

Introduction

REDD+ as part of the global climate change solution continues to evolve at a rapid pace. On 11 March, 54 countries from the world's major forest basins gathered in Paris to begin defining an interim REDD+ partnership which will feed into the REDD+ negotiations already underway in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). More donors came to the table, and many of them pledged to devote at least 20 per cent of their fast-start funding under the Copenhagen Accord to REDD+.

There may be different views on the best way to develop an interim arrangement but there is wide consensus about the need to keep the REDD+ agenda moving forward. Participants at the Paris meeting stressed the need to implement REDD+ strategies in a faster, more coordinated way and preparations are already in full swing for a follow-up meeting in Oslo at the end of May.

Against this backdrop, the UN-REDD Programme stands ready to meet the call for greater coordination. Over the past few months, the Programme has deepened its partnership and collaboration with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to respond to the calls for simpler, more efficient REDD+ implementation. A shining example of this is in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the country was able to recently present the same Readiness Preparation Proposal (RPP) to both initiatives which was in turn approved by both, paving the way for a more unified REDD+ processes. The Programme is also working closely with the Forest Investment Program (FIP) and other initiatives to ensure that REDD+ efforts are coordinated and efficient.

During its fourth Policy Board meeting in Nairobi mid-March, the UN-REDD Programme passed a resolution to create a collaborative platform with FCPF for sharing country experiences and lessons as well as policy discussions. This resolution was also endorsed at the FCPF's Participants Committee meeting a week later in Gabon. A second key decision taken by the governing bodies of the two initiatives was to explore how to optimize delivery of REDD+ readiness at the country level through multiple delivery partners.

These critical decisions demonstrate that the UN-REDD Programme, together with the FCPF and other partners, is not only listening to the calls for greater efficiency, but also taking action to design the best way forward for REDD+. We believe we are well-positioned to play a significant role in any interim REDD+ partnership, and we remain deeply committed to servicing the needs of countries in their REDD+ readiness efforts.

Yemi Katerere
Head of the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat

News

Bolivia, DRC and Zambia Secure Critical Funding for their REDD+ Readiness

The three countries share their reactions and game plans after the UN-REDD Programme's 4th Policy Board Meeting approved US\$14.7 million for their national REDD+ programmes.



More than 100 participants attended the UN-REDD Programme's 4th Policy Board meeting in Nairobi on 17-19 March.

During its fourth policy board meeting in Nairobi mid-March, the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board approved US\$4.7 million for Bolivia's national programme, US\$5.5 million for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and US\$4.5 million for Zambia, bringing the total amount of funding for UN-REDD national programmes to-date to US\$42.6 million.

Spirited applause from more than 100 meeting participants followed each of the

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For more information on the UN-REDD Programme visit www.un-redd.org

three budget allocation decisions, underscoring the significance of this funding for REDD+ readiness efforts in the three countries.

"This is very good news, and it represents an important step towards effectively solidifying actions to reduce emissions from

deforestation and forest degradation,” said Edgar Arias Salvatierra, REDD team leader in Bolivia.

“The government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia has the firm intention of reducing deforestation and forest degradation, and has developed a strategy for Climate Change and Forests. Within this framework, the approval of funding for implementing the UN-REDD Programme in Bolivia represents a significant contribution to the process of preparing the country for implementing a future REDD+ mechanism,” Arias Salvatierra stated. With the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board’s recent budget allocation for Bolivia, the country has now entered the elaboration phase of its REDD+ readiness.

The DRC’s recent budget allocation brings total UN-REDD Programme funding in that country to US\$7.4 million, representing over one quarter of all the DRC’s REDD readiness funding for 2010-12. In March 2009, the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board approved US\$1.9 million in funding for the DRC’s initial UN-REDD National Programme strategy.

“Thanks to this budget, we will carry on preparing the country, including by financing national coordination organizations, by encouraging the involvement of sub-national players and stakeholder awareness, consultation and participation, and by authorizing the roll-out of technical arrangements, such as studies, reference level, and MRV,” said Léon Kanu Mbizi, REDD National Coordinator in the DRC.

“Beyond purely financial considerations, this approval is also evidence of the acknowledgement by the international community involved in REDD, of the efforts, progress and encouraging prospects for REDD in the DRC. This signals a new technical and political credibility for the DRC and is a powerful call to sustain and support national involvement,” said Kanu Mbizi.

He added that, “The preparatory work wasn’t easy and large resources and energy were needed to reach this result, but we couldn’t afford to cut corners. REDD is both a unique opportunity and a considerable challenge for the DRC, and our readiness efforts must be comprehensive, rigorous and collective. (To this end) the support, review and approval process set up by the UN-REDD Programme was therefore experienced as a positive assistance.”

For Zambia, more than US\$4.5 million will be needed to fully implement their national REDD+ strategy, but the country’s Director of Forestry, Anna Masinja, says their recent budget allocation will go a long way to kick-starting their REDD+ initiatives.

“I believe that with the approved funds, we will be able to build not only the capacity to analyze issues and be in a position to monitor forest or land cover change, but also capacity in the form of acquiring appropriate tools, instruments and systems to enable us be ready for the post 2012 Kyoto protocol climate change regime,” stated Masinja.

“The (Policy Board) funding means that the international community has the confidence that we can deliver and that our stakeholders in Zambia who participated in the process of developing the document have a vision to ensure that deforestation is reduced and hence contribute to the process of international action on mitigation against climate change,” said Masinja, adding that the new funds will help to enhance stakeholder engagement and consensus building on finding, “appropriate actions to tackle the drivers of deforestation, improving inter-sectoral actions and ensuring that functional long-term sustainable management structures and systems to deal with deforestation are put in place.”

The fourth UN-REDD Programme Policy Board meeting was attended by just over 100 participants from more than 25 countries, including representatives from the Programme’s nine pilot countries and 13 new countries, eight of which just joined the program in January (Costa Rica, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, Republic of Congo, Solomon Islands, and Sudan). Representatives from the Programme’s three donor countries—Norway, Denmark and Spain— were in attendance as well as permanent observers from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), three Indigenous Peoples representative and three CSO representatives. Guest observers included representatives from Finland, Japan, Commission des Forêts d’Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC), Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat joined the meeting.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Vincent Seya Makonga Kasulu, Director of Sustainable Development, Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ms. Veerle Vandeweerd, Director, Environment and Energy Group, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The meeting was held at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi.

Please find all documents and presentations from the 4th UN-REDD Policy Board meeting are available at <http://tinyurl.com/PB4-docs> ■



Léon Kanu Mbizi, DRC’s representative, listens to discussion after presenting his countries’ national programme document at the UN-REDD Programme’s 4th Policy Board meeting in Nairobi in March.

REDD+ Country Progress... In Their Own Words

At the recent Policy Board meeting in Nairobi, country representatives, Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society organizations, and donors spoke to the UN-REDD Programme about their commitment to REDD+ readiness and the value of their partnership with the Programme. Below are excerpts from some of those interviews.

Pilot Countries

Pham Manh Cuong, Viet Nam



"In Viet Nam we think that whether REDD is successful or not really depends on how the benefit sharing system is established. So we need to establish a transparent benefit haring system and under the support of the UN-REDD Programme, we have reviews of the past and current national policy on the payments in the forestry sector, and we also propose a benefit sharing system for REDD implementation so we do hope that after the first phase- capacity building- that we still get the support from the UN-REDD Programme as a development partner to do the pilot phase of the benefit sharing system.

"I think that participating in the UN-REDD Programme is a very good example in showing how the UN agencies work together.... (the Programme) provides Viet Nam the timely and valuable support for the preparation of the REDD readiness so it's very useful for us."

Felician Kilahama, Tanzania



"Currently now in Tanzania, we have signed the document, we did the launching of the Programme itself. Now we are moving into implementation of the activities... we want to put emphasis on the awareness-raising. Sensitization, education and awareness-raising. Unless people understand what we want to do, you can't get the real support. So the idea is to engage them, then they listen... civil societies, the NGOs... local communities- people living adjacent to the forests- they are very key in this process."

"We have lacked the financing, the technical support, the capacity-building, and this is what the UN is now coming in to do, to reduce those gaps. They are not coming up with a new project, a new idea or whatever. They are helping us to achieve our own objectives."

John Michael, Papua New Guinea



"The institutional framework is now taking shape. We have been working closely with other stakeholders to come up with a framework... we are currently developing our climate compatible development program strategy. So that is moving pretty well and of course we are engaged with all our stakeholders to drive this forward. And I think basically now, with all of this in place, the direction and future focus we are looking at is there."

"UN has been a key partner in running most of these programmes in parallel with the others we've been running, and we have been working closely together to achieve this end so UN-REDD... has been partners with us to run this program."

New members

Ram Asheshwar Mandal, Nepal



"There are two challenges to implement the REDD in Nepal nowadays. First one is related to the MRV, monitoring, reporting and verification and the second one is how to draw the baseline that is related to different scenarios, so I think the UN-REDD can play a key role in supporting these concerns so we are very hopeful to work with the UN-REDD."

Marlo Mendoza, The Philippines



"The Philippines has started consultations as early as two years ago, but momentum picked up on REDD readiness preparation last year. We had extensive consultations with not only the forestry sector but there are other sectors as well, government agencies and civil society. And we invested a lot in this consultation process. The Philippines also has a climate change office in different government agencies to coordinate the work of these government agencies and NGOs."

"What's exciting with joining the UN-REDD Programme is that we benefit from a lot of capacity building efforts and learning from other countries. Especially that you have your nine pilot countries, that have started finalizing their REDD strategies. And the Philippines, being an observer country at this time will benefit from what these other countries have done."

Daniela Carrión, Ecuador



"Ecuador has one of the highest deforestation rates in Latin America and therefore it is a priority for our country to reduce deforestation. It's a national priority now and one of the mechanisms to do this is to implement REDD in our country."

"We have identified the elements of this strategy and some of the activities for each element... for example, we are creating a forestry information system, we have a pioneer initiative called Socio Bosque Program that is an incentive-based policy that's already in implementation since 2008. This program gives economic incentives to Indigenous communities and forest land owners that voluntarily want to conserve their forests."

"For the next steps in Ecuador, we need to develop a monitoring system for greenhouse gas emissions in our country. We need manage the land tenure issue and create the legal and institutional framework to make the REDD mechanism operative in Ecuador."

Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society Representatives

Elifuraha Laltaika, Indigenous Peoples representative to the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board



"I envision a programme which is all inclusive. You have Indigenous Peoples at the decision making organs. You have Indigenous Peoples the recipients of vital benefits directed towards them and so they would be rewarded and feel the need to conserve the forests.... And make our planet a safer place to live despite the impacts of climate change. So that is what I envision as an ultimate success of the UN-REDD Programme."

"We are doing great as the UN-REDD because so far we have managed to make REDD known globally. We have seen the UN-REDD family growing in observer countries... and remember in COP 15 in Copenhagen, (REDD) was the talk so it has been at a very high level... we are heading towards incorporating and collaborating with other stakeholders... working along the same lines as the FCPF and at the end of the day I think we'll be very successful at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation which is the ultimate goal."

Pacifique Mukumba, Civil Society representative to UN-REDD Programme Policy Board



(Translated from French)

"In the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the coordination efforts of the UN-REDD ther involve communities and the civil society."

"We encourage UN-REDD to pursue its action in countries with ambitious programmes involving communities and indigenous populations. And I think that by further contributing to the programme, they will contribute to reducing emissions from deforestation and land degradation. And I hope this is encouraged... communities must be the ones to protect the forests now. Therefore, communities must be provided with these benefits to continue protecting the forests they have managed for thousands of years."

Donors

Hans Brattskar, Norway



"The biggest strength of the UN-REDD Programme is that you have a focal point within the UN system, that can pull the resources of the different agencies, that has representation in all tropical forest countries, and the fact that the UN is a leading player in such areas as monitoring, reporting and verification, governance issues and many other areas. So we definitely need the UN and we need the UN-REDD Programme if we are going to be successful with the REDD+ efforts in the years to come."

Jørgen Karlsen, Denmark



"We see REDD as an integrated part when it comes to climate mitigation but also when it comes to livelihood of people and maintaining natural resources."

"We see that UN-REDD plays an important role in terms of having several UN agencies working together and bringing in some of the expertise that these institutions have, so we see UN-REDD as being part of the global picture of REDD." ■

FAO Publishes its Latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2010) and Calls for Early Action on REDD+

For analysis of some of the FRA 2010's key findings, read UN-REDD Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, Petteri Vuorinen's article in the Features & Commentary section.



Mountains stripped of forests, intensive maize production.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) released the global and regional key findings of the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FRA 2010) on 25 March, 2010. A key message from FRA 2010 is that world deforestation, mainly the conversion of tropical forests to agricultural land, has decreased over the past ten years but it continues at an alarmingly high rate in many countries.

Globally, around 13 million hectares of forests were converted to other uses or lost through natural causes each year between 2000 and 2010 as compared to around 16 million hectares per year during the 1990s. Brazil and

Indonesia, which had the highest loss of forests in the 1990s, are among those countries which have significantly reduced their deforestation rates.

In addition, ambitious tree planting programmes in countries such as China, India, the United States and Viet Nam - combined with natural expansion of forests in some regions - have added more than seven million hectares of new forests annually, thereby reducing the net loss of forest area to 5.2 million hectares per year in between 2000 and 2010, down from 8.3 million hectares annually in the 1990s.

China has a national goal of increasing the forest area to 23% of the total land area by 2020, India aims to increase its forest area to 33% of the land area by 2012 and Viet Nam has a forest goal of 43% by 2010. Together, these three countries have been increasing their forest area by an average of 3.5 million hectares per year in the last ten years.

"A lower deforestation rate and the establishment of new forests have helped bring down the high level of carbon emissions from forests caused by deforestation and forest degradation", said Mette Løyche Wilkie, the Coordinator of the Assessment.

"But we need to look forward because the large tree planting programmes in China, India and Viet Nam, accounting for most of the recent gains in forest area, are scheduled to end by 2020," she stressed. "That means we have a short window of opportunity to put in place effective and permanent measures to significantly reduce the current rates of deforestation and forest degradation. Without such interventions we risk a sudden return to the high rates of net forest loss and of carbon emissions from forests, which we had in the 1990s."

"The recent discussions under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to establish a mechanism to reward countries that reduce their carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation - the so-called REDD+ mechanism - will, hopefully, help implement such measures," she concluded. ■

Features & Commentary

Forest Area Statistics Don't Tell Everything

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recently released their latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2010) report, which shows that world deforestation has decreased over the past 10 years but continues at an alarmingly high rate in many countries.

UN-REDD Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, Petteri Vuorinen, provides preliminary analysis of some of the FRA 2010's key findings in Asia, and suggests they underscore the need for the UN-REDD Programme, now more than ever.

At the regional level in Asia, the FRA 2010 reports a net loss of forest area in the 1990s has been turned into a net gain during

2000-2010, primarily due to large-scale forest planting programmes in China. If you exclude China and its large plantation programme

from the statistics, the positive news is that the rate of forest loss in the region is slowing down. However, many Asian countries continue to have high rates of deforestation and, if you leave China out, it is still the case that about 33 million hectares of forest were lost in the region during the period 1990-2010.

Forest degradation, which is a key concern in this region, is not captured in the forest area statistics. Although FRA 2010 contains some information on forest health, there are no data on the rate of forest degradation or the area of degraded forests. Forest degradation is unfortunately hard to measure and there are no agreed criteria or assessment methodology. Growing stock per hectare could give an indication about the state of the forest health, including post harvesting or other human interventions and



Mangrove nursery for protective afforestation, in the Hainan Province of southern China.

is a reasonable proxy for carbon stocks, but few countries have sufficient data to generate reliable trends over time. Also the planted forests are not the same as natural forests. While forest area is increasing due to the plantation programs in several countries, indigenous forests continue to be lost or degraded in many countries.

What does this all mean for the UN-REDD programme?

Deforestation and forest degradation continue at an alarming rate in many Asian countries. The fact that China is undertaking large planting programmes will help meet its future needs for wood and will contribute to

soil and water conservation in the country, but this does not compensate for the unacceptable loss of forests and forest degradation elsewhere in the region. The reduction in the rate of loss of forests in Indonesia in recent years and the afforestation and reforestation efforts of other countries like India and Vietnam are positive signs, but have still only partial impact in the bigger picture. The FRA 2010 figures highlight the need for multi-purpose forest monitoring and assessment to strengthen national capacities to further implement policies aimed at achieving sustainable forest management (SFM) and reducing carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD) in the region.

The forestry sector has traditionally been a relatively small contributor to the national GDP of Asian countries, which has caused the importance of the forest sector to be underestimated. This has resulted in limited resource allocation to the sector. The UNFCCC discussions and elaboration of the REDD+ programmes have lifted the profile of the forestry sector and thrust it onto centre stage, and the potential of forests to become a source of significant financial income has been recognized by governments. This will hopefully boost not just efforts to protect

forest, but also efforts to develop the forestry sector as whole. Maybe finally concepts like sustainable forest management (monitoring and assessment, silviculture, fire management, forest health, low impact logging) will get the attention they deserve by policy and decision makers.

The concept of monitoring, managing and marketing carbon, in addition to the multiple benefits of forests (social, cultural, environmental and economic) will require a review of policies, programmes and management practices and significant capacity building in the countries. The UN-REDD programme is supporting countries in these efforts and many governments in the region have taken notice, as evidenced by the increasing number of countries wanting to join the UN-REDD Programme. There is little doubt that much work remains to be done in Asia to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the UN-REDD Programme can be instrumental in helping to achieve this goal.



*Petteri Vuorinen is
FAO UN-REDD
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Coordinator for Asia
and the Pacific. ■*

UN-REDD National Programmes: Where to begin?

On the heels of Indonesia's recent Inception Workshop at the end of March, REDD+ consultant and redd-plus.com blogger, Chris Cosslett, reviews what these kick-off events mean for UN-REDD National Programmes.



With the traditional ringing of the gong by Minister of Forestry H.E. Zulkifli Hasan (centre), Indonesia's UN-REDD National Programme is underway.

Since September 2009, three of the nine UN-REDD Programme pilot countries have done it. Viet Nam's will forever retain pride of place as the first. Tanzania's was split in two parts and included gymnastics for tired participants. And Indonesia's officially began on 30 March with the ringing of a traditional gong by the Minister of Forestry. Whether

known as a 'launch', an 'Inception Workshop' or a 'kick-off event', the end result is that the National Programmes (NPs) of three of the UN-REDD Programme's nine pilot countries are officially underway.

By now, the events leading up to the Inception Workshops are familiar. The Policy Board, in one of its periodic meetings—PB-4 was recently held in Nairobi—approves the NP document in draft form. Through a series of follow-up missions and consultations, the document is then 'elaborated' to the point where it is ready for signature by government and the three participating UN organizations. At this point, with project funds available or nearly so, with project teams in the process of being identified and recruited, and with all partners eager to get started, it's time to mark publicly the start of another UN-REDD NP.

Before considering what this entails, it may be worth pausing to reflect on the meaning

of these events. They are in fact important moments marking each country's entry into the emerging international REDD+ regime and, indeed, in the emergence of the regime itself. While a number of countries have previously launched REDD+ projects aimed at reducing emissions in specific sites, or for tackling technical issues like monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV), UN-REDD Programme pilot NPs are among the first efforts to take a systemic, national-level approach to the many challenges of national-level 'REDD readiness.' And while the international community continues its efforts—see Copenhagen, Paris, Oslo, etc.—to fully construct that regime, national governments, with support from the UN-REDD Programme, are wasting no time, in the hopes of being ready for REDD+... when REDD+ is ready for them.

The three Inception Workshops held to date have provided important opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders to bring their issues and concerns to the table. Not surprisingly, in each country, questions have abounded concerning REDD+ in general and the relevant UN-REDD NP in particular. How exactly will the UN-REDD Programme be coordinated nationally? What will be the



Minister of Forestry H.E. Zulkifli Hasan (centre) and Norwegian Ambassador to Indonesia H.E., Eivend S. Homme (centre-right) congratulate one another on the launch of the UN-REDD National Programme.

respective role of forestry departments versus national-level REDD+ steering groups and committees, where these exist? How will the UN-REDD NP be coordinated with other donor support, including large-scale programmes such as those funded by Norway (in Tanzania) and Australia (in Indonesia), to ensure that programming gaps and/or overlaps are avoided? What mechanisms will be established for learning lessons, at project and national levels? How will the uncertainty caused by the rapidly evolving international policy environment be handled and how will project management adapt to related changes? Finally, how will REDD+ strategies consult and engage Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities, while seeking their free and informed prior consent (FPIC) for relevant activities?

For the three participating UN organizations, an additional set of questions surface. How exactly will they work together in ways that minimize the transaction costs facing beneficiary governments? What specific harmonized implementation arrangements will be put in place? What has the 'One UN' process taught them about the best way for three UN organizations with different financial, reporting and other systems to work together in the context of a 'Joint Programme'? And what on earth is a HACT?!? (Hint: it stands for "Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers").

Inception Workshops, along with their more comprehensive cousins, 'Inception Phases,' provide unique opportunities for project teams and stakeholders to address the above questions and to minimize associated uncertainties. In doing so, they may wish to keep certain principles in mind, which have been developed as part of draft national programme guidelines. First, UN-REDD NPs should contribute to and form a constituent element of an integrated national approach to the challenges and opportunities of REDD+. Second, UN-REDD NPs should have effective and transparent systems of oversight. Third, both day-to-day and longer-term, management systems should be streamlined and integrated across participating UN

organizations. Finally, financial management systems should be harmonized and transaction costs facing national authorities minimized.

If the above principles can be put to work right from the inception, then NPs should be well on their way to helping countries achieve their challenging but crucial goal of national-level REDD+ readiness. So sound the gong and let the National Programmes begin!



Chris Cosslett is an independent consultant with extensive experience in the formulation of international environmental projects, mainly in

the areas of biodiversity conservation and environmental finance. Since September 2009, he has been supporting the UN-REDD Global Programme in developing guidance for National Programmes while attending all three Inception Workshops held to-date. He has also created and operates <http://www.redd-plus.com>, a social networking and news website dedicated to all things REDD. ■

The Democratic Republic of the Congo Holds its Course... and its Pace

With almost US\$9 million in new REDD+ funding, National UN-REDD Coordinator, Fabien Monteils, highlights DRC's REDD+ readiness priorities moving forward.

After presenting its Readiness Preparation Plan to the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Participants Committee in March, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has gone quickly back to work, backed by two additional funding agreements totalling US\$8.9 million and the endorsement and congratulations of its peers. Now, the DRC's national REDD team and Civil Society organizations are continuing their REDD+ work, focusing on one key area: integrated pilot projects.

In the DRC, many REDD projects have been launched over the past few years, especially by international NGOs, in addition to the many initiatives set up by various Ministries, businesses, international technical and financial partners or by the national civil

society. For the national REDD+ process, there's a pressing need to coordinate these various initiatives in order to draw lessons and to develop the most robust, fruitful and operational national REDD+ strategy possible. From agriculture microfinance projects, to awareness-raising workshops among civil society, production of briquette and improved cooking stoves (which reduce the consumption of firewood and charcoal), or carbon credit monitoring and sales, one common factor stands out: they can all contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation at a sectorial level. Acting through the National REDD Coordination, the Ministry of Environment (MECNT) is also working to help these initiatives organize and coordinate themselves, and to identify key quantitative and qualitative

lessons which will be the bedrock of REDD+ strategic planning. Initiated in December 2009, this process will continue over the coming months, and a degree of standardization will be applied across these sector-based initiatives, with the participation of all stakeholders.

Leveraging the analysis and information that already exists, the MECNT also wishes to take the lead by testing integrated or systemic approaches through the National REDD Coordination. For example, in January of this year, a civil society mission in Mambasa observed and assessed how these integrated approach could be put into place. Using comprehensive consultations, the territory's stakeholders, supported by the civil society, the Parliament's Environment Commission, representatives of the provincial government and the National REDD

Coordination, drew up a preliminary diagnostic of deforestation causes in their area and defined potential tasks for REDD+ strategies. A comprehensive action plan, set up with the involvement and commitment of multiple partners, included both enabling activities (land security, increased law

enforcement, land use planning, improved governance) and sectorial activities (support for agricultural settlement, reforestation, services to small companies, organization of mining activities). A similar process was carried out across the DRC. In late February, six concept notes for integrated REDD+ projects were personally endorsed by the Minister, before being finalized and submitted to the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF). After the facility managed by the African Development Bank and funded by Norway and Great Britain gave a first approval, the project papers were written and submitted to the CBFF in early April.

This key area of the REDD+ process in DRC naturally involves a financial component. The six pilot projects should help inject around US\$20 million into the country to test not

only REDD+ operational options, but also and specifically the potential synergies between these options, in order to best assess and plan a national strategy. However, beyond these operational considerations, the aim is to sustain the political impetus, at a time when national elections will take place next year. The pilot projects yield substantial co-benefits, which include a civil society partnership, operational capacity-building, an evolving dialogue with the private sector and the involvement of local administrations in a large-scale national programme. Once again, the ability of the international community to consistently support DRC's innovative and ambitious initiatives will be key in gaining national momentum.

The UN-REDD Programme was the first to send a strong signal on 19 March in Nairobi, followed by the FCPF's endorsement the

following week in Gabon, and the Congo Basin Carbon Fund which is now guiding the finalization and funding of the first integrated pilot projects. There's no doubt that when the DRC makes progress in REDD+, it is REDD+ as a whole that progresses in the Congo Basin and on the agenda of the international community.



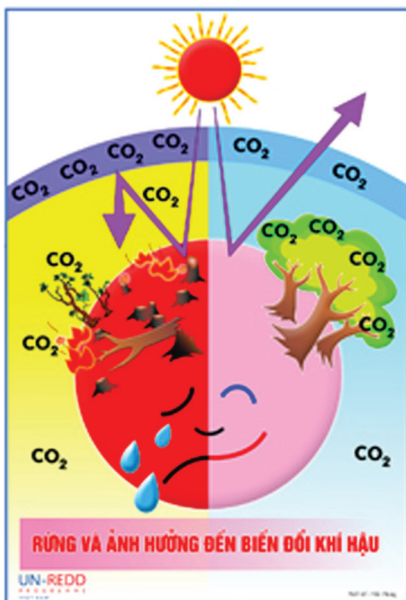
Fabien Monteils works as Chief Technical Advisor for the UN-REDD Programme in the DRC, and is seconded to the country's National REDD

Coordination, at the Ministry of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism. ■

Reports & Analysis

Applying FPIC in Viet Nam

As the first country programme to proceed with formal preparations for field-based REDD+ activities, the Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme is pioneering a process to seek Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in two pilot districts.



A poster developed by the Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme for awareness raising activities in villages.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a rights-based principle representing a particular expression of the right to self-determination, related rights to land, territories and natural resources, the right to

culture, and the right to be free from racial discrimination. FPIC applies to key decision points for actions that have the potential to impact the land, territories, and resources upon which rights holders depend for their cultural, spiritual and physical sustenance, well-being and survival, and is of particular relevance to future REDD+ activities.

As the first country programme to proceed with formal preparations for field-based REDD+ activities, the Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme is pioneering a process to seek FPIC in the two pilot districts of Lam Ha and Di Linh. The UN-REDD Programme's approach to FPIC is consistent with international human rights instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and reflects the draft UNFCCC COP-15 AWG-LCA text, which recognizes the need for full and effective engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in REDD+.

The Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme has designed and initiated an eight-step process based on the principles that: 1) FPIC should be sought for all forest communities and communities living at the margin of forests;

2) FPIC process must proactively reach out to communities (rather than wait for them to come forward); 3) Homogeneity between communities cannot be assumed; and 4) Rights holders offer primary guidance for customized consent procedures. The process is based on seeking consent in each village of the two districts. It starts with consultation with local officials and relies on trained "interlocutors", fluent in local languages, who are responsible for facilitating FPIC activities. For each village, interlocutors, in consultation with village heads, conduct local awareness-raising activities and facilitate an agreed number of village meetings, where the decision on whether or not to grant consent is recorded. Through these steps, a number of practical questions arise. What is the unit of consent? What representation is appropriate? How does the process unfold in each village? And how is the expression of consent (or lack of) recorded? Depending on the results of the process, different scenarios are envisioned for how to proceed or not with activities planned under the Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme.

Activities have started and are expected to be completed by mid-2010, at which point they will be independently evaluated and verified by RECOFTC- the Center for Peoples and Forests. In the FPIC process the Viet Nam UN-REDD Programme is also benefiting from the expertise and support of partners such as the Center for International Environmental Law, the Global Canopy Programme, The Forest Dialogue and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Woods Hole Research Center. ■

REDD+ at the Africa Carbon Forum

The UN-REDD Programme explores emerging opportunities for REDD+ in the agriculture and forestry sectors at the Africa Carbon Forum in Nairobi.

The second Africa Carbon Forum, held in Nairobi on 3-5 March 2010, brought together more than 1,000 representatives working on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and carbon trading, as well as participants from the private and public sectors and civil society, to better understand CDM and explore new opportunities offered by REDD+. The forum was organized by the Nairobi Framework Initiative, a consortium of five UN organizations and two multilateral development banks.

Throughout the three-day forum, project developers, carbon traders and government representatives acknowledged the great potential for REDD+, but participants also noted the gap between national and project level implementation. Specifically, they identified issues related to addressing the drivers of deforestation and degradation and the cost-effectiveness of establishing carbon assets. Participants recognized the lessons learned from CDM afforestation and reforestation projects and noted that the evolution of REDD+ would likely face similar project development time spans and issues.

The UN-REDD Programme participated in a session entitled "Land use and carbon finance post-Copenhagen – State of the play and emerging opportunities in the area of agriculture, forestry and other land uses in Africa". During this session, UNEP Programme Officer, Niklas Hagelberg, gave an overview of REDD+ in Africa to an audience of over 300 people.

In addition, many sessions discussed land tenure and rights, and the importance of governance and appropriate legal

frameworks. While there seemed to be many obstacles to overcome, it was notable how many were in the process of developing REDD+ projects and how many investors were seeking REDD+ projects in Africa.

The overall impression was that there are great environmental and socio-economic opportunities for REDD+ in Africa and for a low-carbon development path, based on the climate change challenge. Additionally, participants recognized that REDD+ project developers are bound to face the same CDM-related problems but that the existing knowledge and amount of active organizations has grown exponentially.

Plans are underway for a third Africa Carbon Forum, to be held in March 2011 in Morocco. ■



More than 300 people from the private and public sector, as well as Civil Society attended a session on REDD+ in Africa at the event.

IPCC Experts Meeting

The UN-REDD Programme participates in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) expert meeting in Japan to explore ways of improving REDD+ guidelines.

The IPCC's Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories met with nearly 50 country and agency experts at the end of February in Yokohama to take stock of the options related to existing MRV systems and the potential applicability of these systems to a wider number of countries. Discussions centered on the elements of current guidelines that should be revised or improved.

The meeting also stressed the need to organize some thematic workshops with a particular focus on "stratification" concepts in forest inventories, the use of TIER 3 models to

solve particular aspects of GHG emission estimates, and the use of "conservativeness" in uncertain estimates related to GHG emissions and removal data. This review phase and in depth analysis will help IPCC prepare for when the Conference of the Parties (COP) will officially require a complete revision or an improvement of the guidelines currently in use.

This workshop in Yokohama was part of a series of expert meetings IPCC plans on holding in 2010 to understand which parts of the guidelines under Decision -/CP.15¹ need to be improved to better support countries

in their future compliance to the expected REDD+ mechanism.

Decision -/CP.15 stated that the most recent IPCC guidelines have to be used to produce GHGs balance estimates under REDD+, but it also recalled the need for future efforts by IPCC to improve such guidelines so as to respond in a more adequate and comprehensive way to REDD+ reporting requirements.

¹Decision-/CP.15 pertains to methodological guidance for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries adopted by COP 15 in Copenhagen on December 2009. ■

The UN-REDD Programme 2009 Year in Review Report

In March, the UN-REDD Programme released its inaugural "Year in Review" report for 2009.

The review reflects on the Programme's first full year in operation, highlighting the significant progress of its pilot countries, the partnerships it cultivated with international partners throughout the year, and the impact the Programme was able to make in building international consensus for REDD+. The report also highlights the important national and international work the Programme supported in key work areas,

including measuring, reporting and verification (MRV), engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society and in the promotion of the multiple benefits of forests.

The report features testimonials of the UN-REDD Programme from various leaders in the REDD+ milieu, including heads of the UN-REDD Programme's three convening

agencies, Helen Clark (UNDP), Jacques Diouf (FAO) and Achim Steiner (UNEP), Norway's Environment and International Cooperation Minister, Erik Solheim, as well as national REDD+ focal points and representatives from forestry organizations and NGOs.

Download the English version of the report at: <http://tinyurl.com/en-yir>

To minimize environmental impact and contribute to climate neutrality, the UN-REDD Programme has printed a limited amount of its 2009 Year in Review, but if you require a printed copy of the report, please send a request to: cheryl.rosebush@un-redd.org. ■

Looking Ahead

9th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

19-30 April 2010: UN Headquarters in New York

World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth

19-22 April 2010: Cochabamba, Bolivia

UNFCCC Expert Meeting on Capacity Building for REDD

26-27 April 2010, Bonn, Germany

UN-REDD Workshop: Identifying and Promoting Ecosystem Co-Benefits from REDD+, Organised by UNEP-WCMC

27-29 April 2010, Cambridge, UK

Also Meeting on Interim REDD+ Arrangement

27 May 2010, Oslo, Norway

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