

Independent Study Project in Development Studies:

How convincing are the Nigerian Government's claims for 'participation' for REDD+ in Cross River State?

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Abstract:

Nigeria is currently preparing for REDD+ projects in Cross River State, which will be funded by UN-REDD and the FCPF. Nigeria's plans acknowledge that participation has an important role to play in increasing the efficiency of conservation activities and in preventing potential harms arising from conservation activities. These plans are critically evaluated. Nigeria's plans for decentralization of forest management are not convincing. Aside from community forest management, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) constitutes the main rationale for participation in REDD+, but Nigeria's plans for FPIC have significant problems. Forest communities are unlikely to benefit from REDD+ activities, and participatory consultation processes are progressing too slowly. The arrangement for participatory oversight is stronger than in other REDD+ countries, but still requires improvement. There is a significant risk of eviction as a part of REDD+ conservation activities. In general, REDD+ planning's claims for participation are found to be unconvincing.

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Introduction

“Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation” (REDD) is a climate change mitigation framework designed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). REDD is a payment for ecosystems services model which incentivizes protection of forests through giving stored carbon a market value, operating at a national level in developing states. REDD+ is an expanded version which includes incentives for sustainable forest management and the enhancement of carbon sinks. REDD+ can be typified as a partnership based on “a commitment ... by developing countries to embark on low-carbon, climate resilient development [and] by developed countries to provide predictable and significant funding as an incentive for reduced forest-based carbon emissions” (UN-REDD 2010, p1). Reducing emissions from deforestation is seen as critical to climate change mitigation, as land use change in forests is estimated to account for circa 20% of greenhouse gas emissions (FAO et al. 2008)¹.

“In general, REDD can be seen as continuous with PES [Payments for Ecosystems Services] projects” (Hufty & Haakenstad 2011, p4) and is therefore open some of the standard critiques of PES programmes, in brief: PES programmes / REDD+ rely on clearly defined land tenure and carbon rights, “yet most deforestation hotspots are characterized by unclear and contested land rights” (Angelsen 2009, p xii). Any attempt to reform land tenure risks becoming coercive and harmful, but will be necessary for carbon trading under REDD+. There are unresolved and complex technical problems with deciding who will receive payments, and how these payments will be administered. Any payment mechanism will require significant administrative capacity at government level, but this to is lacking in many developing states (Tacconi et. al. 2009). REDD+ in its early stages is heavily focussed on capacity building to meet this challenge. As with all development work,

¹ There are many varying estimates of the actual figure. UN-REDD uses 20%, but recent research suggests the actual number may be closer to 10%, see Lang 2014.

the benefits from REDD+ are at risk from capture by elite groups. Climate change threatens marginalized people the most, but “climate-change response measures and the discourses surrounding them have their own, even-less-understood, stratifying outcomes for vulnerable populations,” (Marino & Ribot 2012, p323), and forest dwellers tend to be particularly marginal and vulnerable. REDD+ could be good or bad for forest dwellers, only time will tell, but the unprecedented proposed scale of REDD+ ramps up potential for widespread harm as much as for widespread success. How to effectively monitor carbon stocks is a major issue for REDD+. REDD+ also relates to the tendency for conservationism to dehumanize people at the expense of biodiversity (Neumann 2004), or in this case potentially carbon stores, and political debates over who should have to bear the burden of climate change mitigation (cf Agrawal and Narain 1991).

REDD+ projects attempt to overcome these problems by adding to the traditional PES model social and economic development, or ‘co-benefits’. This is a lesson learned from Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (Brandon & Wells 2009), but these too suffer from problems around unintended consequences, short-termism, over ambition, and limited capacity.

In line with most contemporary development practice, ‘participation’ is posited as a solution to many of the above problems. In most REDD+ plans participation is used to inform planning and oversight to some extent, largely as a means to improving project outcomes and reducing transaction costs (Mosse 2001). It is widely acknowledged that the top-down enforcement of land use change which REDD+ will require entails a significant risk of harm to forest communities. There is a moral element to participation: as a means to secure Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for REDD+. It is outside the scope of this paper to discuss whether FPIC from forest dwellers really mitigates REDD+’s potential harms but

this is its common role in REDD+. FPIC and processes to secure FPIC are seen as a way of “ensuring equitable and efficient benefit distribution,” (UN-REDD 2010, p4), preventing harms, promoting land security and improving conservation outcomes. There is also the implicit assumption that FPIC from forest communities reduces the responsibility of REDD+ actors for any harms which may arise.

This paper will examine Nigeria’s plans for participation and FPIC in Cross River State. In section 1 the context for REDD+ in Nigeria is discussed, including a brief history of REDD+ and the main agencies currently funding REDD+ projects. In section 2 a brief analysis of the shared UN & World Bank policy for FPIC in REDD+ is presented in order to give context to subsequent discussion. In section 3 plans for participatory forest management, carbon monitoring and enforcement are examined, and in section 4 Nigeria’s plans for FPIC are discussed through analysis of planned REDD+ co-benefits, land and carbon rights and participatory governance and oversight elements. Finally in section 5 conclusions for REDD+ in Nigeria are presented.

The primary document used to reflect the position of the Nigeria government is the draft REDD+ Readiness Proposal presented to the World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility in November 2013 (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2013). This has been chosen as it is the most recent planning document available, and is referred to as the R-PP throughout this paper. REDD+ plans for UN-REDD funding were accepted in 2012. While the structure of the plans submitted to UN-REDD (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2012) and the FCPF differs, the content is largely analogous and thus the FCPF R-PP can be assumed to represent the position of the Nigeria government for REDD+ as a whole.

1. The Nigerian Context for REDD+

REDD+ has been discussed and refined regularly at UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties to the Convention (COP) since 2005, and is still very much a developing framework. Most of the discussion to date has focussed on the technical details of implementing REDD+ and how to ensure that it produces the desired results in terms of the protection of forest stock. The focus is monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of REDD+ results and building a mechanism for results-based payments.

Steps to mitigate the harms listed above were identified at COP16 (UNFCCC 2011). The decision made (1/CP.16) affirms the importance of capacity building, acknowledging that weak governance in REDD+ countries can jeopardize equitable results for citizens of REDD+ states. It *recognizes* the need to engage “a broad range of stakeholders” (p3), at all levels of government (national, regional and local), within the private sector and civil society (“including youth and persons with disability”, p3), and that the participation of women and indigenous peoples is “important” (p4) to climate change mitigation. Elsewhere the decision makes passing reference to land tenure, governance and gender issues (paragraph 72, p13) and outlines some basic safeguards for REDD+ projects. These order that

Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

is “promoted and supported” (p26) within national REDD+ projects. COP19 *reiterates* a requirement for REDD+ countries to periodically report on how they are respecting these safeguards (12/CP.19 in UNFCCC 2014, also 12/CP.17 in UNFCCC 2012). The list of safeguards for REDD+ projects itself has not been updated since COP16, and no details of how they should be implemented have been provided.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is frequently mentioned in UNFCCC documents, often appearing alongside mentions of “forest dwellers,” the implication being that forest dwellers and forest dependent people are to be considered as “indigenous”. The right of indigenous peoples to be consulted on actions which have an impact on them (in this case REDD+ projects) is asserted by UNDRIP. Article 28 specifically asserts the right to redress through restitution or compensation, for any “lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent [FPIC].” This has clear implications for REDD+ projects, which will necessarily involve changes in the way forests are managed in ways likely to constitute confiscation, occupation or exclusion and forms the basis for FPIC in REDD+. The UNFCCC also mentions equitable results but there is a “lack of specificity of definition, conflict of interests, power asymmetry and the existence of many varying viewpoints” (Okereke & Dooley 2010, p84) which leaves too much space for poor approaches to securing equity.

REDD+ is promoted and implemented by a range of organizations. For REDD+ in Nigeria the major players are UN-REDD and the World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF).

UN-REDD was set up in 2008. Compared with the UNFCCC framework, UN-REDD’s policy is more encouraging in terms of anticipating harms for forest dwellers, and directly acknowledges that payments for ecosystems services are (at least in theory) open to abuse (FAO et al. 2008). UN-REDD recognizes that ensuring equitable results from REDD+ is a major unresolved challenge (UN-REDD 2010, p4), which will require significant capacity building and close attention to legal frameworks in REDD+ countries to be

resolved. Further, the programme strategy document acknowledges that important stakeholders “are often not engaged in public decision-making processes, yet they depend on forests for their social and economic livelihoods” (UN-REDD 2010, p11). The importance of stakeholder consultation, FPIC, fairness and accountability in REDD+ projects is made explicit, in much stronger language than that used by the UNFCCC. UN-REDD has committed \$4 million (UN-REDD 2011) to the development of the Nigerian REDD+ strategy and associated capacity building.

The FCPF shares policy with UN-REDD on stakeholder engagement and FPIC (Laughlin et al 2013). The FCPF has promised \$3.8 million in funding for REDD+ preparation in Nigeria, subject to minor alterations to the government’s Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP, Federal Government of Nigeria 2013). These include improvements to the R-PP’s documentation of existing stakeholder consultation and plans to “enhance the capacity of communities to participate in all aspects of REDD+” (FCPF 2013).

The level of funding already committed to the planning stages of REDD+ in Nigeria reflects the fact that Nigeria appears to be a prime candidate for climate change mitigation. Existing data is generally poor, incomplete or outdated (Usman & Adefalu 2010, Ite 1997), but there exists a general consensus that carbon stores in Nigeria are substantial (estimated at 7.5Gt, including 1Gt oil, Ravilios 2010), and the annual rate of deforestation is commonly cited as 3.5% for Nigeria as a whole (Aruofor 2001, cited in Oyebo et. al. 2010, Ravilios et. al. 2010, Usman & Adefalu 2010, and the R-PP itself), and 2.2% in Cross River State (Oyebo et. al. 2010). This data is based on comparisons between remote surveys conducted in 1976 and 1997. The REDD+ baseline will be based partially on remote data from 2008, the analysis of which is not yet complete.

The Nigerian government intends to start the national REDD+ programme with three pilot schemes in Cross River State (CRS), home to Cross River National Park (CRNP). The National Park was set up between 1988 (Oban Hills Division, south of Cross River) and 1991 (Okwango Division, to the north of Cross River), and despite its status as a protected area its foundation has done little to slow the felling of trees. Usman & Adefalu (2010) blame this on the poor institutional structure of forest governance, weak enforcement of existing anti-felling provisions, short-termism created by the instability of Nigerian politics and a lack of coordination between different government departments. These are all areas which REDD+ aims to address. Usman & Adefalu also blame “cultural factors,” (forest dwellers’ systems of land tenure) for creating a situation in which “[g]reat opposition normally follows attempts by government to convert what is regarded as personal or communal property to reserves.” (p51). Under UN-REDD / FCPF rules changes to this system will require FPIC from forest communities.

In common with most forests in developing countries (Kanninen 2007), one of the proximate causes of deforestation is agriculture (Oyebo et. al. 2010). The primary economic activity in the vicinity of the park is subsistence agriculture (Ite 1997, Ezebilo 2011). While only a minority of farming involves felling trees there are strong incentives to at least partially clear established forest, as this guarantees ownership of the cleared territory, though felling is more likely than not to be partial, with some trees left standing (Ite 1997). Economic pressures toward cash cropping also play a role in tree felling, as common cash crops (bananas, cocoa etc) require fertile soil, most easily provided by clearing old growth forest. Villages on the edges of Cross River National Park tend to be poorly connected, and education levels and incomes are low compared to Nigerian averages (Johnson 2003).

2. UN-REDD / FCPF policy on Free, Prior and Informed Consent

UN-REDD and the FCPF share operational policy on FPIC (Laughlin et al 2013), and this policy forms the substantive requirement for participation in REDD+ planning and operation. Participation is presented as having both a business and human rights case. There is only a hard requirement for FPIC in REDD+ plans if affected communities are identified as 'Indigenous'. Making this definition is not simple. Self-identification as indigenous is important but not sufficient for securing protection under UNDRIP, and those not identified as indigenous are not protected by UN-REDD / FCPF policy, which states "a blanket application of FPIC is not required for all forest-dependent communities" (Laughlin et al. 2013, p11). This is a critical weakness for REDD+ policy, as potential harms from REDD+ are linked to forest residency and dependency and not to the state of being indigenous of itself.

Despite this, forest communities in Cross River State appear to fulfill the requirements of UNDRIP: there is a long history of continuous settlement, land tenure systems are 'traditional' and links to the state are weak. In the case of Cross River State the R-PP applies FPIC broadly to local populations, and in general uses the terms 'indigenous', 'forest dependent', 'forest community' etc interchangeably, as we have done in this paper.

Nigeria has made firm commitments to securing FPIC, in line with UN-REDD and FCPF policy. At present there has been no attempt to exclude any group of people from the FPIC process, with the possible exception of recent migrants to the area. Committing to the FPIC policy requires Nigeria to "consult ... in good faith ... *with a view to agreement*" (Laughlin et al. 2013, p11, emphasis in original), make FPIC an ongoing

process and establish grievance mechanisms for dealing with FPIC disputes and the below analysis assumes this commitment.

3. Participation in REDD+ management (decentralized forestry management)

Decentralization of forest management has the potential to be empowering for forest dwellers (Agarwal 2001), with the potential to produce positive social and economic change. The major trend in governance theory to achieve local empowerment is towards decentralization (Ribot et al. 2010, Brandon & Wells 2009), and there is evidence from research carried out within Nigeria that direct participation in forest management can improve its efficiency and reduce political friction between forest users and government (Agbeja & Adeyose 2008). Decentralization therefore constitutes the major element for participation in Nigerian REDD+ aside from FPIC. Nigeria's R-PP recognizes that decentralized community forest management has potential for improving REDD+ outcomes, both in terms of conservation and co-benefits, but effective decentralization cannot be guaranteed through laws alone and the reality of decentralized forestry often differs substantially from planned outcomes. Nigeria has national forestry policies which attempt to implement some form of decentralized management, but these have only been only partially taken up. Existing institutional arrangements are complex and REDD+ preparations have already led to a proliferation of forestry agencies at all levels of government.

Historically, authority has been held at state rather than federal level (Arufor 2001).

Forestry in CRS is managed by the Cross River State Forestry Commission (CRSFC), which is "firmly operated under a participatory, community - oriented strategy" (Oyebo et. al. 2010, p 56). It is important to note however, that the National Park itself is administered

by the federal National Park Service, which has a poor record of participation, and “community engagement in decision making is low” (ibid). There are 45 local Forest Management Committees (FMCs) in CRS, but only 19 of these have been recognized by the state government. Given that no new FMCs have been accredited since 2004 it seems unlikely that the remaining 26 will be recognized.

The proposed management of REDD+ in Cross River State involves no fewer than 16 government agencies. One of the FCPF’s concerns with Nigeria’s R-PP is that the proposed institutional structure for implementing REDD+ is that “[t]he number of and nature of management structures for REDD+, at both the Federal and State levels still seems far too complex”, which may lead to “administrative inefficiencies” (Kojwang 2013). This is putting it gently; the framework is extremely opaque, and the relationships between the large number of agencies involved are not always clear². This makes it difficult to say where power is really held, but the proliferation of national and state level agencies suggests significant *de facto* centralization of forestry authority. There are nearly as many government bodies involved in managing REDD+ as there are FMCs.

Work plans and terms of reference for REDD+ activities are ultimately set at the national level by the National Subcommittee on REDD+ and the Nigeria UN-REDD Programme

² The National Advisory Council on REDD+, Federal Ministry of Environment, National Climate Change Committee, Department of Climate Change, Department of Forestry, Jacarand Group for REDD+, National Subcommittee on REDD+, National REDD+ Secretariat, Government of CRS, CRS Technical REDD+ Committee, Cross River State Forestry Commission, CRS REDD+ Unit, CRS Stakeholders Platform, Climate Change Council, CRS Legal Subcommittee and the Nigeria UN-REDD Programme Steering Committee are all listed as managing institutions for REDD+ (R-PP, p11-17), with plans to introduce further agencies to manage FCPF funds.

There is significant overlap between different agencies, for example the Jacarand Group, CRS Technical Committee and CRS REDD+ Unit all either employ or are planning to employ GIS officers, in addition to GIS services provided by the University of Calabar, the Federal Ministry of Environment and the national space agency. While many of the duplicated functions are critical to REDD+, it is easy to see how this may lead to inefficient management, not to mention making it difficult to hold decision makers accountable. Inter agency rivalry is identified as a governance risk in UN-REDD’s initial governance assessment (UN-REDD 2012), but the R-PP does not address this, and the assessment itself suggests the foundation of a coordinating agency as a possible solution!

Steering Committee. Day to day management will be carried out at state level by the CRS REDD+ Unit. This organization does not have any direct representation of forest communities, though there are plans to recruit a stakeholder engagement officer. The R-PP plans to make use of existing community based forest management in CRS, and commits to capacity building for FMCs, though how representative these FMCs can be made will rely on careful management by state government: “inequalities must be taken into account” (Larson & Ribot 2009, p179) in order to ensure effective and equitable results. Otherwise community management is likely to prolong inequalities through allowing powerful actors to capture its benefits (see section 4a below), which would be a failure for participation. As with REDD+ in general, FMCs provide “an enormous amount of room for exploitation and abuse of poor and marginal” people (Larson & Ribot 2009, p181).

Forest communities are not homogenous, but the R-PP does not demonstrate an awareness of this fact. Existing UNFCCC safeguards emphasize the need to enable decision making within existing indigenous institutions, but this does not guarantee equitable results given the broad potential for rent seeking by powerful individuals (Cotula & Mayers 2009, Schoneveld 2014). “Without accountable representation ... participatory policies and projects become forms of covert privatization,” that concentrate power into the hands of the few (Ribot 1996). The R-PP frequently mentions special protections for vulnerable groups, women and youth, but does not provide any detailed safeguards or discuss how FMCs – based on traditional power structures – can be made representative.

Even if this problem were addressed, given that only a minority of FMCs have been certified by state government we should be cautious of treating their inclusion in REDD+ plans as a success. The failure to recognize the remaining FMCs is indicative of control

being ceded in name only. “[D]ecentralisation, even where legislated, is rarely implemented well” (Larson & Ribot 2009, p176) and this appears to be the case in Nigeria and the wider region. Community forest management in CRS has generally been ineffective, and has been “accompanied by even more rapid deforestation” (Johnson 2003, p158). Johnson suggests that this is not a problem inherent to community management itself, but happens because control over forest resources is decentralized in name only, while state and national government officials continue to make the real decisions. Promises of participatory forest conservation “are largely platitudes ‘spun’ by some official to secure international compliance” (Johnson 2003, p156), which are quickly forgotten about when there are personal gains to be made.

The current status of community management in Cross River State shows similarities with the situation of similar projects in Senegal and Ghana. In Senegal, community forestry management has been legislated for but implemented poorly. Rural Councils have struggled to gain state recognition, and those that have been granted powers have in general failed to exercise them. Members of Rural Councils feel compelled to comply with the wishes of government officials, due to the considerable power imbalances involved in negotiating control over forest resources (Ribot et al. 2006). Consultations in CRS show that forest communities fear repercussions for attempting to exercise their powers in defiance of government officials (UN-REDD 2012, UN-REDD 2013b).

There are long-term issues with poor enforcement of existing regulation in CRS (Ite 1997, Usman & Adefalu 2010) throughout the history of the national park. In order to address this, one of the major capacity building activities for REDD+ preparation is improving enforcement. The R-PP makes tentative references to community based enforcement (p51) but recent changes to the structure of the National Park Service (NPS) suggest that

this is unlikely to be implemented. The NPS was recently ‘upgraded’ to a paramilitary body, with expanded responsibilities including enforcement of “international treaties”³, i.e. REDD +, and thus enforcement has been centralized, at least within park borders.

Community participation in MRV is more encouraging, with at least some monitoring planned to take place at community level (R-PP, p86), through “Community Forest Management Working Group[s]”. Community based monitoring (also referred to as Participatory Forest Monitoring in the R-PP) can be highly effective (Larrazábal et. al. 2012), but participation in monitoring does not constitute empowerment and is a weak form of decentralization at best, especially since the major focus of the MRV plan is satellite based survey, with other forms of monitoring added as an afterthought.

The evidence for decentralized forest management, enforcement and monitoring is mixed. We should be mindful that poorly implemented community management risks becoming “participatory corvée” (Ribot et al. 2006, p1867), and that promises of decentralization of power are often included in planning documents but rarely fulfilled. State ownership of and control over forest resources do not necessarily have negative material impacts on forest-dwellers (Jagger et al. 2014), but REDD+ presents an opportunity for community empowerment that should not be missed. It seems unlikely that REDD+ in Nigeria will empower forest communities or provide meaningful decentralization without considerable effort and expansion of existing plans.

The FMC system requires review. The participatory management and decentralization outlined by the national forestry policy (Aruofor 2001, Oyebo et al. 2010) are generally weak in practice. This has serious implications for REDD+ on a national scale, given that it

³ *The Nigerian Voice*, 3rd March 2014, ‘FG Upgrades National Park Service to Paramilitary Body’

is agreed CRS leads on participatory forest management in Nigeria, and that the most recent changes to the national forestry policy (in 2006) have not been implemented outside of Cross River State (Oyebo et al 2010, p47). Projects outside of REDD+ are likely to face even larger capacity gaps for effectively engaging forest communities in the REDD + process.

Overall we can say that current plans for participatory forest management are not convincing, but this could be corrected through more positive action within the existing FMC system, which may emerge over time. UN-REDD is currently developing a community based forestry management policy called Community Based REDD+ (CBR+, UN-REDD 2013a), based on cross-country experience which has “shown that community-based action, initiated and carried out by local organizations, has an impressive record of successfully delivering development results” (p3). This policy is still at the draft stage, but could play a role for REDD+ in Nigeria in the future.

4. Participation and FPIC in Cross River State

Plans structured around securing FPIC constitute the bulk of ‘participation’ in Nigeria’s REDD+ plans. Participation cannot be offered at a high level of policy planning because REDD+ is ultimately an externally determined project, but FPIC represents an opportunity for participation in deciding plans for specific REDD+ outcomes, and participatory management of results and possibly arising grievances.

a. Co-benefits

Co-benefits (i.e. social and economic development integrated into REDD+ projects) form an important part of the participatory process. It is assumed that REDD+ co-benefits will motivate local communities to take part in the REDD+ process, and that their decision making will be informed by the potential for gains from co-benefits. REDD+ will necessarily involve tradeoffs between the interests of forest dwellers and conservation and in order for FPIC to be meaningful people must properly understand what they stand to gain and lose from REDD+. Despite the international nature of global warming, mitigation efforts are mediated by existing differences: there are obvious and considerable power imbalances between forest communities and REDD+ administrators, and without proper information on the likely outcomes of changes to forestry management vulnerable populations are at increased risk of exploitation. Knowledge of co-benefits constitutes the ‘informed’ part of FPIC and is central to participation for REDD+.

REDD+ planning in CRS is weak when it comes to co-benefits. Despite frequent references to opportunities for social and economic development in the R-PP there are no concrete examples of what the development outcomes might look like, and plans for future action do not go beyond commitments to attempt the identification of specific co-benefits in the future. Williams (2013) points out that most REDD+ planning documents emphasize the importance of – and opportunities for – co-benefits but fail to provide options or discuss challenges⁴ to implementation. In general REDD+ plans also fail to provide meaningful outlines for future action on identifying development options. A UNEP report titled ‘Exploring co-benefits. Nigeria.’ (Ravilios et al. 2010) published at the start of the REDD+ process states that “[p]otential co-benefits from REDD+ are highly relevant in Nigeria” (p1), but fails to identify any potential co-benefits, and subsequent documents have failed to move beyond this position. Social and economic gains from conservation are usually

⁴ Nigeria’s R-PP does demonstrate awareness of tenure issues and access to non timber forest products.

described as “social empowerment, income from carbon credit, enhancement of tourism potentials, provision of alternative means of livelihoods, opportunities for collaboration with a wide range of actors, capacity building and CSOs fulfillment of their development and environmental management mandate” (UN-REDD 2012, p4). Ignoring the role of civil society organizations – which presumably continue their work with or without REDD+ – this sort of list can easily be met with another set of potential REDD+ outcomes: social exclusion and eviction, misappropriation of carbon credit incomes, failure to provide alternative livelihoods and concomitant poverty etc. Without more detail in the R-PP we have no way of saying which of these lists will end up accurately reflecting REDD+ outcomes.

The foundation of the National Park was accompanied by an increase in the rate of clear felling for new farming, driven by fears of loss of access to land in future should enforcement become more effective (Ite 1997). Since the foundation of Takamanda National Park in Cameroon (contiguous with Okwangwo Division) there has been a shift toward cash cropping on land outside the borders of the park, driven by declining access to non-timber product within the park boundaries. This has resulted in significant leakage, with accelerated deforestation immediately outside the park undoing conservation gains made within (van Vliet 2010). Increasing reliance on cash cropping exposes forest communities to market fluctuations and exacerbates gender inequalities (ibid.), in addition to driving deforestation.

Most positive economic outcomes arising from the presence of the park are concentrated in the village of Butatong, the closest population centre to the CRNP Okwangwo Division (OD) administrative headquarters. Butatong is the only village in the vicinity of the park to have benefitted from tourism income, with only 5% of all residents of the park receiving

any tourism income (Ezebilo & Mattsson 2010). Promises of tourist income for forest communities are over-optimistic and that tourism will not be able to offset the loss of livelihood from the decline in agricultural expansion that REDD+ will require. Other economic and social benefits from the National Park in OD are generally limited. For example, local populations report that roads and primary healthcare were present before the establishment of the OD. The park has improved the availability of electricity in the area, which may be significant for conservation and local incomes. By enabling improvement to agricultural efficiency and providing opportunities for local processing of agricultural products, the electricity supply may reduce local exposure to market risks and reduce incentives for clear felling for cash cropping (Ite 1997). Access to roads may have a similar effect, but most roads in the region have been built by the logging industry and there has been a moratorium on logging in CRS since 2010 (van Vliet 2010, Oyebo et al. 2010). The OD has also funded the construction of town halls for several villages (including Butatong), increasing capacity for local communication and education, which will be important for effective participation in REDD+.

The foundation of the National Park was intended to produce far more widespread co-benefits, as recompense for changes to local rights to forest products, but these largely failed to materialize due to a lack of funding. This has led to significant resentment of the park amongst the local population (Johnson 2003). The plan for the park's foundation included development projects for 39 local villages but none of these plans produced results (Schoneveld 2014). Funding for the projects was removed after Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth in 1995⁵ (ibid.). The failure of the park's attached development projects has created problems for future projects, as it has generated resentment toward the park and a general mistrust of park conservation activities in the

⁵ Nigeria's membership of the Commonwealth was suspended in 1995 in response to the execution of nine environmental activists.

local population. Immediately after the foundation of the park the WWF employed village liaison officers tasked with communication, and education of conservation objectives. The withdrawal of funding in 1995 left these people unemployed and is still a sore issue to this day (Oyebo et al. 2010). Local populations have “never received any of the ... compensation and development assistance” promised in return for “lost access to important common property resources” (Schoneveld 2014, p151), which throws into doubt plans for similar development projects funded by REDD+.

Despite the protected status of the National Park, CRS still awards concessions to agribusiness for large scale cocoa and palm oil production within the park. This takes the form of ‘privatization’ of abandoned or degraded state owned plantations, which have fallen into disuse as a result of long term mismanagement and neglect. As part of this privatization process there has been some consultation of village councils, who remain *de facto* land owners, but the level of participation has been limited to rubber stamping proposed concession grants. In most cases consultation has been driven by the private sector rather than government itself (Schoneveld 2014). Schoneveld reports that during a recent round of privatization in 2010 at least nine million Naira (£33,000) paid in compensation for land handed over to Wilma International (a palm oil producer) was misappropriated by village elites. The actual figure is likely to be much higher as Schoneveld’s survey only covered five villages of the 13 paid such compensation. Where compensation funds are used appropriately they are “not generally impacting local livelihoods” in the region (van Vliet 2010, p10). The failure to provide alternative livelihoods through compensation funds is aggravated by a decline in income caused by the presence of large scale farming in the park, which marginalizes smallholders by making their products less competitive.

Schoneveld (2014) also suggests that there is significant corruption in the awarding of farming concessions. In the 2010 round of privatizations 57,855ha of the park was allocated for private farming use, and CRS government has attempted to avoid transparency in its decision making process:

“The lack of adherence to the Land Use Act (1978), National Park Decree (1991), Environmental Impact Assessment Decree (1992), and Cross River State Forest Law (2010) can clearly not be attributed to lack of oversight or unawareness of land use conflicts, considering the high degree of awareness of all relevant state agencies and ministries. This included key actors of agencies responsible for enforcing environmental management laws ... A senior official within the Ministry of Environment gave a surprisingly frank interpretation. He asserted that *conservation was not a priority for the ministry* and that the failure of companies and government alike to consult civil society (e.g. through the gazetting and [the] mandatory ... consultation process) *was to avoid excessive public scrutiny.*”

Schoneveld 2014, p159-160, emphasis added.

There is a risk that this process will continue during REDD+ implementation, both undermining its conservation efforts and exacerbating problems for local communities.

In general benefits from the presence of the national park are limited, and do not live up to their promised potential. This is representative of a wider trend for conservation projects, which – despite efforts to include positive outcomes for forest communities – have in general failed to provide alternative livelihoods, reduce poverty or provide other co-benefits (Bolin & Tassa 2012). The federal government plans to generate positive consensus on REDD+ through a national public relations campaign (Oyebo et al 2010). While such a process can play an important role in establishing the grounds for FPIC, the content of the information spread will be important. The government is in a position of power compared to the residents of CRS, and therefore able to promote its own view of REDD+. Promises of co-benefits made by the R-PP are overoptimistic at best, and this undermines the

‘informed’ component of FPIC, especially were these overoptimistic predictions to form part of the REDD+ public relations campaign.

b. Tenure and carbon rights

The major promised economic gain from REDD+ at a local level is income from carbon credits, and at this early stage there is not much detail available in terms of how income from carbon trading will be distributed. Clear systems of land tenure will be important for ensuring equitable REDD+ results (Angelsen 2009). A close reading of what is in R-PP raises some serious concerns on this front. It is acknowledged that “the greater numbers of hierarchical levels at which revenues are managed, the less cost-effective the mechanism will be” due to transaction costs and opportunities for rent-seeking (R-PP, p61), but the over-complicated institutional structure discussed above suggests that the administrative structure for revenue management is likely to run into exactly this problem. The R-PP states that ‘ownership’ of carbon rights will only fall to the state “if the land was formerly state owned” (p66) but the situation is not as straightforward as the R-PP attempts to make out.

Forest land rights have been legally held by the state since 1978 (Schoneveld 2014, R-PP p52) and the vast majority of forest is officially owned by CRS (Aruofor 2001). Given that UN-REDD / FCPF policy (Laughlin et al. 2013) emphasizes *de jure* rather than *de facto* forest ownership it seems that there is a very real possibility that carbon trading income will be concentrated at the centre, despite promises to the contrary. If this is this case it throws into doubt the basis for FPIC on REDD+, and undermines the legitimacy of REDD+ as well as its predicted positive social and economic outcomes. The R-PP is very slippery when it comes to committing to benefit sharing, the language here is indicative:

“There is a growing stream of thought that suggests that REDD+ benefits should primarily reach communities and the Nigeria government is keen with this principle. *However, REDD+ in Nigeria will very probably mobilize a complex fabric of stakeholders* from state governments to private entrepreneurs and communities. *Benefit sharing arrangements will have to recognize the respective roles and efforts in REDD+ of the different stakeholders.*”

R-PP, p62, emphasis added.

This could well be read as a pre-emptive decision to distribute benefits in line with the perceived effort put into the REDD+ process, i.e. for benefits to flow to the state and certain private sector actors rather than to local communities. The FCPF requirements for final acceptance of the R-PP seem to agree with this interpretation. These include the instruction to “provide further information on the issue of carbon rights, *given the state ownership of land.*” (FCPF 2013, emphasis added) but in our opinion this does not go far enough to challenge the R-PP.

The R-PP does demonstrate an awareness of tenure issues and the fact that poorly defined tenure is both a governance risk and a driver of deforestation (R-PP p52, 46, 47). Plans for FCPF funds include investigating a legal review of forest tenure (p58) but there is no commitment to vesting tenure in local populations. CRS’s record on community forestry management and the development of large scale farming show that it suits the state government to retain tenure rights in the vicinity of the park. Poorly defined land tenure seriously complicates the FPIC by calling into question ‘whose FPIC counts?’, and what rights indigenous populations actually hold. Carbon rights are a new institution, and do not sit within traditional conceptions of property rights. Therefore there is a risk that the right to own forest carbon will be defined as separate to traditional rights to forest use, and that forest communities will find themselves excluded from carbon ownership and its attached income. Similar outcomes have been observed for other natural resources, with local

populations often finding themselves excluded from ownership of mining products beneath their feet (Mahanty & McDermott 2013).

Tenure issues extend beyond carbon ownership: there is a serious risk that REDD+ in Nigeria will result in at least some displacement of forest communities. It is important to note here that both FCPF and UN-REDD policies on operational safeguards call for the *avoidance and minimization* of involuntary resettlement rather than banning it outright. While at this stage there are no plans for resettlement, it seems likely that as REDD+ scales up in Nigeria eviction and displacement will occur. Eviction results from conflicting and overlapping land needs between local populations and the state (cf Jagger et al. 2014), the most obvious example being where reforestation and afforestation require the removal of forest dwellers. Eviction has also been used as a way to control deforestation. The R-PP calls for frameworks to mitigate socio-economic impacts and for compensation for displacement (R-PP Annex 2d) but, in line with FCPF policy, does not place hard limits on displacement.

Displacement and eviction are serious issues for REDD+ and conservation in general. Displacement can have extremely serious economic, social and psychological impacts on affected persons (Neumann 2004, Brockington & Igoe 2006). In practice promised compensation for displacement often fails to emerge or is not administered in a timely fashion (Awono et al. 2014), and suffers from the same problems identified above with regards to distribution. Beymer-Farris and Bassett (2012) report that REDD+ readiness in Tanzania has resulted in large scale evictions, legitimated by the demonization of indigenous populations by the Tanzanian state and the World Wildlife Fund⁶ in direct contravention of its own principles for REDD+ projects which include recognition and

⁶ The WWF has thus far not been involved in REDD+ in Nigeria, but is engaged with numerous REDD+ projects elsewhere and was a key player in the foundation of CRNP.

respect for “the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities” (WWF 2011). Most recently there have been widespread violent evictions in Kenya. In common with Tanzania this has been enabled through the classification of those evicted as illegal squatters (Survival International 2014). The World Bank (which funds the Kenyan Forest Service) has attempted to distance itself from the evictions but has been accused of collusion with evictions since 2007 (Bassey & Lemos 2014).

“Consultation with likely affected persons and communities” (R-PP Annex 2d) *does not constitute participation or consent*. No matter what steps are taken to mitigate its harms, involuntary resettlement is necessarily a violation of the consent principle of FPIC and therefore cannot be participatory, even though it may prove necessary to achieve conservation goals.

There is a tendency for FPIC to go ‘out the window’ when it becomes a barrier to the implementation of conservation projects, and “pervasive power differentials between indigenous peoples and companies and states ... [have] produced many examples of tokenistic FPIC processes” (Mahanty & McDermott 2013, p414). FPIC certainly begins to look ‘tokenistic’ when involuntary resettlement is seriously discussed as a probable outcome of REDD+. Stating that FPIC is important to the REDD+ process is not convincing given that the R-PP quickly violates FPIC when it becomes convenient. Tensions between the likely operational necessity of involuntary resettlement and FPIC are not addressed in the R-PP.

Common factors behind discourses which lead to the physical removal and symbolic erasure of forest dwellers (Brockington & Igoe 2006, Brockington et al. 2008) are present in Nigeria, though not to the extent found in Tanzania. This includes “shallow

science” (Beymer-Farris & Bassett 2012) in explanations of deforestation and the relatively large number of environmental INGOs operating in Nigeria. Most notably there are concerns about violation of park boundaries by Fulani groups (Aruofor 2001, Usman & Adelafu 2010, Oyebo et al 2010). The nomadic, pastoralism based Fulani lifestyle is unlikely to pose any conservation threat to the forest but increasing enforcement against Fulani groups may have negative impacts on their livelihoods. The R-PP itself does not use demonizing language against forest populations, instead favouring an analysis based on poverty and education, and this is to be commended.

c. Participatory Governance and Oversight

Given the poor evidence for co-benefits and the very real threat of eviction it is no surprise that the preliminary Participatory Governance Assessment (PGA) carried out in 2012 found that “stakeholders at [local] level envisaged more losses than gains [from REDD+], claiming that they would lose their access to natural resources, income, shortage of food, employment in the forest, etc.” (UN-REDD 2012, p5). The evidence for co-benefits is poor, and promises of social and economic development in the R-PP appear over optimistic without concrete plans to back them up. Promising substantial gains from REDD+ risks being misleading and threatens effective participation and FPIC.

Aside from finding that the general mood is anti-REDD+, the PGA does not satisfactorily address the barriers to effective participation which it identifies. Cases of concerns ranging from lack of capacity to engage in the planning process to fears of repercussions for voicing grievances are met with suggestions to “identify capacity gaps,” “develop a timeline,” or “strengthen institutions,” with no details provided or commitment to action. On the correctly identified risk of “sometimes participation remains a rhetoric rather than

reality” the suggested work to improve safeguards includes the faintly ridiculous “develop working definitions of terms like participation” (UN-REDD 2012, p18). Not only does this fail to address the problem but it is also indicative of a trend for REDD+ planners to attempt to ‘reinvent the wheel’: “It appears that for some ... REDD would emerge in a virgin world where everything is to be reinvented” (Hufty & Haakenstad 2011, p11) and there is “little notion of lessons learned from past experiences” in REDD+ planning (Bolin & Tassa 2012, p7).

While it is arguably outside the scope of the PGA to make firmer commitments to solving the problems it has identified, it is worrying that the R-PP does not directly address the concerns raised. Actions based on the PGA outlined by the follow-workshop held in January 2013 are almost entirely based around internal process improvements, and do not include any attempts to address the specific concerns raised by local stakeholders (UN-REDD 2013b). As far as the participation process itself is concerned, building capacity for stakeholder engagement will not be a simple task. Evidence from Cameroon suggests that technical and organizational capacity for decision making over REDD+ is low at village level, even where education and village institutions are relatively developed (Cerbu 2013). Within CRS, public knowledge and understanding of REDD+ remains poor. UN-REDD backed projects in Cameroon and Tanzania have encountered difficulties in engaging with local populations, despite attempts at capacity building. Tanzania’s model for REDD+ has in general placed far more emphasis on community based forestry management than Nigeria’s R-PP does, but “the representation [of] disadvantaged groups is limited despite increasing efforts to include them,” pointing towards failures of “the model in which local representatives are involved without explicit recognition of the relative powers of the different actors and effective downward accountability mechanism” (Mustalahti & Rakontonarivo 2014, p207).

Participation has been widely discussed in development literature for upwards of 25 years. The sorts of problems arising from the PGA are nothing new, but the R-PP does not show sufficient awareness of this fact or discuss common solutions beyond vague promises of future action. “The [REDD+] policy process is dominated by technical discussions about measuring carbon or, at best, producing ‘strategy papers’ that avoid critical issues such as those surrounding carbon tenure and defining who has the power to make which rules” (Ojha et al 2013, p226). The above was written with reference to REDD+ in Nepal, a process more advanced than its Nigeria equivalent, and reflects the difficulties of implementing participatory safeguards in PES projects.

Without firmer commitment to further work on developing participation there is a risk that participation could become ‘overtaken by events’. Progress on developing responses to REDD+ risks is slow, and there is significant duplication planned to meet both UN-REDD and FCPF safeguard requirements (despite that fact that the two bodies share guidelines on participation and FPIC and their project safeguards are essentially identical). At the same time work on establishing the carbon stock baseline, MRV systems and carbon markets is being given considerable attention and progressing rapidly. There is a risk that REDD+ in CRS will go ahead without enough attention being paid to its commitment to participation, and that ‘participation’ will become little more than capacity building to enable markets as rapidly as possible. Okereke & Dooley (2010) identify a broad trend toward this sort of neo-liberal, ‘market-first’ thinking in REDD+ planning. They suggest that the UN-REDD / FCPF three-phase (Norwegian backed) model for REDD+ offers some protection for forest dwellers by requiring the completion of capacity building activities before carbon trading can begin, but this does not seem to be its outcome in practice. Nigeria’s R-PP plans for benefit sharing are unconvincing given the broad range of evidence against ‘co-

benefits' from existing market based conservation projects (Bolin & Tassa 2012), and this is reflected by the findings of the PGA – local people remain unconvinced and fear that their voices will not be heard.

The R-PP does not envisage the development of specific risk mitigation strategies *until* the REDD+ implementation phase (R-PP p68). This is part of broader unresolved conflict between the need to develop participatory oversight processes for projects which remain only very loosely defined. Despite promises made to learn from more advanced REDD+ projects (including Tanzania which is mentioned by name), the R-PP plans to go its own way and, again, 'reinvent the wheel'. The 'prior' principle of FPIC is only loosely respected: while the PGA and other similar processes represent an attempt at participation in project planning there is far more focus on participation as oversight for projects already determined to begin.

Forest communities are included into oversight processes through the CRS Technical REDD+ Committee, which takes representation from the CRS Stakeholder's Platform (also referred to as the Stakeholder's Forum) and directly from forest dwellers. Identified stakeholders include (in addition to forest communities) CSOs and local and international NGOs as well as civil servants, scientists etc. The Stakeholder's Platform meets twice a year. The R-PP's promises to listen to local voices are most convincing within this oversight body. The membership of the forum has been designed to include representation for forest communities, and is sensitive to the cultural and linguistic differences found within CRS. The planned activities for the platform are relatively broad, and include the opportunity to comment on planned terms of reference for REDD+ activities, suggesting that it will have a real opportunity for input on results-based decision making within CRS. The Technical REDD+ Committee includes within its members "at least three NGO

Representative [and] four Community Representatives” (R-PP, p15). While it is not clear how these representatives will be chosen, their presence does suggest that there will be significant space for local opinions within REDD+ oversight and that the reports of the Stakeholder’s Platform are likely to be taken seriously.

The Technical REDD+ Subcommittee has a role in the planned development of a grievance mechanism for REDD+. While there are at this point no details on the form such a mechanism might take, it is encouraging that the R-PP is committed to its establishment and that the PGA has included local people’s opinions on how the grievance mechanism should look. While progress remains slow, as long as commitments to establishing proper oversight systems are met, there will at least be some form of ongoing FPIC in CRS, limited as it may be. Comparatively, Nigeria’s plans for oversight and opportunities for redress are far stronger than those found in Tanzania, where forest communities have no representation in REDD+ oversight at all (Bolin & Tassa 2012), and the state is determined to carry out conservation projects regardless of local opposition (Beymer-Farris & Bassett 2012), despite the high level of planned community based management in Tanzania. The major environmental INGO identified as a REDD+ stakeholder for Nigeria is the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The WCS has demonstrated an awareness of the need to promote the interests of indigenous peoples and forest dwellers alongside conservation, and its programme in Nigeria includes projects to develop alternative livelihoods for loggers and guerrilla hunters. The WCS is present within the planned institutional structure for REDD+ in an oversight capacity. This does go some way to assuaging the fears identified above with regards to eviction. Of course statements made in the R-PP do not guarantee results, but there is more room for optimism in participatory governance than there is in promised co-benefits.

5. Conclusions

REDD+'s major success to date has been its enthusiastic take-up by multilateral bodies and developing states alike. It has quickly developed from a vaguely defined idea at COP11 in 2005 to a framework backing the numerous and well funded REDD+ programmes currently underway, especially considering the usually slow pace of international climate change mitigation projects (den Besten et al 2014). REDD+ activities are planned on a grand scale: UN-REDD wants to make \$30 billion available for results-based schemes (UN-REDD 2010). National governments, Nigeria amongst them, are understandably keen to take part. In an attempt to learn from the failures of PES projects REDD+ planners place great emphasis on engaging forest dwellers, both as a means to securing conservation goals and in order to reduce potential harms from conservation. Further, UNDRIP creates a requirement to engage indigenous people in the conservation process, and we have shown above that – in CRS at least – most forest dwellers are in effect given the same rights as indigenous people, at least in planning documents.

The engagement of forest dwellers constitutes participation on two fronts: direct participation in the management of REDD+ activities, and participation in REDD+ planning in the form of Free, Prior and Informed Consent. Nigeria's plans for REDD+ frequently make promises that REDD+ will be participatory in both forms, but these promises should not be taken at face value given that they have been widely violated in REDD+ projects elsewhere and in past conservation programmes.

In casting a critical eye at Nigeria REDD+ plans we find that their promises for participation are generally unconvincing. Dealing first with direct participation in forestry management we have shown that Nigeria's existing community management institutions are weak and

that the R-PP does not demonstrate either sufficient awareness of this fact or provide any suggested solutions. There is a tendency towards the centralization of power in conservation projects, and the proposed management for Nigerian REDD+ constitutes significant centralization of forest ownership, management, law enforcement and monitoring. Forest dwellers are most frequently present in the R-PP as a body to be consulted, with no direct role in project planning or implementation and without the power to significantly shape REDD+.

Nigeria has shown some success in consulting local communities in CRS, but its plans for FPIC have serious flaws. Positive social and economic development outcomes (co-benefits) for forest communities are essential to offset the restrictions which REDD+ will put in place. Consultations with people in CRS show that their major concern about REDD+ is income loss, which co-benefits are intended to replace. The evidence for co-benefits is poor. The R-PP is either overoptimistic or deliberately misleading. This undermines FPIC by failing to share accurate information with forest communities in the participatory process.

The bulk of planned co-benefits will arise from carbon trading incomes, but there is no guarantee that carbon income will flow to local projects, largely because forest communities are not guaranteed the right to stored carbon. This is related to broader land tenure issues, which expose communities to displacement and eviction. The R-PP's plans for dealing with 'involuntary resettlement' are participation at its worst, as a superficial attempt to justify coercive processes. We are not convinced that participation in CRS can even be meaningful while REDD+ continues to over-promise on co-benefits and plans to violate the principle of consent.

These problems are exacerbated by poor progress on developing participatory governance. At present participation is limited, and plans to expand the participatory progress are lacking in detail and commitment. However, given UN-REDD / FCPF commitments to capacity building in the early stages of REDD+ we can realistically expect that this situation will improve over time. Problems discussed above are largely technical, and plans for an institutional structure for local input into REDD+ oversight are well developed, even if the operational policy isn't.

The failure to make a convincing case for participatory REDD+ is representative of a trend amongst REDD+ projects. Williams' study of 32 REDD+ readiness proposals found that "[f]ew REDD+ countries consider specific design options of challenges related to REDD+ benefit sharing, conflict resolution, or revenue management systems" (Williams 2013, p2). The R-PP makes references to participation and consent because UN-REDD and the FCPF require that it shows how Nigeria plans to deal with these issues. The response developed often feels tokenistic. 'Youth' issues are a good example of this: the R-PP frequently mentions that youth must be considered in project planning and in consultation⁷, but doesn't specifically detail the impact status differences will have on the results of REDD+ or suggest ways of accounting for status differences in participation. Gender receives a similar treatment, but thorny problems of legitimacy of local forms of political representation do not. This is because UN-REDD / FCPF policy calls attention to youth and women⁸, but not to political legitimacy in general.

⁷ 'Youth' is a highly problematic category in Nigeria for example see Smith 2004

⁸ While it has not been discussed at length here, it is unlikely that the sort of participation that REDD+ offers will have a significant positive impact on forest women (Batliwala 2007). This is a common problem in community forest management (Agarwal 2001), and it is disappointing that the R-PP fails to address gender issues beyond demonstrating an awareness of their existence.

The solution is tightened requirements for country REDD+ projects, and proper safeguards to make sure participative processes have been properly established before REDD+ implementation begins. The UN-REDD three phase model attempts to do this, but as shown above capacity building still constitutes an attempt to get to market-based conservation as quickly as possible.

The fact that Nigeria's plans for participation are not convincing does not necessarily mean that REDD+ in Cross River State will fail in its conservation goals or harm local people, but it does increase the likelihood of both failure and harms. REDD+ is an ongoing process, and there is a good chance that plans for participation will become stronger over time, especially as FCPF funds become available in the near future. If all of the R-PP's promises for action to develop participation are met, REDD+ in Cross River State has every chance of success.

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Appendix 1: List of Acronyms

COP : Conferences of the Parties of the Convention (UNFCCC)

CRNP : Cross River National Park

CRS : Cross River State (Nigeria)

CRSFC : Cross River State Forestry Commission

CSO : Civil Society Organization

FCPF : Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (World Bank)

FMC : Forest Management Committees

FPIC : Free, Prior, Informed Consent

GIS : Geographic Information Services

(I)NGO : (International) Non-Governmental Organization

MRV : Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

OD : Okwango Division (Cross River National Park)

PES : Payments for Ecosystems Services

PGA : Participatory Governance Assessment

R-PP : REDD+ Readiness Proposal

REDD / REDD+ : Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

UN-REDD : United National Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

UNEP : United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC : United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WCS : Wildlife Conservation Society

WWF : World Wildlife Fund