

UN-REDD PROGRAMME



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



UNEP

UN-REDD Programme Writing and Style Guidelines

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Introduction

House style is a crucial element of corporate branding. Consistency in the house style – spelling, punctuation, terminology and formatting – promotes an impression of corporate unity: that the organization speaks with one voice.

The document is therefore aimed at everyone involved in the preparation of UN-REDD information productions, not only copy editors. Projecting a consistent message demands a consistent style. This style guide is designed to help and encourage UN-REDD staff members to develop that consistency.

We are all responsible for ensuring that we communicate clearly and effectively, and this is particularly crucial when we communication with the outside world.

It is important that our external print and online publications are of a high professional standard to best present our activities. Using consistent language, spelling and terminology helps us to achieve this.

This style guide establishes the UN-REDD Programme’s preferred spellings and terminology. It also offers general guidance on English grammar, style and usage. There is a useful section on common editorial mistakes, together with a list of recommended reference books.

As we move towards having a new Workspace with more content available to the general public than before, we cannot assume that our audience will understand elaborative or jargon-heavy language. Some terms are also used consistently in the UN but have a different meaning in common English. Therefore, this guide also contains suggested alternatives for these words (under Writing Guidelines section b).

1. Spelling and Grammar

Spelling

For spelling style and usage questions not covered in the style guide, consult *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, twelfth edition. Where the dictionary provides alternative spellings, use the preferred spelling, the one which is printed first. Avoid American spellings, which the dictionary indicates by an asterisk. In case of a discrepancy between the style guide and *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, refer to the style guide.

The use of the letter ‘z’ in words such as ‘organization,’ ‘mobilize,’ etc. is not an Americanization.

Passive vs Active

Be direct and concise. Wherever possible, use the active voice (We managed the project successfully). This is more direct and concise than the passive voice (The project was managed successfully). The wordiness of the passive voice contributes to its lack of clarity, but the biggest problem with the passive voice is that the subject of the sentence can be left out, as in the last example.

Collective/Group Nouns

There is no firm rule about the number of a verb governed by a singular collective noun. It is best to go by the sense — that is, whether the collective noun stands for a single entity (e.g. the council was elected in March; the staff is loyal) or for its constituents (e.g., the staff are at a retreat).

Plural in form: some words that are plural in form become collective nouns and take singular verbs when the group or quantity is regarded as a unit.

Correct: 10,000 bushels is a good yield (a unit)

Correct: 10,000 bushels were created (individual items)

Split Infinitives

One of the most common forms of a split infinitive is: *To boldly go where no man had gone before*. The infinitive is *to go*. It has been split by the adverb *boldly*. Split infinitives can be distracting and misleading when they weaken the force of the verb rather than strengthening it. Use split infinitives only if needed for emphasis or readability. For example: “*They were advised to regularly check their emails*” reads clearer than “*They were advised to check regularly their emails.*”

2. Punctuation

Apostrophe

The apostrophe is used to indicate:

- possession
- omission or contraction

Possessives:

- plural nouns ending in s: add only an apostrophe, as in Reuters' data
- singular proper names ending in s: add only an apostrophe, as in Professor Jones' lecture
- joint possession, individual possession: use a possessive form only after the last word if ownership is joint - *FAO and UNEP's meeting*; after both words if the objects are individually owned – *FAO's and UNEP's communications strategies*.

Omission or Contraction:

- For formal writing, **do not use** it's (it is), (it will) it'll, I'd (I would)
- **Do not put apostrophes** in decades or abbreviations which are straight plurals: NGOs, the 1990s, CD-ROMs.
- Possessive determiners (my, our, your, his, her, their) and possessive pronouns (mine, ours, yours, theirs) do not require an apostrophe:

Brackets/Parentheses

Use brackets [] to indicate words inserted in quotations, or to enclose an explanation within the text by someone other than the author.

Parentheses () should be used sparingly since they tend to break up sentence structure and can too often be used to avoid having to organize one's thoughts.

Parenthesis and acronyms do not appear in document or Newsletter article titles.

Bullet points

Bullet points are good for simple lists or to break up lengthy, multi-part descriptions. When simple, keep them that way; avoid unnecessary conjunctions and punctuation. When they are more complex, you should use punctuation that helps clarify your meaning. See examples below.

1. When using bullet points to present a list of single words or short statements there is no need for any punctuation. Do capitalize the first word of each line.
 - Asia Pacific
 - Latin America
 - Asia
2. When using bullet points that involve a series of longer statements, but which are still not quite discrete sentences, then punctuate with semicolons.
 - Number one point is presented first in this list; (semicolon)
 - Number two, three, etc. points are presented in their following order; (semicolon; no "and")
 - The last point appears last on the list. (full stop)

Colon

Use a colon to separate a general statement from specifics, usually putting the general statement first. *Three organizations attended the meeting: FAO, UNDP and UNEP.*

- Do not capitalize the first word after a colon unless it is a proper noun.
- Colons are also used to introduce bulleted and numbered lists.

Comma

As a general rule, use commas as an aid to understanding; too many commas in one sentence can be confusing.

- Use commas after expressions of time when they begin a sentence.
- Do not use a comma before 'and' in lists.
- Use commas to separate city from country names: e.g. the meeting took place in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 22 to 24 January.
- Do not use a comma after a question mark

Semicolon

It marks a more definite break than the comma. Its use is never obligatory, because a period should always be an alternative. Use a semicolon where there is no conjunction, such as *and* or *but*. It can be used to separate two related sentences. To avoid confusion in a list that contains several commas, use a semicolon in place of commas.

Examples:

- *The report was launched by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon; the UN Special Envoy for Haiti, Bill Clinton; and the Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes.*

Dash

Beware of overuse: dashes, like parentheses, tend to break up sentence structure and can too often be used to avoid organizing one's thoughts.

Use the em dash (long dash) to set off a phrase or interjection – like this – within a sentence. Use sparingly and never more than one pair per sentence.

The en dash (short dash) is only used in the following cases:

- in a table of contents to indicate a range of paragraph numbers, e.g., 1-12
- mark items in a list, such as this one, as an alternative to a bullet.

To find the em and en dashes in Microsoft Word, go to *Insert*, click *Symbol*, then click *Special Characters*.

Definite article

The definite article is not generally used with acronyms and abbreviations; (e.g. "a representative of WMO" and "a submission from OPEC").

Exceptions include:

the UNFCCC
the GEF
the GCF

the LDCF
the CDM
the JISC

the SBSTA
the IPCC
the COP

Ellipsis

If words are omitted within a quotation, replace with ellipsis (...).

When part of the original text is omitted from a quotation, it should be replaced by an ellipsis, with a space on either side. If used at the end of an incomplete sentence, a period should not be added. If the sentence is complete, the period is set close up, followed by an ellipsis for omission.

Be especially careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning of the original text.

Full Stop (Period)

- Use plenty. They keep sentences short. This helps the reader.
- No period is required for column headings, running heads, chapter titles and short captions, or after contractions, i.e., abbreviations ending with the final letter of the word, such as *vs* for *versus*.
- Quotation marks: periods always go inside closing quotation marks. See quotation marks for examples.
- Leave only **one** letter space after a full stop at the end of a sentence. This rule applies to all punctuation.
- Use full stops for **e.g.** and **i.e.** and **M.Sc.** and **Ph.D.** **Do not** use full stops:
 - after people's titles, e.g. Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr
 - in acronyms, e.g. FAO, UK, USA
 - after a heading, caption or running head
 - in contractions, where the last letter is the same as that of the original word, e.g. Ltd (limited), St (Saint)

Hyphen

There are no simple rules for hyphen, but they should be used sparingly. Some general guidelines follow:

- Compound modifiers: hyphenate compounds when used attributively (before a noun). *An 80-year-old woman*. When using predicatively (after a noun), use space. *The woman is 80 years old*.
- Hyphenate fractions (whether nouns or adjectives): *two-thirds, four-fifths, one-sixth*.
- Hyphenate quarters of the compass: *north-west, south-east*.
- Words with prefixes such as anti-, neo-, non- and pro- should generally be hyphenated: *non-existent, pro-EU*.

- Hyphenate all nouns formed from prepositional verbs. A prepositional verb is one which is extended or changed in meaning by the use of a preposition. When such a verb is used as a noun, it is always hyphenated.
 - *At the end, the chairman will round up the discussion. (verb)*
 - *The discussion ended with a round-up by the chairman. (noun)*
 Other examples are *build-up, scaling-up, set-up and knowledge-building*.
- Hyphenate adjectives composed of two or more words: *day-to-day, up-to-date*.
- The words cooperate and coordinate do not need hyphens

3. Standard Usage

The UN-REDD Programme

The UN-REDD Programme should always be referred to as one of the following options:

- the UN-REDD Programme
- the Programme.

Only in short headlines can the Programme be referred to as ‘UN-REDD.’ In the body of the text, ‘the’ should always precede mentions of the Programme.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Generally, no periods in abbreviations formed by combining the initial letters of the main words, unless the result would spell an unrelated word – as US for the United States of America, which is therefore U.S.

The UN-REDD Programme style is to use a minimum of abbreviations in texts intended for an external audience to ensure readability.

Abbreviations are not to be used in titles or headings, nor should they be used for the titles of senior officials.

First use of an abbreviation must be in parentheses (round brackets) preceded by the term or organization name in full. Thereafter, use only the abbreviation. This usage is based on the understanding that these abbreviations are widely used and understood among the general public.

Acronyms: Use uppercase for acronyms, do not use full stops/periods within acronyms (FAO not F.A.O.).

Acronyms are not to be used in titles or headings.

If a document contains numerous abbreviations and acronyms, a list may be included after the table of contents or at the end of the document if there is no table of contents.

All abbreviations and acronyms should be spelled out the first time they appear in a text. Terms need not be abbreviated if they only appear once.

-ize, -ization, yse

Use *-ize* and *-ization*, not *-ise* and *-isation*, as indicated in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. Example: *organize*.

Use *-yse*, not *-yze*. Examples: *analyse*; *catalyse*.

Accents

Always respect the use of accents and special characters in the names of people and organizations: Médecins Sans Frontières or José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

On foreign words now accepted as English, use accents (also known as diacritic signs or marks) only when they make a crucial difference to pronunciation. Some examples of where an accent is required - *communiqué*, *exposé*, *façade* – and of where none is needed – *elite*, *feted*, *naive*.

To find accents and special characters in Microsoft Word, go to *Insert* then click *Symbol*.

Ampersand (&)

Don't use the ampersand symbol (&) unless it appears in a title of a name. Always use the word "and".

Foreign Words

Foreign words and expressions, including Latin genera and species, not in common use should be in italics. Some examples of foreign words and phrases to italicize:

- *de rigueur*
- *ad hoc*
- *a priori*
- *de jure*
- *pro bono*
- *in situ*
- *avant-garde*
- *bona fide*
- *vis-à-vis*.

Upper or lower case

Use capital letters for ranks and titles when written together with a name, but lower case when used on their own.

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| • International Director General Edoardo Conti | the director general |
| • South African President Jacob Zuma | the president |
| • Environment Minister Thi Hoang | the minister |
| • Ambassador Ndobe | the ambassador |

Similarly, capitals are used for Chairs and Co-Chairs of subsidiary bodies and other constituted bodies:

- The Co-Chairs of the EGTT...
- The Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Finance

Lower case is used when referring to chairs and co-chairs in general:

- the co-chairs of the contact group...
- the co-chairs of the working programme on...

Words specific to the Programme

'National Programme' and 'Policy Board' must always be spelled out in full.

Refer to REDD+ rather than 'REDD plus' (the UNFCCC uses both)

UN *agencies* need not be capitalized.

Use of the terms 'results' 'outputs' and 'outcomes'. The United Nations Development Groupⁱ defines these as such:

Result - a describable or measurable change that is derived from a cause-and-effect relationship. There are three types of such changes – outputs, outcomes and impact – which can be set in motion by a development intervention.

Outputs - changes in skills or abilities, or the availability of new products and services that are achieved with the resources provided within the time period specified. Outputs are the level of result in which the clear comparative advantages of individual organisations emerge and accountability is clearest.

Outcome - changes in institutional performance or behaviour among individuals

Bullet Points

Examples of the three most frequently used formats are provided below. Note that bulleted lists should always be preceded by a colon. If each item is less than a complete sentence, the list is actually a single large sentence. In this case begin each bulleted item with a lowercase letter, and place a period at the end of the last item.

The communications pack includes:

- *key messages*
- *talking points*
- *facts and figures.*

If some of the bulleted items are longer than one line, end each item with a semicolon and place a period at the end of the final item.

These strengths and comparative advantages include:

- *regional and country-specific agency teams that are able to provide policy and advisory services;*

- *unique composition of the Policy Board, including REDD+ countries, donors, representatives of indigenous peoples and civil society organizations as well as the three UN-REDD Programme agencies;*
- *focus on delivery at the country level.*

If some of the bulleted items comprise more than one sentence, each bullet (as well as each sentence) should begin with a capital letter and end with a period.

The report suggests that a participatory evaluation in the development context include certain steps:

- *All those involved in a programme decide jointly to use a participatory approach. They decide what the objectives of the evaluation are.*
- *When agreement is reached, a small group of coordinators is elected to plan the details.*

Capitalization

Overcapitalization is common and is often used incorrectly for emphasis. Remember that overcapitalization slows down reading speed, is uncomfortable on the eye, and can appear pompous. Use common sense – the word delegate is a simple noun that should not be capitalized. Do not give importance to temporary committees, teams, departments or units: *human resources department*.

Proper names: use an initial capital for common nouns such as party, river, street and west when they are an integral part of the full name, e.g., Democratic Party, Mississippi River, Fleet Street, West Virginia.

Use lowercase for these common nouns when they stand alone in subsequent references: the party, the river, the street.

Use lowercase for the common elements of names in all plural uses: the Democratic and Republic parties, Main and State streets, lakes Erie and Ontario.

Use uppercase for titles of people. Use lowercase when referring to the office or appointment. *He saw Prime Minister Cameron. He saw the British prime minister.*

Compositions: use title capitals (i.e., use an initial capital for the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters) for the names of books, articles, publications, etc.

Note: The following should always be in lower case:

- indigenous peoples
- co-chair.

Quotation Marks

Use single ones only for quotations within quotations.

Placement with other punctuation:

- The period and the comma always go within the closing quotation marks.
- The colon, dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks only when they apply to the quoted matter alone. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

Long quotations: quotations that are longer than three typed lines should be indented or placed in smaller type; quotation marks are then not needed.

Unfamiliar terms, e.g., a word or words being introduced to readers, may be placed in quotation marks on first reference: a “No Go” decision.

Quotations within quotations: Use single quotation marks for a quotation within a quotation:

- The UN-REDD-FCPF brochure states that: “The United States Environmental Protection Agency has proposed new plans for mitigating climate change, calling it ‘serious and potentially dangerous to the welfare of the nation’.”

Job Titles

Use initial capitals for the titles of specific posts. Use lowercase for non-specific posts. Examples: *The Communications Officer organized the workshop in Geneva. He invited the public information officers from several organizations. The Minister of Finance chaired the meeting.*

Remember:

- Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General (always hyphenate)
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General (only hyphenate the last two words).

Working Group

If referring to a specific working group, use uppercase *W* and *G*. Otherwise use lowercase.

Example:

- *The Climate Change Working Group was the most heavily attended working group.*

Numbers

Write out in full numbers up to ten. Use figures for numbers from 11 and above. Use figures for numbers below and above ten in the same sentence. *There were 19 participants, 11 from FAO and 8 from UNEP.*

Use figures with percentages, for sums of money, resolutions and articles.

Use figures with the words million, billion, etc.

Never start a sentence with a figure. Write the number in words instead.

Use commas with numbers of four digits or over.

Hyphenate fractions and spell out in words. *Two-thirds, one-eight.*

Write per cent, percentage. In tables, use the % sign to save space.

Measurements

Except when the specific context demands it, use metric forms in the English spelling: *metres, litres, not meters, liters*.

When writing out measurements, the figure should be followed by a space then the unit of measurement: *300 kilometres, 20 hectares*.

When using the abbreviated form, there should be no space after the figure: *300km, 50kg, 20ha*.

Currency

When written in full, the monetary unit should follow the number, as with 100 Swiss francs; but the abbreviation should always precede it, as with CHF 100.

Never use the symbol '\$' on its own to represent the dollar, as the dollar is also the name of the official currency of other countries, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Where a symbol is used to represent the monetary unit, there should be no space between the symbol and the amount: €200, £200.

Where the abbreviation is a letter or letters or a combination of letter(s) and symbol, leave one space between abbreviation and number: US\$ 200.

If using an abbreviation in a table, such as 'CHF,' add a footnote explaining CHF = Swiss francs.

Dates

Use the British date format. Format dates in following order and style: day, month, year. *10 July 2013 (not 10th July 2013 or July 10, 2013)*.

When using a date range with a preposition, use 'to' and not an en dash. *From 2005 to 2006 (not from 2005–2006)*.

Write out date ranges in full, using an en dash to separate the years. *1998–1999*

Geographic References

Capitalize when referring to an official place name or major geographical region. Use lowercase for geographical direction or as a general reference to an area within a country: *north-west of the country, south-eastern Afghanistan, North-South dialogue, southern Lebanon*.

Topographical names

A generic term – such as lake, ocean, river, mountain, or island – is capitalized when it is part of an official name of a place or feature, e.g Indian Ocean, Himalayan Mountains (or Himalayas).

Do not capitalize common words used in conjunction with specific place names, e.g Congo forests, Amazon rainforest

Government

Capitalize when referring to the ruling entity of a country. Use lowercase for the general concept of government or when referring to more than one government: *The governments of Ecuador and Panama, the Government of Bhutan, the U.S. government.*

Ampersands

Do not use the ampersand (&) unless for book titles and authors, or if it forms part of an organization's name. Use 'and' for running text.

Web Addresses

Most web addresses and the online locations of documents, etc. begin with <http://>. Write all such addresses without this prefix as it is generally assumed that the full address will begin with <http://>. www.un-redd.org (not <http://www.un-redd.org>)

Write out all other address in full.

<http://bit.ly/15gx0nc> (not bit.ly/15gx0nc)

Use a full stop after a web address when this appears at the end of a sentence.
For more information, visit www.un-redd.org.

English usage

- Use **assist + in + gerund or noun**, not assist + infinitive.
- Use **compare with**, not compare to, in comparison with not in comparison to.
- Use **different from**, not different than or different to.
- Use **participate in**, not participate at.

- Expressions to avoid:
 - **a lot of** – use many or, preferably, be more precise
 - **get or got**
 - **hopefully**
 - **since** should only be used with reference to time, not as a substitute for **because**
 - **due to** should only be used when attached to a noun or pronoun – use **owing to** when attached to a verb (e.g. ... the crops failed owing to drought ... **not** ... the crops failed due to drought). It is better to substitute **because, result from**, e.g. ... the crops failed because of drought.

4. Writing guidelines

General guidelines for writing online Workspace contentⁱⁱ

As a general guide, our text should be interesting enough for even an expert to want to read, but also accessible enough for someone with little knowledge of the subject to follow. Using short sentences can help with this. These show a strong grasp of a subject area while allowing those unfamiliar with it to keep up.

When introducing what you are writing about, you may consider outlining the legal basis for the Programme to be working in this field. Which climate talks saw an agreement on guidelines for this work area? How does the topic relate to climate change? What is new that you want to communicate? Remember that anyone from the general public may be reading and may require a big step back to place the topic in a wider context.

Asking ourselves the following questions can then help build sentences in a way that is as effective as possible:

What am I trying to say?

What words will express this?

Have I said anything avoidably ugly?

Can I remove any words and still keep the same meaning?

In general, when writing any content:

- Consider your audience

Before starting any piece of writing, think of your target audience and the message you want to get across. Be aware of their level of knowledge, and write accordingly.

- Be specific

Avoid euphemisms or vague terms such as “stakeholders” – try to be specific about who has a stake in the issue or decision. “Actively” is often used unnecessarily (actively engaged); if we’re engaged, let’s assume it’s actively

- Report as the UN-REDD Programme rather than, as in the following sentence, as an individual participating UN agency: *The UN-REDD partner country received targeted support backed by FAO/UNDP/UNEP and a FAO/UNDP/UNEP mission was carried out by policy advisers.*

200more USD, swiss francs

- Stripping away superfluous words will help ensure the reader grasps your idea correctly. For example, is it necessary to say that someone *fully participated and benefitted from* a course on strategy development? Or, rather than say the UN-REDD Programme *is conducting a process to*

develop a guidance note, the UN-REDD Programme *is developing a guidance note by...* may be better.

- Aim to write in a similar way to everyday speech and avoid abstract or lengthy words. For example, prefer **show** to **demonstrate**, **let** to **permit**, **arrange** to **orchestrate**, **start** to **initiate** and **break** to **violate**ⁱⁱⁱ. Any writing that can be interpreted as being pompous may suggest we are not sure of what we are writing or have been unclear on purpose.

Whereas the following words may be appropriate for letters, consider using the following alternatives^{iv} in Workspace text that could be read by the general public:

Composition – **setting up, content**

Deployed – **put in place**

Facilitate - **help, put in place, smooth the way for**

Hereafter, hereby - **now**

Herein - **here**

Hereupon - **immediately after this, right now**

Implemented – **carried out**

Utilize – **use**

If writing an **overview** section for a topic on the Workspace, this should summarise information and put the topic into context. It should make sense alone, were a reader to read nothing else on that page. It would be useful to explain any jargon at this stage. Consider including practical examples of what takes place on the ground – this will be the reader’s landing page for your topic.

If writing **frequently asked questions** (FAQs) for the Workspace, these should put us in the shoes of a stakeholder or member of the general public. What questions are they likely to ask, rather than are ones we would *like* them to ask? Our answers should be as brief as possible. The reader may be reading this section as they feel stuck or in need of basic clarification.

Charts, photographs or illustrations can break up your text, helping keep the reader engaged.

All contributions are subject to editing for size and consistency with house style. If any significant changes are made, the Editor should send the text to the author for a final check.

Suggested alternatives for English words and expressions^v

The following examples are either taken from real or hypothetical material produced by the Programme.

Even if they may currently be used consistently within **the UN**, we cannot assume that the general public or future REDD+ beneficiaries will understand their use when simpler or more common forms of expression are available. Alternatives or correct meanings are therefore provided below.

Actual

Background

‘Actual’ is sometimes used to refer to something that is happening now, as might be inferred from the French word ‘actuelle’ or Spanish ‘actual’. However, in English it means ‘real’ or ‘existing’.

Example

‘The workshop aimed to share experiences from actual projects in the country^{vi}’ – this probably meant to mean projects that are currently taking place in the country, rather than highlighting that projects do exist.

Alternatives

current, present, ongoing.

Actor

Background

The Collins Concise English dictionary defines an actor as ‘a person who acts in a play, film, broadcast, etc.’ or ‘a person who puts on a false manner in order to deceive others.’

However, in UN usage, ‘actors’ are often people and/or organisations involved in doing something. Research done in the UK found people to believe this to mean film stars or for a poor translation to have taken place.

Examples

‘[The US] acknowledges and welcomes the success of state-building efforts by the UN, which have been supported by the EU and endorsed by various international actors.’

‘The UN-REDD Programme invites actors^{vii} around the world to use these guidelines^{vii}’

Alternatives

It is very often preferable to spell out that organisations or stakeholders were involved. Civil society ‘actors’ can often simply be described as civil society ‘organisations’.

Sentences can also be reworked to avoid the problem. For example, instead of ‘deforestation is an important actor in the process of climate change,’ have ‘the process of climate change is to a great extent driven by deforestation’.

Adequate

Background

‘Adequate’ is frequently used by international organisations to mean ‘appropriate’. However, its actual meaning is closer to ‘satisfactory’ or even ‘barely satisfactory’. An ‘adequate solution’ to a problem may not be the best one, but it will do. An ‘appropriate solution’ is one that is fitting.

Example

‘REDD+ reduces corruption if the issue is adequately addressed at local governance level^{viii}’ – ‘adequately’ actually has a weak meaning here.

Alternatives

appropriate, suitable, fitting.

Coherent/Coherence

Background

Coherent means ‘logical; consistent and orderly’ or ‘capable of logical and orderly thought’.

In the UN, on the other hand, it is frequently used with the meaning of ‘in agreement with’ or ‘accordant with’ (something else).

Example

‘The proposed Framework Programme is coherent with the objectives of the UN-REDD Strategy’.

Alternatives

consistent/consistency

Complete

Background

To 'complete' means to finish, end or terminate. It therefore implies that whatever is being completed was somehow not finished.

In UN texts, however, this word is often used to mean that something extra has been added to supplement something that was actually complete beforehand.

Example

'The Republic of the Congo will propose a new law to complete that which established carbon accounting'

Alternatives

supplement, add to.

Concerning

Background

Letters or announcements have been drafted with 'concerning xxx,' instead of 'with regard to'. This is fine but, given the word's second meaning of causing anxiety, an alternative may be considered.

Example

'Concerning the letter received on 23 October with a request for targeted support for...'

Alternatives

with regard to (for starting letters), in respect of, in terms of.

Deepen

Background

An easy word to misuse. Knowledge can be deepened, as can understanding, but not much else. We cannot 'look into more deeply' nor 'deepen an issue'.

Example

'Countries first need to deepen their knowledge on...'^{ix}

Alternatives

Improve, develop, elaborate, bolster.

Define

Background

In English, 'define' means 'to state the precise meaning of'. It does not mean 'establish', 'set out' or 'illustrate'.

Example

'The country will define a national plan for dealing with illegal logging'

Alternatives

establish, lay down, set out, draft, establishment, drafting, design.

Dispose of

Background

The most common meaning of 'dispose of' is 'to get rid of' or 'to throw away'. It does not mean 'to have' or 'to possess'.

Examples

'The Programme disposes of various data sources' actually means that the Programme deletes data.

'The Remote Sensing section disposes of limited computer hardware'^x

Alternatives

have, possess

Ensure

Background

To ensure means to make certain. It does not mean to provide. It should therefore not be followed by 'to' and an indirect object.

Example

'National plans must ensure to populations dependent on forests sufficient consideration of their rights'

Alternatives

Provide, guarantee

Eventual

Background

Eventual refers to an unspecified time in the future, rather than 'possible'.

Example

'Eventual refund requests should be submitted by email'

Alternatives

Possible, any

Financial envelope

Background

This has been used instead of 'budget,' which is more digestible to a broad audience.

Example

'The European Commission will pass a financial envelope to UNEP^{xi}'

Alternatives

Budget, allocation

Foreseen

Background

The basic meaning for this in English is 'to see in advance,' 'predict' or 'expect'.

Example

'The document presents the implementation modalities foreseen under the Strategy'^{xii}

Alternatives

It sounds odd for a Strategy to be predicting its contents. 'Laid out in,' 'set out in' would be best.

To 'foresee' therefore does not quite the same as the meaning usually inferred by *prévoir* in French, which conveys something already arranged *e.g les prochaines réunions de l'ONU-REDD et la FCPF sont prévues pour le 20 et 22 mai*'. Here, 'scheduled' or 'planned' for would work best.

Formulize

Background

This is used in scientific circles to mean 'reduce to a formula'.

Example

'to formulize rigid and tested public consultation'^{xiii}

Alternatives

Depending on the context, alternatives could be to produce, come up with or even write or organize. Not to be confused with 'formalise,' as this means 'to give legal status to'.

Framework

Background

This is defined by the Concise English Oxford Dictionary as

1. 'an essential supporting structure of a building, vehicle or object
2. 'a basic structure underlying a system, concept or text'.

While this second meaning may be relevant to the Programme, we may come across more accurately by re-phrasing sentences. We already use 'framework' in document titles.

Example

'the provision of a framework for overarching country approaches to REDD+' could have been written as 'guidance provided on how countries can/are preparing for REDD+'.

Alternatives

set-up, body, structure (if the sentence cannot be re-written)

Modality

Background

This is a specialised word in English normally referring to medicine or grammar. In our case, it means a main branch of funding.

Example

'The country formulized a modality^{xiv}'

Alternatives

This is used consistently by the Programme but we should be aware that an external audience may not at first be aware of its meaning. We could therefore keep using it but give a brief explanation between two commas or dashes, e.g. *'the targeted support modality – one of the main branches of funding available under the Programme –aims to...'*

In cases where we do not want to refer to a funding branch, the terms procedure, mode or method may be most appropriate.

Normally

Background

This means 'as a rule' or 'ordinarily,' but not that something is meant to happen.

Example

'Normally the conference starts at 9am' would mean that the conference usually starts at 9am, not that it should.

Alternatives

Supposed to, should, is expected to

Normative

Background

This is defined by the Concise English Oxford Dictionary as:

1. Implying, creating, or prescribing a norm or standard, as in language ⇒ normative grammar
2. Expressing value judgments or prescriptions as contrasted with stating facts ⇒ normative economics
3. Of, relating to, or based on norms

This leaves quite a broad spectrum for possible use. So as to narrow this down, **UNEG** defines normative work as:

- a) the development of norms and standards;
- b) the support to governments and others to integrate the norms and standards into legislation, policies and development plans; and
- c) the support to governments and others to implement legislation, policies and development plans based on the international norms, standards and conventions.

Example

'The FCPF and UN-REDD Programme work together... harmonizing normative frameworks^{xv}' – this makes sense but could be re-phrased if aimed at an external audience, for example: *'The FCPF and UN-REDD Programme aim to ensure that that their work is based on the same values'*.

Alternatives

Consider rephrasing. The terms conventional, prescriptive or regulating may also be more appropriate.

Reinforce

Background

Whereas this is most commonly used in English to describe military activities, it has been used to mean 'improve' or 'increase'.

Example

The workshop aimed to reinforce knowledge on forest monitoring

Alternatives

Bolster, strengthen, consolidate, increase

Sight

Background

This refers to eyesight rather than a location

Example

The Policy Board meeting took place at a special sight this month

Alternatives

Site, location

Writing REDD+ Resource newsletter articles

Authors should aim to keep REDD+ Resource (the new Newsletter) articles below 500 words – the Secretariat can help with this. Even a very short story can share interesting and useful information so do not feel that it is necessary to write lengthy articles.

The REDD+ Resource will be published bi-monthly and authors can choose whether they have a byline (name) on their articles and brief biography. Articles should not include an introductory text.

To help get started, guidance on brainstorming for ideas can be found [here](#). Under its new strategy, the Programme is from 2016 expected to aim to be more focused on country needs and better equip countries to work to UNFCCC REDD+ guidelines – what news can you share in these fields for example?

Some general tips when writing a newsletter article

- Keep articles focused: who is carrying out the work you are highlighting? What change has a training session or workshop brought about?
- Consider writing the title of your stories last – it will make choosing one easier
- Do not use capital letters in the article title unless referring to a noun
- The first paragraph of your story could build on the title, while introducing a fresh element to draw readers in. Avoid repeating what you have already said in the title. For example, the first paragraph of [this](#) story adds four new and interesting details to the title.

- The second paragraph could give the news some context. For example, [this](#) article stops to reiterate the importance of satellite technology in relation to carbon savings. This helps keep readers less familiar with the topic on board
- Consider writing one paragraph for each topic or idea. The start of the paragraph should prepare the reader for what is to follow, almost like a summary – there should be no surprises for the reader. This conveys a sense of control to your writing.
- Use the active, rather than passive voice, where the subject of the sentence performs the action. For example, *Columbia has approved a new law aimed at protecting forests* rather than *a new law aimed at protecting forests has been approved by Columbia*.
- Use as few words as possible. A short and snappy article does not hold less value than a longer one. Long sentences or paragraphs run the risk of vagueness or having too many sub-clauses for the reader to understand clearly
- Read your story aloud! Is it easy to follow? Can any words be removed?

A conversational tone will allow readers who are new to REDD or who do not have a strong grasp of English to get more out of the article.

REDD+ Resource article authors are entirely free to choose the structure for their text that they think is best. However, when writing about an event, such as a workshop, you may want to consider:

- Exactly what new knowledge has been learned? i.e. what was the added value of having a workshop that brings people together?
- If capacity has been ‘strengthened,’ in what way? What can the workshop participants now do more effectively? What environmental or social effects will this help bring about?
- How does the event fit into international climate efforts?

A concept note has been circulated to relevant staff with further guidance on the REDD+ Resource, including the production schedule.

Weekly Roundup

A weekly update of all [announcements](#) posted on the Workspace from the past seven days can be distinguished from REDD+ Resource articles by the urgency of when they need to be communicated. For example, a call for proposals with an upcoming deadline can be posted on the Workspace right away. If a study has been commissioned on an issue relevant to REDD, this could be announced in the Weekly update, while a follow-up article could appear in the REDD+ Resource.

More routine announcements can also be made in the update that would not qualify as ‘news’ but where the timing of the announcement is important, such as with a job posting.

Aim to keep titles short and snappy, as you can always build on this in the text box.

Embedding a hyperlink into text (by right clicking on words, clicking on 'hyperlink' and pasting the web address there) is preferable to copy pasting links into the text box.

Visual Identity

UN-REDD Programme logo

The UN-REDD Programme logo is composed of two distinct elements:



1. the name of the Programme "UN-REDD Programme"
2. the three logos of FAO, UNDP and UNEP.

While it is preferred to present the logo elements cohesively, as above, these logo elements can be used separately where necessary. Various versions of the logo can be found in the [logo folder](#) on the workspace. Examples of various uses can be found in the below.

Logo font

The font type for the UN-REDD logo is "Frutiger light".

Logo colours

The CMYK values for the colours in the logo are as follows:

Red: C:0; M:88; Y:81; K:0

Blue: C:71; M:36; Y:0; K:0

FAO Blue: C:71; M:36; Y:0; K:0

UNDP Blue: C:92; M:60; Y:2; K:0

UNEP Blue: C:75; M:22; Y:0; K:0

Logo Usage

When resizing the logo, the relative proportions/dimensions and colours of the logo should not be altered. The UN-REDD Programme logo should only appear on materials that have been produced with funding from the UN-REDD Programme. Prior to launching materials that bear the UN-REDD Programme logo, review should be solicited from UN-REDD Programme staff at the appropriate level from each of the three Participating UN Organizations.

Logo versions and uses

Language versions

The UN-REDD Programme logo is available in English, French and Spanish. The language of the logo should match the language of the communications material it is being used on. All language versions and formats are available in the workspace [logo folder](#).



Style versions

1. Full colour



When to use:

The full colour version of the full logo is the standard Programme logo and should be used in most cases. The logo should appear on a white or light coloured background.

It should not:

- Be used over a photo or dark background
- Be altered in any way

2. Grey scale



When to use:

The greyscale version of the full logo should be used for any materials printed without colour. This logo should appear on a white background.

It should not:

- Be used over a photo or dark background
- Be altered in any way

3. White

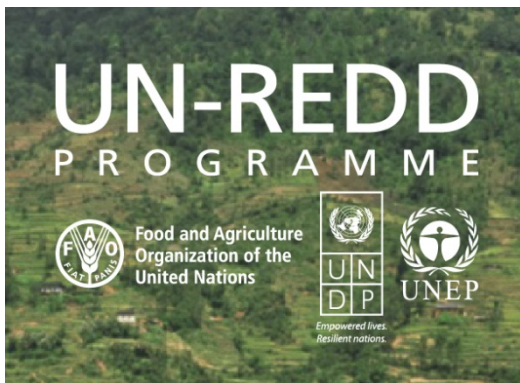


When to use:

The white version of the full logo should only be used over colour backgrounds or photos.

It should not:

- Be used over photos that make the text difficult to read.
- Be used over a colour background that makes the text difficult to read.
- Be altered in any way



4. Separated



When to use:

The Programme logo and agency logos can be separated when necessary due to size or spacing restrictions, and where having the logo appear in its full form would not be visually pleasing in relation to the overall design. The agency logos must still appear in a visible location, and follow the above standards for style.

It should not:

- Have only one element without the other.
- Obscure the agency logos

Examples of incorrect usage



Why is this incorrect?

- The colour version of the logo should only be used on a white background.
- UNDP's logo has been altered, and part of its tagline is missing.
- UNEP logo is the wrong colour blue.



Why is this incorrect?

- The grey version of the logo should only be used for printing in black and grey, on a white background.



Why is this incorrect?

- The grey version of the logo should only be used for printing in black and grey, on a white background (not over a photo).



Why is this incorrect?

- The white version of the logo should not be used over colours that make the text difficult to read.

Templates for Documents, Letters, Reports and PowerPoint Presentations

Templates for documents, letters, reports and PowerPoint presentations are available on the UN-REDD workspace. They are located under Documents, in the section [Templates and concept notes: informational materials](#) folder. Please help us maintain consistency in all our documents by downloading the templates from the UN-REDD Programme workspace before working on your document.

To the extent possible, please type the information into the cover page and in the header, to avoid changes in formatting and text colour. The body text can be pasted into the document, but please ensure that the final version follows the formatting guidelines as outlined above.

Formatting

Fonts and Paragraph Styles

When formatting documents to be submitted to the Policy Board or other official use, please use the following formatting guidelines.

Text font: Calibri type, size 11
Document title: Calibri, bold, 28
Date: Calibri, regular, 11
Heading 1: Calibri, bold, 14
Heading 2: Calibri, bold, 11
Heading 3: Calibri, italics, 11
Heading 1 spacing: paragraph break below
Heading 2 and 3 spacing: single line break below
Line spacing: 1.5
Alignment: left
Indents: none
Colour: black

Email Signatures

Email signatures should conform to the following template:

First and Last Name

Title

UN-REDD Programme

Address, postal code

City, Country

Office line

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



Annexes

Annex I: UN-REDD Partner Country Names

Short Form	Formal Name
1. Argentina	the Argentine Republic
2. Bangladesh	the People's Republic of Bangladesh
3. Benin	the Republic of Benin
4. Bhutan	the Kingdom of Bhutan
5. Bolivia	the Plurinational State of Bolivia
6. Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
7. Cambodia	the Kingdom of Cambodia
8. Cameroon	the Republic of Cameroon
9. The Central African Republic	the Central African Republic
10. Chad	the Republic of Chad
11. Chile	the Republic of Chile
12. Colombia	the Republic of Colombia
13. The Congo	the Republic of the Congo
14. Costa Rica	the Republic of Costa Rica
15. Côte d'Ivoire	the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
16. Democratic Republic of the Congo	the Democratic Republic of the Congo
17. Dominican Republic	the Dominican Republic
18. Ecuador	the Republic of Ecuador
19. El Salvador	the Republic of El Salvador
20. Equatorial Guinea	the Republic of Equatorial Guinea
21. Ethiopia	the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
22. Fiji	the Republic of Fiji
23. Gabon	the Gabonese Republic
24. Ghana	the Republic of Ghana
25. Guatemala	the Republic of Guatemala
26. Guinea	the Republic of Guinea
27. Guinea Bissau	the Republic of Guinea-Bissau
28. Guyana	the Republic of Guyana
29. Honduras	the Republic of Honduras
30. Indonesia	the Republic of Indonesia
31. Kenya	the Republic of Kenya
32. Lao PDR	the Lao People's Democratic Republic
33. Liberia	the Republic of Liberia
34. Madagascar	the Republic of Madagascar
35. Malawi	the Republic of Malawi
36. Malaysia	Malaysia
37. Mexico	the United Mexican States
38. Mongolia	Mongolia
39. Morocco	the Kingdom of Morocco
40. Myanmar	the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
41. Nepal	the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal
42. Nigeria	the Federal Republic of Nigeria
43. Pakistan	the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
44. Panama	the Republic of Panama

45. Papua New Guinea	Independent State of Papua New Guinea
46. Paraguay	the Republic of Paraguay
47. Peru	the Republic of Peru
48. The Philippines	the Republic of the Philippines
49. Solomon Islands	Solomon Islands
50. South Sudan	the Republic of South Sudan
51. Sri Lanka	the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
52. The Sudan	the Republic of the Sudan
53. Suriname	the Republic of Suriname
54. Tanzania	the United Republic of Tanzania
55. Tunisia	the Republic of Tunisia
56. Togo	the Togolese Republic
57. Uganda	the Republic of Uganda
58. Vanuatu	the Republic of Vanuatu
60. Viet Nam	the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
61. Zambia	the Republic of Zambia

Annex II: Frequently Used Acronyms

BDS	Benefit Distribution System
BeRT	Benefits and Risks Tool
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFF	Congo Basin Forest Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
COMIFAC	Central African Forests Commission
COP	Conference of Parties
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCM	Participatory Carbon Monitory
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
PGA	Participatory Governance Assessment
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
REL	Reference Emission Level
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SEPC	Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UN-REDD	The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Annex III: Endnotes, Footnotes, References and Bibliography

Endnotes and Footnotes

Both endnotes and footnotes should be kept to a minimum. Very short notes, such as cross-references to other sections or pages in the same work, should be given in parentheses in the text.

- Use superscript Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.) to identify footnotes and endnotes.
- If two or more passages require the same endnote, the endnote should appear only once and the endnote number be repeated.
- Footnote numbering should restart on each page. If two or more passages appearing on the same page require the same footnote, the footnote should appear only once and the footnote number be repeated.
- The superscript numbers should be placed after any punctuation that immediately follows the word, part of a sentence or sentence to which the endnote or footnote refers.

References

Authors of UN-REDD texts, please note: responsibility for verifying references cited and imposing the correct format rests with the document author. An incorrectly formatted reference can compromise its accuracy, e.g., a misplaced number in a reference to a journal may constitute an issue number in place of the volume number intended.

Bibliography

A bibliography lists sources not cited in the text but which are relevant to the subject and were used for background reading. It should be placed at the end of the document. Bibliographical lists are ordered alphabetically by the surname of the author. They may be divided into sections by subject, in which case items should be presented alphabetically within each section.

- All references must include: name of author(s), year of publication, title, place of publication and publisher (for books), journal title, volume and pages (for articles).
- The names of all authors of a work should be given in bibliographies.
- Where there are **more than three** authors in the bibliography, abbreviate to ***et al.*** in the text (but not in the bibliography).
- When an author has written more than one work in the same year, use **a, b**, etc. to differentiate, e.g. **2000a, 2000b**.
- Entries by the same author/s should be listed in ascending chronological order.
- Use the **ampersand (&)** between the names of the last two authors in the bibliography but use **and** in the text.
- In the case of a corporate author, it is not necessary to repeat the name of the organization as publisher. However, if the corporate author is not well known or defined in the text, the full name may be given after the place of publication.
- Titles of books, journals and periodicals are italicized (**do not** use inverted commas). Titles of articles and chapters are **not** italicized.
- Titles of papers presented at meetings and titles of theses are italicized. The type of thesis, e.g., M.Sc., Ph.D., is placed at the end of the reference, in parentheses, without a full stop, e.g., **Saxton, R.** 2000. *Information and rural women*. University College, London. (MA thesis)
- Titles of mimeographs are italicized, with the abbreviation **mimeo** placed at the end of the reference in parentheses, e.g. (mimeo)
- Personal communications are not cited in a bibliography but appear only in the text, e.g., (J. Wright, personal communication, 2000).

Guidance

The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition)* provides guidance on citing published print documents, unpublished material, material on CD-ROM, DVD or disk, and material on the Internet. It is exhaustive, providing guidance on almost every eventuality with examples to illustrate each one. What follows is a select list of examples reflecting the MLA's style guide's order of listing, with brief explanations, intended to serve as a quick guide to formatting the kind of references most commonly encountered in UN-REDD publications. For guidance on citing material not covered in the quick guide, or for help in solving a specific problem (such as handling non-English citations) refer to the MLA style guide, which is available from <http://www.mla.org/store/CID24/PID363>.

Books

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of the Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year. Medium of Publication.

Books by a Single Author

Fukuyama, Francis. *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*. New York: Farrar, 2002. Print.

Books by Two or More Authors

If the book has two or three authors, list all of the authors. If the book has more than three authors, list the first one, followed by et al. The same rule applies when listing editors of a book.

An Article or Entry in a Reference

Book

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, First Name (if available). "Title of the Article or Entry." *Title of the Reference Book*. Vol. Volume Number. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Journal, Magazine, Newspaper Articles - From a Library

Database

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Periodical Title* Volume number. Issue number (Date of publication): Page number range. *Database Name*. Medium of Publication. Date of Access. <URL>.

Journal, Magazine, Newspaper Articles - Print

Versions

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Periodical Title* Volume number. Issue number (Date of publication): Page number range. Medium of Publication.

Web

Pages

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Page/Document." *Title of the Web Site*. Sponsoring Organization, Publication/Updated Date. Medium of Publication. Date of Access. <URL>.

Annex IV: 7. Dictionaries used by the UN-REDD Programme

In English, the [Concise Oxford English Dictionary](#)

In French, the [Dictionnaire de l'Académie française](#) (top box) / [Le trésor de la langue française](#)

In Spanish, the [Diccionario de la lengua Española](#)

There is also a UN-REDD Programme [Trilingual Dictionary](#) (please email frances.lim@un-redd.org for access to the latest version as this is being continuously updated).

Annex V: 8. Useful References

References on writing, editing, publishing and usage

UN Editorial Manual

<http://dd.dgacm.org/editorialmanual/>

FAO recommended word list

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/ac339e/AC339E02.htm>

The Economist Style Guide

www.economist.com/research/styleguide/

The Elements of Style, W. Strunk, Bartleby.com

www.bartleby.com/141/

United Nations Multilingual Terminology Database

<http://unterm.un.org/>

Online tools

Currency converter

www.xe.com/ucc/full/

Conversion of weight, measure and temperature

www.onlineconversion.com/

Time zone and date information

www.timeanddate.com/library/abbreviations/timezones

If you feel that a new section to the Writing and Style gGuide is needed to help you write text for the new Workspace or elsewhere, please contact mark.grassi@un-redd.org.

ⁱ United Nations Development Group, *Results-based management handbook*, p.7, 2011

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- iii Includes examples taken from: The Economist, *Online Style Guide*, [2014](#)
- iv Some of these are proposed in the following blog: Birnberg, Judi, *Wordthoughts*, [2013](#)
- v Includes examples taken from: European Court of Auditors *Misused English terminology in EU publications*, , September 2013
- vi UN-REDD Programme Newsletter, *MRV workshop in Tanzania*, [2010](#)
- vii UN-REDD Programme Newsletter, *UN-REDD launches guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent*, March [2013](#)
- viii UN-REDD Programme Newsletter, *New study examines the role of local governance institutions*, September [2011](#)
- ix UN-REDD Programme website, Reports and Analysis, [Multiple benefits](#)
- x FAO Viet Nam *Project document*, Forest Inventory and Planning section, [page 13](#)
- xi UNEP press release, *European Commission and UNEP announce new partnership to catalyse Green Economy*, [23 February 2011](#)
- xii UN-REDD Programme Strategy [2011-2015](#), page three
- xiii UN-REDD Programme Workspace, *Principles of formulation of REDD+ Nastra, Indonesia*
- xiv UN-REDD Programme Newsletter, *More UN-REDD partner countries now receiving targeted support*, Features and Commentary, [October 2012](#)
- xv UN-REDD Programme Newsletter, *The UN-REDD Programme and the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, Features and Commentary*, [August 2009](#)