

# REDD+ AWARENESS WHERE?

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# The Legacy

- Awareness 'out there' largely informed by the infamous carbon cowboys.
- Simply, money for nothing, no loss of development options, and significantly – save the bush and we all get rich.
- No or very limited attempts to inform anyone, private sector included, of the shifting realities of the REDD+ framework as a tool for enhancing sustainable forest management.

# The Myths

- REDD+ is 'law'. Fact, it is a voluntary arrangement between donors and recipients, administered by various UN agencies and World Bank.
- There is 100% carbon emission on tree felling. Fact, 50% of carbon is stored in wood products but this is ignored under the 'rules' of false carbon accounting.
- Conversion of forested land to agriculture, including oil palm or forest plantations, results in permanent increase in carbon emissions. Fact, oil palm fixes 167% more carbon than a forest. Forest plantations 1.5 to 2 times a natural stand.

- Forestry is a key driver of deforestation in PNG. Fact, 75% of cut over forest will recover to its preharvest state and this % can be increased significantly, by up to 20%, thru 'human intervention'. Similarly, carbon stock recovers by 1.12tonne/ha/yr.
- Land use change is avoidable. Fact, the State has no land use rights and in very limited applications where it may have, it is unwilling to do so. Rapid population growth makes an already unmanageable situation only worse.

- There is money to be made by stopping everything and undertaking REDD+ activities.

Fact, indicative returns	NPV US\$/ha
Oil palm	9,275
One off forestry	1,099
Subsistence farming	745
Voluntary carbon	994*

\* @ US\$4.40/tonne, latest EU prices are under \$2/tonne.

- Deforestation and forest degradation are the particular problem of developing tropical countries. Fact, developed, western economies are rapidly increasing their forest production eg Germany up by 80%, 1995-2010 ,(Indonesia down by 16% in the same period), Germany now produces 54% more forest products than Indonesia. Similar trends are evident in USA, Canada, Russia and several Sth American states, although much of this growth is from forest plantation sources.

- A national MRV system is a priority for PNG. Fact, there is no agreement in the UNFCCC negotiations on what measures will be agreed and no established baseline for calculating emissions. Some donors promote emission reduction schemes in tropical, developing countries in the hope of securing access to ‘cheaper’ carbon credits and thereby avoid their own economic costs of reducing their own emissions eg Norway, a seed donor in PNG, has increased emissions 5% since 1990 – their Kyoto commitment, a 10% reduction by 2020.

# Some Suggestions

- Refocus efforts on climate change adaptation rather than emission reductions. In developing countries, poorly targeted and misinformed reduction programs can undermine poverty alleviation and food security programs. For this reason Kyoto allows Annex 2 countries, PNG, to increase emissions according to development needs.
- In the context of SFM, forest plantations and far better post harvest management are where we should be. (land tenure issues noted!). Plantations are a key, low cost means of sequestering carbon. PNG has demonstrated expertise and advantages in plantations.



- Harvesting and replanting trees and development of processing industries, creates employment, income and value added exports: while growing trees absorb more carbon than mature forests.
- With better management, cut over forests can continue to supply significant timber volumes for use and sale and higher carbon storage. Wider adoption of SFM can provide significant financial and other benefits to the community forest owners.

- A viable REDD+ program in PNG needs to be founded on a technically sound basis of facts about PNG's emissions, an accurate picture of the carbon cycle of PNG's forest estate and sound economic analysis of the impact of programs to ensure compatibility with national development strategies.

# Acknowledgements

- Throughout, I have drawn heavily on, and highly recommend for further reading –  
Fox et al, Final Report, Assessment, management & marketing of goods & services from cutover native forests in PNG, ACIAR 2011  
Curtin T., Ringbarking third world forestry, Quadrant Online, Sept 2012  
PNGFIA, Comments on the draft climate compatible development policy, May 2013