

Wed, 13 Jun 2012

Contact us | Subscription | RSS feed | Layout

The Bhutanese

HOME | ABOUT TOWN | BUSINESS | DEMOCRACY IN ACTION | EDITORIAL | HEADLINE STORIES | LETTER | OFF THE RECORD | OPINION

THE NATION

Home » REDD-iness

Tweet {5} Like 2 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

REDD-iness

By Kuenzang Choden | 21 April 2012

Bhutan stands to gain but various issues need to be considered

Bhutan is slowly gearing towards developing a national strategy on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD +). However, there is skepticism from various quarters at the country actually becoming a signatory to the mechanism. REDD+ is a mechanism that establishes incentives for developing countries to protect and better manage their forest resources by creating a financial value for the carbon stored in forests.

The three mechanisms under REDD+ include: the host country should have a REDD strategy in place, they should establish a reference deforestation rate using credible methods and a monitoring mechanism should be developed which provides data on deforestation and forest degradation on an annual basis.

An environmentalist in his opinion said that Bhutan already has what REDD+ would ensure.

Moreover, with the country feeling the impeding need for development, how sustainable would it be is a question, he said.

"Would the community people be deprived of the advantages they have now to take timber from the community forests? Because once the forest is protected under REDD+, then it has to be preserved that way," he said.

Further he also asked, "Since the incentives would be coming from outside, what is the mechanism in place to pay to the community?"

Is giving money directly to the people advisable? What would compel the people to be a signatory to the mechanism? If rules are broken what are the penalties? How sustainable is the payment given the dwindling economic situation worldwide?"

Another environmentalist said that Bhutan should not take a hasty decision.

"It would be sensible if started as a pilot project and it is better to find out what it entails before bound by its obligations."

During the Conference of Parties (CoP 17) in Durban, South Africa, issues on the mechanism was discussed. "The mechanism basically locked indigenous people out of the forests," said a Nepalese representative.

The head of Watershed Management Division (WMD), Karma Tshering, said that Bhutan is supposed to remain carbon neutral and with this policy, REDD+ projects would be economically viable for proposition. However, it depends entirely on how it is managed. "In terms of managerial issue, it will be hard to tell as of now," he said.

According to him, the mechanism is an option for additional income to the communities but how profitable it will be cannot be predicted currently. Further, the issue on where the money comes from must be also considered in the strategy, he said adding that it ultimately boils down to primary requirement of a conducive policy environment.

A former WMD official said that the institutionalizing of the mechanism is at an preliminary stage. "Bhutan does not have a national REDD+ strategy. Unless there is one and it is being implemented, benefits to the communities cannot be measured," he said.

He also said that prior informed consensus by the community people is required so it all lies in the hands of the community. The situation now with the community forest (CF) is that it has been commercialized and more than the required amount of trees are cut down to sell which might result in forest degradation.

In this situation, REDD+ can help improve the sustainability of the CFs as it promotes sustainable forest management and plantations in barren land, he added.

Bhutan has the opportunity to gain from them Bali Action Plan (CoP 13) on REDD+, and as decided in CoP 16 held in Cancun, Bhutan is to adopt a phased program to implement the mechanism to secure ecological and economic benefits.

A feasibility study on REDD+ recommended that a national REDD+ advisory group and REDD+ technical working group should be formed. The working group is to guide the REDD+ readiness process and develop a national strategy. The group will also give technical and policy guidance to the Bhutanese negotiators at the CoP and the representation in the UN-REDD framework.

However, lack of definite guidelines and standards of technical compliance in the absence of a comprehensive, holistic and globally agreed REDD+ mechanism poses a challenge for Bhutan to take precise decisions and invest in REDD+ interests.

WMD with financial support from UNDP will be organizing a national level workshop on REDD+ strategy/action plan development from 26 April to 27 April, 2012. The workshop aims to bring all the stakeholders together and provide opportunity to the participants to familiarize with the concept of REDD+ scheme and educate them on the process of a REDD+ strategy development, institutionalize the advisory committee and technical working group, finalize their mandates, and also to share and identify the processes for the development of a national strategy.

SEARCH

Subscription

Subscribe by RSS feed or by e-mail address to receive latest news and updates.

Subscribe by RSS feed

Enter your e-mail... SIGN UP

LATEST NEWS | MOST POPULAR | COMMENTS

- Land Bill 2012 gives 'Kidu' powers to Cabinet
- Ninth session of Parliament begins yesterday
- Govt approves 10bn Credit Line
- Office goers' after-office passion to achieve vegetable self-sufficiency
- A Regulation to issue corporate bonds
- Increase in stipends will help solve Nutritional Deficiency in the boarding students
- Reasonable vegetable & food prices – can FCB provide some relief?
- Land Bill: Unconstitutional and Dangerous
- Druk Miter Tshogpa approaches BMF Director for the Party President's post *discussed 62 times*
- Land Bill 2012 gives 'Kidu' powers to Cabinet *discussed 56 times*
- Hundreds of acres in Thimphu confiscated from illegal land owners *discussed 45 times*
- High level committee report sheds light on unresolved land cases *discussed 37 times*
- Govt and RMA also responsible for rupee crunch *discussed 35 times*
- Nepotism – a rampant and spreading social evil *discussed 33 times*
- Civil servants' vehicle quota drains govt. coffers by Nu 900 mn from 2002-2011 *discussed 33 times*
- Scholarship students will be sent only to third countries to ease rupee outflow *discussed 32 times*

Recent Comments

- the monk on Land Bill 2012 gives 'Kidu' powers to Cabinet
tingting, move on, 2008 was 5 years ago, you are b...
- river on Land Bill 2012 gives 'Kidu' powers to Cabinet
should be okay
- tingting on Land Bill: Unconstitutional and Dangerous
if i begin to make noise, it's not going to be tin...
- tingting on Land Bill 2012 gives 'Kidu' powers to