Myanmar REDD+ Readiness Roadmap

Working Group 1: Drivers and Strategies

Terms of reference

Co-Chairs: [to be identified by WG members; one Government co-chair, one non-Government]

Secretary: Forest Department, assisted by UN-REDD Coordinator

Advisors: Ben Vickers (FAO), Tim Boyle (UNDP), Thomas Enters (UNEP)

Objective: to identify and quantify the key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Myanmar and their underlying causes; and to identify potential strategies to address them.

1   Background

As a result of a visit to Myanmar by Mr. Erik Solheim, former Norwegian Minister for the Environment and International Development, in late October/early November 2011, there is interest in Norway in providing support for the REDD+ Readiness process in Myanmar. Subsequently, support from Norway's International Climate and Forests Initiative for the preparation of a REDD+ Readiness Roadmap and funding proposal was sanctioned at environmental ministry level to be delivered through UN-REDD Programme in collaboration with RECOFTC.

An initial scoping mission (July 9th-13th, 2012) yielded recommendations on the process to be followed in preparing a Roadmap and funding proposal.   One recommendation was that a Working Group be formed, consisting of selected individuals from different sectors and representing different stakeholder groups, to review existing information on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Myanmar and their underlying causes; and to identify potential strategies to address them.

2   Issues to be Addressed by the Working Group

In the REDD+ debate the term 'driver' is used broadly but for analysis and assessments it is important to separate proximate/direct causes and underlying/indirect causes of deforestation and forest degradation. Commercial agriculture is the most important proximate driver of deforestation in the majority of non-Annex I countries. Legal and illegal timber harvesting are the most important drivers of forest degradation in Asia.

Many countries stress weak forestry sector governance and institutions, including conflicting policies and illegal activities (related to weak enforcement) as critical underlying drivers of deforestation and degradation.

The main indirect driving forces of forest change such as population and economic growth, national and international demand for agricultural products (food and biofuels), wood products and minerals are all expected to increase in the coming years.

Historical patterns in deforestation and degradation drivers may not necessarily be repeated in the future, largely due to more rapid economic development and GDP growth among within developing countries. This is particularly true in the case of Myanmar, for which recent political changes are likely to result in a very different development pathway in the future compared with recent decades.

Taking this into account, the key issues to be addressed in the analysis of drivers and underlying causes are:

2.1   Overview of land-use trends, forest policy and governance relevant to REDD+

- Describe the major land-use trends in Myanmar, e.g. use of forests, other land use sectors (mining, agriculture, tree crops e.g. oil palm, tourism, urban expansion).
- Describe the current and potential impacts of legislation and policies affecting forest use, conservation, sustainable forest management, and land-use change in Myanmar.
- Identify the main governance challenges for the forest sector.
- Identify the main capacity[1] challenges in the forest sector.

2.2   Identification of key drivers and underlying causes

- Identify all drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Myanmar. Looking beyond the forest sector in analyzing drivers is critical, particularly the significant role of commercial agriculture in driving deforestation. It is also essential to consider international drivers – for example, timber demand in other countries. Distinguish, to the extent possible, in each case between deforestation and forest degradation.
- For each driver, derive the information indicated in the Table below

Driver	Recent trends (ha/yr for 5 or 10 yr intervals[2])	Projected future trends (5-20 years)	Severity of impact	Overall priority
1. Dry-Zone forests				
2. Coastal/mangrove forests				

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[1] This overview of capacity challenges should take into account and appropriately distinguish between capacity at the individual, organizational/institutional, and enabling environment (policies, legal framework) level

[2] Highlight also differences among sources

3. Other forest ecosystems				

- Identify all underlying causes of the drivers listed in the Table. Consider, especially, land tenure security, adequate information systems for decision-making, integration of forest and land-use planning with socio-economic development planning, the value of good governance, agricultural intensification as a deforestation strategy, cross-sectoral commitments, and challenges of leakage, indirect land-use change and foreign direct investment.

2.3   Review of current strategies

Identify existing strategies that are being used to address deforestation and forest degradation and functional capacities required to implement these strategies. Identify:
- When the existing strategy was initiaited, and under which legal/policy guidelines
- How each strategy is funded
- Results obtained to date
- Constraints which may be limiting effectiveness of each current strategy

2.4   Identification of potential REDD+ strategies, policies and measures

In identifying potential REDD+ strategies, policies and measures, the following points should be considered:

 i) A mix of incentives, disincentives and enabling measures, under a holistic REDD+ driver intervention package, aimed at drivers and underlying causes, will provide greatest leverage to affect drivers.
 ii) In order for REDD+ to be successful, incentives, disincentives and enabling measures will need to reach the actors responsible for causing and/or addressing the drivers of deforestation and at the appropriate scale.
iii) When demand- and supply-side interventions are mutually reinforcing, there may be greater chance to affect driver activity.
iv) Coordinated efforts within entire sectors, spanning multiple scales and engaging key actors, aided by supportive government policies and financial incentives, hold most promise in reducing deforestation and degradation pressures.

Ultimately, the National REDD+ Strategy will define specific policies and measures to be applied to address each driver and underlying cause. For the purpose of the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap, the Working Group needs to identify activities to be undertaken to elaborate those policies and measures; it is therefore critical that the Working Group also think through, specifically, any capacity development activities which would need to be undertaken in order to

elaborate the policies and measures, taking care to consider not only individual level capacity development needs (e.g. trainings and workshops; individual skills building and learning activities) but also capacity needs within and between organizations/institutions that will have a role in REDD+ in Myanmar.

Therefore, the Working Group should prepare a Table similar to that shown below.

Driver	Direct cause	Underlying cause	Possible REDD+ strategy	Action needed to elaborate policies and measures to implement strategy

3   Outputs

The Outputs of the Working Group will consist of compilations of background materials (studies, reports, legislation, etc.) and minutes, conclusions and recommendations of each Working Group meeting. The conclusions should consist (wherever possible) of text that can be directly inserted into the emerging REDD+ Readiness Roadmap (this would also include current knowledge gaps).

4   Methods of Working

The Working Group will meet regularly – nominally once a month – to develop the information required for the Roadmap, as described above. It is expected that most or all meetings will be in Naypyitaw. The costs of Working Group members located outside Naypyitaw to attend the meetings will be covered.

The duration of the Working Group's work will nominally be 4 months, but the actual duration will be determined by completion of its outputs.

Background information, consisting of existing reports on drivers and underlying causes, legislation and policies, and analyses of options for improved forest management will be compiled by the Forest Department, assisted by the UN-REDD/RECOFTC Coordinator, although any member of the working group or advisors may contribute materials. All background materials will be shared with all working group members, electronically where possible.[3]

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[3] Given the importance of adequately and thoroughly considering the issue of capacity needs and potential capacity development (CD) strategies needed for addressing underlying drivers and strategies, the Working Group may consider nominating a CD Focal Point who will have responsibility for seeing that CD issues are appropriately reflected in Working Group deliberations as well as in the Group's written outputs. The UNDP (Bangkok) Capacity Development advisor is available to support the Working Group in thinking through these issues.

For each meeting, the Co-chairs, assisted by the Forest Department and UN-REDD/RECOFTC Coordinator will prepare a brief ToR, defining the purpose of the meeting, the expected result of the meeting, and appending any materials required in preparation for the meeting. This information will be shared with all Working Group members at least a week before the meeting.

At each meeting, a secretary will be nominated who will be responsible for recording minutes and conclusions of the meeting. This document will be shared with all members of the Working Group within one week of the meeting. Comments and corrections may be proposed by any Working Group member within one additional week, after which the minutes and conclusion will be considered final.   This document will be sent to the UN-REDD/RECOFTC Coordinator.

While every effort will be made to select a meeting date that will allow all Working Group members to participate, it is inevitable that this will not always be possible. In such cases, Working Group members who are not able to attend a meeting will be provided with all the pre-meeting information, as well as the minutes and conclusions and will be invited to make additional contributions to the conclusions within one additional week.