

# FOREST REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL AND REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

MAY 2018



*Zorg voor het Bos en het Bos zorgt voor ons*

**WE ZIJN HET BOS**

# **FOREST REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL FOR SURINAME'S REDD+ PROGRAMME**

**MAY 2018**





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## FOREWORD

Suriname is located in the globally important Amazon forest and the biodiversity hotspot of the Guiana Shield. The country wishes to maintain its status as one of the world's most forested countries. In this context, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) is seen as a tool for sustainable development. Through the REDD+ readiness phase, Suriname has been successful in building capacity and to estimate emission factors and activity data and has formulated a national strategy for REDD+ implementation. This Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) has been written in-country by a national team, bringing together the most robust national forest related data available, with policy goals for the country's future. The purpose of the FREL is to enable result-based payments for REDD+ implementation that can help steer the current mining paradigm in Suriname into a more diversified economy with social equity and harmony with nature. In that way, Suriname can continue as a High Forest Cover and Low Deforestation country (HFLD) into the future, with its forests offering a global service in terms of climate change mitigation.

The UNFCCC has defined Forest Reference (Emission) Levels (FREL/FRLs) as benchmarks for assessing each country's performance in reducing emissions and increasing removals associated with the implementation of REDD+ activities. The UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Cancun (COP16) encouraged developing country parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector, in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances, and stated that, "more broadly, FREL/FRLs are considered relevant to assess the performance of countries in contributing to mitigation of climate change through actions related to their forests." According to UNFCCC COP decision 12/CP.17, developing countries aiming to implement REDD+ activities are invited to submit a national forest reference level to the secretariat, on a voluntary basis and when deemed appropriate by the country. The information contained in the submission should be transparent, accurate, complete and consistent. It should also be developed pursuant to recent IPCC guidelines as adopted or encouraged by the COP.

The result can be found in this document, which we are pleased to share with the world.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AAC</b>	Annual Allowable Cut
<b>AAE</b>	Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico / Strategic Environmental Advice
<b>ACT</b>	Amazon Conservation Team
<b>ACTO</b>	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization
<b>AD</b>	Activity data
<b>AdeKUS</b>	Anton de Kom University of Suriname
<b>AFOLU</b>	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use
<b>AGB</b>	Above-Ground Biomass
<b>ASGM</b>	Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining
<b>BFAST</b>	Break detection For Additive Seasonal Trends
<b>BGB</b>	Below-Ground Biomass
<b>C</b>	Carbon
<b>CATIE</b>	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CBM</b>	Community-based monitoring
<b>CELOS</b>	Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname
<b>CH4</b>	Methane
<b>CHS</b>	CELOS Harvesting System
<b>CI</b>	Confidence Interval
<b>CI</b>	Conservation International
<b>cm</b>	Centimeter
<b>CMRV</b>	Community Measurement, Reporting and Verification
<b>CO 2</b>	Carbon dioxide
<b>COP</b>	Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC)
<b>CSNR</b>	Central Suriname Nature Reserve
<b>D</b>	Diameter (lianas)
<b>dbh</b>	Diameter in breast height
<b>DDFDB+</b>	Drivers of Deforestation, Forest Degradation and Barriers to REDD+ activities
<b>DOM</b>	Dead Organic Matter
<b>DW</b>	Dead Wood
<b>E</b>	Emission
<b>EF</b>	Emission Factors
<b>EITI</b>	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
<b>ELE</b>	Extracted Log Emissions
<b>eq</b>	Equivalent
<b>et al.</b>	And others (et alia)
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FCMU</b>	Forest Cover Monitoring Unit
<b>FCPF</b>	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
<b>FREL</b>	Forest Reference Emission Level
<b>FRL</b>	Forest Reference Level
<b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
<b>g</b>	Gram
<b>GCCA+</b>	Global Climate Change Alliance
<b>GCF</b>	Green Climate Fund
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GFOI</b>	Global Forest Observation Initiative



<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse gas
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>GMD</b>	Geological Mining Department
<b>GOFC-GOLD</b>	Global Observation of Forest and Land Cover Dynamics
<b>GOS</b>	Government of Suriname
<b>GPG</b>	Good Practice Guidance
<b>ha</b>	Hectare
<b>HFLD</b>	High Forest Low Deforestation
<b>Hg</b>	Mercury
<b>ibid</b>	In the same source as above
<b>ICL</b>	Incidental Cutting License
<b>IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>INDC</b>	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
<b>INPE</b>	National Institute for Space Research in Brazil
<b>IPCC</b>	Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change
<b>km</b>	Kilometre
<b>LBB</b>	Lands Bos Beheer / State Forest Service
<b>LDF</b>	Logging Damage Factor
<b>LDW</b>	Lying Dead Wood
<b>LIF</b>	Logging Infrastructure Factor
<b>LULC</b>	Land Use Land Cover
<b>LULUCF</b>	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
<b>m</b>	Metre
<b>MI-GLIS</b>	Management Institute for Land Registration and Land Information System
<b>MMU</b>	Minimum Mapping Unit
<b>MRV</b>	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
<b>MTP</b>	Minor Timber Products
<b>MW</b>	MegaWatt
<b>N</b>	North (latitude)
<b>N2O</b>	Nitrous oxide
<b>NFI</b>	National Forest Inventory
<b>NFMS</b>	National Forest Monitoring System
<b>NH (Min)</b>	Ministry of Natural Resources
<b>NIMOS</b>	National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname
<b>NRTM</b>	Near Real Time Monitoring
<b>NSC</b>	Norwegian Space Centre
<b>NTFP</b>	Non-Timber Forest Products
<b>NZCS</b>	National Zoological Collection Suriname
<b>ONF</b>	French Governmental Forestry Service
<b>ONFI</b>	ONF International
<b>PMU</b>	Project Management Unit
<b>QA/QC</b>	Quality Assurance / Quality Control
<b>QGIS</b>	A free and open source GIS software
<b>R2</b>	R square (statistics)
<b>RAC</b>	REDD+ Assistants Collective
<b>REDD+</b>	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks

<b>RIL</b>	Reduced Impact Logging
<b>RIL-C</b>	Reduced Impact Logging Certification
<b>RO (Min)</b>	Ministry of Regional Development
<b>R-PP</b>	Readiness Preparation Proposal
<b>SA</b>	Skidtrail Area
<b>SBB</b>	Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control
<b>SDW</b>	Standing Dead Wood
<b>SEPAL</b>	System for Earth observations, data access, Processing & Analysis for Land monitoring
<b>SF</b>	Skidtrail Factor
<b>SFM</b>	Sustainable Forest Management
<b>SIS</b>	Safeguards Information System
<b>SLMS</b>	Satellite Land Monitoring System
<b>SOC</b>	Soil Organic Carbon
<b>SPS</b>	Stichting Planbureau Suriname / National Planning Office
<b>SRD</b>	Surinamese Dollar
<b>SU</b>	Sampling Unit
<b>t</b>	Tonnes
<b>TBI</b>	Tropenbos International
<b>TEF</b>	Total Emission Factor for forest degradation
<b>TNC</b>	The Nature Conservancy
<b>TNRS</b>	Taxonomic Name Resolution Service
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UN-REDD</b>	United Nations REDD Programme
<b>US\$</b>	United States Dollar
<b>WHRC</b>	Woods Hole Research Center
<b>yr</b>	Year



## Executive summary

This document presents the first national Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) for Suriname to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Suriname's FREL will serve as the baseline for measuring emissions reduction from the implementation of activities targeted at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, while recognizing the important role of conservation, sustainable forest management (SFM) and carbon stock enhancement (REDD+) under a results-based payment framework.

The Suriname National REDD+ Strategy (being finalized) outlines the vision of REDD+ in Suriname and the policies and measures to be implemented. Suriname aims to implement REDD+ as a tool for sustainable development, remaining a High Forest Cover and Low Deforestation (HFLD) country, while still actively pursuing national development goals. Suriname is currently finalizing the REDD+ readiness phase with a grant from the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) delivered through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In accordance with UNFCCC guidelines, Suriname's REDD+ program including the FREL is being developed in a manner that is:

- **Transparent:** with comprehensive and clear documentation of methods and data<sup>1</sup>;
- **Accurate:** with estimates of emissions that are accurate and include estimates of uncertainty represented at the 95% confidence interval (Frey et al., 2006), using the simple propagation of errors method given in chapter 5 of the IPCC GPG (2003) reporting instructions;
- **Complete:** providing all information, methodologies and results so that the FREL can be reconstructed (in agreement with decision 13/CP. 19);
- **Consistent:** with 'historical time period' emissions estimated in a manner that is consistent and shall remain functionally consistent during the REDD+ program. Methodologies and data are also consistent with the guidance agreed upon in the UNFCCC COPs.

The current FREL submission is based on best available data, mostly generated by the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), with a transparent analysis of uncertainty and remaining gaps. This corresponds to Decision 12/CP.17 Paragraph 1. Suriname will update its FREL periodically, based on new knowledge, new trends and any modification of scope and methodologies.

<sup>1</sup> See folder with FREL Suriname background information openly available online:  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11AyfuYZUeStfxAiLiusguHO55qGEjsMy?usp=sharing>; Geportal:  
<http://www.gonini.org/portal/>

The following decisions have been made for the FREL:

- The FREL is developed on a national scale;
- Inclusion of the different direct drivers of deforestation: Mining (73%) (of which Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) covering ca. 59% of the total deforestation), Infrastructure (15%), Urbanization (4%), Agriculture (3%), Pasture (1%), Burned area (3%) and other deforestation (1%) (see annex 5);
- Inclusion of forest degradation caused by logging (ca. 25% of the total emissions);
- The definition of forest used is: "Land covered primarily by trees, but also often containing shrubs, palms, bamboo, herbs, grass and climbers, with a minimum tree crown cover of 30% (or equivalent stocking level), with the potential to reach a minimum canopy height at maturity in situ of 5 meters, and a minimum area of 1.0 ha.";
- The IPCC pools included in this FREL are: Above-Ground Biomass (AGB), Below-Ground Biomass (BGB) and Dead Organic Matter (DOM). The pools that are not included, namely Litter and Soil Organic Carbon (SOC), will be included in a future FREL submission as soon as relevant data gets available;
- Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is the only GHG that has been included in this FREL, except for deforestation due to forest fires where the emissions of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) are also taken into account;
- 'Historical period' calculations are based on the fifteen-year timespan from 2000-2015, and the FREL is established for a period of five years (2016-2020). After these five years, the FREL will be evaluated and adjusted as necessary.

Suriname's historical emissions show that the country has a low percentage of both deforestation (deforestation rate of 0.02-0.05%) and forest degradation, resulting in an effective forest cover of 93% of the land area (SBB, 2017c) and historical emissions of 99,251,689 t CO<sub>2</sub> (with annual average of 6,616,779 t CO<sub>2</sub> for the period 2000-2015) with an uncertainty of ± 5,919,754 t CO<sub>2</sub> or ± 5.96%.

Nevertheless, pressure on Suriname's forests has steadily increased in recent years, primarily due to strong incentives for the growth of economic activities from mining, especially artisanal small-scale gold mining (ASGM). The steady expansion of Suriname's mining sector has brought economic growth, but at a significant environmental and public health cost. Forest degradation related to timber production has also increased mainly because of the increase of foreign investments, but on the other hand a large area (25%) of the logging concessions is under a voluntary certification scheme, where companies commit to work in a sustainable way.

The forestry sector could provide many opportunities for a successful implementation of the REDD+ climate change mitigation approach by promoting sustainable forest management practices. Production in Suriname's agricultural sector has remained low in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2-3% of the deforestation in the period 2000-2015), but a rapid expansion is expected in the near future due to various projects (e.g., oil palm plantations) planned to boost Suriname's development. This planned growth in primary production is an inherent component of the National Development Plan of 2017-2021.

Due to this expected increased growth, Suriname is presenting a FREL with a linear growth projection in calculating its historical emissions. This corresponds with the results found through the scenario modeling process for future deforestation prediction executed in the framework of the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy, based on the National Development Plan of 2017-2021 and in-depth dialogue with partner institutions and stakeholders (Annex 6). Also the timber production is expected to continue increasing until it reaches the maximum annual sustainable production of 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> (SBB, 2017d).

Suriname's FREL corresponds to the following annual CO<sub>2</sub>-Emissions (t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq per year):

- 2016: 14,627,465 t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq
- 2017: 15,591,284 t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq
- 2018: 16,555,103 t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq
- 2019: 17,518,922 t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq
- 2020: 18,482,741 t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq

To implement the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy, technical and financial support from the global community will be necessary. Such support will make it possible for the country to diverge, through a stepwise economic diversification, away from an extractive economy based upon mining. Through the implementation of the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy, the country will maintain its status as a HFLD country. This strategy includes improved forest governance (including sustainable forest management), robust land use planning, forest conservation, and rehabilitation of forest land on mined out areas.

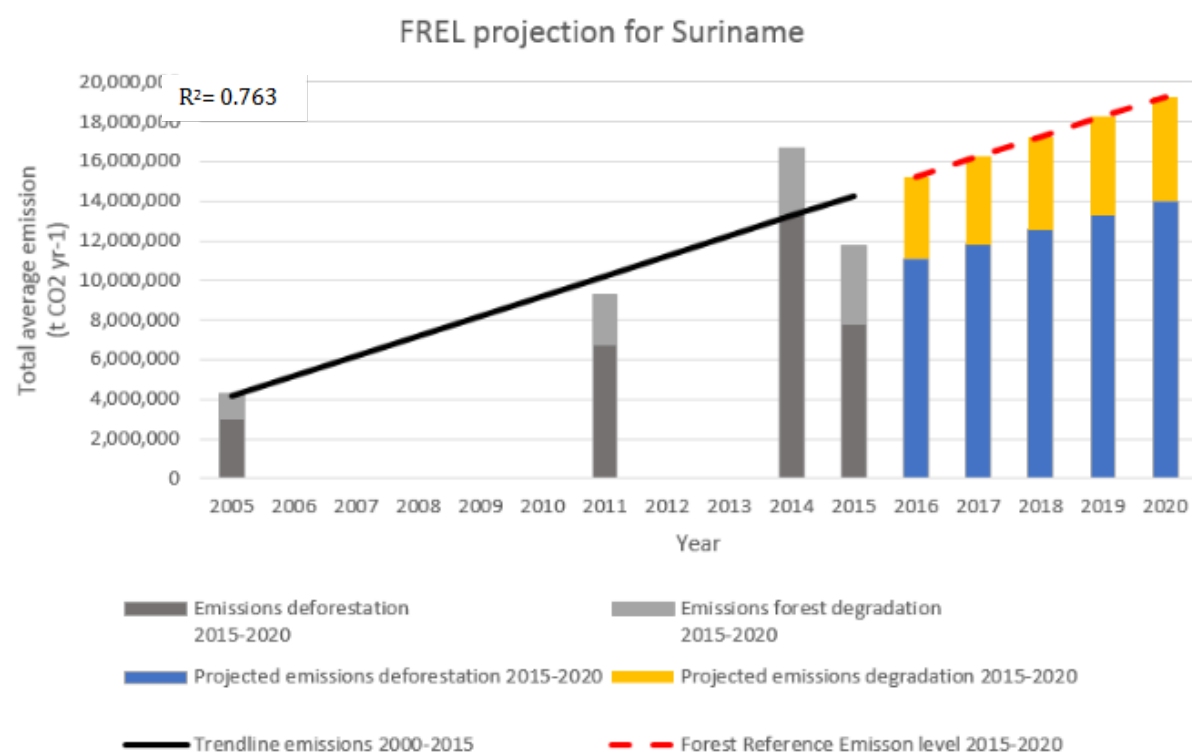


Figure. FREL projection for Suriname – The annual emissions at year 2005 and 2011 respectively represent the time periods 2000-2009 and 2009-2011

## 1. Introduction

Suriname welcomes the opportunity to submit a Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) for technical assessment in the context of REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The submission of this first FREL for Suriname is part of the overall REDD+ readiness process of Suriname and this FREL is consistent with the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy (finalized soon). Suriname intends to use REDD+ as an instrument to maintain its status as a High Forest cover and Low Deforestation (HFLD) country - thus contributing significantly to global climate change mitigation, being adequately compensated for this global service, and optimizing the sustainable use of its forest resources for national development.

The vision for REDD+ in Suriname, agreed through a multi-stakeholder process and included in the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy, is:

Suriname's tropical forest continues and improves its contribution to the national and community growth, welfare and wellbeing of current and future generations through planning, research, effective protected areas management and sustainable forest management, resulting in an efficient use of the forest and natural resources, ecosystem services and the preservation of biodiversity, while continuing to offer a substantial contribution to the global environment, enabling the conditions for an adequate compensation for this global service.

Suriname aims to implement REDD+ as a tool for sustainable development and to be eligible for results-based payments in accordance with decision 9/CP.19<sup>1</sup>. Together with other countries, Suriname was active in the UNFCCC negotiations to promote inclusion of the "+" activities in the REDD+ climate change mitigation approach. Suriname's REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) was approved by the Participants Committee of the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013. Consequently, Suriname was granted US\$3.8 million to support REDD+ readiness activities in the country. With the UNDP as Delivery Partner, this grant is used for the project 'Strengthening national capacities of Suriname for the elaboration of the national REDD+ strategy and the design of its implementation framework', carried out in the period 2014-2018. In January 2018 an additional US\$ 2.65 million was confirmed from the FCPF for additional REDD+ readiness activities in Suriname until June 2020. The National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS) is the Implementing Partner in charge of REDD+ readiness coordination in Suriname. A national REDD+ strategy is being finalized and a Safeguards Information System (SIS) is under development. The Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control (SBB) serves as the REDD+ Technical Partner responsible for preparation of the FREL and the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS).

<sup>1</sup> <http://redd.unfccc.int/fact-sheets/forest-reference-emission-levels.html>

In accordance with UNFCCC decision 4/CP.15, this document shows transparently how the FREL for Suriname has been established, taking into account historical data with adjustment for national circumstances. Suriname underlines that pursuant to UNFCCC decisions 13/CP.19 (paragraph 2) and 14/CP.19 (paragraphs 7 and 8), the submission of forest reference emission levels (FRELs) and/or forest reference levels (FRLs), as well as subsequent Technical Annexes with results, are voluntary and exclusively meant for the purpose of obtaining and receiving payments for REDD+ actions. This submission therefore does not modify, revise or adjust in any way other actions currently being undertaken by Suriname.

Formal submission of the FREL is done through the Office of the President's Coordination Environment of the Republic of Suriname as the National Focal Point to the UNFCCC, via NIMOS and SBB. Before its submission, the FREL went through an extensive consultation process with national stakeholders. This process included the raising of awareness about the FREL and building capacity of stakeholders to better understand its concept. Technical stakeholders provided substantive feedback that helped improve the FREL before submission. Special thanks are given to international experts who supported Suriname in technical preparations and review of the FREL. A list of national and international reviewers and contributors can be found in annex 1.

Suriname recognizes that the UNFCCC allows for a stepwise approach for development of the FREL. The current submission is based on best available data, with a transparent analysis of uncertainty and remaining gaps. The country strives to constantly improve the availability and quality of data and intends to submit an improved FREL/FRL as needed, taking into account the feedback that will be provided through the technical assessment on this first submission.



## 2. Context of Suriname

The forests of Suriname are part of the Amazon and the Guiana Shield region, included in one of the largest blocks of primary tropical rainforest worldwide and marked by high biodiversity levels. These forests provide ecosystem services important on global and local levels, including climate change mitigation, biodiversity preservation, cultural values, livelihoods and food security for communities, while they also contribute to national incomes of countries in the region (Loftus et al., 2013; Dijn, de (ed.), 2018). The country is rather small with an official reported land surface of 163,800 km<sup>2</sup> (FAO 2014). Suriname is located on the north-eastern coast of South America, between 2° and 6° North latitude and 54° and 58° West longitude. It borders French Guiana to the east with the Marowijne river and the Lawa river, Brazil to the south, Guyana to the west with the Corantijn river, and the Atlantic Ocean to the north with a very dynamic coastline resulting in land accretion and decretion (See figure 1). Suriname's 15.2 million hectares of forest (SBB, 2017c) represent around 0.9% of the total tropical forest (1.71 billion hectare) in the world (FAO, 2015).

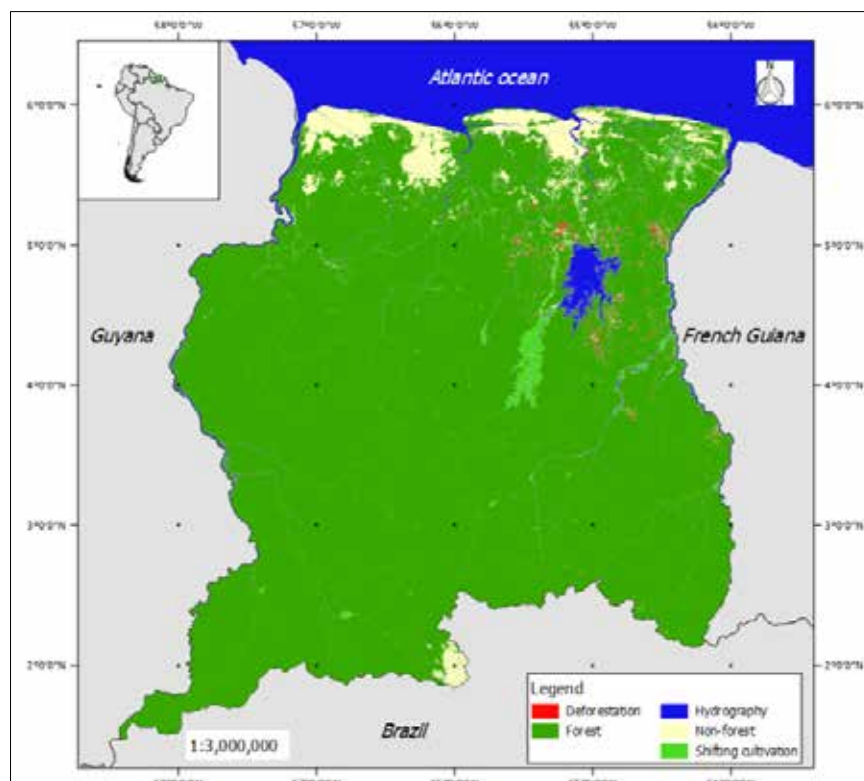


Figure 1. Situation map of Suriname

In terms of conservation, 13.5% of the country's surface is within protected areas (GOS, 2009). Suriname is currently drafting a new Nature Conservation Law in a participatory process, to enable improved management of its protected areas. This law will replace the Nature Conservation Act of 1954.

In line with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi targets<sup>2</sup>, it is expected that the area with a protective status will expand to at least 17% of the terrestrial land by 2020. This will lead to the expansion of the national network of legally protected areas to accomplish 100% representation of all ecosystems and biological species, according to the National Biodiversity Action Plan (Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment, 2013), the National Forest Policy (2005) and the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy.

The annual deforestation rate in Suriname has historically been very low (0.02% for the period 2000-2009). However, due to an increased demand for natural resources, especially gold, the rate increased from 0.02% to 0.05% in average in the period 2009-2015, and is expected to continue increasing (SBB, 2017c).

The current main driver of deforestation is mining (mainly for gold), especially Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) (ca. 80% of all mining activities) (SBB, 2017c). In addition, for the future, several proposed infrastructure projects could cause some unavoidable planned deforestation in the interest of the country's development. The Nassau mining project and the Grankriki hydropower lake are examples of projects with infrastructure activities. The intention to conditionally remain a HFLD country was also mentioned in the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)<sup>3</sup> and is in line with the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy. For this to be possible without hampering national development, adequate compensation for the global climate mitigation service is necessary.

Commercial timber logging in Suriname is considered a contributor to forest degradation but not to deforestation, since only selective logging takes place due to among others the limited number of commercial tree species, the minimum allowed diameter at breast height to be cut and the promotion of sustainable forest management (SFM) by the government. The vegetation of Suriname can be classified into three main types: Hydrophytic, Xerophytic and Mesophytic. The Mesophytic vegetation, mainly consisting of high tropical lowland forest with a diverse species mix, is considered the most valuable from a commercial perspective (LBB, 1990 in Mitchell, 1996). Commercial logging is taking place only north of the 4° N latitude within the forest belt, covering an area of 4.5 million hectares, of which ca. 2.5 million ha are currently issued under logging licenses ([www.sbbsur.com](http://www.sbbsur.com), August 2017). Logging impacts could be reduced by following Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) guidelines, including the enforcement of the Code of Practice for sustainable logging (including Reduced Impact Logging). This yet needs to be finalized and further enforced (National Forest Policy, 2005; draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy). Applying these guidelines enables maintenance of other forest functions such as protection of water and soil, maintenance of biodiversity, carbon sequestration and erosion control (Werger et al., 2011).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/default.shtml#GoalC>, accessed on 27-11-2017

<sup>3</sup> Accessible at: <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Suriname/1/INDC-2-Suriname%20300915.pdf>



### 3. Scope and scale of the FREL

In line with decisions 4/CP.15, 12/CP.17 and 13/CP.19, countries preparing their FREL/FRL need to consider and make choices on, among others, the scale or geographic area covered, historical time period and scope of REDD+ activities included. This section presents and motivates decisions made on the scope and scale for this first FREL submission for Suriname.

#### 3.1 Scale (geographic area)

Suriname is submitting a national FREL, because the government structure of the country is centralized and most data is available on the national level.

#### 3.2 Historical time period

The historical reference period used for the first FREL in Suriname is 2000-2015. For this period, robust and locally produced information is available in terms of Activity Data (AD) linked to deforestation as well as to timber production related forest degradation. This period was separated in four time intervals based on the availability of deforestation data: 2000-2009, 2009-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. These time intervals are of a different duration because the national deforestation maps were made as a contribution to regional Amazon deforestation maps<sup>4</sup>. Activity data (AD) for forest degradation due to logging (timber production) are available on an annual basis, but this data has been aggregated in the time intervals mentioned above.

#### 3.3 Scope of activities

##### Deforestation

In the context of this FREL submission, deforestation is defined as “the direct and/or induced conversion of forest cover to another type of land cover in a given timeframe”.

##### Explanatory notes

This excludes areas that undergo a temporarily loss of the forest cover, such as:

- Shifting cultivation (included in the definition of forest): The patches that are deforested are mostly smaller than the minimum area of forest and the Minimum Mapping Unit of our deforestation maps. There is a remaining tree cover and the area will recover after it is left to regenerate. The conversion from natural forest to shifting cultivation is seen as forest degradation.
- Natural deforestation where the forest cover will recover naturally such as small areas where wind break or unplanned fires took place.

<sup>4</sup> Within the project of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO): “Monitoring the forest cover of the Amazon region”

There are several drivers of deforestation in Suriname, as presented in the Background Study for REDD+ in Suriname: Multi-perspective analysis of Drivers of Deforestation, Forest Degradation and Barriers to REDD+ activities (DDFDB+ study, SBB et al., 2017b), the main ones being:

1. Mining;
2. Infrastructure;
3. Urbanization;
4. Agriculture.

All these drivers are included and reported upon in the total deforestation assessed in the Technical report: Forest cover monitoring in Suriname using remote sensing techniques for the period 2000-2015 (SBB, 2017c). This FREL is based upon these reports.

##### Forest degradation

Forest degradation is for this FREL submission defined as “human-induced or natural loss of the goods and services, provided by the forest land, in particular the forest carbon stocks, not qualifying as deforestation, over a determined period of time”.

As presented in the DDFDB+ study (SBB et al., 2017b), the drivers of forest degradation in Suriname are:

1. Mining (mining itself is deforestation, but degradation takes place in its vicinity);
2. Logging activities;
3. Shifting cultivation;
4. Fire.

A natural cause of forest degradation is windbreaks, but because of their natural character, they are not included here.

Taking into account the available data, as well as the estimated contribution of different sources of degradation to the overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, Suriname will only include logging as a source of forest degradation in its first FREL. Methodologies are currently being developed to quantitatively assess the emissions due to the other drivers of forest degradation, to be included in a future submission.

Conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks  
The three “+” activities of REDD+ – conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks – are generally highly relevant for HFLD countries and are all included in the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy. The removals resulting from carbon stock enhancement has not been included in this first FREL, because there are limited historical activities that can be used to determine these removals. It is part of the description of national circumstances and the aim is to include these in the next FREL/FRL submission.

## 4. Information used to construct the FREL

All information used to quantify deforestation and emission factors due to deforestation and forest degradation are originating from the multipurpose National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) (SBB, 2017).

The NFMS includes a Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) function and other monitoring functions. Suriname's NFMS is composed of an operational Satellite Land Monitoring System (SLMS)<sup>5</sup>, a National Forest Inventory (NFI), a Sustainable Forest Management monitoring component (SFM), a Near Real Time Monitoring system (NRTM) and several cross-cutting activities (e.g. mangrove monitoring), with broad participation of other institutions and stakeholders. Guiding principles for the NFMS in Suriname include national ownership, open data accessibility and transparency, cost efficiency, and adaptation to context (e.g. different contexts require a different monitoring approach specific for each aspect of the FREL, such as methods used for determining emissions from forest degradation and deforestation) (SBB, 2017).

According to Decision 12/CP.17, developing country parties implementing REDD+ can use a stepwise approach to construct reference levels, incorporating better data, improved methodologies and, where appropriate, additional pools. Forest Reference (Emission) Levels should be updated periodically, taking into account new knowledge, new trends and any modification of scope and methodologies. The NFMS will continue to serve this purpose in Suriname<sup>6</sup>.

### 4.1 Definitions and information used to construct the FREL

#### Forest definition for Suriname

While Suriname has a forest definition in its Forest Management Act (1992), this definition is meant for administrative purposes. Therefore Suriname has chosen to monitor forest based on nationally appropriate criteria chosen in line with the Marrakesh Accords (UNFCCC, 2001)<sup>7</sup>:

Land covered primarily by trees, but also often containing shrubs, palms, bamboo, herbs, grass and climbers, with a minimum tree crown cover of 30% (or equivalent stocking level), with the potential to reach a minimum canopy height at maturity in situ of 5 meters, and a minimum area of 1.0 ha.

<sup>5</sup> Capacity for satellite land monitoring has been built up in Suriname through the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) project 'Monitoring the Forest Cover in the Amazon Region', through which a Forest Cover Monitoring Unit (FCMU) was established in 2012 and officially launched in 2013.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see the NFMS Roadmap - Status and Plans for Suriname's National Forest Monitoring System (SBB, 2017). Available data can be found on the Geoportal <http://www.gonini.org> and in published reports.

<sup>7</sup> Under the Marrakesh Accord (UNFCCC, 2001), forest is defined as having a minimum area of land of 0.05-1 ha with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10-30% with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2-5 m at maturity in situ.

It should be noted that shifting cultivation (slash and burn agriculture) is included as forest, as long as it is done in a traditional way so that the forest gets the chance to grow back after harvest.

The administrative forest definition in the Forest Management Act (1992) will need to be adjusted and improved based on the above mentioned criteria. For reporting done within the FAO Forest Resource Assessment 2015, the above-mentioned criteria to define forest is applied. This will also be implemented for the next Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

The choice of parameters for the national forest definition are based on the following considerations:

#### a) Minimum canopy height (Vegetation height)

Based on the characteristics of Suriname's forest, which is mainly undisturbed, most trees are higher than 5m. Based on the Detailed Global Tree Height Estimates across the tropics (WHRC, 2015) only 2.2% of the vegetation in Suriname is less than 5m high (See figure 2). This corresponds with general field observations.

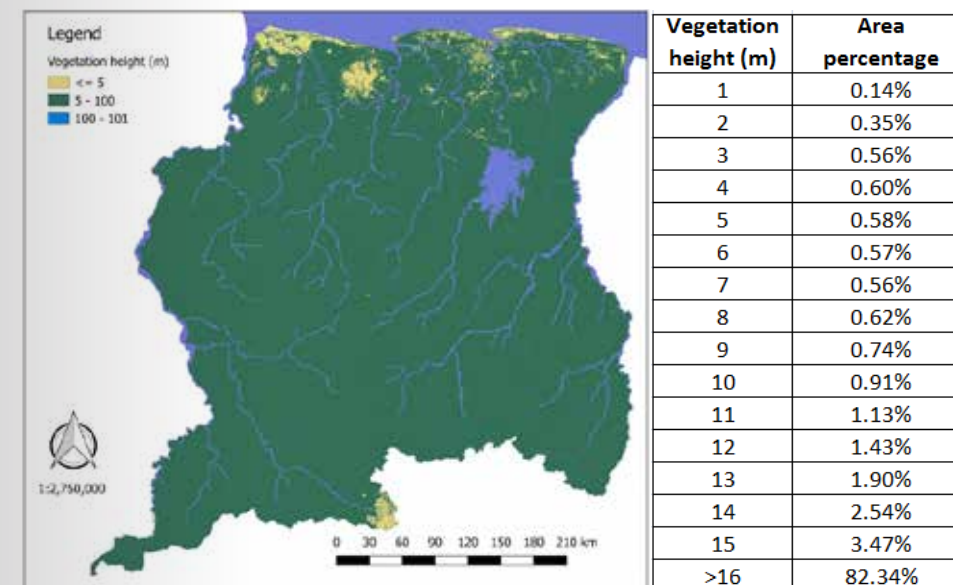


Figure 2. Indicative vegetation height for Suriname (WHRC, 2015)

#### b) Minimum tree crown cover

An assessment of Suriname's tree crown cover (table 1) shows that using a minimum tree crown cover of 10% compared to 30% does not influence the total forest cover area significantly (only 0.2% of the land area has a tree crown cover of between 10% and 30%). The main driver of forest degradation is selective logging, which takes place in ca. 30% of the country's area. Since only a few trees (1-5) per ha are removed during selective logging, it is unlikely that this activity will cause a tree crown cover of less than 30%.



Table 1. Percentage of land in Suriname in different tree crown cover classes - Data from Hansen et al. (2013)

% Tree cover	0-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-100
% land	4.1	0.11	0.09	0.1	0.13	0.23	0.07	0.2	1.68	93.31

### c) Minimum area

Because of the abundance of forest in Suriname, most forest patches are larger than 1 ha. This assumption was confirmed by the results of a quick analysis on the global forest cover change data (Hansen et al., 2013). Therefore the minimum area will be the same as the Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) of 1 ha.

Shifting cultivation is included in the national definition of forest, but conversion of primary forest to shifting cultivation is seen as forest degradation (forest land remaining forest land). Shifting cultivation is a type of small-scale farming that involves clearing the land, burning the plant material, planting and harvesting the crops, and then abandoning the land to go fallow. In the Surinamese situation, shifting cultivation plots are traditionally cultivated for 1 to 3 years and fallow periods vary from 3 to 15 years, letting the forest regenerate on the abandoned land (Helstone and Playfair, 2014). According to Ribeiro Filho et al. (2013), in most cases shifting cultivation can be seen as a sustainable activity without long-term negative impact on the soil and where fallow periods, which are long enough, mimic forest ecosystems. The forest dependent indigenous and tribal communities clearly indicate that shifting cultivation is a traditional and sustainable use of the forest (Gomes-Poma and Kaus, 1992; AAE and Tropenbos International Suriname 2017). Analysis conducted by SBB, using multi-year forest loss data (Hansen et al., 2013) has shown that most shifting cultivation patches (>90%) are smaller than the minimum mapping unit of 1 hectare. It should be noted that in Suriname's 2nd National Communication to the UNFCCC on GHG inventory, the conversion of primary forest land to shifting cultivation was classified as the conversion from forest land to cropland. This will be updated and streamlined when submitting the 3rd National Communication.

## 4.2 Compliance with IPCC Guidance

Decision 12/CP.17 annex states that information used to develop a reference level should be guided by the most recent IPCC guidance and guidelines. Therefore, the IPCC 2003 Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry (GPG-LULUCF) and the IPCC 2006 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land use (AFOLU) were used for technical guidance during the formulation of this FREL.

### 4.2.1 Good Practice

To ensure the quality of GHG inventories, the IPCC guidelines 2006 provide a set of good practices that Suriname applied as follows:

- Transparency: FREL Suriname background information is openly available online<sup>8</sup>. All spatially explicit information on forest cover change is available through the open-access geoportal [www.gonini.org](http://www.gonini.org). There is a multi-stakeholder collaboration (annex 2) in the development of national Land Use Land Cover (LULC) Maps and an exchange of data between these stakeholders, which promotes transparency regarding spatial data in Suriname. Reports and documents on spatial and non-spatial information such as Emission Factors (EF), Timber production and Forest Inventory data are published and disseminated through the website of the National REDD+ Program ([www.surinameredd.org](http://www.surinameredd.org)) and the website of the SBB ([www.sbbsur.com](http://www.sbbsur.com)).
- Accuracy: Area estimations based on remote sensing are generated following the good practices recommended by Olofsson et al. (2014) and GFOI (2016) and the tools developed by FAO (2016). When new data on emission factors and carbon stocks were collected, field protocols were developed and implemented in the field. To reassure the quality of the field measurements, field plots were reassessed. In case of large deviations, the plots were re-measured by the field teams. The accuracy of the timber production is determined based on expert estimations.
- Completeness: All methodologies used, intermediate results and decisions made are presented and documented so that is possible to reconstruct the FREL (in agreement with decision 13/CP.19).
- Consistency: The FREL and the Suriname GHG national inventories are not consistent yet, but they will be in the future. Suriname's 1st National Communication was formally submitted to the UNFCCC on 27 March 2006 and the 2nd National Communication (based on 2008 data for the GHG inventory) was submitted on 15 March 2016<sup>9</sup>. This FREL does not fully coincide with the National Communications GHG inventory. Because the forest related emissions within the GHG inventory were determined before the NFMS was established, these emissions were estimated based on expert knowledge and research. Since the NFMS became operational, regular numbers are available on the forest cover change using well described national methodologies, and additional data was collected and processed on emissions due to selective logging and carbon stocks. The subsequent GHG inventories will use the data provided by the NFMS. Another example is that the national forest definition has been updated in the FREL. The new forest definition will be used in a consistent manner for the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Communication and other forthcoming documents. The national staff responsible for the NFMS and FREL has developed strong capacity by designing methodologies and procedures and building the different data collection components in-house, with support from international partner organizations. This assures consistent application of the methodologies in the future.

<sup>8</sup> <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11AyfuYZUeStfxAiLiusguH055qGEjsMy?usp=sharing>

<sup>9</sup> <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/surnc2.pdf>

#### 4.2.2 Tiers and approaches

A system of tiers and approaches has been developed by the IPCC to represent different levels of methodological complexity. Tier 1 is the basic method, Tier 2 is intermediate and Tier 3 is the most demanding in terms of complexity and data requirements (Chapter 4, IPCC guidelines 2006). Activity Data are assessed using three different approaches: Approach 1: total land-use area, no data on conversions between land uses; Approach 2: Total land-use area, including changes between categories; Approach 3: Spatially-explicit land-use conversion data (Chapter 3, IPCC guidelines 2006). Suriname is currently operating mostly at Tier 2 and Approach 3 level by:

- Annual wall-to-wall monitoring of the Activity Data (AD) using Landsat imagery, following a standard protocol and applying the methodology recommended by Olofsson et al. (2014) for land-use and land-use change area estimations. This is according to Approach 3.
- Activity data are disaggregated by drivers of deforestation for three periods. This has been done using ancillary data and field experience from multiple institutions. Throughout this process, guidelines for the visual interpretation of the different land use and land cover classes (LULC) were developed and adjusted (SBB, 2017c). This is according to Approach 3 (the resulting land use change matrices are presented in annex 5).
- While no National Forest Inventory (NFI) has been carried out covering the the whole country, the forest carbon stocks have been assessed by assembling a national database bringing together data from 208 forest inventory plots scattered over the country. Within this database, above-ground biomass and dead wood were assessed according to Tier 2, based on national data, but using pantropical allometric estimates. Belowground biomass was assessed using Tier 1.
- To calculate the emissions due to logging, a field procedure was developed and carried out in ten locations using a randomly stratified approach; where 200 felled trees were measured, 150 skidtrail plots were established, 100 log yards and 200 road widths were measured, haul roads within nine concessions were partly mapped and skidtrails were mapped and measured in about 550 ha of logging units. These emission factors are considered Tier 2.

Suriname will take steps for gradual improvement towards a combination of Tier 2 and Tier 3 (see chapter 6).

#### 4.3 Pools / Gases

For deforestation, the following carbon pools are included in this FREL for Suriname:

- Above-Ground Biomass of trees, palms and lianas (AGB);
- Below-Ground Biomass of trees (BGB);
- Dead Wood (DW).

#### Litter

Based on Crabbe et al. (2012), litter contributes ca. 2-6% to the total carbon stock. This includes 1-5% lying dead wood (with diameter larger than 5 cm), which is included within the FREL

(Table 4). This means that the remaining litter component contributes less than 5% to the total emissions. Because of no reliable complete national dataset, as well as the presented estimations showing that the contribution of litter smaller than 5 cm is not significant, litter is not included in this FREL. National data will be collected during the coming years, when the national forest inventory will be carried out.

#### Soil Organic Carbon

Based on Crabbe et al. (2012) Soil Organic Carbon (depth 0-30 cm) contributes ca. 14% to the total carbon stock. Nevertheless this dataset was collected only for a very limited sample, for a limited part of the country. Because no further national data was available, Soil Organic Carbon was not included in this FREL.

For forest degradation the following pools are included in the FREL:

- Above-Ground Biomass of trees and palms (AGB);
- Below-Ground Biomass of trees (BGB);
- Dead Wood (DW).

Measuring the damage to lianas after timber harvesting is an almost impossible task (they are mostly already decomposed or grow further in another tree). Because of the limited number of trees extracted per hectare (3-4 stems per ha), the associated emissions related to lianas are even more limited (less than 1%) and are therefore not included in this FREL. Within a future submission, methods to increase consistency will be evaluated.

For forest remaining forest land, the Tier 1 approach assumes that Soil Organic Carbon and litter are in equilibrium. Changes in carbon stock are assumed to be zero.

#### Gases

The only GHG that is included in this FREL is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). As exception, the estimations of the emissions of non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases (nitrous oxide, N<sub>2</sub>O, and methane, CH<sub>4</sub>) from burned forest land are included. These estimations are based on the IPCC 2006 AFOLU method and factors, whereafter they are and converted to CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalents.

CH<sub>4</sub> is also released when swamp area or mangrove forest are deforested. Nevertheless the swamp area being deforested contributes approximately less than 1% to the total deforestation.

#### 4.4 Deforestation

##### 4.4.1 Activity data

Activity data (AD) for deforestation are estimated from the forest basemap of year 2000 and the historical assessments of deforestation for the periods 2000-2009, 2009-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> With deforestation 2000-2009, it is meant that the deforestation after 2000 (thus 2001) and until 2009 (thus including 2009) is measured. And for the following period 2009-2013 the deforestation is measured after 2009 (thus 2010) until 2013 (thus including 2013).



These maps were developed by the Forest Cover Monitoring Unit (FCMU), located in SBB, through support of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) project “Monitoring the Forest Cover of the Amazon region”, in collaboration with international experts (INPE, UN-REDD, ONFI and CI) and national stakeholders. The periods were adapted based on the input to be provided for the regional Amazon maps.

For the wall-to-wall mapping and monitoring of the basemap 2000 and all deforestation maps, Landsat satellite images with a resolution of 30m were used (Landsat 5, 7, 8). The method used to produce the maps is a semi-automatic classification in QGIS using Orfeo Toolbox (Inglada and Christophe, 2009), followed by a post-processing step in TerraAmazon (GIS software developed by INPE), where the classes were visually checked and adjusted where necessary (SBB, 2017c).

Using Landsat satellite images for the monitoring of the forest cover is a challenge, due to the fluctuation in cloud coverage on these images leading to possible underestimation of the deforestation. In order to minimize this underestimation, a method was established to fill the cloudy areas with more available data.

All methodological details regarding map construction and analysis of satellite imagery are described in the technical report “Forest cover monitoring in Suriname using remote sensing techniques for the period 2000-2015” (SBB, 2017c). Figure 3 shows an overview of the deforestation per district over the periods 2000-2009 and 2009-2015. This data can also be viewed on the website [www.gonini.org](http://www.gonini.org), having the ability to zoom in and out for a better view of the data and separating the periods 2000-2009, 2009-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

The areas of deforestation were determined based on the results of the map accuracy assessment, as suggested by Olofsson et al. (2014), GFOI, GOF-C-GOLD & NSC, 2017).

The accuracy assessment was carried out with support of the UN-REDD program using the manual developed by the FAO (2016). The method includes a set of “Good Practice” recommendations for designing and implementing an accuracy assessment of a change map and estimating area based on the reference sample data. These “Good Practice” recommendations address the three major components: sampling design, response design and analysis using an on-screen review with remote sensing imagery (Olofsson et al., 2014). The process is broken down into Quality Assessment/Quality Control (QA/QC) of four major components: (i) Final map, (ii) the sampling design, (iii) the response design and (iv) the analysis.

Within this method a stratified random sampling design is used, because it makes it possible to increase the sample size in classes that occupy a small proportion of area to reduce the standard errors of the class-specific accuracy estimates for these rare classes (change map) (SBB, 2016; SBB, 2017c).

The accuracy assessments of the forest cover change data for the periods 2000-2009, 2009-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 took place with guidance from UN-REDD/FAO, and in close collaboration with SBB and the Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname (CELOS). The

OpenForis tools such as Collect Earth, Stratified Area Estimator Design and Analysis, were used to carry out the accuracy assessment. Also the System for Earth observations, data access, Processing & Analysis for Land monitoring (SEPAL), an on-the-cloud processing system, was used to adjust scripts for the analyses. The results show an overall accuracy of 99%. The stratified estimated areas will be used in further calculations (See table 2).

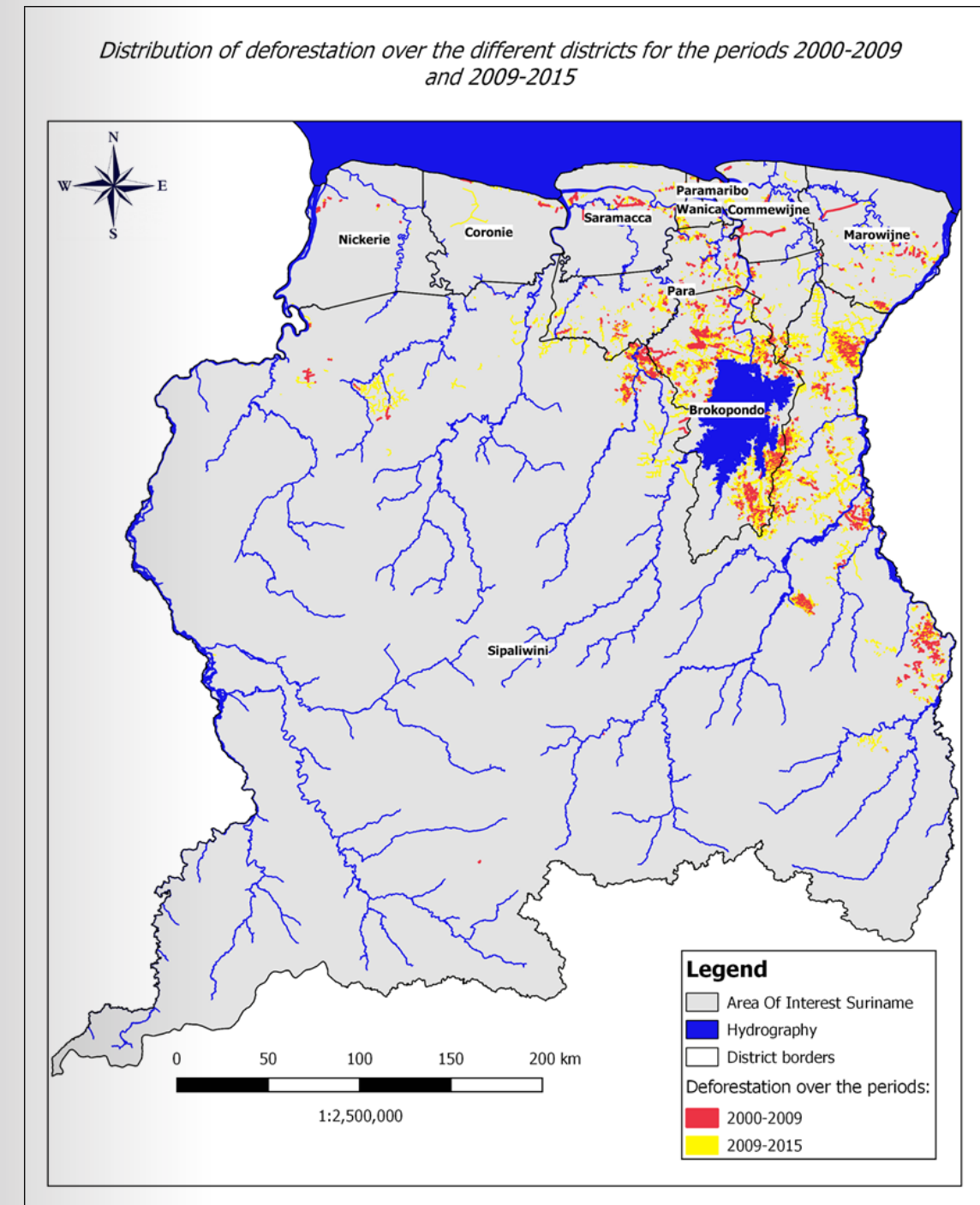


Figure 3. Overview of the deforestation per district in Suriname over the periods 2000-2009 and 2009-2015

Table 2 shows a general increase in deforestation in the period 2009-2015. Nevertheless there is a decrease for the period 2014-2015 (year 2015) compared to the earlier period 2013-2014 (year 2014). This could be due to a slight decrease of the gold price during that year.

Table 2. Stratified estimated areas and confidence intervals (SBB, 2017c)

	Stratified estimated area (ha)	95% confidence interval (ha)
Deforestation 2000-2009	33051	5361
Deforestation 2009-2013	32071	2388
Deforestation 2013-2014	15757	2082
Deforestation 2014-2015	9442	1620

For the years 2009, 2013 and 2015, Post-deforestation Land Use Land Cover (LULC) maps have been created where the LULC classes (see annex 5) were determined through multi-sectoral collaboration. The main driver of deforestation is mining (mainly gold mining). Gold mining covers about 71% of the deforestation for the period 2000-2015 (SBB, 2017c). According to the regional study where the impact of gold mining on the forest cover in the Guiana Shield region was assessed, the rate of gold mining has doubled when comparing the periods 2000-2008 and 2008-2014 (Rahm M. et al., 2015). Based on a general assessment, 80% of the gold mining areas are artisanal small scale gold mining (ASGM). The other drivers of deforestation for the period 2000-2015 are infrastructure (15%), urbanization (4%), agriculture (3%), pasture (1%), burned area (3%) and other deforestation (1%) (SBB, 2017c). Land use change matrices have been created for the period 2000-2009, 2009-2013 and 2013-2015, indicating the transformation of the forest and the LULC classes between the given years with the amount of area in ha (see annex 5).

Deforestation or conversion from forested land to other types of land is monitored in Suriname using the IPCC Approach 3 (See annex 5 - Overview of the classes in the Deforestation maps and Post-deforestation LULC maps).

#### 4.4.2 Source and compilation of data for carbon stocks

Within the country's REDD+ readiness phase, a study was carried out bringing together data from eleven different forest inventory programs as shown in figure 4 (more details on the inventories can be found in annex 4). This study, Technical Report State-of-the-art study: Best estimates for emission factors and carbon stocks for Suriname done by SBB in collaboration with CATIE, CELOS and AdeKUS (SBB et al., 2017a) was an update of earlier work carried out by Arets et al. (2011), completed with the data collected in 12 field transects established during

the Forest Carbon Assessment and Monitoring project (SBB., 2012) and the data collected in 31 Sampling Units (SU) throughout the pilot NFI project in 2013-2014.

The forest inventory databases went through a harmonization process, including a QA/QC component, making sure that all data were comparable, after which they were merged into one database. The first step in performing data quality control was to unify criteria for identifying and standardizing of categorical and numerical variables. This included unifying the names of the variables, encoding variables and converting the numerical value of dbh and height to the same measurement units. Subsequently, the following protocol for data analysis was established (more details to be found in SBB et al. (2017a)):

- Detection of outliers using minimum and maximum function. This activity was performed using the dbh variable component, and identifying the maximum and minimum values;
- Identification of a unique scientific name for each species. All scientific names were reviewed to identify synonyms and inaccurate writing, for which the software F-Diversity (Casanoves et al., 2010) was used;
- Identification of outliers through standardization. When the databases had several species, the identification of outliers has to be performed for each species. In order for standardization to correctly identify unusual values, the species in question must have a considerable number of individuals. The equation used in this study to standardize the data sets was:

$$Z = \frac{X - \mu}{\sigma} N(0; 1)$$

Equation 1. Standardization equation

Where:

- X the value of the response variable,
- $\mu$  the overall mean of that variable in one species,
- $\sigma$  the square root of the variance of the variable within a species.

By applying this, dbh records of each species were standardized, and values > 3.5 standard deviations and <-3.5, were considered outliers. These atypical values were revised and then corrected or discarded (SBB et al., 2017a).

Vernacular tree species names were converted to scientific names using an update of the regional tree species list<sup>11</sup> and cross checked with the Taxonomic Name Resolution Service (TNRS)<sup>12</sup> into the most recent scientific name. This allows the tree species to be linked with the wood density values.

<sup>11</sup> <https://reddguianashield.com/studies/improving-knowledge-sharing-on-tree-species-identification-in-the-guiana-shield/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://tnrs.iplantcollaborative.org/>



First an assessment of the carbon stock per forest type was carried out (see annex 3), but because no nationally approved area estimations for all these forest types are available, this classification was not further considered and an approach using four more general strata was used for now. The four general strata are delineated on a general understanding of large different landscapes: Stratum 1: Mangrove forest, because of its specific characteristics and dynamics, but also the role this forest type plays in both, climate change mitigations and adaptation; Stratum 2: “Younger” Coastal plain. This stratum is delineated based on the occurrence of the precambrian Guiana Shield; Stratum 3: the area where logging concessions are granted (North of the 4°Northern Latitude); Stratum 4: Forest areas where very limited activities are carried out (south of the 4°Northern Latitude) including the Central Suriname Nature reserve, where little anthropogenic activities are carried out. While a full NFI is currently being prepared to be carried out in the coming years (SBB, 2017), the EF due to deforestation was calculated using these four general strata, based on this compiled database.

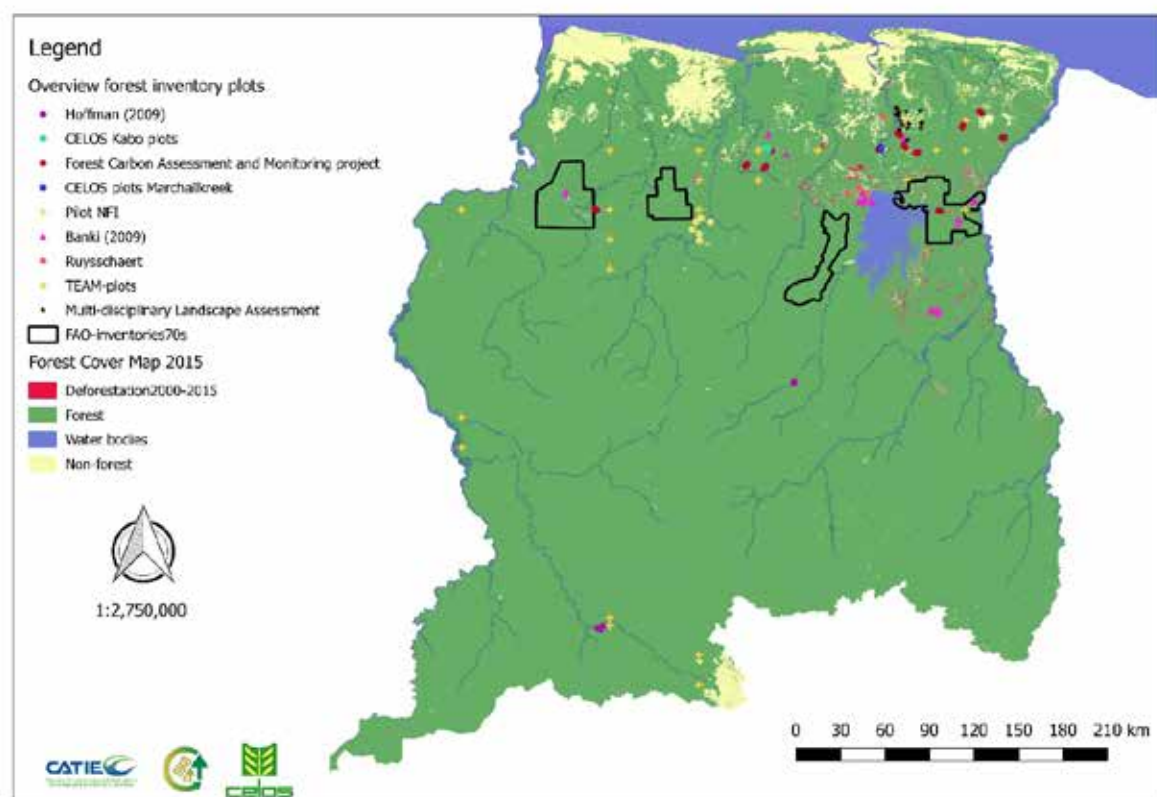


Figure 4. Overview of the forest inventory plots in Suriname (SBB et al., 2017a)

#### 4.4.3 Forest stratification

With the country being entirely part of one ecoregion, the Guiana Shield, it is a challenge to effectively categorize forest diversity for modeling the main ecosystem services. For this FREL, a first stratification of the country (figure 5) was made combining physical (e.g. natural boundaries) and administrative boundaries (e.g. protected areas, southern border of the forest belt) (SBB et al., 2017a).

The strata currently included are:

- Stratum 1 Mangrove forest;
- Stratum 2 Coastal plain: From the mangrove forest to forest belt;
- Stratum 3 Forest belt: Includes the area where most logging activities occur, bordered in the South by the 4° North latitude and the Central Suriname Nature Reserve (CSNR);
- Stratum 4 Forest in the interior: The CSNR and the area south of the forest belt.

The emission factors for deforestation (equal to average carbon stocks) used for the different strata are displayed in table 4.

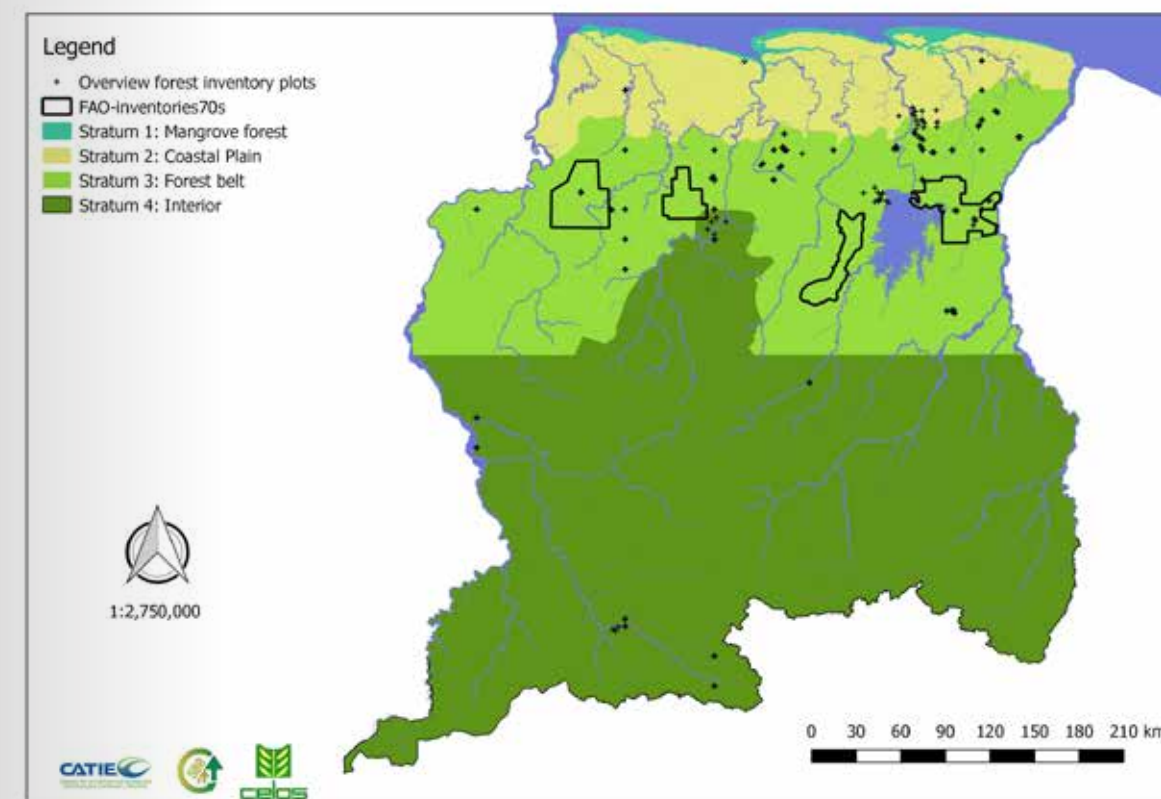


Figure 5. Preliminary stratification of Suriname

Currently other stratification approaches are being tested, such as the method developed by Guitet et al. (2013) in French Guiana. In this process geomorphological landscapes and climate zones are taken into consideration.

#### 4.4.4 Method used to estimate deforestation emission factor

The Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (GPG-LULUCF) of the IPCC 2003 provides definitions for five carbon pools: Above-Ground Biomass, Below-Ground Biomass, dead wood, litter and soils. Based on the available data in the database described in section 4.4.2, Suriname will include the carbon pools<sup>13</sup> within this FREL as

<sup>13</sup> While there was data available on litter and Soil Organic Matter, this data was collected only in a limited geographic area (forest belt) (SBB et al., 2012). Therefore, for this FREL, Suriname will not report on these two carbon pools.

indicated in table 3. More details can be found in Technical Report State-of-the-art study: Best estimates for emission factors and carbon stocks for Suriname prepared by SBB in collaboration with CATIE, CELOS and AdeKUS (SBB et al., 2017a).

To avoid biased estimates for carbon stock, all data within the harmonized database was weighed by the plot size. The average carbon stocks and related uncertainties were calculated under a stratification sample frame.

Table 3. Carbon pools and methods to estimate carbon in forest biomass in Suriname

Above-Ground Biomass (AGB)
Trees (dbh ≥ 5 cm): Since Suriname has not yet developed specific allometric equations, the pantropical equation established by Chave et al. (2005) was used. This equation will be evaluated by CELOS in the coming period. The selected equations used dbh values in cm and wood density values ( $\rho$ ) in $\text{g cm}^{-3}$ . The wood densities were obtained from the Global Wood Density Database (Zanne et al., 2009). A community weighted mean of $0.68 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ was found for the wood density in this dataset and used for unknown species.
Palm trees: For estimating the AGB of palms, four specific genus equations and one general family equation were used, according to Goodman et al. (2013).
Lianas (D ≥ 5 cm): To calculate the biomass stored in lianas, the equation developed by Schnitzer et al. (2006) was used.
Below-Ground Biomass (BGB)
To obtain the BGB value, AGB values were multiplied by the 0.24 factor for tropical rainforests (Cairns et al., 1997), as recommended by the IPCC 2006.
Lying Dead Wood (LDW)
Biomass in lying dead wood was estimated from the volume of the tree using Smalian's formula, the community weighted mean ( $0.68 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) and a biomass reduction factor approach (suggested by Harmon and Sexton, 1996). Factors used depended on the decomposition state of the tree. For solid wood the factor used was 0.46, for wood in advanced state of decomposition it was 0.40 and for decayed wood 0.34 (SBB et al., 2017a).
Standing Dead Wood (SDW)
Biomass in standing dead trees was estimated based on the dbh measured in the field and using the Chave et al. (2005) equation developed for estimating biomass in living trees. After this, knowing that the wood density is lower for standing dead trees, it was assumed that all standing dead trees were decomposing, thus a biomass reduction factor representing 75% of the individual total weight was applied to each individual, as suggested by Brown et al. (1992) and Saldarriaga et al. (1998), cited by Sarmiento, Pinillos and Garay (2005).

To determine the carbon content in the different carbon pools, the biomass is converted to carbon. The IPCC 2006 recommends to use a factor of 0.47, based on McGroddy et al. (2004). In table 4 the average carbon stocks in t C per hectare per pool per stratum are shown.

It is remarkable that the forest belt, where logging takes place, has a higher average carbon stock than the interior where only very limited anthropogenic activities are carried out. This could be explained by the fact that the interior is difficult to access, resulting in a limited number of plots there (Figure 5), or by a sparser tree cover in the interior because of the mountainous landscape and/or savanna. For the mangrove forest, the carbon stock estimates based on national data are very low and the uncertainties are very high (SBB et al., 2017a), because of the limited number of plots in the mangrove forest. Therefore, for mangrove forest the IPCC default values have been used. The information will be improved when more field data is collected during the implementation of a National Forest Inventory in the coming years.

Table 4 Carbon stocks (t C ha<sup>-1</sup>) in the selected pools in each stratum (SBB et al., 2017a)

Carbon Pools		Carbon stock (t C ha <sup>-1</sup> )			
		Mangrove forest	Coastal plain	Forest belt	Interior
Above-Ground Biomass	Living trees (dbh 5cm)	90.24	149.62	176.10	164.99
	Palms	0.00	5.08	1.06	2.26
	Lianas	0.00	0.64	2.83	2.38
Below-Ground Biomass	Roots	44.22	37.12	42.51	40.14
Dead Organic Matter	LDW	0.00	3.23	11.54	4.50
	SDW	0.00	1.31	3.14	1.92
Total		134.46	197.00	237.18	216.19

Compared to the neighboring countries the average carbon stock found in Suriname seems relatively low. On the other hand, the results calculated with available data in Suriname appear to be consistent with results from other studies such as Alder and Kuijk (2009) (cited by Cedergren 2009) who reported AGB carbon stocks for the Guiana Shield of  $152 \text{ Mg C ha}^{-1}$ , while ter Steege (2001) found carbon stocks in Guyana between  $111.5$  and  $146.5 \text{ Mg C ha}^{-1}$ . Furthermore, Arets et al. (2011) reports that AGB carbon stocks in Suriname ranges from  $121$  to  $265 \text{ Mg C ha}^{-1}$ .

The emission factors for deforestation per stratum (table 5) are calculated by converting the carbon stocks per stratum (table 4) to its CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent by using the factor 44/12.



Table 5. Emission factors for deforestation per stratum

Stratum	Emission factors for deforestation	
	t CO <sub>2</sub> ha <sup>-1</sup>	Uncertainty
Mangrove forest	493.01	4.7%
Coastal plain	722.34	17.1%
Forest belt	869.68	3.6%
Interior	792.70	9.6%

Activities are planned to improve these estimations, especially through the implementation of a full multipurpose National Forest Inventory. In 2018 more data will be collected especially from the mangrove forest, to provide national data to improve the estimations as in this report IPCC Tier 1 values have been used for mangrove.

Non-CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from deforestation due to forest fire

Emissions from deforestation due to forest fire include not only CO<sub>2</sub>, but also other greenhouse gases, or precursors of greenhouse gases, which originate from incomplete combustion of the fuel. These include carbon monoxide (CO), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOC) and nitrogen (e.g., N<sub>2</sub>O, NO<sub>x</sub>) species. In this FREL, the only non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases included are CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O (IPCC, 2006).

These emissions were estimated using equation 2.27 of IPCC (2006) (cf. Volume 4, Chapter 2, Section 2.4.):

$$L_{\text{fire}} = A \times M_B \times C_F \times G_{\text{ef}} \times 10^{-3}$$

Where:

$L_{\text{fire}}$  = amount of greenhouse gas emissions from fire, tonnes of each GHG (CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O)  
**A** = area burnt, ha  
**M<sub>B</sub>** = mass of fuel available for combustion, tonnes ha<sup>-1</sup>  
 Note: This includes aboveground biomass and dead wood.  
**C<sub>F</sub>** = combustion factor, dimensionless (default values in Table 2.6)  
**G<sub>ef</sub>** = emission factor, g kg<sup>-1</sup> dry matter burnt (default values in Table 2.5)

Equation 2. Calculation method for the non CO<sub>2</sub> forest fire emissions from deforestation.

#### 4.4.5 Historical emission due to deforestation

Emissions caused by deforestation will be determined with the IPCC 2006 basic equation (see equation 2), by multiplying the AD with the EF for gross deforestation (the average carbon stock of the forest in t C per ha). While more detailed carbon stocks for other land use types need to be determined, it was assumed that the carbon stock immediately after deforestation is zero. This can be supported, knowing that most of the deforestation was caused by mining (73%), infrastructure (15%) and urbanization (4%) (annex 5) (SBB et al., 2017c), which all are land use classes corresponding to a zero carbon stock.

$$E = AD \times EF$$

Where:

E = Emissions in t C yr<sup>-1</sup>

AD = Activity data in ha yr<sup>-1</sup>

EF = Emission factors in t C ha<sup>-1</sup>

Equation 3. IPCC equation for the estimation of emissions

The historical emissions for the period 2000-2015 are calculated based on activity data (deforested area) and emission factors (for deforestation and forest fire emissions). The total deforestation of the period was divided by the number of years and multiplied with the emission factors. Therefore the total emissions from deforestation in the period 2000-2015 were 75,440,919 t CO<sub>2</sub> (see table 6). Using the error propagation method proposed by IPCC 2003, the uncertainty is ± 4,511,086 t CO<sub>2</sub> or ± 5.98% of the mean calculated according to IPCC guidelines (2003 GPG) on error propagation using approach 1 (for more details, see Total Emissions Tab in the excel file Suriname\_FRELCalculationTool<sup>14</sup>).

Table 6. Emissions due to deforestation for the period 2000-2015

Period (years)	Historical activity data (deforestation)			Annual deforestation emissions		Total deforestation emissions
	Area (ha)	Area (ha) yr <sup>-1</sup>	Uncertainty (%)	t CO <sub>2</sub> yr <sup>-1</sup>	Uncertainty (%)	t CO <sub>2</sub>
2000-2009	33,051	3672	16.22%	3,034,882	13.09%	27,313,938
2009-2013	32,071	8018	7.45%	6,757,268	7.25%	27,029,071
2013-2014	15,757	15757	13.21%	13,282,026	11.81%	13,282,026
2014-2015	9,442	9442	17.16%	7,815,882	14.45%	7,815,882
<b>Total period 2000-2015</b>	<b>90,322</b>	<b>6021</b>	<b>7.12%</b>	<b>5,029,395</b>	<b>5.98%</b>	<b>75,440,919</b>

Note: \* The emission factor of 219.79 was used for deforestation emissions, excluding forest fire deforestation where IPCC (2006) was used for calculating the emissions factors from CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O.

#### 4.5 Forest degradation due to logging

##### 4.5.1 Activity data

Activity data due to the construction of haul roads for logging and log yards are included within the deforestation LULC class 'infrastructure' (see annex 5). Additional activity data linked to logging are determined by the annual timber production, extracted from SBB's records and

<sup>14</sup> Online: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11AyfuYZUeStfxAiLiusguH055qGEjsMy?usp=sharing>

published on an annual basis. These records are based on the registration that takes place on cutting registers where all legal logs, and when confiscated also the illegal logs, are recorded. SBB started registering produced logs after the year 2000, using a log tracking system (LogPro) that was developed in house with the technical assistance of FAO in 1999. Before 2000, the production was recorded by the State Forest Service (LBB).

The total timber production from 2000-2015 is presented in the graphic shown in figure 6, indicating that the timber production has been relatively constant up to 2008, but has been steadily increasing over the last years. All timber production statistics can be found on the SBB website ([www.sbbsur.com](http://www.sbbsur.com)). In terms of area harvested, from the ca. 2.5 million ha of forest area issued for timber harvesting purposes, ca. 50,000 ha are harvested on a yearly basis (SBB, 2016).

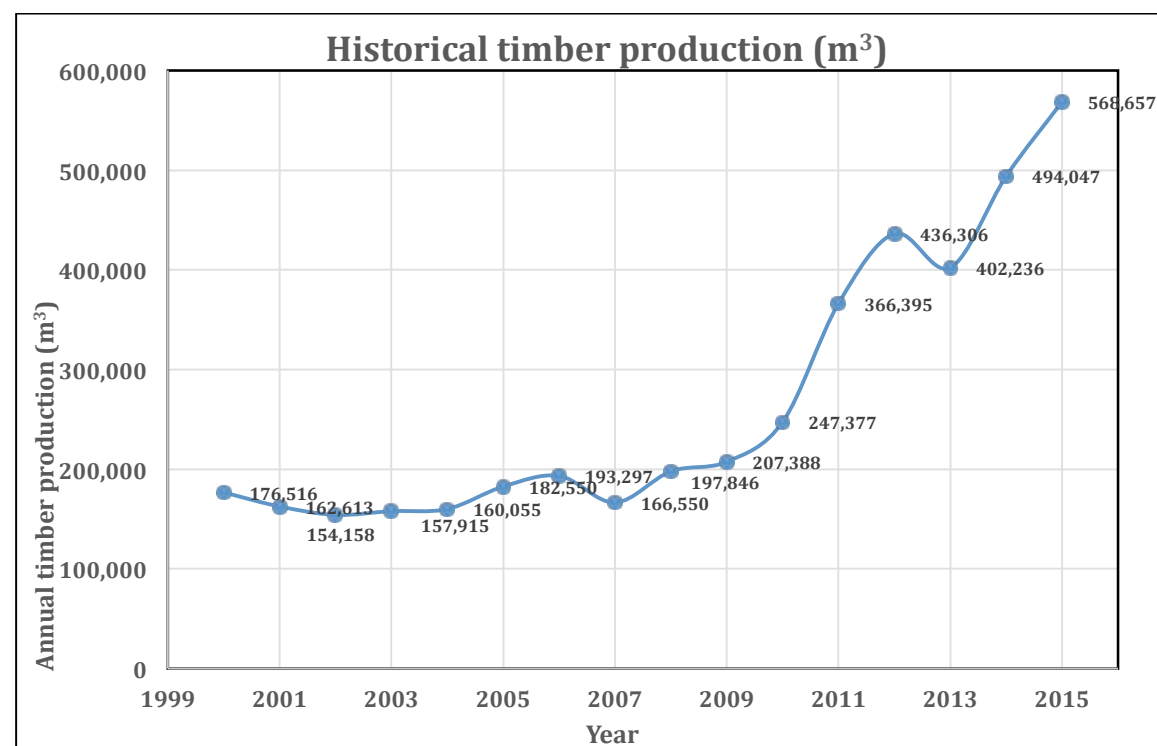


Figure 6. Timber production for the period 2000-2015 (SBB, 2016)

Illegal logging has not been included within this FREL submission, because no recent updated information exists on it. Earlier reports have shown an average proportion of illegal logging of 20%, including timber that was transported to Guyana (Playfair, 2007). This percentage also includes the illegal logs that are confiscated and registered. Therefore this estimation cannot be used in the FREL, because it could lead to double accounting of illegal logs that might be registered after having been confiscated. This approach corresponds to the IPCC guidance related to being conservative.

Within the development of the NFMS, two subsystems are currently being developed which will strengthen the monitoring of activity data and emissions factors from legal and illegal logging:

- Sustainable Forestry Information System Suriname (SFISS): based on agreed definitions of legality, this SFISS will strengthen the registration of legal and illegal logs. This will make it possible to report separately on both components. The development of the SFISS includes the revision and improvement of the current procedures in a collaborative manner (private and public sector), a training component, and the construction of a new database accompanied with relevant front-end applications.
- Near Real Time Monitoring (NRTM) system: This currently semi-operational system provides alerts on unplanned activities. The feedback mechanism related to unplanned logging will be integrated within the SFISS, improving the detection of illegal logging activities.

The current status of these subsystems will be further elaborated upon in Chapter 6- section A2. Logging.

#### 4.5.2 Emission factors due to forest degradation caused by logging

To estimate the carbon losses caused by forest degradation due to selective logging, the emission factors (in t carbon per m<sup>3</sup>) of produced timber were established. The approach used is a gain-loss approach and focuses on the direct losses in live biomass, namely the extracted logs, incidental logging damage to other trees caused by tree felling, and the skidtrail establishment (Pearson et al., 2014). The field methods used are similar to the field methods used by Griscom et al. (2014). The work was carried out in Suriname in the first half of 2017 by SBB, with support of The Nature Conservancy, the University of Florida and CELOS. Since the IPCC guidelines (2003, 2006) do not provide enough details on how to calculate emissions from logging activities, the methodology developed by Pearson et al. (2014) and tested by Haas (2015) was applied.

The following criteria were used for the calculations:

- All timber extracted is emitted at the time of the event, according to IPCC Tier 1.
- Above-Ground tree biomass was estimated using Chave et al. (2005).
- No measurements were done in areas overlapping with other land use, mainly gold mining, because this could result in an over- or underestimation of the emissions related to selective logging.

#### Field data collection

Because the emissions can vary as a function of the management types as defined in SBB (2017a, 2017b), different logging intensities and physical terrain conditions, a random stratified sampling approach was conducted over the whole range of active logging concessions (including community forest)<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> In total four intensive/controlled, four extensive/conventional and two FSC certified sampling units (corresponding to the logging units) were randomly selected.

### Emission calculation

The Total Emission Factor (TEF) in t of carbon emitted per m<sup>3</sup> timber extracted from selective logging is estimated using equation 4 (Pearson et al., 2014).

$$\text{TEF} = \text{ELE} + \text{LDF} + \text{LIF}$$

Where:

TEF = Total Emission Factor in t C m<sup>-3</sup>  
 ELE = Extracted Log Emissions in t C m<sup>-3</sup>  
 LDF = Logging damage factor in t C m<sup>-3</sup>  
 LIF = Logging infrastructure factor in t C m<sup>-3</sup>

Equation 4. Calculation method for the Total Emission Factor (TEF)

### Extracted Log Emissions (ELE)

The ELE are equal to the carbon emission of the extracted log parts and thus related to the timber harvest itself, which are calculated based on the volume of the extracted logs and the carbon content of these logs. The volume of the extracted log was calculated using the Smalian's formula<sup>16</sup>, which uses the measured log length and the log diameters (top and bottom diameters of extracted logs). This volume was converted to biomass using the wood density of the tree species (Zanne et al., 2009).

The ELE value was calculated for logging units by dividing the sum of the calculated carbon emission for that logging unit by the sum of the extracted log volume (see equation 5).

$$\text{ELE} = (\sum (\text{WD} \times \text{GAPVol} \times \text{CF})) / \text{Volume extracted from cutting block}$$

Where:

ELE= Extracted log emissions (t C m<sup>-3</sup>)  
 WD= Wood density of felled trees (10<sup>3</sup> kg m<sup>-3</sup>)  
 CF= Carbon fraction, which is 0.47  
 GAPVol= Volume of timber over bark extracted in gap (m<sup>3</sup>)

Equation 5. Calculation method for the ELE

### Logging Damage Factor (LDF)

The LDF, also referred to as DW (dead wood), reflects the emissions from the decomposition of dead wood caused by felling trees. This includes the emissions from parts of the felled tree that were not extracted, such as the stump, left behind timber, the crown, and dead wood of incidentally killed trees (collateral damage). The amount of incidentally damaged trees identified

<sup>16</sup> The Smalian's formula states that the volume of a log can be closely estimated by multiplying the average of the areas of the two log ends by the log's length:  $\text{Volume} = (A1+A2)/2 \times \text{Length}$

as dead wood is determined by the damage types, where only snapped and grounded trees are included as actual fatalities, as advised by regional experts.

A total of 258 felled trees were sampled. The AGB of the total tree is estimated by using the equation from Chave et al. (2005) and the AGB for palms was calculated using the equations from Goodman et al. (2013). The BGB was calculated using an equation proposed by Cairns et al. (1997). The tree biomass left behind equals the sum of the AGB and BGB of the total tree minus the extracted log piece. The carbon losses from collateral damage were calculated by measuring all the grounded and snapped trees in the felling gaps and calculating the emitted carbon for those trees using the same Chave et al. (2005) and Goodman et al. (2013) equations. As seen in equation 6, the carbon emission for each gap per m<sup>3</sup> was calculated by dividing the emitted carbon in the gap by the volume extracted from that gap.

$$\text{LDF} = \left\{ \sum_{\text{gaps}} [ f(\text{dbh}) - (\text{GAPVol} \times \text{WD} \times \text{CF}) + (\text{BI} \times \text{CF}) ] / \text{GAPVol} \right\} / \text{Number of gaps}$$

Where:

DW or LDF= Dead wood carbon stock in t C m<sup>-3</sup> or logging damage factor (LDF)  
 f (dbh, h, WD)= Allometric function for calculating tree biomass in carbon in t C  
 GAPVol= Volume of timber over bark extracted in gap in m<sup>3</sup>  
 WD= Wood density of felled trees (10<sup>3</sup> kg m<sup>-3</sup>)  
 CF= Carbon fraction of 0.47  
 BI= Biomass of fatally damaged/killed trees in t gap<sup>-1</sup>  
 Number of gaps= Total number of gaps inventoried

Equation 6. Calculation method for the LDF

### Logging Infrastructure Factor (LIF)

The LIF is carbon emitted when creating forestry infrastructure, such as skidtrails, haul roads and logging decks (also called log yards). For the establishment of the FREL, only the LIF related to the establishment of skidtrails will be considered, because the emissions related to the construction of haul roads and logging decks are included in the deforested AD.

To calculate the LIF, it is necessary to estimate the SF (Skidtrail Factor) in t carbon emissions per hectare of skidtrail. This is calculated by estimating how much biomass is lost per area of skidtrail constructed. For this, the biomass damaged on the skidtrails was measured using sample plots on the skidtrails. Snapped and grounded trees on the skidtrail were measured to determine emissions from skidding.

The skidtrail area (SA) for each sample unit was calculated by multiplying the average measured width of the skidtrails multiplied by the total length of the skidtrails in the sampling unit.



The LIF is calculated by dividing the total skidtrail emissions (SA \* SF) within a sampling unit by the extracted volume from that sampling unit. The data from the harvested trees sampled is used to calculate the production (extracted volume) for each sampling unit. To calculate the LIF (see equation 7), the skidtrail area (ha) is used, which was calculated by multiplying the skidtrail total length with the average skidtrail width.

$$\text{LIF} = (\text{SF} \times \text{SA}) / \text{Total Sample Volume}$$

Where:  
 LIF= Logging Infrastructure Factor in t C m<sup>-3</sup>  
 SF= Skid trail factor in t C ha<sup>-1</sup>  
 SA= Area of skid trails in ha

Equation 7. Calculation method for the LIF

#### Resulting EF for forest degradation

The total emission factor (TEF) for forest degradation due to logging was estimated to be 1.58 t C m<sup>-3</sup> with an uncertainty of 15.96% (seen in table 8). The contribution of the LIF, LDF and ELE to the TEF were respectively 55.26%, 20.62% and 4.74%. These high uncertainties in LIF and LDF can be explained through the large variation between samples in the field and the small sample size (n=10).

Table 7. Emission factors for logging

	Logging emission factors (t C m <sup>-3</sup> )			
	LIF	LDF	ELE	TEF
Mean	0.24	1.04	0.30	1.58
95% CI	0.13	0.21	0.01	0.34
Uncertainty	55.26%	20.62%	4.74%	15.96%

#### 4.5.3 Historical emissions due to forest degradation from logging

The historical emissions for the period 2000-2015 (see table 9) are calculated with the activity data and emission factors. The total timber production of that period was multiplied with the emission factors, resulting in a total emission of 23,810,770 t CO<sub>2</sub>. Using the error propagation method proposed by IPCC (2003 GPG), the uncertainty is ±1,587,385 t CO<sub>2</sub> or ± 13.65% of the mean (for more details, see Total Emissions Tab in the excel file Suriname\_FRELCalculationTool<sup>17</sup>).

<sup>17</sup> Online: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11AfyuYZUeStfxAiLiusguHO55qGEjsMy?usp=sharing>

Table 8. Emissions due to degradation for period 2000-2015

Period	Historical activity data		Emissions due to degradation from logging
	Production (m <sup>3</sup> )	Production (m <sup>3</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> )	t CO <sub>2</sub> yr <sup>-1</sup>
2000-2009	1,582,372	175,819	1,021,721
2009-2013	1,452,314	363,079	2,109,923
2013-2014	494,047	494,047	2,871,008
2014-2015	568,657	568,657	3,304,582

#### 4.6. Total historical emissions

The total deforestation due to the conversion of forest to non-forest and forest degradation due to logging accounts to a total historical emission of 99,251,689.097 t CO<sub>2</sub> (with annual average of 6,616,779.27 t CO<sub>2</sub> for the period 2000-2015). The uncertainty is ± 5,919,754 t CO<sub>2</sub> or ± 5.96% of the mean (see FREL Tab, Suriname\_FRELCalculationTool<sup>18</sup>) (See figure 7).

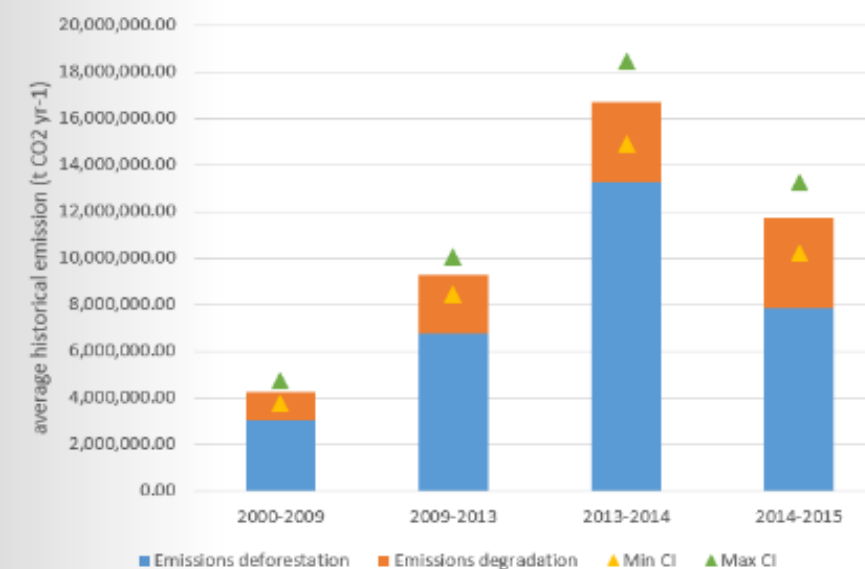


Figure 7. Emissions from forest degradation due to selective logging and emissions from deforestation over the different periods (CI = confidence interval)

<sup>18</sup> Online: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11AfyuYZUeStfxAiLiusguHO55qGEjsMy?usp=sharig>



## 4.7 National Circumstances

While Suriname has maintained its mainly primary forest cover up to now, the historical trends presented in the previous sections, the projected future development scenarios and the national circumstances, show that increasing economic activities may pose a risk for the future maintenance of this valuable forest and the ecosystem services this forest provides. Nevertheless, during UNFCCC COP23 the Government of Suriname expressed its intention to maintain the current forest cover of 93% of the land area, contingent upon sufficient technical and financial support from the global community (GOS, 2017).

This section provides more insight into the national circumstances, to provide a basis for the establishment of the linear growth adjustment in the next chapter. This is in line with UNFCCC decision 12/CP.17, which invites Parties to provide details on how national circumstances have been taken into account in the construction of their FREL/FRL.

### 4.7.1 General context

Suriname is a small country with a GDP per capita of SRD 34,245 at the end of 2016. Like other developing countries, Suriname is also facing challenges in its economic development. The country's economy is highly dependent on the extractive (gold, oil, and bauxite) and agriculture industries, which play an important role in driving growth, employment and government revenues. Therefore the sharp decline of international gold and oil prices, which resulted in the international financial crisis, affected Suriname's economic performance. The cessation of the alumina production also had an impact on the country's economy. As a consequence this has caused external and fiscal deficits and as well a loss of parts of the international reserves. To address these issues, the government is giving high priority to promoting economic diversification through private sector development, strengthening social services and addressing the effects of climate change (in line with national policy and the Financial Strategy of the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy).

A key strategic instrument that guides the development planning in the country is the National Development Plan, which has a constitutional base and sets out the State's social economic development for a period of 5 years (current version Development Plan 2017-2021). The current Plan aims at both strengthening the economic development capacity of the country and achieving sustainable development, by combining economic and social development with the responsible use of the environment. The four pillars that compose the National Development Plan 2017-2021 are (i) the strengthening of developmental capacity, (ii) economic growth and diversification, (iii) social progress, and (iv) the use and protection of the environment. Climate change and the sustainable use of the forests' economic value, including through REDD+, are considered within the last pillar on environmental protection but are also crosscutting.

According to the data on the forest cover of 2015 (SBB, 2017c) and the data on the average carbon stock per ha (SBB et al., 2017b), Suriname's forest stores at least 12,200 million t CO<sub>2</sub>. The sustainability of Suriname's development is highly vulnerable to climatic disasters, especially flooding because of rising sea levels. Removing mangrove forest already leads to high costs because of coastal erosion and flooding, and these costs will increase when the sea level rises. Inhabited areas in the coastal plain, including the capital Paramaribo, will be flooded. Conserving the mangrove forest is therefore a crucial measure within the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy.

Within the National Development Plan 2017-2021, pursuing growth through the extractive economy - based mainly on mining, agriculture, but also on timber harvesting - will be the primary solution to diverge from the economic challenges the country is currently experiencing. Activities have been initiated to establish an oil palm plantation in the east of the country. Considering that Suriname is rich in mineral resources and that most of its forests are fit for timber extraction, the opportunity cost of preserving the forest has increased. While the annual deforestation rate has been historically low (0.02%), an increased deforestation rate (average 0.05%) was measured in the period 2009-2015 (SBB, 2017c). If this trend accelerates, these pressures might result in an increasing deforestation and forest degradation, which would have negative impact on the global and local environment. Through participation in the international REDD+ process, Suriname is exploring the possibility to access financial incentives for alternative development pathways seeking for a balance between national, local and global welfare and wellbeing for the current and future generations, resulting in forest based GHG emissions that will remain below an agreed level.

In parallel, the Government of Suriname wants to invest in diversification of the economy. While no trade markets are yet fully functional for ecosystem services such as biodiversity and water regulation, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is currently initiating a mechanism for results-based payment for REDD+. These mechanisms will need to make it possible for a country in development to preserve its standing forest, avoiding that there will be leakages from the countries that are slowing down deforestation and forest degradation to countries where deforestation or forest degradation previously did not take place, or took place in a more limited extent. Hereby, the opportunity cost of gold mining, the main driver of deforestation in Suriname, needs to be considered. This opportunity cost is so high that it is difficult for potential incomes of carbon credits to compete (SBB et al., 2016b). Planning, research, sustainable forest management and restoration of previously deforested areas will be key to reducing negative impacts and maintaining the country's contribution to the local and global environment.

Another challenge Suriname is facing is the potentially high climate change adaptation costs, to protect the low lying coastal areas where most of the population is living and most economic activities are taking place, but also to deal with the lower electricity supply because of lower water levels in the Brokopondo hydropower lake (caused by climate change). The lower electricity supply caused by climate change and the projected increasing energy demand of 500 MW until 2020 (GOS, 2015) are a major concern during the current FREL period. The Grankriki project, which is another hydropower project in the planning, has the aim to strengthen the Brokopondo hydropower lake and increase the electricity supply. Related to this project,

infrastructure activities will also be executed. To enable the government to maintain the current living conditions for the population, the financial means to meet these costs might be generated through unsustainable use of the natural resources. This shows again the importance of providing an economic incentive to protect the forest.

Table 9. Contribution of different drivers to the FREL and overview of relevant policies and plans

Drivers of projected emissions level	Percentage of contribution to reference level	Regulating policies and planned development relevant for the Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL)
Forestry (degradation)	About 25% of the total emissions	Forest Management Act (1992), National Forest Policy (2006), Strategic Action Plan for the Forest Sector, Code of Practice, National Development Plan 2017-2021, Draft National REDD+ Strategy.
Mining (deforestation)	55% of the total emissions, of which 44% is contributed by Artisanal Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM)	Mining Decree (1986), Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI - member since 2017), Minamata Convention (ratified 2018), National Development Plan 2017-2021, Draft National REDD+ Strategy.
Infrastructure (deforestation)	11% of the total emissions	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), National Development Plan 2017-2021, Draft National REDD+ Strategy.
Urbanization (deforestation)	3% of the total emissions	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), National Development Plan 2017-2021, Draft National REDD+ Strategy.
Agriculture and pasture (deforestation)	Agriculture 2%, pasture 1% of the total emissions	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), National Development Plan 2017-2021, Draft National REDD+ Strategy.

#### 4.7.2 Forest and mining

Mining has been the largest driver (73%) of deforestation over the period 2000-2015 (SBB, 2017c), of which artisanal small-scale gold mining (ASGM) has the largest impact. Suriname's mineral sector comprises the production of oil, gold, bauxite/alumina, building materials and natural stones, nevertheless 95.5% of mining induced deforestation is caused by gold mining (SBB et al., 2017b). A recent study carried out as a regional collaboration between the forest monitoring teams of the Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana and the Brazilian State of Amapá, indicated a 84% increase in the rate of deforestation due to gold mining in Suriname comparing 2000-2008 (19,020 ha) with the period 2008-2015 (35,099 ha) (Rahm et al., 2017).

It should also be mentioned that some of the main access roads towards the interior (e.g. Afobaka road), which are an underlying cause of deforestation and forest degradation, were constructed because of mining activities.

Gold, oil and bauxite, which are the most important commodities for Suriname's economy, accounted for 90% of exports, 95% of the national revenues and 30% of the GDP in 2013. Since 2014 the bauxite production has stopped and the contribution of bauxite to the GDP became zero. Corporate income taxes, royalties and dividends applied to gold, bauxite and especially oil are a major source of government revenues (World Bank, 2015). Within the DDFDB+ study (SBB et al., 2017b), a Net Present Value for respectively small and large scale mining of US\$ 108,000 ha<sup>-1</sup> vs. US\$ 193,364 ha<sup>-1</sup> was found. The small scale mining sector provides employment to ca. 10,000 to 12,000 people, including the service sector (Heemskerk, 2016).

Within the country's Development Plan 2017-2021 (SPS, 2017), the government intends to regulate the small scale gold mining activities, aiming for improvement of the technology used and for reduction of the impact on the environment, while the national revenues related to large scale mining will be increased. Planned new large scale gold mining projects will support the country's pathway out of the economic difficulties, in particular with the government taking substantial equity stakes in large-scale gold mining projects. It is equally important that the country works towards a more diversified economy, less dependent on mining activities and on the fluctuating prices of the mineral resources.

#### Small Scale Gold Mining

In the 1990s, small-scale gold mining became an attractive income generation activity for Maroons in eastern Suriname; the area that had been hit hardest by the interior war (1986-1993) and hosts much of the country's gold deposits (Heemskerk, 2000, cited from SBB et al., 2017b). Around the same time, increasing numbers of Brazilian miners (garimpeiros), who were confronted with more stringent restrictions on small-scale gold mining in their own country and in French Guiana, moved into Suriname (ibid.). This caused a multiplicative effect on the deforestation due to gold mining in Suriname and Guyana (Dezécache et al., 2017). Nowadays Brazilian garimpeiros and Maroons dominate the workforce in the artisanal small scale gold mining (ASGM) sector (Heemskerk et al., 2016). For a large share of households in the interior, gold mining is a primary source of family income. Often in the areas where gold mining takes place, this is one of the only employment alternatives, especially for people with few employable skills (SBB et al., 2017b).

When small scale miners start their operations, the valuable on-site trees are typically not utilized, but simply felled and burned. The miners have no information on the ecological importance of soil and its possible use for reforestation purposes (SBB et al., 2017b). Small-scale mines are often revisited and re-mined one or several times. Because small-scale gold miners fail to extract an estimated half to two thirds of the gold in the soil, the exploitation of old mining sites is economically viable when mining efficiency improves and the gold price rises (Peterson and Heemskerk, 2001). Yet, the amount of small-scale mining taking place on old sites versus new locations has never been estimated. Resulting from the 'ad-hoc', unplanned



status of ASGM are undesirable factors such as an uncertain legal status for the activity, limited government oversight in the field, and an association of the activity with widespread environmental degradation including deforestation, river siltation, and mercury contamination (SBB et al., 2017b). Existing research suggests that evaporated Hg (mercury) is transported and, after depositing through precipitation, may affect a much larger area than the mining zones (Ouboter, 2015). In 2016, Social Solutions and the Artisanal Gold Council estimated that ASGM operations in Suriname annually emitted 63.0 Mg Hg/yr (Heemskerk et al., 2016). Based upon a very rough estimation procedure, Rahm et al. (2017) found that 2,197 km of Suriname's waterways were directly affected and 6,806 km were indirectly affected.

Table 10. Summary of policies and plans relevant for small-scale gold mining

Small-scale gold mining
<p>Regulating policies and laws: Mining Decree (1986), Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI - member since 2017), Minamata Convention (ratified 2018).</p>
<p>National Development Plan 2017-2021: Regulate the small-scale gold mining activities aiming for improvement of the technology used, limited area for the activities and for reduction of the impact on the environment.</p>
<p>Draft National REDD+ Strategy: Also in the context of REDD+, the government will focus on regulation and organization of the small-scale gold mining activities so that they are carried out in a more controlled way, in a restricted area, with improved technology and with reduced impact on the environment.</p>
<p>Ongoing project: A Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project on 'Improving Environmental Management in the Mining Sector of Suriname, with Emphasis on Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining' is being implemented in the period 2018-2025.</p>

### Large scale mining

During the period 2000-2015, two large scale gold mining operations and one large scale bauxite mining operation took place. Rosebel Gold Mines in the Brokopondo district started their commercial production in 2004 and Newmont Mining Corporation in the east of the country started their operation in 2016 (with deforestation related to the mine construction phase starting in 2015). Suralco established three bauxite mines on the Eastern side of the Suriname river.

The government's intention to increase income from large scale mining has already started with two new large scale mining projects planned to be launched shortly: IAMGOLD's Kleine Saramacca project and Newmont Suriname in the east. Additionally, negotiations were re-initiated with ALCOA for a bauxite mining project within the Bakhuys mountains in the west of Suriname.

The Nassau project is another bauxite mining project that may be executed in the coming 20 years, together with the Grankriki hydropower lake and the infrastructure to access these areas.

Table 11. Summary of policies and plans relevant for large-scale mining

Large-scale mining
<p>Regulating policies and laws: Mining Decree (1986), Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI - member since 2017), Minamata Convention (ratified 2018).</p>
<p>National Development Plan 2017-2021: Increase national revenues related to large scale mining, through new large scale gold mining projects planned to be launched shortly. Bauxite mining in new areas is considered as a possibility.</p>
<p>Draft National REDD+ Strategy: The strategy recognizes that Suriname's economy is dependent on income from the mining sector. The following relevant measures are included in order to improve the efficiency of the mining sector and limit the related deforestation and forest degradation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Streamline concession policies, particularly of the departments responsible for mining and logging concessions/permits;</li> <li>2. Formulate new land use planning legislation;</li> <li>3. Review and update the Mining Decree from 1986 and improve mining regulation by incorporating considerations of environmental nature (particularly on land degradation and deforestation) and social considerations in concession and permit requirements;</li> <li>4. Further support Suriname's decision to participate in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI);</li> <li>5. Capacity building of institutions in forest monitoring, control and protection (this includes the institutions responsible for the enforcement of the Mining Decree).</li> </ol>

### 4.7.3 Forest and logging

Forestry in Suriname has a rich and long history, with first attempts to establish a productive forestry sector dating back to 1903 and the establishment of a state forest service a few years later. In 1947 the second Forest Service was established and in that year the Timber Act was promulgated. The Nature Conservation Act and the Game Act were promulgated in 1954. In 1992 the Timber Act 1947 was replaced by the Forest Management Act. In the 1980s, a forest management system best suitable for Surinamese forests was developed by CELOS, the polycyclic CELOS Management System. Key concepts developed under this system, together with those of the CELOS Harvesting System (CHS), were later incorporated into a draft Code of Practice for SFM. The CHS is the oldest Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) system developed in South America (Werger et al., 2011).

Overall, the contribution of the timber industry to the gross domestic product is 1.7% and the sector employs about 5,500 people. In addition, the recorded harvesting of Minor Timber Products (MTP) is small and their contribution to the overall timber taxation is just about 0.5%



(van Dijk 2011, cited by SBB et al., 2017b). However, the actual harvesting levels are suspected to be much higher than existing official records, as many MTPs are harvested for subsistence purposes. The collection and use of non-timber forest products (NTFP) is also estimated to be significant, but there are no data records to serve as proof. CELOS market research (2017) indicated a sharp increase in the number of NTFP processing industries (8 in 2008 to 33 in 2016).

In Suriname's context, most forestry practices could be characterized as low impact selective logging based on Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) principles, which aims to mimic natural forest dynamics (Werger et al., 2011), and thus are not associated with significant levels of degradation. Nevertheless, it is expected that these levels of degradation could be higher in recent years, because of the following reasons:

- Fast growing increment of timber production in Suriname in the last years;
- Increasing global demand for tropical timber;
- Insufficient law enforcement;
- Comprehensive operational guidelines and procedures need to be improved;
- Limited resources in the responsible organisations.

A clear indicator for the potential emission reduction is the proportion of logging units under a conventional management regime (known as extensive management). While the annual timber production and the managed area has increased, the number of compartments under the conventional logging regime has remained within the same range (ca. 50%). In conventionally managed forests, timber can be harvested without prior timber stock inventories and without demarcation and planning of roads and skidtrails (controlled logging or intensive management). Commercial logging is permitted, provided that the logging compartments are demarcated and logged according to the SBB regulations (such as respecting buffer zones and adhering to a maximum harvesting intensity). These minimum requirements are the basis for SBB production control (SBB et al., 2017b). Better harvesting planning and implementation of this planning could reduce the emissions from the forestry sector.

With the increase in the gold mining activities especially in the period 2009-2015, logging companies claim that there is little certainty about the land use designation of their concession area on the long term. This stimulates companies to ask for exemptions and instead of applying the required controlled logging, they apply for extensive management with conventional logging.

Timber production increased significantly in the past decade, amongst others caused by Asian investments in the timber industry. Nevertheless actual harvesting levels remain far below the annual allowable cut of 25 m<sup>3</sup> per hectare. In 2003, SBB presented its ambition to increase the annual timber production to 500,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year by 2008 (FAO, 2003). As the conditions were subsequently put into place, this objective was first reached in 2015.

However, due to Suriname's forest composition (i.e. the large diversity in tree species), the harvesting levels from selective logging are still far below the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) per ha; in practice being only 7.4 m<sup>3</sup> per ha with a range of 4.8 to 10.7 m<sup>3</sup> per ha (SBB, 2016). This can be higher in cases where the logging compartments are entered multiple times within the

cutting cycle. In Suriname the suggested cutting cycle of 25 years is based on the outcome of CELOS silvicultural experiments in the past (Werger et al., 2011). This implies that for a concession, the AAC in m<sup>3</sup> equals the total net productive area in hectares divided by 25 years, multiplied by 25m<sup>3</sup> ha<sup>-1</sup>. This net productive area is far less than the gross area as mentioned in the concession license and is estimated to ca. 80% of the gross productive area, because of ecological buffer zones and unproductive vegetation types (vicinity of creeks, rivers, steep slopes, swamps).

Concession operators practicing controlled logging may seek third party certification to demonstrate their commitment to SFM. Roughly 1.6 million ha have been issued as logging concessions and other forestry production titles, 737,500 ha as community forest and 168,400 ha as Incidental Cutting Licenses (ICL) (SBB, 2016). Of the total area, 396,090 ha (25%) was FSC certified in late 2015 (ibid). At present, there are no ongoing activities to expand the forest area under (FSC) certification (SBB et al., 2017b). When calculating the EF of forest degradation, the results suggested that the FSC and controlled management systems have significantly lower emissions than the conventional management systems. More data will be collected to assess this difference.

Controlled logging results in higher production levels (SBB, 2016), closer to the AAC. The timber extraction rate may thus not be reason for concern in the view of forest degradation. Forest that has been logged at these modest rates are assumed to be able to recover in due time and to restock and restore the associated carbon stocks. Based on Roopsind et al. (2017), there is only 67% probability that timber stocks will recover in 25 years to pre-logging levels after careful harvests of 25 m<sup>3</sup> ha<sup>-1</sup>. This indicates that the logging cycle or the AAC might need to be revised.

In 2016 the total roundwood production in Suriname was 573,000 m<sup>3</sup>, of which 265,000 m<sup>3</sup> was exported and 308,000 m<sup>3</sup> was locally processed by the sawmill industry in the country. The recovery rate of rough sawn wood in sawmills in Suriname is 45%. When producing export quality sawn wood, the recovery rate decreases to between 25-30%. Within a period of 17 years from 2000-2016, the roundwood production in the country increased with about 300%, and the sawn wood production increased with about 200%. In the same period, the export of roundwood increased with about 1,400%. Timber export statistics show that in the past 10 years the assortment roundwood contributes more than 80% of the timber export volumes. Due to foreign investments, mainly Asian, most of the roundwood (about 85%) is exported to Asia. The expectation is that in the coming 5 years the timber production will increase steadily.

While infrastructure is included as a driver of deforestation, it should be mentioned that in the past and the present a number of main access roads were constructed primarily for logging purposes. A recent example is the 50 km long road, which was constructed in the period 2016-2017 to the village Pusugrunu.

Table 12. Summary of policies and plans relevant for forestry

Forestry
<p>Regulating policies and laws: Forest Management Act (1992), National Forest Policy (2006), Strategic Action Plan for the Forest Sector, Code of Practice.</p> <p>National Development Plan 2017-2021: The policy related to forestry in this period is focused on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increasing the national wood production</li> <li>2. Increasing the contribution of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) to the national economy</li> <li>3. Complete the REDD+ readiness phase and move on to REDD+ implementation.</li> </ol> <p>Draft National REDD+ Strategy: The REDD+ strategy aims to further stimulate the sustainable management of forests. Specifically, the following measures are included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phasing out extensive management and stimulating Reduced Impact Logging, as already implemented by FSC-certified companies</li> <li>2. Completing and implementing Practice Guidelines for sustainable logging</li> <li>3. Revising forestry levies so that sustainable management is stimulated (this can possibly be linked to the financial compensation of the REDD+ program)</li> <li>4. Increasing the efficiency of local wood processing</li> <li>5. Streamlining concession policy, especially of the ministries responsible for mining and logging concessions</li> <li>6. Reviewing the issuance policy of concessions and community forests</li> <li>7. Revision of the Forest Management Act.</li> </ol> <p>Implementing the National Forest Monitoring System will ensure that transparent and up-to-date information is available. A project has been started to specifically optimize the monitoring and control of logging, in order to be able to measure the impact of logging on the forests, but also to significantly improve the services to the forestry sector.</p>

#### 4.7.4 National Development Plan and REDD+ priorities

Within the National Development Plan 2017-2021, climate change is considered within the pillar on environmental protection, but it is also a part of all other pillars. On climate change, the National Development Plan indicates that the country will work on attracting further investments committed to increase reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, using energy and other resources more efficiently, and minimizing the loss of biodiversity and damage to ecosystems. REDD+ is mentioned in the National Development Plan 2017-2021 as a tool for sustainable

development. The plan lays out a detailed set of priorities and actions to address economic and climatic change and it asserts that “the compensation for conserving Suriname’s pristine tropical forest is part of the international climate change programme, under which REDD+ is inserted, and contributes to the growth and development through a programmatic approach for conserving and where necessary restoring Surinamese forest”.

Both the National Development Plan 2017-2021 and the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy make clear that even with REDD+ implementation, Suriname will need the extractive industry to boost the economy and development, so that the country can recover from the economic difficulties. As mentioned in the above section 4.6.2 on forest and mining, new large scale gold mining projects are planned and the government intends to increase the national revenues related to large scale mining through participation in these projects. When it comes to small scale gold mining, the government will focus on regulation and organization of the activities so that they are carried out in a more controlled way, in a restricted area, with improved technology and with reduced impact on the environment. This is part of the draft National REDD+ Strategy’s strategic line 3, and specific measures are mentioned in table 11 above.

The restoration of already mined out areas is a priority activity within the National Development Plan 2017-2021 and the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy. In addition, the country is currently initiating a Global Environment Facility (GEF) program, coordinated by the Ministry of Natural Resources (NH) in close collaboration with the National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS) to improve the management of artisanal and small-scale gold mining in Suriname (ASGM) and promote uptake of environmentally responsible mining technologies to reduce the negative effects on biodiversity, forests, water, and local communities, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The National Forest Policy (2005) includes many elements that are re-emphasized in the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy strategic line 2 on forest governance. By further promoting the application of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL), integrating RIL-C within the draft Code of Practice, and implementing this Code while creating an enabling environment for its implementation through broad capacity strengthening activities and institutional strengthening, could reduce the emissions due to logging with 30-50% (Griscom et al., 2014). However, this still needs to be assessed for Suriname’s context. Also special attention is given to the opportunity of adding value to timber for the country and enabling in-country timber processing in a more efficient way, reducing the export of roundwood and increasing the export of processed wood. This will increase the long term carbon storage in wood products and decrease the pressure on the forest. The reduction of illegal or unplanned logging through strengthening the log tracking system and monitoring capacities is another priority within the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy.

Equally important is that the country will work towards a more sustainable, inclusive and diversified economy, less dependent on mining. In the current context, employment opportunities in the interior of the country are limited and people from marginalized communities may have no other choice than entering small scale gold mining for income. Besides a general

focus on a broader diversification of the economy, the draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy focuses on creating alternative livelihoods related to sustainable use of the forest resource. Specifically the production of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and medicinal plants, and the promotion of nature tourism and agroforestry initiatives will be stimulated.

The overarching goal of REDD+ in Suriname is to support Suriname's efforts to continue being a HFLD country while receiving compensation for a more sustainable, inclusive, and diversified economy. The Suriname National REDD+ Strategy will be implemented allowing broad participation of stakeholders from different groups within the society. This modality is presented within the REDD+ implementation framework (draft Suriname National REDD+ Strategy).

## 5. Proposed FREL for Suriname

Being the most forested country, Suriname has a history of very low emissions related to deforestation and forest degradation. Nevertheless these emissions have increased significantly over the last six years. This can be explained by an increase in deforestation, mostly due to gold mining (SBB, 2017c) and an increased forest degradation due to the increasing timber production. Taking into account the foreign investments in both sectors, this trend is expected to continue and even accelerate. Therefore Suriname proposes a linear growth FREL projection.

As part of the scenario modeling process carried out in order to support the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy, different future scenarios and their impact on the forest cover were identified, providing an indication of the possible amount of deforestation in the future. One of these scenarios was the Development scenario, where future planned projects have been taken into account. During the process of creating the scenarios, all the main projects that have the probability to be carried out were considered. The National Development Plan of 2017-2021 was used as a guide, but especially in-depth dialogues were carried out with different stakeholders (see annex 2), such as the Suriname Planning Office and the Ministry of Natural Resources, who were involved in order to have a broad view on the expected development. Two new bauxite mines, two new gold mines, some planned infrastructure, four development areas and several planned oil palm plantations are projects that were taken into account in the Development scenario model. At the moment the scenarios are still under construction, as part of the finalization of the Suriname National REDD+ Strategy. However, the preliminary results of the Development scenario indicating the deforestation of all the planned projects, provided results which are very similar to the linear projection used to establish the FREL (see annex 6). Also the timber production is expected to continue increasing until it reaches the maximum annual sustainable production of 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> (SBB, 2017d).

$$\text{t CO}_2 \text{ emission year}^{-1} = 963,819 \times \text{year} - 1,928,432,063$$

Equation 8. Linear trend for FREL

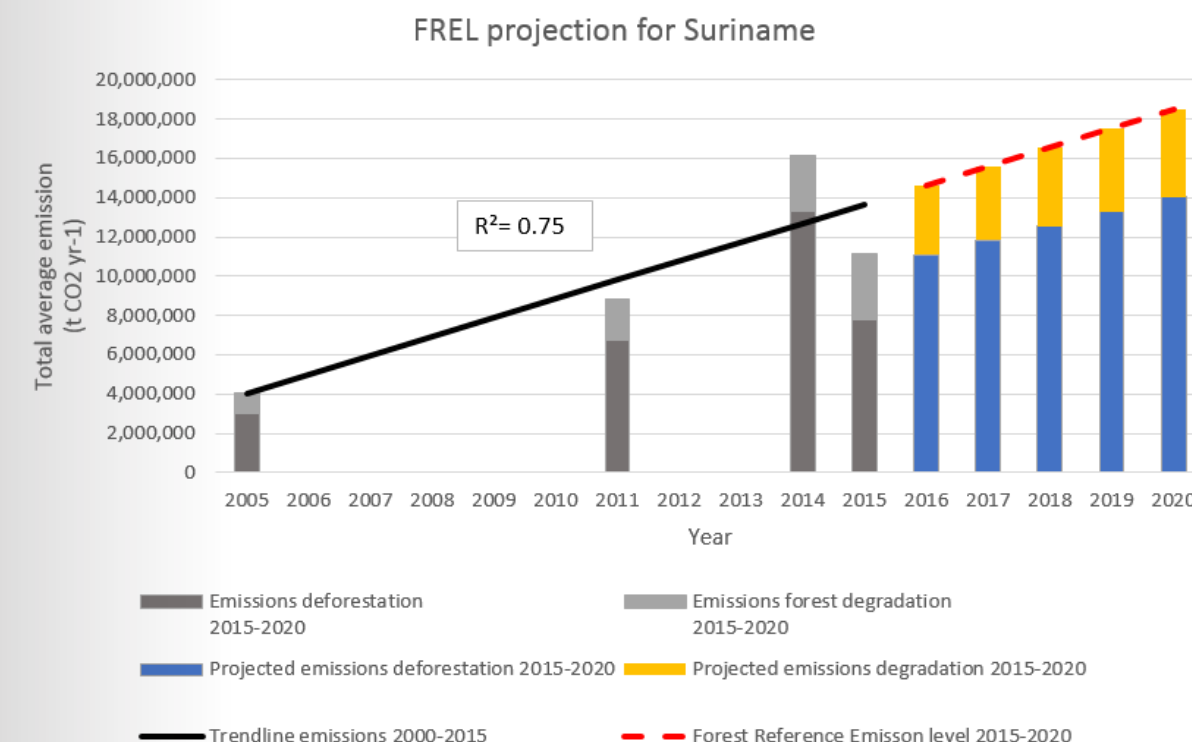


Figure 8 FREL projection for Suriname - The annual emissions at year 2005 and 2011 respectively represent the time periods 2000 - 2009 and 2009 - 2013

Table 13. FREL for Suriname, expressed in yearly CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Year	Projected future emissions from deforestation and degradation	Projected emissions from deforestation	Projected emissions from degradation
2016	14,627,465	11,099,636	3,527,828
2017	15,591,284	11,831,003	3,760,281
2018	16,555,103	12,562,370	3,992,733
2019	17,518,922	13,293,737	4,225,185
2020	18,482,741	14,025,104	4,457,638
Total	82,775,515	62,811,850	19,963,665



## 6. Proposed improvements

According to the stepwise approach in setting out the FREL, Suriname submits the current report with the expectation that several aspects of the FREL will require further improvement in the near future, once more accurate data is available. This relates to various components of the FREL report.

The improvements that will be made to this FREL in the next submission are closely related to the activities planned within the NFMS roadmap (SBB, 2017):

### A) Forest degradation

#### A.1 Mining

While deforestation due to gold mining is the main source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the AFOLU sector for Suriname, no data are yet available to assess the degradation related to mining. Forest degradation due to mining is caused by two components: 1) deforestation due to gold mining smaller than 1 hectare, and 2) higher tree mortality in the buffer zone around the deforested areas.

In a study within the Guiana Shield, Rahm et al. (2017) found that mining areas between 0.5 and 1 ha contribute in average only 0.5% to the total deforested area within the period 2001-2014. Therefore, including gold mining areas smaller than 1 hectare will probably have a limited impact on the FREL. Hence during the coming period, studies are carried out to assess forest degradation in the buffer zone around deforested areas, using three methodologies:

- Assessment of the state of fragmentation of the landscape (Haddad et al., 2015) related to small scale gold mining, which is often following the creek patterns (SBB et al., 2017b);
- Assessment of long time series of satellite observations to track forest disturbance using the Break detection For Additive Seasonal Trends (BFAST) (Verbesselt et al., 2010);
- The methodology developed by Brown and Mahmood (2016) in Guyana, assessing tree mortality in a buffer area zone around deforested areas.

Based on the results of these studies and further expert consultation, a national methodology to assess forest degradation related to mining will be developed, especially if these emissions contribute more than 10% to the total emissions. Emissions contributing less than 10% are considered to be insignificant, according to the World Bank's Carbon Fund, and do not need to be accounted for.

#### A.2 Logging

##### i) Legal logging

Estimations for emissions related to legal logging within this document are based on a field research carried out in 2017, in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC). While this research provides a statistically sound estimate of the total emissions, for monitoring purposes more detailed information will be needed. As mentioned before (section 4.5.1), the Sustainable Forestry Information System (SFISS) is currently established as an inherent subsystem of the

National Forest Monitoring System.<sup>19</sup> Within the SFISS, which will be operational by the end of 2018, impact indicators that are easy to measure will be added to the daily control that the SBB forest guards are carrying out. This will provide more information on the difference in impact between different management types (Reduced Impact Logging, controlled logging and conventional logging), and will be used as a day-to-day instrument to guide the sector towards sustainable forest management. This new information can also improve the estimations provided in the FREL. The LogTracking database of the SBB will be strengthened through the same project, which will result in a lower uncertainty related to timber extraction.

##### ii) Illegal logging

While it is estimated that illegal logging could contribute up to 20% to the total timber production in Suriname (Playfair, 2007), it was not included in this FREL, because after confiscation this timber might be registered as legal logs, which could lead to double accounting. Therefore a more conservative approach was followed. Within the SFISS as mentioned above, measures will be taken to avoid this double accounting and improve registration of illegal logging. Concretely the following steps are being taken:

- Review and improvement of the logging monitoring procedures in dialogue with the private sector: first draft is finished
- Regional exchange on lessons learnt related to monitoring Sustainable Forest Management between Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana and Brazil- this will take place in June
- Develop and test new database and front-end applications from July- October
- Field and classroom trainings in the new procedures will take place in November
- Launch of the first version of SFISS by December 2018.

The newly developed Near Real Time Monitoring (NRTM) component of the NFMS provides independent area estimates of illegal logging based on Sentinel 2A satellite images and the feedback mechanisms related to the NRTM will also be incorporated into the new SFISS system. These components of the SFISS system will make it possible to add an estimate of illegal logging to an improved version of the FREL.

#### A.3 Shifting cultivation

The increase in area subjected to shifting cultivation (pioneer shifting cultivation) was measured while monitoring the changes in forest cover, but high uncertainty of the data indicates that this class needs a more detailed study (SBB, 2017c). Within the NFMS an additional study will be carried out to assess the net emissions related to the conversion of primary forest to shifting cultivation. Combining a multi-temporal spatial analysis with field measurements linked to socio-geographic characteristics could provide concrete examples for land use measures, combining the advantages of both traditional and modern knowledge.

<sup>19</sup> This program has support from IDB and CATIE as part of the regional project *Mechanisms and Networks for Technology Transfer Related to Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean*. <https://www.catie.ac.cr/en/catie-news/2971-forest-monitoring-technical-support-to-benefit-suriname.html>

### **B) National Forest Inventory**

The carbon stocks used within this FREL are determined based on fieldwork carried out in 208 plots scattered over the country, where data was collected over different years (1970-2015) during forest inventories established for different objectives. While for now these data provide the best estimates of the country's carbon stocks, these estimations might improve significantly when a National Forest Inventory, based on a solid stratification approach, is carried out (SBB, 2017c). An NFI is a costly activity and requires in-depth planning as well as broad involvement of partner organizations (SBB, 2017). Within the NFI, information on other carbon pools such as litter and soil organic carbon will be included. Additional parameters, among others on biodiversity, will be collected and can provide insights in the co-benefits of REDD+. Information on the other REDD+ activities, such as the enhancement of carbon stocks and conservation, can also be collected within the NFI. Because of the limited number of plots within the mangrove forest and their high corresponding uncertainty, at first more field plots will be established within this forest type. This will be done in 2018-2019 with support from the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA+) project.

### **C) Validation of pantropical allometric equations**

One of the potential sources of error in the carbon stocks and emission factors, is the use of an allometric equation that is not appropriate for the geographical area, the forest type or the tree species. Within this FREL, the equation from Chave et al. (2005) was used, as this equation includes data from the region, and was validated in Guyana. During 2018, a study coordinated by CELOS will be carried out to evaluate the performance of the different pantropical allometric equations, using the methodology proposed by Alvarez et al. (2012). During this study we will for example validate the more recent allometric equations Chave et al. (2014). Based on our findings, our carbon stock and emission factor estimates might need to be updated.

### **D) Stratification**

Currently other stratification approaches are being designed, such as the method developed by Guitet et al. (2013) in French Guiana, where geomorphological landscapes are considered explanatory for the forest composition (Guitet et al., 2015), the floristic diversity (Richard-Hansen et al., 2015) and also for modeling ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration. Suriname is currently applying the FOTO method developed by Coueron, Barbier and Gautier (2006), which delineates landscapes based on elevation data. The results will go through a national validation process, whereafter the carbon stocks would be recalculated for these landscapes. This stratification approach will also be important for practical forestry planning processes.

### **E) Community-Based Monitoring, Reporting and Verification**

It is planned that in the future, the NFMS will include a component of community based monitoring (CBM/CMRV), to ensure that national and local initiatives are supporting each other. In 2018 funding is available for strengthening the capacity of some pilot forest-based communities in monitoring logging operations taking place in their community forests. The idea is that the internal governance related to the community forests will be fed with objective information for better insight in the ongoing logging activities, which will contribute to more sustainable forest management. This will partly also take place in the context of the development and implementation of the new SFISS national log tracking system, which will

include a capacity building aspect aiming to give community forest holders more tools and knowledge to monitor logging within their forest and also detect, report and prevent illegal logging.

### **F) Capacity building needs**

Within the country's process of building capacity for determining the FREL and establishing the NFMS, Suriname has focused strongly on building national expertise within its responsible institutions, supported through South-South technology exchange and collaboration with international backstopping experts. This creates an enabling environment for the sustainability of the NFMS, as a component of a broader environmental monitoring and information system. Nevertheless through the formulation of this first FREL for Suriname and earlier experiences within its NFMS, the following areas have been identified as areas for urgent further capacity building:

- Development of a cost-efficient National Forest Inventory design with statistical estimation procedures (including a Carbon Inventory but also information on the co-benefits of REDD+ and for the production sectors);
- Combining Measuring and Reporting systems at different scales (national and community) and building capacity on all those levels;
- Building one harmonized NFMS database, which provides up-to-date reports of emissions for UNFCCC GHG inventory including solid calculation methods of uncertainties, but also for reporting on criteria and indicators for e.g. CBD, FRA, ITTO. This includes methods to calculate the emission factors related to the conversion from forest land to a land use type with remaining biomass (such as agriculture, pasture);
- Further strengthening of capacity to report on the emissions caused by forest degradation through field based measurements but also through spatially explicit methods.

These capacities will need to be strengthened in order to improve future submissions for the FREL.



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## ANNEXES

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- Presentation of FREL/FRL ideas to the Suriname REDD+ Project Board 2017-08-11
- Presentation for Directors of different Ministries, Anaula 2017-09-06
- Presentation for the REDD+ Assistants Collective (RAC) 2017-10-04
- Presentation of FREL draft 2 for NIMOS and REDD+ PMU 2017-11-30
- In-depth technical FREL session for national stakeholders 2017-12-05
- Presentation for Office of the President 2017-12-12
- National FREL validation workshop (111 participants) 2017-12-15
- Consultation meeting with Maureen Playfair, CELOS 2017-12-21
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## Annex 3: Above-Ground carbon by forest type

Table 14. Above-Ground carbon (trees >5 cm dbh t C ha<sup>-1</sup>) by forest type in Suriname

Forest Type	Mean	S.E.	LL (95%)	UL (95%)	Uncertainties
All forest	157.38	3.23	151.03	163.72	4.03
Creek forest	139.51	7.37	124.78	154.23	10.55
Dry montane forest	202.26	0.00	-	-	-
Forest plantation	210.12	77.87	-	-	-
High Savanna forest	159.05	12.39	133.67	184.43	15.96
High swamp forest	109.93	9.42	83.77	136.08	23.79
Low Savanna forest	117.52	34.82	32.31	202.72	72.50
Low swamp forest	122.29	12.12	70.16	174.42	42.63
Mangrove	44.41	17.15	-	-	-
Moist Evergreen forest	161.75	4.57	152.71	170.78	5.59
Montane forest	198.11	15.53	164.27	231.96	17.08
Periodic swamp forest	165.47	13.15	134.38	196.55	18.79
Riparian forest	112.88	0.00	-	-	-
Savanna forest	210.87	17.24	173.32	248.43	17.81
Secondary forest	113.81	33.94	30.76	196.87	72.97
Swamp forest	127.47	31.33	50.81	204.14	60.14
Unknown	167.43	6.40	154.52	180.34	7.71



Table 15. Above-Ground carbon (t C ha<sup>-1</sup>) by carbon pool in forest type in Suriname

Type of forest	Palms	Lianas	Lying dead wood	Standing dead wood
Creek forest	3.53	3.01	6.29	1.35
Dry Montane forest	0.11	4.56	3.02	1.65
High savanna forest	0.03	1.06	14.91	4.65
Low Savanna forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.99
Low Swamp forest	2.30	8.30	3.40	2.17
Mangrove	0.00	0.00	0.79	2.11
Moist evergreen forest	1.05	2.99	9.81	2.97
Periodic swamp forest	7.35	3.59	6.29	2.77
Riparian forest	0.58	0.00	3.70	2.04
Secondary forest	0.59	3.67	22.89	4.09
Swamp forest	0.01	1.62	4.81	1.13
High swamp forest	7.63	2.66	0.00	1.90
Montane forest	0.05	1.57	0.00	0.00

#### Annex 4: Overview of the inventory plot database

Table 16. Forest inventory plots included for carbon stock estimation in Suriname

Forest component	Source or study where data was collected	Sampling Unit areas (size and shape)	Minimum dbh recorded
Trees (n= 104451)	FAO (1975), provided by SBB	9,039 small plots established in 4 areas of the country 0.04 ha circular plots	dbh >= 25 cm
	Study by Sofie Ruyschaert (SR) provided by SBB	4 plots 1 ha, rectangular plots 0.01ha, rectangular plots	dbh>=10cm dbh>=5cm
	Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) implemented by SBB	31 Sampling Units, area 1.6ha 32 rectangular plots per SU of 0.01 ha 16 rectangular plots per SU of 0.01 ha	dbh>=20cm dbh>=10cm dbh>= 5cm
	Forest carbon stock measurements (FCAM). Pilot Carbon project implemented by SBB	12 transects, 1.5 ha, transect conformed by three rectangular plots (each 0.5 ha) Subplots of 0.375 ha	dbh>= 20cm (1.5ha) dbh>= 5cm (0.375ha)
	Olaf Banki (OB) provided by SBB	39 plots, 1 ha varying shape	dbh >= 10cm
	Bruce Hoffman (BH) provided by SBB	5 plots 1 ha (4 plots) rectangular 0.5 ha (1 plot) rectangular	dbh>=10cm
	Kabo, provided by CELOS	30 plots 1 ha square 100x100m	dbh>= 15cm
	MLA, provided by CELOS	18 rectangular transects 40 m per transect, various area size	dbh >=25 cm

Forest component	Source or study were data was collected	Sampling Unit areas (size and shape)	Minimum dbh recorded
	Nassau, provided by CELOS	1 plot 1 ha square 100x100m	dbh>=15 cm
	TEAM (CSN) managed by CELOS and Conservation International	5 plots 1 ha square 100x100m	dbh >10 cm
	Marchall Kreek (MK) provided by CELOS	6 plots 1 ha (3 plots), each 1 ha plot consist of 16 squares of 25m X 25 m 0.2 ha (3 plots), each 0.2 ha plot consist of 5 squares of 25m X 25 m	dbh>=20 cm dbh 5-20 cm
Lianas (n= 2266)	Forest carbon stock measurements (FCAM). Pilot Carbon project implemented by SBB	12 plots 0.375 ha, transect, unknown shape	dbh>= 1cm dbh>= 2 cm
	Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) implemented by SBB	33 SU with 8 plots each 0.32 ha, 4 square subplots of 0.01 ha, per plot	dbh>= 5 cm
	Bruce Hoffman (BH) provided by SBB	4 plots 1 ha (4 plots) rectangular	dbh >10 cm
	TEAM (CSN) managed by CELOS and Conservation International	5 plots 1 ha 100x100m	dbh >10cm
Palms (n=2650)	Forest carbon stock measurements (FCAM). Pilot Carbon project implemented by SBB	6 transects 0.375 ha, measures in 2 square subplots of 0.125 ha each 0.5 ha 6 transects, measures in all plots 0.375 ha, 5 transects, measures in 2 square subplots of 0.125 ha	dbh 5-20cm dbh >= 20cm Stem H >= 1.3 m

Forest component	Source or study were data was collected	Sampling Unit areas (size and shape)	Minimum dbh recorded
	Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) implemented by SBB	31 plots (clusters) 0.01 ha rectangular plots, 4 subplots in each cluster	stem H ≥ 1.3m
	Olaf Banki (OB) provided by SBB	20 plots 1 ha, varying shape	dbh >= 10cm
	Bruce Hoffman (BH) provided by SBB	1 ha (2 plots) rectangular 0.5 ha (1 plot) rectangular	dbh >= 10cm
	Study by Sofie Ruyschaert (SR) provided by SBB	4 plots 1 ha, unknown shape 1 ha 1 subplots, unknown shape	dbh >= 10cm dbh 0-10 cm
Standing dead wood (n=3244)	Forest carbon stock measurements (FCAM). Pilot Carbon project implemented by SBB	12 plots 0.5 ha, rectangular plots	dbh >= 5cm
	Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) implemented by SBB	31 plots 0.02 ha, square plots	dbh >= 10cm
Lying dead wood (n=608)	Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) implemented by SBB	29 plots 0.01 ha, square subplots	dbh >= 10cm

**Annex 5: Overview of the classes in the Deforestation maps and Post-deforestation LULC maps**

Table 17. Definitions of LULC classes

Deforestation classes	LULC classes	Definition
Deforestation	Secondary vegetation	Areas that, after the complete removal of forest vegetation, are in advanced process of regeneration of shrub and/or tree vegetation.
	Agriculture	Extensive areas with a predominance of annual cycle crops, such as grains, banana, vegetables, etc., with use of high technological standards, such as use of certified seeds, inputs, pesticides and mechanization, among others.
	Pasture	Pasture areas in current production process with a predominance of herbaceous vegetation, and between 90% and 100% coverage of grass species.
	Urban area	Urban patterns formed by population concentration, villages, towns or cities with differentiated infrastructure from rural areas, with density of streets, houses, buildings and other public facilities.
	Infrastructure	All roads excluding roads within another LULC class and man-made waterways such as irrigation canals, access ways to oil wells, etc.
	Mining area	Mining areas in current production process of gold mining (industrial and artisanal mining), sand mining, house material mining, bauxite mining, oil mining and gravel mining.
	Burned area	Areas that have recently been burned.
	Other	These areas that do not fall under any of all LULC classes, with different coverage pattern such as savannas and others.

Table 18. Land Use Change matrix between 2000 and 2009 based on map areas

		LULC2009								
		AGRICULTURE	BURNED AREAS	FOREST	INFRA-STRUCTURE	MINING	OTHERS	PASTURE	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	URBAN
Basemap 2000	AGRICULTURE (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	BURNED AREAS (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	FOREST	871	243	15026292	2767	19519	169	148	14736	846
	INFRA-STRUCTURE (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	MINING (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	OTHERS (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	PASTURE (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	1	---	---	61	61	---	---	192743	183
	URBAN (NA)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Table 19. Land Use Change matrix between 2009 and 2013 based on map areas

		LULC2013									
		AGRICULTURE	BURNED AREAS	FOREST	INFRA-STRUCTURE	MINING	OTHERS	PASTURE	SECONDARY VEGETATION	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	URBAN
LULC 2009	AGRICULTURE	706	0	0	10	2	0	0	125	0	30
	BURNED AREAS	0	238	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
	FOREST	555	1759	14994265	4786	22360	95	28	123	1752	516
	INFRA-STRUCTURE	2	0	0	2407	231	0	0	180	0	7
	MINING	3	0	0	70	19041	1	0	457	0	21
	OTHERS	0	53	0	100	4	5	0	7	0	1
	PASTURE	0	0	0	2	0	0	145	2	0	0
	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	7	0	0	80	365	0	54	4	206759	222
	URBAN	14	2	0	41	14	0	1	38	0	917



Table 20. Land Use Change matrix between 2013 and 2015 based on map areas

		LULC 2015									
		AGRICULTURE	BURNED AREAS	FOREST	INFRA-STRUCTURE	MINING	OTHERS	PASTURE	SECONDARY VEGETATION	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	URBAN
LULC2013	AGRICULTURE	1286	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BURNED AREAS	0	2052	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FOREST	685	452	14963545	5399	19843	95	70	229	2939	987
	INFRA-STRUCTURE	0	0	0	7333	4	92	0	44	0	26
	MINING	0	0	0	8	41932	0	0	31	0	0
	OTHERS	0	0	0	0	0	86	0	7	0	8
	PASTURE	0	0	0	0	0	0	228	0	0	0
	SECONDARY VEGETATION	0	0	0	0	46	0	0	891	0	4
	SHIFTING CULTIVATION	241	0	0	218	439	8	157	0	206749	684
	URBAN	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	1709

## Annex 6: Background information on existing future scenarios for deforestation and forest degradation

### 1. Modeling scenarios for future deforestation

Suriname is currently in the REDD+ preparation phase, in which the institutional frameworks are strengthened and the National REDD+ Strategy is developed. An important part of this phase, is the development of spatial explicit scenarios. This activity was carried out as a multi departmental approach, where the expected impact of the National Development Plan 2017-2021 on the forest cover has been discussed.

The results of the spatial explicit for scenarios of future deforestation are relevant for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy and should be comparable with the Forest Reference Emissions Level (FREL).

A land use change model was developed within Dinamica EGO to simulate scenarios. The three scenarios that were identified are:

1. Business As Usual (BAU) scenario: the assumption in the BAU scenario is that there will be no major differences in economic, technological and political development. The deforestation rate will remain stable and there will be no REDD+ implementation;
2. Development scenario: the assumption here is that the development projects which are included in the Development Plan 2017-2021 will be carried out, except the projects with reforestation activities;
3. Development with REDD+ scenario: the assumption in this scenario is that the development projects which are included in the Development Plan 2017-2021 will be carried out, but considering the implementation of the REDD+ National Strategy.

The scenarios were simulated from 2015 till 2035, with an interval of 5 years in between. It should be noted that the BAU scenario and the REDD+ scenario have comparable results (Table x-1). This can be explained because of the historically low deforestation rate. Nevertheless, currently there is an ongoing increase in the mining and logging sector and a number of large land conversion projects have been initiated. This indicates that the expected future projection if no REDD+ activities are carried out, will be closer to the development scenario than to the BAU scenario.

Table 21. Results of the modeling of the future deforestation models

	BAU	Development	REDD+
<b>Deforestation 2015-2035 (ha)</b>	407,772	656,290	400,267
<b>Average annual deforestation based on scenarios (ha per year)</b>	15,588	28,013	15,212

We expect the deforestation to increase gradually, and therefore, the projected average annual deforestation rate for the Development scenario for the period 2015-2035 will not be reached during the FREL-period 2015-2020. Table x-2 shows the projected increase in deforestation based on the country's FREL. Rehabilitation of deforested area has not been included in the REDD+ scenario, but might become necessary to maintain the country's 93% forest cover.

Table 22. Results of the modeling of the future deforestation models

Year	Emissions deforestation (t CO2)	Projected deforested area (ha) based on FREL
2016	10,424,074	13,773
2017	11,109,668	14,680
2018	11,795,262	15,588
2019	12,480,855	16,495
2020	13,166,449	17,403

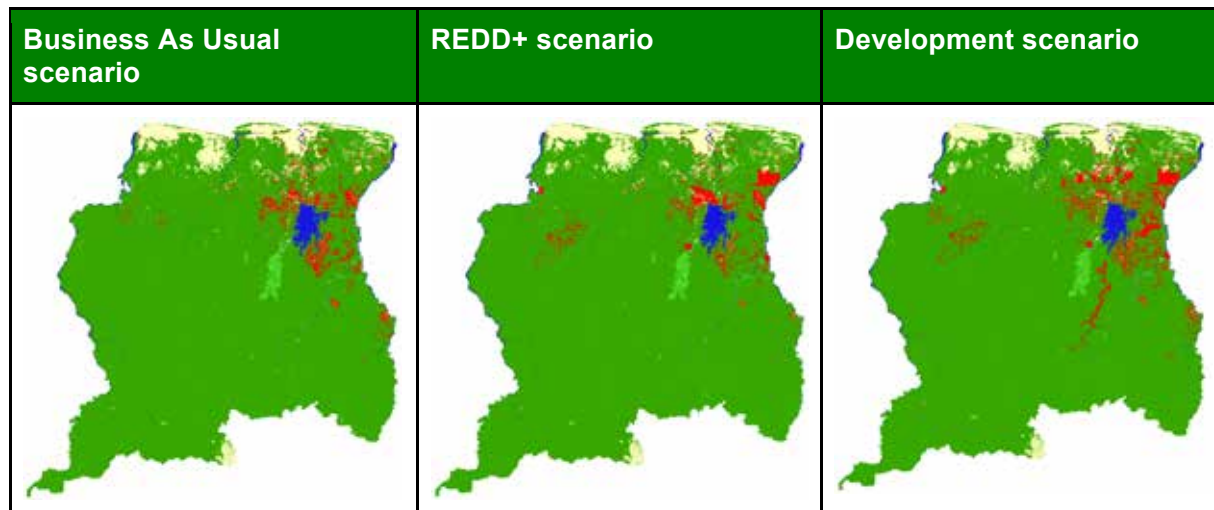


Figure 9. Overview of the three scenarios for the period 2015-2035

## 2. Modeling future scenarios for forest degradation due to timber logging

While no spatial explicit scenarios for future forest degradation prediction are available, the projected FREL can be compared with the emissions based on the projected timber production which are part of the yearly analysis of the forest sector reports (reports can be found on: <http://sbbsur.com/bosbouw-economische-diensten/statistieken/>). Within this projection, it was assumed that the timber production will keep on increasing til the maximum sustainable annual timber production has been reached. To make sure that the production does not exceed the maximum sustainable annual timber production of 1,000,000 m3 (leading to more forest degradation), additional measures need to be implemented.

When comparing these projections with the FREL projected timber production, the results show that the FREL projection has been conservative. Based on the real timber production of the period 2016-2020 the projection will be updated for the next submission of the FREL.

Table 23. Projected timber production in scenario and in FREL

	Projected Timber Production (m3)	FREL projected Timber Production (m3)
2016	650,000	560,444
2017	750,000	597,305
2018	860,000	634,165
2019	990,000	671,026
2020	1,000,000	707,887

**REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT  
OF THE PROPOSED FOREST  
REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL OF SURINAME  
SUBMITTED IN 2018**





## SUMMARY

This report covers the technical assessment of the voluntary submission of Suriname on its proposed forest reference emission level (FREL), in accordance with decision 13/CP.19 and in the context of results-based payments. The FREL proposed by Suriname covers the activities “reducing emissions from deforestation” and “reducing emissions from forest degradation”, which are among the activities included in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70. For its submission, Suriname developed a national FREL. The FREL presented in the original submission, for the reference period 2016–2020, corresponded to 14, 441, 113, 15, 390, 853, 16, 340, 593, 17, 290, 333 and 18, 240, 073 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub> eq) for the respective years. As a result of the facilitative process during the technical assessment, the FREL was modified to 14, 627, 465, 15, 591, 284, 16, 555, 103, 17, 518, 922 and 18, 482, 741 t CO<sub>2</sub> eq/year for 2016–2020, respectively. The assessment team notes that the data and information used by Suriname in constructing its FREL are transparent, complete and in overall accordance with the guidelines contained in the annex to decision 12/CP.17. This report contains the assessed FREL and a few areas identified by the assessment team for future technical improvement, in accordance with the provisions on the scope of the technical assessment contained in the annex to decision 13/CP.19.

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## I. Introduction and summary

### A. Overview

**1.** This report covers the technical assessment (TA) of the submission of Suriname on its proposed forest reference emission level (FREL),<sup>1</sup> submitted on 8 January 2018 in accordance with decisions 12/CP.17 and 13/CP.19. The TA took place (as a centralized activity) from 19 to 23 March 2018 in Bonn and was coordinated by the UNFCCC secretariat.<sup>2</sup> The TA was conducted by two land use, land-use change and forestry experts from the UNFCCC roster of experts<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the assessment team (AT)): Mr. Craig Elvidge (New Zealand) and Mr. Mohan Poudel (Nepal). In addition, Mr. Thiago Mendes, an expert from the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, participated as an observer<sup>4</sup> during the centralized activity in Bonn. The TA was coordinated by Mr. Peter Iversen (UNFCCC secretariat).

**2.** In response to the invitation of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and in accordance with the provisions of decision 12/CP.17, paragraphs 7–15, and its annex, Suriname submitted its proposed FREL on a voluntary basis. The proposed FREL is one of the elements<sup>5</sup> to be developed in the implementation of the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70. The COP decided that each submission of a proposed FREL and/or forest reference level (FRL), as referred to in decision 12/CP.17, paragraph 13, shall be subject to a TA in the context of results-based payments, pursuant to decision 13/CP.19, paragraphs 1 and 2, and decision 14/CP.19, paragraphs 7 and 8.

**3.** Suriname's submission is supported by six annexes, which enhanced transparency: a list of contributors to the submission (annex 1); multi-stakeholders involved in the land-use and land-cover mapping and scenario development (annex 2); above-ground carbon (in t carbon (C)/ha) by carbon pool for forest types in Suriname (annex 3); an overview of the inventory plot database (annex 4); an overview of the classes included in the deforestation maps and post-deforestation land-use and land-cover maps (annex 5); and background information on future scenarios of deforestation and forest degradation (annex 6).

**4.** Suriname's FREL was constructed and the submission written in-country by a national team, bringing together the most robust national forest-related data available with policy goals for the country's future. The purpose of the FREL is to obtain result-based payments for REDD-plus<sup>6</sup> implementation with a view to shifting the current mining paradigm in Suriname towards a more diversified, socially equitable economy in greater harmony with nature. In that way, Suriname can continue being a country with high forest cover and low deforestation in the future, with its forests offering a global service in terms of climate change mitigation.

**5.** The objective of the TA was to assess the degree to which the information provided by Suriname was in accordance with the guidelines for submissions of information on reference levels<sup>7</sup> and to offer a facilitative, non-intrusive, technical exchange of information on the construction of the FREL with a view to supporting the capacity of Suriname for the construction and future improvement of its FREL, as appropriate.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The submission of Suriname is available at <http://unfccc.int/8414>.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 7.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraphs 7 and 9.

<sup>4</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 9.

<sup>5</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(b).

<sup>6</sup> In decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, the COP encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities: reducing emissions from deforestation; reducing emissions from forest degradation; conservation of forest carbon stocks; sustainable management of forests; and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

<sup>7</sup> Decision 12/CP.17, annex.

<sup>8</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 1(a) and (b).

**6.** The TA of the FREL submitted by Suriname was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines and procedures for the TA of submissions from Parties on proposed FRELs and/or FRLs.<sup>9</sup> This report on the TA was prepared by the AT following the same guidelines and procedures.

**7.** Following the process set out in those guidelines and procedures, a draft version of this report was communicated to the Government of Suriname. The facilitative exchange during the TA allowed Suriname to provide clarifications and additional information, which were considered by the AT in the preparation of this report.<sup>10</sup>

**8.** As a result of the facilitative interactions with the AT during the TA, Suriname provided a modified version of its submission on 2 June 2018, which took into consideration the technical inputs of the AT. The modifications improved the clarity, accuracy, completeness, consistency and transparency of the submitted FREL. This TA report was prepared in the context of the modified FREL submission. The modified submission, containing the assessed FREL, and the original submission are available on the UNFCCC website.<sup>11</sup>

### B. Proposed forest reference emission level

**9.** The proposed national FREL presented in Suriname's modified submission covers development activities that are in the pipeline for the reference period 2016–2020 and corresponds to emissions of 14, 627, 465 (2016), 15, 591, 284 (2017), 16, 555, 103 (2018), 17, 518, 922 (2019) and 18, 482, 741 (2020) tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO<sub>2</sub> eq) from deforestation as well as from forest degradation due to timber logging.

**10.** The FREL is based on emissions from deforestation, defined as the direct and/or induced conversion of forest cover to another type of land cover within a given time frame, and emissions from forest degradation, defined as the human-induced or natural loss of the goods and services provided by forest land, in particular forest carbon stocks, that does not qualify as deforestation, over a determined period of time.

**11.** The FREL estimation was based on historical emission trends for the period 2000–2015. In the absence of complete and consistent annual time series data, Suriname reported four data ranges between 2000 and 2015, of unequal time intervals: 2000–2009, 2009–2013, 2013–2014 and 2014–2015.

**12.** In decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, the COP encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking a number of activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances, in the context of the provision of adequate and predictable support.

**13.** The FREL proposed by Suriname, on a voluntary basis, for a TA in the context of results-based payments, covers the activities “reducing emissions from deforestation” and “reducing emissions from forest degradation”, which are two of the five activities included in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70. Pursuant to paragraph 71(b) of the same decision, Suriname developed a national FREL covering its entire territory and incorporating all forests in the country.

**14.** The FREL includes the pools above-ground biomass, below-ground biomass and deadwood. It excludes litter and soil organic carbon in the absence of adequate data. Regarding greenhouse gases (GHGs), the FREL is based on the estimated trends in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from deforestation and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from forest degradation. Suriname shared with the AT the Excel tables showing all of its calculations and assumptions with relevant clarifications.

<sup>9</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex.

<sup>10</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraphs 1(b), 13 and 14.

<sup>11</sup> <http://unfccc.int/8414>.

## II. Data, methodologies and procedures used in the construction of the proposed forest reference emission level

### How each element in the annex to decision 12/CP.17 was taken into account in the construction of the forest reference emission level

#### 1. Information that was used by the Party in the construction of the forest reference emission level

**15.** For the construction of the FREL, Suriname used the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (hereinafter referred to as the IPCC good practice guidance for LULUCF), and the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (hereinafter referred to as 2006 IPCC Guidelines) for technical guidance.

**16.** Suriname included deforestation and forest degradation in its first national REDD-plus FREL submission. Regarding forest degradation, Suriname noted that only logging has been included so far and that it intends to include other types of forest degradation in the next FREL submission. The Party also intends to include the other REDD-plus activities (conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks) in future FREL submissions.

**17.** The FREL includes the gross emissions from deforestation, which is defined as direct and/or induced conversion of forest cover to another type of land cover, mainly due to gold mining, infrastructure development, urbanization and agriculture, and from forest degradation due to logging. Suriname applied area-based activity data (AD) for deforestation and volume-based AD for forest degradation.

**18.** On the basis of a study completed in 2017,<sup>12</sup> Suriname identified mining (71 per cent), infrastructure (15 per cent), urbanization (4 per cent), agriculture and pasture (4 per cent) and burning (3 per cent) as the main drivers of deforestation in the country. The Party does not consider forest clearance due to shifting cultivation as deforestation; instead shifting cultivation is in most cases seen as a sustainable practice used by indigenous and tribal communities. Logging is the only source of forest degradation included in the FREL. Suriname informed the AT that the other drivers of forest degradation identified (e.g. mining, shifting cultivation and fire) will be included in future FREL submissions on the basis of ongoing work on methodologies for assessing the associated emissions and removals.

**19.** The FREL presents information on the entire forest area of the country (15.2 million ha), comprising four strata: mangrove, coastal plain, forest belt and forest in the interior. The strata were derived from the combination of administrative boundaries (e.g. protected areas, southern border of the forest belt) and physical elements (e.g. natural boundaries). As a result of the facilitative exchange during the TA, in its modified submission Suriname ensured that a consistent stratification was applied for emission factors (EFs) and AD. The AT considers that this improved the accuracy and consistency of the submission and commends Suriname for its efforts.

<sup>12</sup> National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname, Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control, and UNIQUE forestry and land use. 2017. *Background study for REDD+ in Suriname: Multi-perspective analysis of drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and barriers to REDD+ activities*. Paramaribo, Suriname. Available at [https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/SUR/DDFDB+%20study%20national%20edition\\_2017-05-30.pdf](https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/SUR/DDFDB+%20study%20national%20edition_2017-05-30.pdf).

**20.** Suriname presented information on the contributions of the emissions from deforestation and forest degradation during the historical period 2000–2015, with deforestation contributing approximately 75 per cent and forest degradation due to logging contributing approximately 25 per cent of total emissions.

**21.** For its submission, Suriname applied a stepwise approach to developing the FREL, in accordance with decision 12/CP.17, paragraph 10. The stepwise approach enables Parties to improve their FRELs/FRLs by incorporating better data, improved methodologies and, where appropriate, additional pools.

**22.** Suriname used a combination of approaches 2 and 3 from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines to determine historical deforestation. Historical assessments of deforestation for the periods 2000–2009, 2009–2013, 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 were based on Landsat satellite images, which were used for the base map and all deforestation maps.

**23.** A semi-automatic method was used to determine deforested areas, which were also checked manually using the methodology described by Olofsson et al. (2014)<sup>13</sup> (see table 2 of the FREL submission). A minimum mapping unit of 1 ha was used and the deforested areas were divided into four strata (mangrove, coastal plain, forest belt and forest in the interior). The main driver of deforestation has been gold mining, which was estimated to account for about 71 per cent of the 90,322 ha deforested in the period 2000–2015. Suriname assumed a linear trend in projecting the level of deforestation for 2016–2020, which takes into account the time series 2000–2015 and assumes that foreign investment will continue in the future.

**24.** Suriname's deforestation EFs are based on the average total carbon stock of the three carbon pools (above-ground biomass, below-ground biomass and deadwood) for each of the four forest strata, assuming instantaneous oxidation of all carbon stocks (see tables 4 and 5 of the FREL submission). The used data are based on a 2017 study of 11 different forest inventory programmes.<sup>14</sup> As a result of the facilitative exchange with the AT, Suriname decided to use the default values for mangrove carbon stock from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines, owing to the lack of national estimates and high uncertainty.

**25.** Biomass in deadwood on the forest floor was estimated on the basis of tree volume and state of decay. Biomass in standing dead trees was estimated on the basis of diameter at breast height and adjusted by applying a biomass reduction factor representing 75 per cent of the individual total weight. Below-ground biomass was based on default values from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for tropical forest and assumes below-ground biomass is 24 per cent of above-ground biomass.

**26.** An allometric equation from Chave et al. (2005)<sup>15</sup> was used as it includes data from the region. Suriname mentioned that a study to evaluate the equation will be carried out in 2018, which could lead to updated carbon stock data and EFs for future FREL submissions. The AT considers this is an important area for future technical improvement that will increase confidence in future FREL submissions. Suriname used a single carbon fraction value of 0.47 t C (t dry matter)–1 from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines to convert dry matter into carbon.

<sup>13</sup> Olofsson P, Foody GM, Herold M, Stehman SV, Woodcock CE and Wulder MA. 2014. *Good practices for estimating area and assessing accuracy of land change*. *Remote Sensing of Environment*. 148: pp.42–57.

<sup>14</sup> Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control, Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname, Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center, and Anton de Kom, University of Suriname. 2017. *State-of-the-art study: Best estimates for emission factors and carbon stocks for Suriname*. Technical report. Paramaribo, Suriname. Available at [http://sbsur.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/TechnischrapportEmissionFactors\\_CarbonStocks.pdf](http://sbsur.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/TechnischrapportEmissionFactors_CarbonStocks.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Chave J, Andalo C, Brown S, Cairns MA, Chambers JQ, Eamus D, Fölster H, Fromard F, Higuchi N, Kira T, Lescure JP, Nelson BW, Ogawa H, Puig H, Riéra B and Yamakura T. 2005. *Tree allometry and improved estimation of carbon stocks and balance in tropical forests*. *Oecologia*. 145: pp.87–99.



**27.** AD for forest degradation were estimated applying the same historical periods as applied for deforestation. The volume-based AD were determined by the annual timber production, which were extracted from the records of the Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control and are published on an annual basis. The records are based on the registration that took place of all legal logs and confiscated illegal logs.

**28.** Illegal logging was not included in the FREL submission owing to lack of updated information on illegal harvesting. Earlier records indicate that 20 per cent (on average) of the total timber volume originates from illegal logging, including timber transported to Guyana. Suriname explained that this percentage includes illegal logs that were confiscated and registered and so, to avoid possible double counting, any additional illegal logging was not included in the FREL. Suriname considers this a conservative approach that is in accordance with IPCC guidance.

**29.** Suriname explained that it is developing a national forest monitoring system (NFMS), incorporating its sustainable forestry information system Suriname (SFISS) and near real time monitoring system, and believes that these subsystems will strengthen the monitoring of AD and EFs from different management regimes, including both legal and illegal logging. The AT commends Suriname for these efforts and considers this an important area for future technical improvement.

**30.** Suriname also explained that approaches to including community monitoring as part of the NFMS are being investigated with a view to ensuring that national and local initiatives support each other.

**31.** The EF for forest degradation was estimated assuming instantaneous oxidation of the direct loss in living biomass due to logging, namely the extracted logs, unextracted wood, incidental logging damage to other trees caused by tree felling, haul road establishment and the skid-trail establishment. Since the IPCC good practice guidance for LULUCF and the 2006 IPCC Guidelines do not provide enough detail on how to calculate emissions from logging activities, Suriname applied the methodology developed by Pearson et al. (2014).<sup>16</sup> According to the methodology, a total EF (in t C emitted/m<sup>3</sup> timber extracted from selective logging) is estimated as the sum of carbon from the extracted logs plus carbon from deadwood due to logging on the logging site and carbon from deadwood due to the establishment of skid trails and haul roads, all measured in t C/m<sup>3</sup> timber extracted.

**32.** To obtain the required input data, a random stratified sampling approach was conducted over the whole range of active logging concessions. Above-ground biomass was estimated using a methodology from Chave et al. (2005) without including tree height, which Suriname explained maintains consistency when calculating the above-ground biomass of dead standing, fallen and damaged trees. Skid-trail emissions were estimated using data from damaged trees detected and measured in the field. The total EF for forest degradation due to logging was estimated to be 1.58 t C/m<sup>3</sup> with an uncertainty of 15.96 per cent. The uncertainties of the EFs for carbon from extracted logs, carbon from deadwood on the logging site and carbon from deadwood due to the establishment of skid trails were 55.26, 20.62 and 4.74 per cent, respectively (see table 7 of the FREL submission). Suriname explained that the large variation between samples in the field and the small sample size (n=10) caused the high uncertainty for carbon from extracted logs.

**33.** No measurements were taken in areas of overlapping land use, mainly gold mining, because this could have resulted in an over- or underestimation of emissions from selective logging.

<sup>16</sup> Pearson TRH, Brown S and Casarim FM. 2014. Carbon emissions from tropical forest degradation caused by logging. *Environmental Research Letters*. 9(3).

## 2. Transparency, completeness, consistency and accuracy of the information used in the construction of the forest reference emission level

### Methodological information, including description of data sets, approaches and methods

**34.** The AT considers that the modified submission and the annexes provided by Suriname, together with the clarifications given during the facilitative exchange of the TA, constitute a complete, transparent and accurate description of the construction of the FREL, including the data sets, approaches and methods used. The additional scenarios modelled by Suriname also increased confidence in the FREL. Suriname also provided a detailed list of the areas requiring further development and improvement.

**35.** In its modified FREL submission Suriname made a number of improvements as a result of the facilitative exchange with the AT, which increased the accuracy, transparency and consistency of the submission.

**36.** During the facilitative exchange, Suriname provided further information on the stratification used for the construction of the FREL and it included this information in the modified submission. The Party does not have a nationally approved method for area estimation of different forest types, but a national forest inventory (NFI) is planned and other stratification approaches are being tested, including an approach that takes into consideration geomorphological landscapes and climate zones. The AT commends Suriname for these efforts and considers this an important area for future technical improvement.

**37.** Suriname increased accuracy and completeness by including emissions of non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases (i.e. CH<sub>4</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub>) from deforestation. It also increased the accuracy of the FREL submission by applying a tier 1 value for above-ground carbon for mangrove forest.

**38.** The Party ensured a consistent approach by applying the same stratification as used for EFs and deforestation to estimate carbon stocks and deforestation at the national level. Suriname presented emissions in the modified submission in t CO<sub>2</sub> eq.

**39.** The FREL does not fully coincide with the GHG inventory included in the Party's most recent national communication. Suriname explained that the emission estimates in the GHG inventory were determined before NFMS was established and were estimated on the basis of expert knowledge and research. The Party assured that for future GHG inventories the data used will be those provided by NFMS as used for the FREL. Suriname updated the national forest definition, which will be used in a consistent manner for its third national communication and other forthcoming documents.

**40.** Suriname increased transparency by adding additional information on the status and plans of SFISS and on how illegal logging can be tracked in the future. It also increased understanding and transparency by separating projected emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and by including a definition of deforestation and forest degradation in the modified submission.

**41.** Suriname used data collated from sample plots over the period 1970–2015 but has not yet implemented a full NFI owing to the costs involved. However, during the facilitative exchange, the Party expressed its intention to implement an NFI that will include information on litter and soil organic carbon while first prioritizing sample plots in the mangrove strata. The AT commends the Party for such improvements, and notes that NFI data could also be used for providing information relevant to additional activities not yet included in the FREL.

**42.** Suriname further increased the transparency of its submission by including an annex on scenario models for future deforestation and future projected forest degradation. It included a section on capacity-building and a summary table of its policies and plans. It also included a land-use change matrix for the periods 2000–2009, 2009–2013 and 2013–2015 based on mapped areas, and made other general improvements to the submission that increased understanding and transparency.

**43.** During the facilitate exchange, the AT noted that assuming instantaneous oxidation of all deadwood left in forests after logging could lead to the overestimation of emissions for years with above-average logging activities and underestimation of emissions for years with below-average logging activities. Instead, a 20-year default decay period could be applied. Suriname agreed to consider applying the default 20-year period for deadwood decaying residue from the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for future FREL submissions.

**44.** During the facilitative exchange, Suriname explained why some of the issues raised by the AT can only be addressed in future FREL submissions. The Party improved the method used to estimate the logging infrastructure factor and the logging damage factor. However, this resulted in even higher uncertainties. Suriname informed the AT that it plans to address this issue in future FREL submissions (additional information and details on Suriname's improvement plan can be found in section 6 of its modified submission).

### **Description of relevant policies and plans, as appropriate**

**45.** In response to a question raised by the AT, Suriname provided a detailed list and summary of information on domestic drivers, national circumstances, policies and plans in the modified submission. Suriname's main instrument for guiding development planning is the national development plan, which details planned social and economic development for a period of five years (2017–2021) and is based on four main areas: strengthening developmental capacity, economic growth and diversification, social progress, and the use and protection of the environment.

### **3. Pools, gases and activities included in the construction of the forest reference emission level**

**46.** According to decision 12/CP.17, annex, subparagraph (c), reasons for omitting a pool and/or activity from the construction of the FREL should be provided, noting that significant pools and/or activities should not be excluded.

**47.** The pools included in the FREL are above-ground biomass, below-ground biomass and deadwood. Litter and soil organic carbon were not included. Suriname assumed that litter contributes insignificant emissions (less than 5 per cent of the total emissions from deforestation and forest degradation), referring to Crabbe et al. (2012).<sup>17</sup> However, Suriname did not consider Crabbe et al. (2012) in relation to soil organic carbon despite the assumption that soil organic carbon holds 14 percent of the forest carbon. Suriname noted that the data used by Crabbe et al. (2012) were collected from few sample plots distributed in a limited area of the country. Given the available information, Suriname assumed annual carbon changes in soil organic carbon and litter to remain at zero (in equilibrium). However, the Party intends to undertake further studies on soil organic carbon in the future to obtain higher-tier information, on the basis of which further decisions will be taken, following the stepwise approach.

**48.** Suriname excludes litter with diameter less than 5 cm in its FREL. The AT considers that this exclusion will not have a significant impact of the forest management reference level, and the non-inclusion at this time is adequately justified by Suriname. The AT commends the Party for its efforts to obtain this information within the NFI, with the aim of including litter in the FREL as part of the stepwise approach.

**49.** The exclusion of soil organic carbon was justified by Suriname given the low level of samples and coverage. The AT commends the Party for its efforts to obtain better information on the pools in the future with the aim of including them in the FREL as part of the stepwise approach. However, the AT notes that the IPCC good practice guidance for LULUCF provides a method for estimating carbon stock changes in the omitted pool (soil organic carbon) and a corresponding default EF. Therefore, the AT considers the treatment of emissions from soil organic carbon to be an area for future technical improvement of the FREL.

**50.** Suriname reported that some drivers of deforestation and forest degradation might have resulted in emissions of non-CO<sub>2</sub> (i.e. CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O) gases. As a result of the facilitative exchange, Suriname included non-CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from deforestation due to forest fires in the modified submission. Deforestation due to forest fires accounted for 3 per cent of total deforestation during the period 2000–2015.

<sup>17</sup> Crabbe S, Somopawiro R, Hanoeman W, Playfair M, Tjon K, Djosestro M, Pinas B, Wortel V, Sanches M, Sanches C and Soetosenojo A. 2012. Results of forest carbon assessment and monitoring project Suriname. Technical report. Available at <http://sbbsur.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/FINAL-Carbonreport.pdf>.

**51.** The AT acknowledges that Suriname included the most significant activities (i.e. reducing emissions from all types of deforestation as well as from forest degradation due to timber logging) of the five activities identified in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, in accordance with its national capabilities and circumstances. The AT notes that other activities could also be significant, in particular forest degradation as a result of other drivers (e.g. mining, shifting cultivation, illegal and unsustainable harvesting/consumption of forest resources, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks). According to Suriname, lack of adequate and reliable data and limited country capacity to establish an effective monitoring system are the main reasons for the exclusion of those activities. The AT notes that combining multi-temporal spatial analysis with field measurements could help Suriname to estimate emissions and removals from other activities, and considers the inclusion in the FREL of other activities leading to forest degradation as an area for future technical improvement.

**52.** The AT notes that the exclusion of enhancement of forest carbon stocks, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and degradation due to other drivers (e.g. illegal harvesting, shifting cultivation) from the FREL appears to be conservative. Overall, the AT commends Suriname for the information provided in its submission. The AT acknowledges Suriname's intention to identify necessary improvements to the FREL submission once new, adequate data and better information become available, as part of the stepwise approach.

#### 4. Definition of forest

**53.** Suriname provided in its submission the definition of forest used in the construction of its FREL (minimum area 1 ha, minimum height 5 m at maturity and in in-situ conditions and at least 30 per cent canopy cover) and also increased the transparency of the definition in the modified submission in response to the initial findings of the AT. The definition is within the boundaries of the thresholds established in the Marrakesh Accords and is also consistent with the definition that was used by Suriname for its reporting to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

### III. Conclusions

**54.** The information used by Suriname in constructing its FREL is in overall accordance with the guidelines for submissions of information on reference levels (as contained in the annex to decision 12/CP.17). The documentation on methods, data and assumptions used, as well as the additional information provided by Suriname during the TA, facilitated a transparent and complete understanding of how the FREL was calculated.

**55.** The annexes to the FREL submission provided a significant amount of additional technical material, which increased understanding and transparency. The AT believes that the FREL was calculated in a manner consistent with the methods described. Suriname also provided a detailed list of where the submission can be improved, which is consistent with the stepwise approach.

**56.** Pursuant to decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 3, the AT identified a number of areas for future technical improvement, most of which were already proposed by Suriname in the modified submission as planned improvements to be reflected in future FREL submissions:

- (a) Validate and potentially update the stratification used for AD and EFs (see para. 36 above);
- (b) Consider implementing an NFI as part of the NFMS, including with information on other carbon pools such as litter and soil organic carbon, as well as provide information on the other REDD-plus activities (see para. 41 above);
- (c) Prioritize NFI plots within mangrove forest to minimize existing uncertainty (see para. 41 above);
- (d) Develop a national methodology to assess emissions from forest degradation related to mining and net emissions related to conversion of primary forests to shifting cultivation, combining multi-temporal spatial analysis with field measurements (see para. 51 above);
- (e) Operationalize SFISS, incorporating impact indicators, which will help to generate accurate information on the different impacts of different logging management types (see para. 29 above);
- (f) Establish near real time monitoring within SFISS to improve the registration of illegal logging so as to avoid possible double counting when assessing emissions from illegal logging (see para. 29 above);
- (g) Investigate whether emissions from soil organic carbon are significant and, if relevant, identify ways to include them in future FRELS (see para. 49 above);
- (h) Consider applying the 20-year IPCC default period for deadwood decaying in forest (see para. 43 above);
- (i) Minimize sources of error in estimated carbon stocks and EFs by validating the pan-tropical allometric equation applied in constructing the FREL (see para. 26 above).



57. In conclusion, the AT commends Suriname for showing a strong commitment to the continuous improvement of its FREL estimates in line with the stepwise approach. A number of areas for future technical improvement of Suriname's FREL have been identified in this report. At the same time, the AT acknowledges that such improvements are subject to national capabilities and policies, and notes the importance of adequate and predictable support.<sup>18</sup> The AT also acknowledges that the assessment process was an opportunity for a rich, open, facilitative and constructive technical exchange of information with Suriname.

58. The table contained in the annex summarizes the main characteristics of Suriname's proposed FREL.

<sup>18</sup> Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 1(b), and decision 12/CP.17, paragraph 10.

## Annex

### Summary of the main features of the proposed forest reference emission level based on information provided by Suriname

Main features of the FREL		Remarks
Proposed FREL (in t CO <sub>2</sub> eq/year)	14 627 465 for 2016 15 591 284 for 2017 16 555 103 for 2018 17 518 922 for 2019 18 482 741 for 2020	The FREL covers emissions from deforestation and from forest degradation  See paragraph 9 of this document
Type and duration of FREL	<b>FREL</b> = linear projection for 2016–2020 based on historical trends over the period 2000–2015	See paragraphs 10 and 11 of this document
Adjustment for national circumstances	Yes	Anticipated/planned development activities were explained to justify the adjustment  See paragraphs 9 and 34 of this document
National/subnational	National	The FREL covers the complete forest area of Suriname (15.2 million ha)  See paragraph 19 of this document
Activities included	Deforestation and forest degradation (due to logging)	See paragraph 16 of this document
Pools included	Above-ground biomass, below-ground biomass and deadwood	See paragraphs 47 of this document
Gases included	CO <sub>2</sub> , N <sub>2</sub> O and CH <sub>4</sub> for deforestation and CO <sub>2</sub> for forest degradation	See paragraph 50 of this document
Forest definition	Included	See paragraph 53 of this document
Relationship with latest GHG inventory	Data used, emission factors and some methodologies used for the FREL are not consistent with the latest GHG inventory, included in the Party's second national communication	See paragraph 39 of this document
Description of relevant policies and plans	Included	See paragraphs 42 and 45 of this document
Description of assumptions on future changes in policies	Not applicable	
Descriptions of changes to previous FREL	Not applicable	
Future improvements identified	Yes	See paragraph 56 of this document

**Abbreviations:** FREL = forest reference emission level, GHG = greenhouse gas.



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