

Investing in Good Governance for REDD+

Proceedings from UN-REDD side event in Bonn, held on 5 August 2010

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On Thursday 5 August 2010 the UN-REDD Programme held its side event “Investing in Good Governance for REDD+: Seeking Common Ground” at the Bonn Climate Talks. Participants discussed existing national governance initiatives that relate to REDD+ readiness, with specific examples from Philippines and Ecuador, and explored ways to enhance country ownership of REDD+ governance through multi-stakeholder approaches.

On 5 August, just a few hours before the Interim REDD+ Partnership presented its work program, and the very day that the REDD+ text was discussed in the AWG-LCA, the UN-REDD Programme held its side event, “Investing in Good Governance for REDD+: Seeking Common Ground” at the Bonn Climate Talks. Based on the idea that information about governance efforts needs to be shared more widely and systematically, the event sought to deepen a common understanding of the range of governance activities required - and sometimes undertaken already - to prepare an efficient, equitable and effective REDD+ mechanism. Participants discussed existing national governance initiatives that relate to REDD+ readiness, with specific examples from Philippines and Ecuador, and explored ways to enhance country ownership of REDD+ governance through multi-stakeholder approaches.

In his opening remarks Charles McNeill, UNDP Senior Policy Adviser on REDD+ in the UN-REDD Programme, noted that often different actors speak about different things when they talk about governance for REDD+. For example, some think about it in the context of illegal activities and corruption; others focus on governance as a coordination issue, or stakeholder engagement. “Today”, he added, “we’ll try to unpack elements of governance for REDD+, based on specific country examples”. Florence Daviet, Associate Manager at the World Resources Institute, [presented an analysis](#), first launched last May at a [Chatham House/ UN-REDD workshop](#), of [what governments in REDD+ countries have identified as governance challenges](#) in their national UN-REDD Programmes and Readiness Preparation Proposals. Recurring elements across 16 documents have been found to be: 1) Stakeholder consultation & participation in REDD+ planning and implementation 2) Transparency & accountability of REDD+ systems & processes 3) Government coordination in REDD+ planning & implementation and 4) legislative reform and enforcement. “Consensus on some issues such as unclear tenure and weak law enforcement are universally mentioned”, she highlighted. She pointed to possible gaps such as gender issues and strategies to engage women, the role of the judicial system, and strategies to engage local government and law enforcement bodies, and overall plans to monitor these elements. All documents

recognize the importance of building good governance into national REDD+ programs, she concluded, as well as the need to build capacity.

Vicky Tauli-Corpuz, chair of the Tebtebba Foundation and REDD+ negotiator for the Philippines, spoke of the development of the national REDD strategy in the Philippines, a process initiated and driven by civil society. The Philippines, she noted, is in a particular situation as the Indigenous peoples act recognizes certificates of ancestral domain titles and claims, and a recognition of free Prior and Informed Consent. Civil society organization hired experts, and engaged with the department of forestry to develop a proposed REDD strategy that relies on implementation by local governments. Although some critique was raised that indigenous peoples were not sufficiently engaged in the preparation of this draft, it is overall good, Vicky noted, and integrates different drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The challenge now will to ensure that traditional practices of indigenous communities are sustained and reinforced and that capacity is built to do so.

Marco Chiu, Undersecretary of Climate Change in the Government of Ecuador, examined [Ecuador's approach to REDD+ governance](#) through UNDP's framework of legality (rules), legitimacy (proper functioning of institutions and their acceptance by the public) and participation (efficacy of government and the achievement of consensus by democratic means). Legal instruments, he pointed out, are delimited by provisions in the National Constitution, the National Development Plan, the National Environmental Policy and the Presidential Executive Decree 1815. He described Ecuador's institutional arrangements, and a process of stakeholder involvement that is being developed and includes information, consultations, engagement and capacity building, and will start its implementation with a focus on indigenous peoples this year. He noted challenges in defining modalities for decision making that balance urgency and consultation, ensuring legitimacy, building and maintaining trust, and adequate platforms to secure long-term processes.

John Samuel of UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre presented [Democratic Governance Assessments for REDD+](#), an approach to be supported by the UN-REDD Programme that emphasizes national ownership and accountability. These assessments, he noted are developed and owned by the key stakeholders and citizens of a given country, help to build the national and local capacity of the government and local, forest-dependent communities, have more validity and impact than externally driven assessments and are both a practical and a political approach. The best safeguards, he noted, is when people claim their rights, participate in the process and have ownership of it. "Unless and until there is ownership", he emphasized, "change just won't happen".

Discussions touched on how to include women in designing REDD+ strategies; the role of local stakeholders in independent monitoring; the relationship between good governance and ensuring fair benefit-sharing mechanisms and the tracking of poverty alleviation outcomes. Victor Fodeke, head of the newly formed Nigeria REDD Technical Committee, highlighted that the message he'd take home was one of "information, consultation, engagement, and capacity building".

