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# Draft Strategic Framework, 2016-2020

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UN-REDD PROGRAMME  
THIRTEENTH POLICY BOARD  
MEETING

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3-7 November 2014  
Arusha, Tanzania

## 1. Introduction

As agreed at the 12th meeting of the UN-REDD Programme's Policy Board (PB12, Lima, July 2014) and in accordance with the approved "roadmap", work has been undertaken between July and October 2014 to prepare a proposal for the future Programme strategy. The current strategy expires at the end of 2015.<sup>1</sup> Thus, developing a strategic framework for the five year period from 2016 to 2020 has provided an opportunity for the stakeholders in the Programme to realign the aims and scope with respect to the evolving context of REDD+ as well as to adjust the operational modalities for improved delivery of the Programme.

Two particularly important foundations for the new strategy are worth mentioning at the outset. Firstly, agreements at the 19<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Warsaw at the end of 2013 completed the set of decisions that constitute the "rulebook" for REDD+ implementation and thereby provide the necessary technical guidance for countries that decide to participate in the REDD+ process under the UNFCCC. Secondly, the first external evaluation of the UN-REDD Programme was undertaken in 2013-14 and resulted in a series of conclusions and recommendations which have been taken into account in preparing the new strategic framework. In particular the evaluation underlined: i) the need to ensure country leadership in developing REDD+; ii) that enhanced inter-sectoral exchange and cooperation needs to be promoted at country level; and, iii) that enhanced inter-agency collaboration as well as broad-based stakeholder engagement with Civil Society (CSOs), Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and other partner organisations are critical for the success of the REDD+ process. The significance of high-level political commitment and backing for REDD+ was also emphasized in the evaluation.

The development of the proposed strategic framework outlined in the following sections of this paper has entailed several steps:

- Carrying out of interviews with members of the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board;
- Preparation of a discussion paper summarizing the main elements of the strategic framework;
- Completion of an online public survey with compilation of responses to a number of questions directly related to the discussion paper;
- Organization of three consultation workshops - held in Panama City for the Latin America and Caribbean region, in Bangkok for the Asia Pacific region and in Nairobi for the Africa region - with a view to gathering feedback on the initial proposals for the strategic framework as summarized in the discussion paper.
- Incorporation of inputs by UN-REDD Programme staff working in different regions and countries.

The resulting proposal for the strategic framework will be examined at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Policy Board (PB) on 6-7 November 2014, with the aim of generating convergence on the key elements of the future strategy. With the strategic framework in place further exploration of a number of issues will be undertaken after PB13 in order to complete the design of the UN-REDD Programme 2016-20 (as indicated in section 4, below).

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<sup>1</sup> Similarly the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the FAO, the UNDP and the UNEP which established the Programme in 2008 also expires in 2015.

## **2. Outline of the proposed vision, mission, objectives and focus**

The **vision** for the UN-REDD Programme, 2016-2020 is:

To contribute to changes such that developing countries have significantly reduced their forest emissions, as a result of their capacity building and incentives from a results-based REDD+ mechanism, while achieving national development goals in a sustainable and equitable manner.

The **mission** of the Programme is as follows:

Drawing on the convening power and inclusive, rights-based approach of the United Nations, as well as the provision of technical knowledge based on trusted relationships, to support developing countries' efforts to contribute to climate change mitigation through the implementation of REDD+ activities as agreed in the UNFCCC.<sup>2</sup> Comprehensive stakeholder and country-driven consultations will be the essential foundations of these efforts.

The **objectives** of the Programme are:

To provide advisory and technical support services that are tailored to a variety of circumstances and to the needs of developing countries in order to:

- Enable as many countries as possible to participate effectively in the UNFCCC process by enhancing their readiness for REDD+;
- Scale-up efforts in those countries that have advanced in the readiness phase to help them design and implement results-based actions (RBAs) that could be recognized by the UNFCCC and are therefore eligible for results-based payments (RBPs).<sup>3</sup>
- Enhance the additional benefits of REDD+ for adaptation to climate change, biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods.

The proposed **Programme focus** comprises four components. Thus, services provided by the Programme would assist developing countries to:

A. Advance their readiness for and support them on building the four elements of REDD+ that are specified in the Cancun agreements, thereby allowing them to start submissions to the UNFCCC on:

- The National forest monitoring system (NFMS);
- Forest reference emission levels / forest reference levels (FREL/FRL);
- Safeguards information systems (SIS); and
- National REDD+ strategies / Action plans (NS/AP).

It is worth noting that support for preparing national REDD+ strategies and/or action plans will be a central component for advancing towards implementation (beyond readiness), given that a range of policies, actions and measures must be designed in any given country to address the drivers of deforestation and

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<sup>2</sup> As defined in the UNFCCC decision 1/CP.16 (Cancun COP), these are: Reductions of emissions from deforestation; Reductions of emissions from forest degradation; Conservation of forest carbon stocks; Sustainable management of forests; and Enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

<sup>3</sup> The UN-REDD Programme does not anticipate being a provider of RBPs but can play a role in connecting developing countries with funders (donors, private sector) that are willing to pay for UNFCCC recognized results, through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) or other appropriate channels (see also below).

forest degradation, promote conservation, implement sustainable management of forests and enhance forest carbon stocks.

- B. Address issues in other UNFCCC decisions related to REDD+, notably those associated with the Cancun Agreement on Safeguards.
- C. Accompany countries in the implementation and processes to develop RBAs with a view to receiving RBPs and other benefits according to national circumstances. This implies compliance with requirements specified in the Convention, including measuring, reporting and verification (MRV).
- D. Access knowledge for REDD+ readiness and implementation, providing well-documented, evidence-based and programmatic knowledge on REDD+ and facilitating expanded South-South knowledge sharing. This would include capturing and disseminating REDD+ readiness and implementation best practices in order to strengthen capacity development.

### **3. Approach**

Support through the UN-REDD Programme would be tailored to the unique needs of each developing country identified through an iterative and increasingly robust assessment of country needs conducted jointly with relevant partners in each country. Involvement of CSOs and IPs in these processes will be of paramount importance, as full and transparent stakeholder consultations are crucial for the success of REDD+.

The UN-REDD Programme will provide tailored advisory and technical support services through interdisciplinary and interagency teams that will accompany and guide countries through the steps they decide to take to go through the UNFCCC process. The approach is designed both to develop country capacities and also maximize the provision of other non-performance based benefits. This will include an open and easily accessible knowledge management system designed to assist developing countries to share methods and lessons learned and progressively improve their actions and capacity, including the normative basis of their actions. Thematic issues that have emerged during the first six years of the UN-REDD Programme will continue to be given particular attention, including livelihoods, gender equality, land tenure and rights as well as engagement with the private sector in REDD+.

Support will also entail thorough assessment of countries' progress towards REDD+ readiness, including reporting to the UNFCCC on: the national REDD+ strategy or action plan, the national forest monitoring system, the safeguards information system and reference emissions levels. As indicated above, it is envisaged that tailored support to different countries will be provided, based on individual needs and on mapping of progress.

### **4. Further Programme design**

#### **Theory of change and assumptions**

On the basis of the outline above, a comprehensive theory of change for the Programme will be drawn up, defining the expected long-term impact and the building blocks that will contribute to achieving the desired results (outcomes). Similarly, a performance results framework with targets and indicators to be tracked

through results-based reporting will also be defined.<sup>4</sup> At this stage it is worth highlighting several assumptions, which should be taken into account in further Programme design. These include:

- Sufficient and reliable long-term finance is available to support climate change mitigation efforts related to forests, which can contribute to reaching the target of no more than 2° Celsius global temperature increase;
- Finance is available for REDD+ results-based actions (RBAs), which aim to tackle the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to implement the other REDD+ activities (as listed in footnote 2) on the basis of well-designed policies and measures;
- A streamlined, efficient Programme is funded as a means to assist countries in implementing UNFCCC decisions.

### **Interagency arrangements**

The UN-REDD Programme is a powerful example of the value and efficiency of UN agencies working together. Strengthened interagency collaboration is important and actions are already being taken in this regard. These range from simple adjustments, such as all UN-REDD staff in the three agencies having the same UN-REDD email address, to deeper changes such as one lead agency per country, one country support team for all Programme interventions, increased co-location in the regions and strengthened portfolio management. Another key feature of the envisaged joint management is better integrated planning and budgeting, enabling improved tracking and oversight of the Programme. This will include greater attention to reporting of results as noted above.

Ensuring an integrated interagency delivery modality is also important and at the country level the Programme and the agencies are committed to improving efficiency, ultimately disbursing through one single administrative interface. Identified steps to improve efficiency include better country portfolio joint management by a streamlined management group, identifying one task team leader from across the agencies' teams to lead inter-agency "country support teams" tailored to the needs of each country, and the appointment of a single programme coordinator serving as an interface with government counterparts and providing support to all agencies involved. These measures combined will significantly increase internal efficiencies and coordination, and offer a much improved interface and services for partner countries.

### **Programme governance**

Both the Programme evaluation and the regional and online consultations have highlighted the need to design "leaner" and streamlined Programme governance arrangements. The approach adopted during the development of the strategic framework has been that form follows function. Therefore it was necessary to first determine what the Programme would do and then how it would operate. Nonetheless it has been recognized that the governance of the Programme needs to be adjusted to maintain the multi-stakeholder nature but at the same time to operate more efficiently.

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<sup>4</sup> An important recommendation of the external evaluation was to continue efforts to develop and implement results-based planning, monitoring, and reporting tools across the Programme.

In accordance with the roadmap agreed at PB12, there will be ample time and opportunities for the stakeholders to define the full governance arrangements that will be appropriate for the new phase of the Programme.

### **Strategic partnerships**

Strategic partnerships are also critical for the future UN-REDD Programme. Effective and efficient collaboration with the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the BioCarbon Fund have been and will be important. In particular, steps will be taken to draw up a joint collaborative work plan that is consistent with the complementarity but also recognizes the differences between the approaches developed by the FCPF and the UN-REDD Programme. The approach to results-based actions to be supported through the FCPF's Carbon Fund is targeting a limited number of countries that develop sub-national emissions reduction purchase agreements as the basis for payments (RBPs). The UN-REDD Programme strategy as outlined in this strategic framework would focus on supporting the development of national results-based actions recognized by the UNFCCC REDD+ decisions.

The emergence of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as a significant source of REDD+ finance must also be taken into consideration in the further design of the Programme. Assisting countries that are moving towards results-based payments through the GCF will be important. The UN-REDD Programme can provide support to countries that are aiming to access REDD+ funding opportunities. In this context it is worth emphasizing that the Programme will not operate as a funding facility for REDD+, but may provide the technical assistance required for the establishment of REDD+ funding channels (setting up and managing funds). Furthermore, there are many other partners involved in REDD+, both international organizations such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and non-governmental organizations, with which the UN-REDD Programme will need to interact.

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