

# Third National Stakeholders Consultation Workshop

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**Bangladesh REDD+ Readiness Roadmap, Bangladesh  
27<sup>th</sup> March 2012, Dhaka**

## Introduction

The Third national stakeholder consultation workshop on the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap for Bangladesh took place on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at Hotel Ruposhi Bangla, Dhaka. The objective of this workshop was to share, discuss and validate the draft national roadmap document among the key stakeholders in Bangladesh. A total of 72 participants attended the workshop, from government bodies and NGO/CSOs. The participant list is attached.

The workshop was divided into an inaugural session and a technical session. Mr. Munjurul Hannan, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) inaugurated the event. Mr. Aparup Chowdhury, secretary in charge, MoEF, was Chief Guest and delivered the opening address on behalf of Dr. Hasan Mahmud, Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Forests. Stefan Priesner, UNDP Country Director and Dominique Burgeon, FAO Country Representative, spoke as Special Guests. Mr. Md. Yunus Ali, Chief Conservator of Forests presented the keynote speech. This was followed by the technical session, chaired by Tim Boyle, Regional Coordinator (UN-REDD), Asia-Pacific Region.

## Strategy Presentation: Dr. Ansarul Karim

This presentation captured the feedback from all the regional stakeholder consultation workshops regarding the drivers and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation in different forest areas. The presentation generated the following comments.

- Individual consultant Ms. Shireen Syed appreciated the pace of the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap preparation in Bangladesh and the summary made by Dr. Karim. She opined that there needs to be capacity development doorways for the forest department officials. She also cited World Banks Wild Life Conservation project and expressed her intention whether more new projects can be identified from the existing effort of REDD+.
- Centre for Natural Resources Studies (CNRS) emphasized on the policy level support that needs to be there to support co-management.
- Representative from POUSH categorically focused on the arrangement of ministry level coordination that needs to be clarified and how this will be done.
- Nature Conservation Management (NACOM) mentioned that there needs to be other options of house hold needs/dependency on forest and in this connection active involvement of Upazilla council, local government was cited.

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- Prof. Alamin from Chittagong University felt the strong need for research work on REDD+ in Bangladesh as it is a new theme
- Representative from Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) opined that Chittagong Hill Tracts and its governance structure is different from the rest of the country. In this context the executive body for the CHT area known as Hill District Council needs to be under serious consideration specially its up-gradation of capacity. He also advised that the best practices/examples of village common forest management needs to be identified and promoted for future replication.
- Arannayk Foundation critically emphasized on the scope of the strategy specifically whether it covers national or regional challenges
- Forest Department representative drew that historically it took long time to include local community with the existing forest management policy and keeping that in mind particular attention needs to be there to ensure/clarify the process of inclusion of the community into REDD+ mechanism
- Another Forest Department official felt the need to formulate a new law as “Forest Conservation ACT”

### **Legal Issues Presentation: Mr. Hafij Islam**

The main focus of this presentation was to highlight the legal implications of REDD+ in Bangladesh. Subsequently other relevant legal issues were discussed and the following comments were recorded:

- Representative from LRI enquired how the existing laws/framework will deal with the REDD+. He also envisaged on the integration of fragmented laws( human rights) and the probable mechanisms to include indigenous people.
- Another Forest Department official cited that the existing REDD+ effort shouldn't take much time to formulate new rules/regulations simultaneously he enquired whether that needs to go through the parliament or amendment will serve the purpose
- Suggestion came from the presenter that the REDD+ initiative has created a new doorway to rethink about the probable legal framework and its full-fledged review

### **Stakeholder Mapping Presentation: Tanveer Morshed Khan**

This presentation helped to understand the process been followed to map the stakeholders in the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap for Bangladesh. Subsequent comments are mentioned below:

- Chief Conservator of Forests enquired on what ground Parliamentary Standing Committee can be considered as a stakeholder.

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- Representative from Poush cited that it will be cumbersome to come up with a stakeholder heavy project as coordination will be difficult and might end up with conflicting situation.
- Ubinig representative emphasized that it will be much easier to be under one law instead of several acts
- Arannayk Foundation representative categorically emphasized that the weightage ascertained in the Stakeholder Mapping exercise is confusing

### **MRV Presentation: Dr. Matieu Henry and Dr. Mariam Akhter**

FAO representative Dr. Henry and consultant Dr. Akhter jointly presented the draft MRV action plan. The following comments came up after the presentation:

- Institute of Water Modeling (IWM) representative transmitted the participants about the modeling experience they have and offered to extend their expertise as needed.
- SPARRSO representative enquired how the reviewers from REDD review team will verify the ground inventory part and also focused on the training need for Forest Department officers in this regard
- Forest Department official cited whether there will be a gap for the context of MRV in Bangladesh as explained in the IPCC or GHG guideline and how it will be minimized
- Representative from Chittagong University shared that Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics(BBS) have their own way of doing census and survey and how the requirement for REDD+ will be satisfied when it comes about statistical support from an organization like BBS
- Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies(BCAS) resource person wanted to know how the carbon estimation will be made or the volume will be calculated subsequently whether RIMS unit had that capacity or not
- In this connection Additional Secretary, MoEF elaborated that as a least developed country Bangladesh got preferential treatment/higher opportunities to get the funding for capacity development of Forest Department but necessary ground work needs to be done to find the donors. He also emphasized the need on coordinated effort from the Government Ministries

### **Group Discussions:**

At the end of the technical session three groups were formed to represent the Strategy, Safeguard and MRV Working Groups. The groups were asked to address the following questions:

- What activities remain to complete the Roadmap?
- How do we achieve them?

The groups came up with the following recommendations:

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### ***Strategy group:***

- Forest land demarcation needs to be there
- Village common forest area should be measured and
- Exercise of the rights and privileges of foresters needs to be ensured

### ***Safeguard Group:***

This group concentrated on information gaps in the Roadmap document:

- Validation of text on the Social Forestry Rules, Co-management rules, VCFs
- Expand on details of Line Ministry responsibilities for REDD+
- Details of the Hill Council Act and the division of responsibilities between Hill Council and central government
- Information on other local government bodies: Committees on forestry and environment, DDCCs and inter-departmental project evaluation committees
- More information on IPAC project, Nishorgo network and relevant NGOs
- Information on the REDD-relevant expertise of academic institutions
- Discussion on the existing stakeholder networks and representative bodies that could be mobilized to ensure full and effective consultation for REDD+
- Microfinance as a tool for resource distribution under REDD+: provision for channeling BCCRF finance through CSOs and NGOs, role of PKSf and Grameen Bank, gender impact of microcredit schemes, extension of microfinance and microcredit schemes to CHT, potential for microfinance as an element of REDD+ strategies through alternative livelihood support, new revenue sharing modality for CMOs under IPAC project
- Potential roles of Financial Management bodies in national REDD+ fund creation and management; World Bank, Grameen 'Social Business/Entrepreneurship development', PKSf, fund trustees, BCRF as a model for a national REDD+ fund, role of ERD within finance ministry
- Legislation relevant for Social and Environmental Safeguards and Standards for REDD+: regulations for SIA and EIA under the Environmental Conservation Act and Rules, equity under the Social Forestry Rules
- New Access to information act and Anti-corruption act and creation of national-level commissions for both
- Gender equality under the constitution

A number of individuals within the group volunteered to provide text on all the above points by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March (information on CHT by 4<sup>th</sup> April)

The groups were in agreement that a new legal regime for REDD+ is not appropriate. It is necessary to use existing legal structures and policies. New REDD+ Rules may be appropriate, but not Acts.

Phase 2 of REDD+ in Bangladesh should involve 5-10 priority pilot projects. One of these should focus on alignment of existing legal regime with REDD+.

The importance of dynamic and enthusiastic co-chairs (one each from BoD and civil society) for Technical Working Groups (TWGs) was stressed, with reference to the successful example of TWGs in Viet Nam.

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### ***MRV Group:***

- Coordination body for MRV: MOU should be developed for satellite-based forest monitoring system (SPARRSO, CEGIS, IWM, FD, Universities)
- Data sharing Platform: MOU should be developed for data sharing (SPARRSO, CEGIS, IWM, FD, Universities, BFRI, BNH)
- National Forest Inventory: MOU should be developed for data sharing (CEGIS, FD, Universities, BFRI, BNH )

### **Conclusion:**

During the workshop, support and enthusiasm for the REDD+ programme in Bangladesh was evident. It was also agreed, in principle, that the comments and recommendations from the participants recorded in this workshop will be incorporated in the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap, as appropriate. Mr. Haradhan Banik, national REDD+ focal point chaired the group presentation. Mr. Ratan Kumar Mazumder, Deputy Conservator of Forests, FD concluded the technical session and expressed his gratitude towards UNDP and FAO in supporting the national REDD+ Readiness Roadmap process.