

Bhutan: National Approaches to Developing Safeguards

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Background

- Almost over 72 percent of land under forest cover
- Over 50 percent of land under Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Biological Corridors).
- Low rate of deforestation and degradation
- Carbon Neutral Strategy (COP 15)

- Consistent political and societal commitment to environment preservation (GNH development philosophy, Constitutional requirement, National Forest Policy)

Status of Bhutan Forests

- Total forest area 24,718 sq. km
- 4 percent of forest land to be designated as Community forest by end of 2013 and 20 percent by 2020.

Status of REDD + in Bhutan

- National workshop with relevant stakeholders
- Advocacy and awareness program on REDD +, environmental safeguards and multiple benefits
- REDD + activities identified
- Identification of REDD + interventions
- Identification of risks and benefits

REDD + activities identified

Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation	Conservation of Forest carbon stocks_
Sustainable management of forest	Enhancement of forest carbon stocks

Benefits

Timber and NWFPs (Sustainable)
Micro-corridor for animal migration
Fire line
Increase population of species
Stream ecosystem maintained
Non-forest ecosystem intact
Contribute to meeting the constitutional mandate of maintaining 60% forest cover and GNH pillar- Environment
Conservation Improved livelihood through generation of ecosystem services (hydroelectricity, ecotourism, employment opportunities etc.)

Risks

Forgo Developmental activities

Change in Government agenda/policies

Uncertainty/lack of assured market

Visual Scarring

No undergrowth

Increased invasive species

Human-wildlife conflict

Benefits

Aesthetic and recreation

Watershed protection for
hydropower generation

Enhance knowledge capacity of
stakeholder in sustainable forest
management

Funds (incentives)-Enhance
income and employment

Enhance carbon stock

Ecosystem regulation (PES) and
stream base flow

Risks

Human-wildlife conflict- Restriction
on use of resources (forest
resources

Loss of non-forest ecosystem

Loss of wetlands

Increase in pest and Diseases

Conversion of natural Forests
(change in forest types

National Approach to Safeguards

Programmes, Policies, Laws and Regulations identified

Section of Cancun Safeguards	Programmes, policies, laws and regulations	Relevance
<p>[REDD+ should]... Para 1 (d) ... take into account the multiple functions of forests and other ecosystems; ... when undertaking [REDD+] ...</p> <p>Para 2 (e) [REDD+ is]instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services</p>	<p>Initial Environmental Examination, Environmental Act</p>	<p>Helps to identify which non forest land can be planted on without adverse impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services</p>
	<p>Hydropower Policy of Bhutan 2008</p>	<p>Promotes Integrated water catchment management inclusive of forest and no forest ecosystems</p>

Programmes, Policies, Laws and Regulations identified

Section of Cancun Safeguards	Safeguard policies	Relevance
When undertaking [REDD+] the following ... should be promoted and supported ... (f) Actions to address the risks of reversals ;	Rural electrification by 2013 programme	Reduce degradation from fuelwood collection and reducing need of fuel wood for lighting
	National Forest Inventory planned for 2013	Will help identify the location of natural forest in the country

Way forward

- Research interventions for REDD + strategy crucial. Watershed Management Division working closely with research institutions to explore research intervention
- Risks and benefits identified to be included in the National REDD + Strategy

- National Forest Inventory : preparatory work in progress work
- Work on social safeguards

THANK YOU