

With 12 weeks to go before the negotiations in Copenhagen, there is a visible momentum and excitement around REDD. However, there also remains much skepticism and doubt that a deal can be reached at COP 15 in Copenhagen. Some have even suggested that it is time to openly consider Plan B in the event that there is no agreement on REDD.

In view of this, the High level event on REDD convened by the United Nations Secretary-General on 23 September couldn't come at a more critical time. Speaker after speaker pleaded support and commitment to sealing the deal on REDD.

But it was the President of Guyana who challenged everyone to focus on the opportunities that REDD offers rather than on the problems and challenges. While it is accepted that REDD issues are complex, previous negotiations such as the Kyoto Protocol faced similar complexities and challenges, yet agreement was reached.

It is this positive spirit and thinking that is needed to make a case for an agreement in Copenhagen. That REDD is doable and is a win-win solution for the environment and people is undeniable and largely recognized.

But progress hinges on leadership. Some countries, like Norway and Guyana, have made substantial commitments to REDD -- one in financial terms and the other in forest area. We need to see more examples such as these ones. More developed and developing countries need to step forward and make clear commitments that will spur the rest to move ahead with REDD.

Yemi Katerere  
Head of the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat

## News

### United Nations event on forests and climate change underscores North-South agreement and support for REDD

In an unprecedented display of cooperation between developed and developing countries on climate change, 18 Heads of State gathered at UN headquarters in New York to publicly express their commitment and support for REDD. They asserted that the new climate change agreement to be negotiated in Copenhagen must address in an effective and equitable way the role of forests as a mitigation option.



Secretary-General speaks at United Nations High-Level meeting on reducing emissions

Following the previous day's Summit on Climate Change, and ahead of the critical Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen taking place this December, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened leaders and dignitaries from developed and developing countries to dialogue and publicly support REDD.

The event marked the largest gathering of countries to date on the issue of REDD, with the participation of over 100 countries and

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For more information on the UN-REDD Programme visit [www.un-redd.org](http://www.un-redd.org)

over 150 dignitaries and leaders from international and non-governmental organizations, academia, think tanks and the private sector from around the world concerned with climate change and forests. "This convergence of world leaders highlights a positive, growing momentum in support of REDD and signals how this mechanism may be feasible from a technical, financial and collaboration perspective," Secretary-General Ban said about the event.

Industrialized countries (Australia, Belgium, Norway, Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom) and World Bank President Zoellick took the stand to support progress and actions on REDD.

"I believe immediate action on REDD+ should be included in the Copenhagen agreement," said Prime Minister of Sweden Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, speaking on behalf of the European Union. "It's an important step in the right direction – for our people, for the biodiversity of our forests, and for our climate."

"One of the most important elements [in Copenhagen] is that we have to agree on how to save our forests and halt deforestation," said Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. "We will allocate up to US \$500 million yearly to reduce deforestation and forest degradation."

Australia is already investing AU\$200 million (US\$175 million) in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Heads of States and high ranking officials from Bangladesh, Bolivia, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Guyana, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Congo also underlined their commitment as well as the urgent need for action.

"We can't afford to wait for the lessons of the pilots that are ongoing now," warned President of Guyana Mr Bharrat Jagdeo. "We need to act now."

"By associating conservation and sustainable management of forests, REDD is a winning formula for the climate and an efficient solution for mitigating climate change," said President of the Republic of Congo Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

Participating developing countries also expressed their willingness to undertake significant cuts in deforestation and forest degradation, provided that they receive sufficient financial support. Guyana, for example, has committed to offer all of its forest to REDD, in exchange for the right financial incentive.

A report by the Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (IWG-IFR) estimates a 25% reduction in deforestation could be achieved with a financial commitment of 15-20 billion Euros (US\$22-29 billion) by 2015. "This translates into 1.5 cent of a dollar per day for each person in industrialized countries," underlined Mr Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana.

This would represent a reduction of 7 gigatonnes of CO2 equivalent by 2015. Without comparison, this would be the biggest contribution to fighting climate change in that time period.

"Without global commitment, there will be no deal in Copenhagen," said Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Mr Michael T. Somare. "We can't seal the deal without REDD."

There are still questions that need to be solved, such as the funding mechanism for REDD, and questions related to how the funds and technology would trickle down to forest-dependent communities. However, there was no question about the fact that REDD is one of the smartest, quickest, and most cost-effective investments the world can make to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is now clear that in order to constrain the impacts of climate change within limits that society will reasonably be able to tolerate, the global

average temperatures must be stabilized

within two degrees Celsius. "If we don't reach an agreement on REDD in Copenhagen, those who will suffer most are the poor countries," said Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai, speaking at a reception following the event. "But in any case everyone will be worse off, since climate change will affect both developed and developing nations alike. So it is in our common interest to do whatever is possible to reduce the threat posed by climate change on our people."

"With all these countries speaking on REDD, I don't see why we shouldn't be able to have an agreement at Copenhagen," noted Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. "I appeal to all countries to fully include forest communities and indigenous, otherwise REDD will not succeed. Yet, we simply cannot afford to fail this time."

You can view the agenda and further information at: <http://tinyurl.com/event-agenda>

Tune in and watch the webcast from the event and subsequent Press Conference [English: 1 hour and 38 minutes ] at: <http://tinyurl.com/hle-web-cast> ■



*The event marked the largest gathering of countries to date on the issue of REDD, with the participation of over 100 countries and over 150 dignitaries and leaders.*

## Systematic review of methods to measure and assess terrestrial carbon

A team of world experts is working on a scientifically-based review of methods for measuring and assessing terrestrial carbon, for countries embarking on REDD

Within the UN-REDD Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is developing a collaborative project which will systematically analyze literature on methods to measure and assess terrestrial carbon stocks using an evidence-based process of the type widely used in medicine for scientifically-grounded decision-making. The draft Protocol is cur-

rently under peer-review. The full review will begin in October 2009.

The project will introduce the proven systematic review approach to forestry and land management. It will lend scientific credibility to the guidance given to countries who aspire to participate in a future REDD mechanism, and will provide scientific underpinning of the many approaches that already exist.

The Draft Protocol, titled "Comparison of methods for the measurement and assessment of carbon stocks and carbon stock changes in terrestrial carbon pools" was produced collaboratively by Gill Petrokofsky, FAO/UN-REDD Programme and external experts. It has now been posted on the website of the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE), a consortium that facilitates systematic reviews. The document can be viewed at <http://www.environmentalevidence.org/SR77.html>

The Protocol is now being peer-reviewed. The next phase will consist of putting together a team of reviewers for the full systematic review, which will start in October 2009. Revisions to the Draft Protocol are available on the CEE website and feedback is being collected throughout the period of consultation.

More information on the process can be found at <http://www.fao.org/climatechange/55337/>

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## Last days to vote for civil society representatives

There are only a few more days left to participate in the selection of civil society representatives. Review the candidates and cast your vote by Monday 28 September 2009



Civil society organizations (CSO) are invited to participate in the self-selection process for four observers to the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board. Over 50 nominations have been submitted and voting is

now open to elect civil society representatives from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and developed countries.

Key criteria are:

- Only civil society organizations are permitted to vote. Incomplete ballots will not be counted.
- Each CSO can cast one vote for one preferred candidate for each of the four regional observer positions – Africa, Latin American and Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and the developed world.
- An organization with offices in multiple countries is treated as a single entity, eligible for one vote per region.
- candidates may vote for themselves, and for observers in the three other regions.

Ballots, available on the UN-REDD Programme website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/csoselection-ballot>

These must be e-mailed to: [csoselection@un-redd.org](mailto:csoselection@un-redd.org) before 5:00 pm EST on 28 September 2009. Election results will be announced on 1 October 2009.

The selected observers will attend the 3rd meeting of the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board in Washington, D.C., USA, on 29-30 October 2009.

For more information on the CSO observer self-selection process, please refer to the UN-REDD Programme website at: <http://www.un-redd.org> ■

## Features & Commentary

### UN-REDD and indigenous peoples' engagement: the case of Africa

By Elifuraha Isaya Laltaika

Worldwide, Indigenous Peoples face many injustices. These are such as dispossession of their ancestral land without their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as well as forced assimilation into the way of life of the dominant group. In most of the

African countries, indigenous peoples face yet another challenge. This relates to lack of legal recognition of their existence by their respective governments within their territories. Lack of recognition has resulted into lack of measures to ensure that in-

igenous peoples enjoy their rights on an equal footing to other communities.

In the context of climate change, indigenous peoples in Africa are the most vulnerable group, occupying fragile ecosystems. They bear the catastrophe with no access to resources to cope with the changes. Worse still, mitigation initiatives being developed pose more land tenure security threats. This is mainly due to lack of meaningful participation in decision making on the various projects being developed in their lands and territories.

The UN-REDD Programme is determined to reverse the above undesired state of affairs. It



provides space for representatives of indigenous peoples in its decision making organ namely the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board. A document providing for this requirement is called the "Operational Guidance on the engagement of Indigenous peoples and other Forest dependent communities."

In the context of Africa, this representation has been very fruitful in that indigenous peoples through their representative can take part in the decision making process of the UN-REDD Programme. Similarly, indigenous peoples of Africa can now timely access

relevant documents of the Policy Board. The Operational Guidance also provides that indigenous peoples shall be represented on national steering committees or equivalent bodies.

It follows therefore that if all the UN-REDD Programme pilot countries will adhere to the Operational Guidance in practical terms, indigenous peoples of Africa will be part of the various UN-REDD initiatives in their respective countries and ensure that they are in line with their rights. Indigenous peoples' activists are inspired to lobby and advocate for the rights of their constituencies in the UN-REDD processes due to the presence of the UN Collaborative agencies. These agencies draw their mandate to engage indigenous peoples from the UN charter, among other documents.

The engagement of indigenous peoples in international decision-making processes is an important step towards the recognition of their rights at the national level. It is also essential for ensuring the success of REDD.

*Elifuraha Isaya Laltaika is the elected Indigenous Peoples of Africa representative to the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board. He holds a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) from the University of Dar-Es-salaam and a Master of Laws (LL.M) in Environmental Law from the University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. He works with Community Research and Development Services (CORDS) as a Legal Officer. He also teaches Land Law and Constitutional Law at Makumira University College in Arusha. ■*

## Reports & Analysis

### Several UN-REDD countries participate in discussion on assessment and monitoring forest degradation

Participants from UN-REDD countries attended a technical meeting on forest degradation at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy from 8-10 September 2009

Several representatives from UN-REDD countries met in early September at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in Rome, Italy, to attend a technical meeting on "Assessment and Monitoring of Forest Degradation". The goal of the meeting was to present an analysis of definitions of forest degradation, as well as case studies on forest degradation.

Participants defined forest degradation as "the reduction of the capacity of a forest to provide goods and services". There was also consensus among participants on the need to evaluate degradation in relation to the state and process of degradation, and within a defined context of time and space. Forest management objectives and forest types are also elements to consider when monitoring and evaluated degraded forests.

Participants discussed technical aspects of methodologies for assessing and monitoring forest degradation and recommended actions to improve measurement, assessment and reporting on forest degradation. The meeting was part of a special study on forest degradation to identify the parameters of forest degradation and the best practices for assessing them. The study is carried out by the team of the Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) of FAO as well as members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and other partners.

The complete report of the meeting will be available in October 2009.

To download the presentations, please visit the FAO website at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf/degradation/en/> ■

### UN-REDD countries meet to share experiences on measuring, reporting and verification systems for REDD

A measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) meeting held in FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 10-11 September 2009, brought together representatives from nine UN-REDD countries and three UN agencies

A measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) meeting took place on 10-11 September 2009 in Rome, bringing together representatives from the nine UN-REDD

countries, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a few other observers.

Among the most important outcomes of the two-day meeting, country representatives have been able to share their experi-

ence and learn from other UN-REDD projects, establish priorities for capacity-building and technical advice on MRV systems, and adopt a common strategy which will enable them to gather comparable data related to the implementation of MRV systems for REDD.

The meeting's main objectives were to:

- discuss the current status of MRV tools and information in each of the UN-REDD countries
- develop a common vision on strategies for MRV in the UN-REDD countries
- present and deliver tools and data for MRV of UN-REDD in the countries
- update countries on the development of the MRV toolkit and gather inputs from country representatives



The MRV meeting brought together representatives from nine UN-REDD countries and three UN agencies

The FAO presented the MRV framework developed by UNREDD and hosted a discussion with the participants. Each country then presented the status of their development of MRV systems and gave inputs on the MRV strategy proposed for the UN-REDD programme. ■

## US\$4.38 million UN-REDD Viet Nam Programme launched

Viet Nam is the first pilot country to fully start implementing activities that will help to reduce deforestation and forest degradation

Viet Nam, one of nine UN-REDD Programme pilot countries, officially launched its UN-REDD national programme in Ha Noi on 17 September 2009. The Programme will help Viet Nam combat climate change, conserve its rich biodiversity, and reverse land degradation and desertification. As activities unfold, lessons learned in Viet Nam will be most valuable to other pilot countries and the wider international community.

Funded by the Government of Norway, Viet Nam's US\$4.38 million UN-REDD programme will be executed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), and will run for almost two years. Lam Dong Province has been selected as the pilot site. Over the last 20 years, Viet Nam has taken several successful measures to increase its total forested area. Yet, over half of its natural forests are considered poor or regenerating, and rich and closed-canopy forests constitute just over nine percent. The country's rich biodiversity is also at risk: of its total 1,534 animal species, 121 are endangered, and 145 plant species are threatened.

Curbing deforestation and forest degradation are substantial steps in responding to climate change and promote win-win solutions. For example, mangrove forests support livelihoods and protect people from surge storms and floods and also absorb and store carbon.

The UN-REDD Programme aims to create financial incentives for Viet Nam to preserve its forests and improve their management.

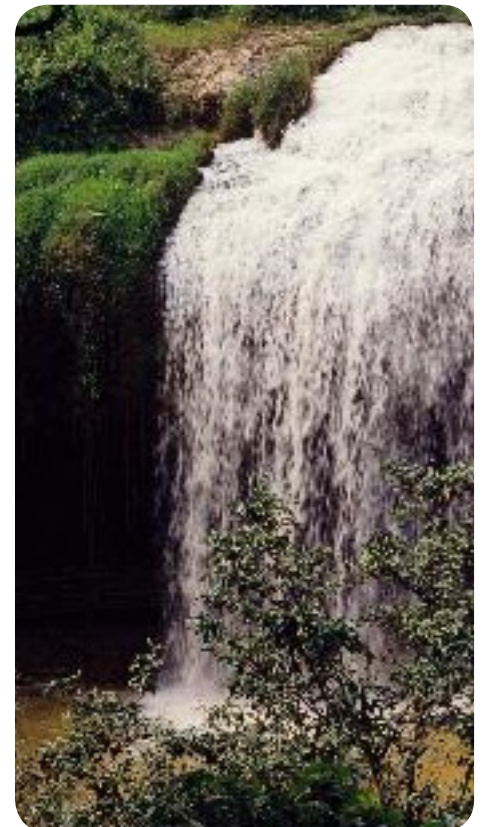
It will provide the country with institutional and technical capacity to pilot REDD initiatives, and will focus on building capacity to implement REDD, both at the national and sub-national level, through activities in Lam Dong. It will also look at ways to promote cooperation among the countries of the lower Mekong basin to avoid cross-border leakages of emissions.

"We hope that this collaborative UN Programme will be able to quickly demonstrate that the costs associated with deforestation outweigh the immediate economic benefits of cutting down trees," says Setsuko Yamazaki, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Director during the inception workshop that launched the national programme. "To achieve this goal, it is critical that REDD benefits first and foremost the poorer forest managers and communities."

The programme inception workshop, held in Ha Noi on 17 September 2009, spread over three days. More than 100 participants took part, representing Vietnamese and international partners, central and local government, and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations, representing academia, civil society, and environmental groups.

This first day allowed the three cooperating UN agencies of the UN-REDD Programme (UNDP, UNEP, and FAO) to meet with the Programme Management Unit staff, to

review implementation arrangements and agree on procedures to be followed for work planning and reporting. On the second day, representatives from the Lam Dong Province joined the workshop to begin the detailed planning and budgeting of activities for the first quarter of implementation. The third day was opened by MARD Vice-Minister Mr Hua Duc Nhi, whose remarks were followed by the UNDP Country Director Ms Setsuko Yamazaki, Ambassador of Norway Mr Stale Torstein Risa, and Vice-Chair of the Lam Dong Provincial People's Committee, Mr Hoang Si Son. Participants then discussed the overall approach to the UN-REDD Viet Nam



Since 1990, Viet Nam was able to increase its forest cover, yet over half of its natural forests are considered poor or regenerating.

## Viet Nam facts and figures:

Total land area:	32,549,000 ha
Forest cover (% of total land):	39.73%
Primary forest (% of total land):	0.26%

### Forest cover change between 1990 and 2005:

Forest cover increased by 38.11%  
Primary forest cover decreased by 77.86%

### Wildlife diversity:

Total species:	1,534
Endemic species:	126
Threatened species:	121

### Plant diversity:

Endemic plant species:	1,260
Threatened plant species:	145

### Value of forest products (US\$):

Industrial round wood:	\$91,579,000
Wood fuel:	\$77,788,000
Non-wood forest products:	\$289,507,000
Total value:	\$458,874,000

Programme as well as plans for the proposed outcomes of the Programme. The debate focused on opportunities for collaboration with other partners and appropriate timing for the different activities.

"We believe Viet Nam can become one of the success stories of REDD that will be told to the world to help convince world leaders that REDD is possible," says Norwegian Ambassador Stale Torstein Risa. The experiences gained, the capacities built and the cooperation established through the joint efforts of the Government of Viet Nam and the UN-REDD Programme will help catalyze a successful outcome for REDD in Copenhagen this year." ■

## Looking Ahead

### Third Policy Board Meeting of the UN-REDD Programme

29-30 October 2009, Washington, D.C.

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