ from each country. The donors also have representation. To guarantee satisfactory synergies with the already existing regional initiatives, the steering committee invites observers (WWF, CI and a representative of the Guiana Shield Facility of UNDP).

Additionally, the technical working groups have been created in order to bring together specialists from the countries and also from other institutions in the region, in order to encourage sharing of experiences and good practices, as well as to strengthen capacities.

TIMELINE FOR THE PROJECT

Duration of the project : from 2013 to 2015

Signing of the financing agreement : September 2012 (Local administration of French Guiana), October 2012 (Interreg), January 2013 (FFEM)

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