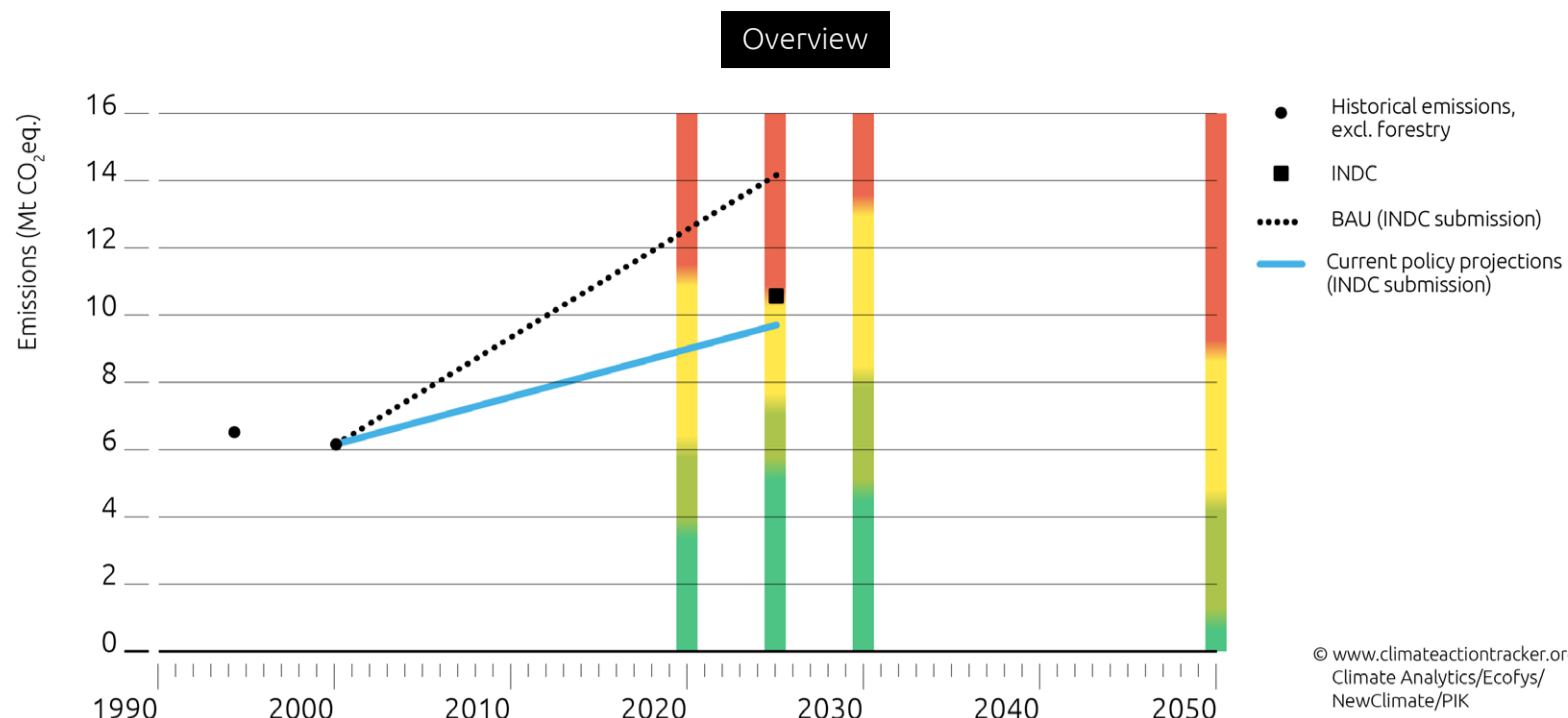


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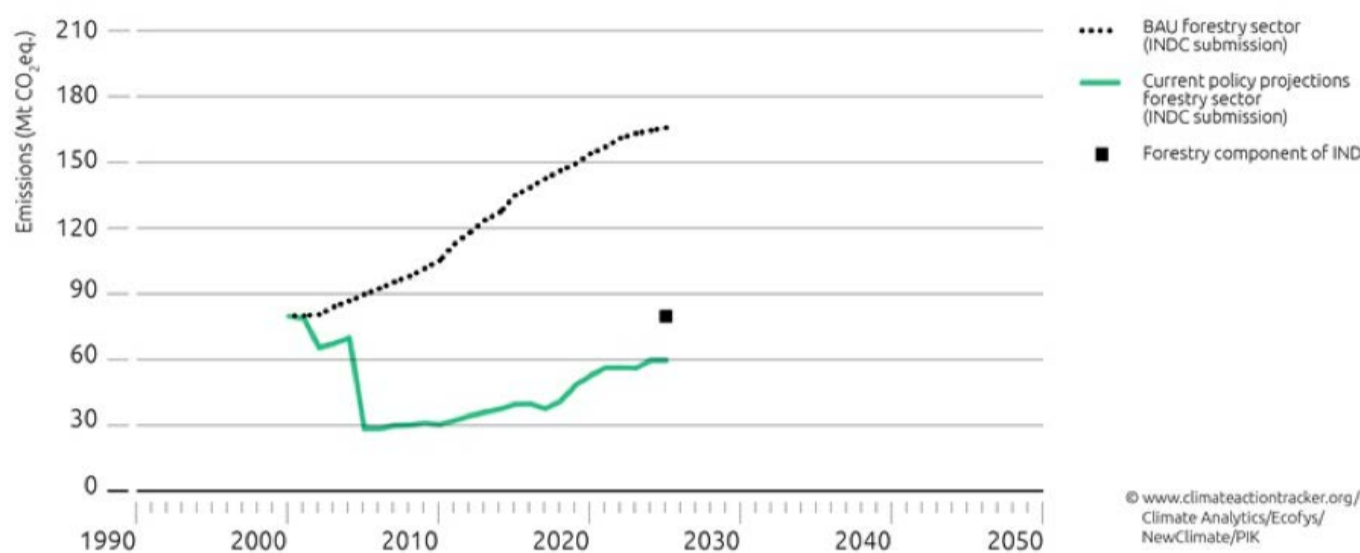
Note: The two data points in 1994 and 2000 are taken from Gabon's National Communications under the UNFCCC. Other more complete sources were not considered to be reliable. Emissions projections are simplified straight-line representations based on data provided in Gabon's INDC submission.

Assessment

On 31 March 2015, Gabon submitted its [Intended Nationally Determined Contribution \(INDC\)](#), which contains the target to reduce GHG emissions including subsectors from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) by at least 50% below business as usual by 2025. This is equivalent to 3% above 2000 levels across all covered sectors, or a 72% increase if LULUCF emissions are excluded. We did not provide an overall rating of the INDC due to insufficient information supporting Gabon's calculation of emissions from the LULUCF sector, and specifically forest degradation. Emissions from LULUCF are one order of magnitude higher than all other emissions.

Gabon did not provide Information in its INDC to support its calculation of emissions from forest degradation (such as choice of methodology, source of historical data, and/or a forest reference baseline). Forest degradation is still an emerging area of emissions abatement, and methodologies for estimating emissions differ both within and outside of the UNFCCC process. Without evidence to corroborate Gabon's calculation of forest degradation emissions, and given its significant contribution to Gabon's INDC target, a rating of the whole INDC was not possible.

Because of the uncertainties associated with current policy emissions from forest degradation, Gabon's LULUCF sector emissions (of which forest degradation accounted for 87% in 2000) are shown in a separate graph.



Additionally, the INDC includes a subsector of LULUCF which is a large source (forest degradation), but excludes another subsector which is a large sink (carbon in forest biomass). Further clarity is needed as to why some subsectors are excluded and the potential impact of accounting for all emissions/removals from this sector. We note that because LULUCF emissions in the base year 2000 were very high, this masks the fact that emissions from covered LULUCF emissions could increase from now through to 2025, as shown in the above graph, and still reach the target.

Since the INDC does not distinguish between forest degradation and other types of LULUCF emissions, it was not possible to remove the effect of forest degradation from Gabon's overall emissions profile. If all LULUCF emissions (87% of which are attributable to forest degradation) are excluded from the assessment, we would rate Gabon's INDC alone as "medium", indicating that the non-LULUCF component of Gabon's INDC is only in line with the least ambitious interpretations of a "fair" approach to reach a 2°C pathway. Most of the pledged reductions (all sectors) have already been achieved in the period 2000-2015 and the reported current policy projections reduce emissions further than the INDC.

Pledge and post-2020 contribution description

Forests cover 88% of Gabon, so emissions from the LULUCF sector have a significant influence on Gabon's emissions profile. In a business-as-usual scenario, the part of the LULUCF emissions included in the INDC is projected to account for ~163 MtCO₂e or 92% of Gabon's projected emissions in 2025.

Emissions from the LULUCF sector

In 2000 Gabon reported a forestry sink of ~75 MtCO₂e attributable to vegetation growth. However, while Gabon has put measures in place to protect the role of its forests in increasing carbon stocks, it has chosen to exclude this activity from its INDC.

Gabon has chosen to include emissions caused by a full accounting of forest degradation in its emissions profile and INDC target. Forest degradation is a net source of emissions for Gabon and is the largest single contributor to its emissions profile, accounting for ~70 MtCO₂e or 81% of emissions from all sectors in 2000.

The UNFCCC first recognised the importance of reducing emissions from forest degradation in Bali at COP 13 in 2007. Since then, forest degradation has become an established mitigation action, culminating in the adoption of the 'Warsaw Framework for REDD+' at COP 19 in 2013. The UNFCCC has provided some guidance on the methodology, measurement, reporting and verification of emissions from REDD+ initiatives, although it is not prescriptive. While other INDCs have addressed individual elements of forest degradation (by accounting for forest management, uncontrolled fires and fuelwood collection, etc.), Gabon's is the first assessed to date to undertake a full accounting of forest degradation emissions (and abatement) from all drivers, on both managed and unmanaged lands.

However, as of August 2015, we were not able to find any publicly available information on the methodology Gabon used to calculate forest degradation emissions. The methodology has not been submitted to the UN technical assessment process on proposed forest reference emission levels established by decision 12/CP.17, nor to any recognised initiatives providing guidance for measuring REDD+ results such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Carbon Fund or the Verified Carbon Standard's Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ standard.

The INDC does not contain many details on how abatement from the LULUCF sector was - or will be - measured. However, policies are already in place to reduce illegal logging and increase forestry rotation cycles, several national parks have been created and a National Plan for Land Management has been implemented. While the largest source of emissions abatement over the 2000-25 period in the LULUCF sector is avoided forest degradation, the majority of abatement was already delivered prior to 2015, as can be seen in the above graph.

Emissions from industrial sectors

We consider Gabon's emissions in the industrial sectors of its economy separately; that is, excluding emissions from the LULUCF sector. While reducing emissions, or increasing sinks, in the LULUCF sector is important, a pathway towards 2°C requires decarbonisation of the world energy system. Gabon's reliance on LULUCF abatement to achieve its INDC target could mask a significant increase in emissions in other sectors and make it more difficult for Gabon to make the eventual transition a low carbon economy.

For GHG emissions excl. LULUCF, abatement is largely achieved by reductions in fugitive emissions from gas flaring, and a reduction in emissions from electricity generation resulting from the delivery of several hydroelectricity projects in place of conventional, fossil fuel based power plants.

Emissions from industrial sectors could increase by between 60-500% by 2025 on 2000 levels without compromising Gabon's overall reduction target. The expected range of 60-500% exists because increased emissions in the industrial sectors can be offset by increased abatement in the LULUCF sector. By relying on the identified abatement potential from LULUCF activities, Gabon would be able to increase its non-LULUCF GHG emissions by almost 500% on 2000 levels. This would result in an "inadequate" rating for its contribution excluding LULUCF emissions, which is not in line with interpretations of a "fair" approach to reach a 2°C pathway.

However, if Gabon continues along its current policy projections for industrial emissions, those emissions would increase by only 60% on 2000 levels. This would maintain Gabon's "medium" rating for its contribution excluding LULUCF emissions. However the additional ambition would not be enough to achieve a rating of "sufficient", which represents a "fair share" of efforts to hold warming below 2°C

Fair share

Because of the uncertainties associated with verifying forest degradation emissions, we did not provide a rating of Gabon's total INDC. However, a rating of the 2025 contribution excluding all LULUCF emissions is "medium". The "medium" rating indicates that Gabon's proposed contribution is only in line with the least ambitious interpretations of a "fair" approach to reach a 2°C pathway. If all governments would move to the least ambitious end of the range, the aggregate of all the proposals would result in emissions well above what is required to keep warming below 2°C. This means it is not consistent with limiting warming to below 2°C

Current policy projections

While the stated overall reduction target is 50%, Gabon projects that its current policies exceed this target. As a result Gabon has some flexibility in how it achieves its target - by taking stronger action in either its LULUCF sector or in its industrial sectors.

Assumptions

Pledge and historical emissions

- Historical emissions taken from Gabon's national communications under the UNFCCC
- LULUCF emissions in the reference scenario include ~70 Mt CO₂-e attributable to forest degradation which are not included in the GHG inventory of the national communication and therefore included only in parts of the figures displayed in the INDC submission
- A scaling factor (50%/62%) is applied to each sector's reduction in 2025 from business-as-usual emissions to determine their contribution to the overall 50% reduction target.

Current policy projections

- Forest degradation as proportion of total LULUCF emissions remains constant over the 2000-2025 period.
- As stated in the INDC, energy (other) emissions increase with population growth and waste emissions increase with GDP growth.
- While not stated in the INDC, it is assumed that industrial processes emissions increase with GDP growth (as assumed for other energy sector emissions) and agriculture emissions increase with population growth (as assumed for the waste sector).

Sources

Contribution prévue déterminée au niveau national (Gabon Intended Nationally Determined Contribution), March 2015.

Actions d'Atténuation Appropiées au niveau de Gabon sur les changements climatiques (Gabon Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions), February 2010.

Seconde communication nationale du Gabon sur les changements climatiques au titre de la Convention Cadre des Nations-Unies sur les Changements Climatiques (Gabon's second national communication under the UNFCCC), December 2011.