

INFO BRIEF

UGANDA REDD+ PROCESS



Key Messages

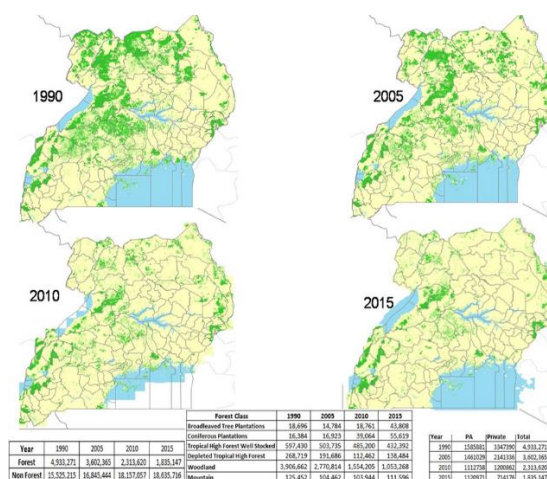
Policy Impact of overall UN-REDD support to Uganda REDD+ Readiness Process:

- ✓ The UN-REDD National Programme has increased the **general discourse on climate change** and awareness on the challenges around reducing the high rate of deforestation
- ✓ The REDD+ activities **contribute to the overall policy goal of the National Forestry Policy to ensure** an approach to the management and development of the forest sector
- ✓ The REDD+ narrative is ensuring sustainable management of forest resources, enhancing incomes from forestry resources management, and promotion of stakeholder participation in forestry resources development and management
- ✓ **REDD+ is well integrated** in the Macro-Economic Investment Plan, Mid-Term Expenditure Framework and Water and Environment Sector Investment Plan
- ✓ National REDD+ strategy is integrated into broader national vision, planning and development frameworks (Vision 2040 and NDPII), as well as **positioning REDD+ as part of the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)** under the Paris Agreement

INTRODUCTION

Uganda has the second highest deforestation rates globally. Uganda has seen a rapid decline in its forest cover, between 1990 and 2015, natural forest cover reduced from 30% to 10% of total land area. Rate of deforestation reached the peak of about 200,000ha per year in 2005 – 2010.

The highest rate of deforestation was outside Protected Areas (PA). In addition, approximately 80% Natural Forests on privately owned land wand 30% in forest and wildlife reserves was lost. Figure 1. Maps showing the trends in forest cover loss between 1990-2015



impact of forest loss in Uganda is immense. With the high deforestation rates, Uganda is losing its very high biodiversity value.

UGANDA'S BIODIVERSITY AFFECTED BY HIGH DEFORESTATION

Uganda's forests have about **1,592 species** of amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles, of which 1.1% are endemic in Uganda; and home to 4,900 species of vascular plants.

Deforestation will impact on tourism as about **61% of Uganda's tourism income** is generated by forest based national parks.

The Government views forestry as one of the key sectors to support its climate change response, hence REDD+ is one of many options that the Government considers as relevant to support its objectives. Uganda is one of 56 countries that indicate in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) the aim to implement REDD+ as part of their broader strategies to address climate change. The Government has developed the Uganda Green Growth Development Strategy (UGGDS) to operationalize green growth principles and accelerate the implementation of global development goals, Uganda Vision 2040 and the second National Development Plan (NDP II).

UN-REDD PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Given the rate of deforestation and forest degradation over the past two decades, Uganda embarked on the REDD+ readiness process in 2008 to address the rampant deforestation. This has been possible with substantive financial support from UN-REDD Programme, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), complemented by the Norwegian Government, and the Austrian Development Corporation (ADC). UN-REDD National Programme has been a major catalyst in the evolution of national discourse on efforts to reduce deforestation and supported the country in meeting the Warsaw Framework elements to meet the eligibility criteria for REDD+ results-based payments.

For example, the country has completed consultations on various analytical studies that contributed towards the development of 4 elements in accordance with the Warsaw framework. These include: i) adopting a **National REDD+ Strategy** and Action Plan; and, ii) developing a **Forest Reference Level** which was submitted to UNFCCC in January 2017. Uganda has also made good progress towards: i) the design of a robust and transparent **National Forest Monitoring System** with Measurement, Reporting,

and Verification (MRV) functionality; and, ii) setting up REDD+ national management arrangements, including proper environmental and social safeguards in a System for **Monitoring and Reporting Safeguards** (Safeguards Information System).

NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY

Through consultations with various stakeholders at both national and sub-national level, eight (8) strategic options were validated based on their abatement potential as well as the anticipated cost-effectiveness during the investment phase. The eight options are summarized in following table:

Strategy	Sub-Strategy
<i>Climate smart agriculture</i>	SLM and agroforestry practices; Rainwater harvesting with collection tank and drip irrigation; Greenhouse cultivation of vegetables.
<i>Sustainable fuelwood and (commercial) charcoal use</i>	Small-holder and community bioenergy woodlots; Small-holder and community poles and timber plantations; Improved charcoal kilns linked to bioenergy woodlots.
<i>Large-scale commercial timber plantations;</i>	Commercial eucalyptus transmission pole and timber plantation; Commercial pine pole and saw-log plantation; Improved charcoal kilns linked to plantation sites.
<i>Rehabilitation of natural forests in the landscape</i>	Closures of deforested areas for natural forest regeneration; Restoration of degraded protected natural forest (i.e. national parks and forest reserves and forests on privately owned land); Devolution of forest management through PFM and similar set-ups; Traditional/customary forest management practices.
<i>Energy efficient cooking stoves</i>	For fuelwood; For charcoal; For biogas
<i>Integrated wildfire management</i>	Integrated wildfire management.
<i>Livestock rearing in the Cattle Corridor</i>	Livestock breeding programme; Establishment of drinking water dams for livestock; Establishment of fodder agroforestry plantations.
<i>Strengthening of policy enforcement in REDD+ implementation</i>	Strengthening of policy enforcement in REDD+ implementation

NATIONAL FOREST MONITORING SYSTEM (NFMS)

UN-REDD supported the strategy formulation process through organizing multi-sectoral dialogues (media, private sector, CSOs, women, youth, religion leaders, parliamentary groups, and technical groups) and consultations on draft policies and measures and developing critical analytical studies on themes such as -the community based approaches of REDD+ as well as on reforestation potential- all which contributed evidenced based inputs into the National REDD+ strategy.

The National REDD+ Strategy has been officially launched at the Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP23) in Bonn, Germany and was well positioned to mobilize support for the investment phase.

FOREST REFERENCE EMISSIONS LEVELS (FREL):

Uganda finalized a national forest definition using a robust process that involved the methodological Task-Force and National Technical Committee with further endorsement by National Climate Advisory Committee (NCCAC). Uganda submitted a **Forest Reference Level (FRL) to the UNFCCC in January 2017.**

UGANDA'S FOREST DEFINITION

The forest definition allows Uganda to report and monitor woodlands that cover big parts of central Uganda and some parts of north and north-eastern Uganda. The definition enables Uganda to use all the available historical data and continuous use of freely available Landsat imagery. The definition enables Uganda to use the same data that is used by the National Green House Gas Inventory.

The construction of the Uganda FREL/FRL was accomplished by the establishment of the 5 building blocks including; Forest definition, Data, Scale, Scope and Construction Methodology. By December 31st 2015 forest definition for Uganda was finalized and technically endorsed by the methodological Task-Force (TF) and National Technical Committee (NTC). With all the five elements needed for the construction of the FRL discussed and agreed upon at all levels, Uganda was able finalize the construction of its initial FRL for submission to UNFCCC in January 2017. A plan for omitted significant pools, activities and gases is in place.

Uganda has one of the **more advanced NFMS in the region.** The progress with this component is a result of the support provided by UN-REDD partnership (FAO) with funding from the FCP, ADC and the Government of Uganda. The development of a forest and land use monitoring web-portal to display REDD+ information was also completed.

UGANDA'S FOREST DEFINITION

The basic build blocks of the NFMS are in place: the land based Satellite information system with capacity to Monitor land use/ cover change plus change in forest remaining forest through the National Forest Inventory. This provides information on emission factors and a basis for estimating change in carbon stocks in forest remaining forest through repeated forest measurements.

As a result of the joint support from the development partners, the Government of Uganda launched the National GHG-I system with LULUCF recognized as a key category. In addition, the establishment of the MRV platform comprised of key data providers of forest and other land category and is an important step towards broad data sharing and provision. The engagement with such a wide range of stakeholders is encouraging and will be beneficial for a wide range of sectors involved in land use.

SAFEGUARDS AND SAFEGUARDS INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS):

Uganda's Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) was completed and SESA recommendations were integrated into the REDD+ Strategy options and REDD+ implementation action plan. Furthermore, work on the establishment of SIS is on-going and will be completed in 2019. The goals and objectives of a national and sub-national system for monitoring Multiple benefits, other impacts and governance and actual safeguards have been defined.

NEXT STEPS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Uganda is currently poised to transition from REDD+ readiness to result based payments phase and would require support from the international community on a number of areas:

- ✓ **Private Sector engagement** - harnessing private sector opportunities is critical for Uganda and can contribute to both social development and forest restoration, climate smart agriculture and other measures that reduce pressure on forests.
- ✓ Land and forest governance reforms are often considered as preconditions for implementing REDD+. While there is recognition that forest governance, spatial planning, and land tenure will need to be addressed in Uganda, additional political support and **vigorous resource mobilization** are important for rapid forestry sector reform.
- ✓ **Prioritize National REDD+ strategy** implementation.



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