

# TFD Review



## Giving REDD+ Life

Integrating REDD+  
with Broader  
Development Goals

Summary and Recommendations  
from TFD's Multi-stakeholder  
Dialogue Initiative on REDD+  
Readiness, 2009–2012

The Forests Dialogue

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# TFDReview

## Giving REDD+ Life

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Development Goals

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#### TFD Review

The purpose of this *TFD Review* is to inform stakeholders about the Initiatives sponsored by TFD. For more information on topics covered in publication, visit our website at [www.theforestsdialogue.org](http://www.theforestsdialogue.org).

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## Executive Summary



Dialogue Co-chair  
Stewart Maginnis

This report draws on The Forests Dialogue's REDD+ readiness dialogue series, which took place in six countries — Brazil, Ghana, Guatemala, Ecuador, Cambodia and Switzerland — between October 2009 and March 2011. The series involved 240 key stakeholders from more than 30 countries representing governments, businesses, communities, non-governmental organizations, resource owners and managers and academia.

REDD+ is a comprehensive strategy for addressing deforestation and forest degradation and supporting forest conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. The first phase of the strategy is 'readiness'.

The TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series shows a growing consensus around the need to bring REDD+ out of isolation and, in the readiness phase, to fully integrate it into development plans. Not only would this help ensure that the indirect drivers of deforestation are tackled, it would also guarantee that social safeguards become a key component of implementation practice. There is general acknowledgement that transformational governance reform which not only achieves reductions in greenhouse gas emissions but also facilitates broader sustainable development is possible and needed. The question is whether there is sufficient political will for it to happen.

### STRATEGIC NEEDS

#### Alignment of REDD+ perspectives

International negotiations on REDD+ are failing to engage with broader land-use issues. At a local level, the issues of Indigenous rights and poverty, if left unresolved, will challenge the legitimacy of REDD+. Differing perspectives between the international and local levels create bottlenecks at the national level, where authorities grapple with reconciling them. International REDD+ platforms need to broaden their scope, cater to local needs and adopt a landscape-based approach to REDD+.

#### Alignment with land-use strategies

Cross-sectoral stakeholder engagement is required for REDD+ to be integrated into broader development and land-use strategies. This does not imply that REDD+ would be expected to address issues such as energy and food security, but its objectives cannot be achieved if its implementation is confounded by cross-sectoral issues. Countries need international support to garner political will for national-level cross-sectoral harmonization. The incorporation of REDD+ into existing development models would provide a stronger base from which to determine tradeoffs and complementarities at the national and international levels.

#### Enhanced phased approach

A cross-sectoral approach to align the scope of REDD+ with broader land-use strategies will be time-consuming. Moreover, REDD+ readiness is slowed by a lack of straightforward definitions and a set timeframe and by differences between countries in baseline conditions. REDD+ readiness should allow countries to learn by doing with the ultimate aim of complying with international obligations, including those related to Indigenous Peoples' rights. Countries may need to move back and forth between REDD+ phases as they learn from experience. This requires a refined or enhanced phased approach that prescribes specific triggers by which countries move between phases.

### CHALLENGES AND WAYS FORWARD

The TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series identified the following key challenges for REDD+ processes, and ways to meet those challenges.

#### Engagement

The participation of all affected stakeholders in decision-making on REDD+ is crucial, but most REDD+ countries lack capacity in multi-stakeholder decision-making processes. Better engagement is required with Indigenous Peoples, local communities and the private sector, and



Cambodia Dialogue  
Co-chair Kalyan Hou





Ghana Co-chair  
Emelia Arthur

within government. The principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for Indigenous Peoples is an integral part of REDD+ readiness.

*Mapping.* A starting point for engagement is to map, using participatory approaches, statutory and customary rights and the incentives on offer for the involvement of stakeholders in REDD+.

*Political buy-in.* There is a need to build formal and ongoing stakeholder consultation platforms that harness knowledge and feed it into planning processes. The support of high-level decision-makers for multi-stakeholder processes is also crucial if stakeholder inputs are to influence the design and implementation of REDD+.

*Government as convener.* Governments should aim to 'deliver' and guarantee REDD+ stakeholder engagement processes while not attempting to dominate them. They should act as conveners and third parties should facilitate.

*Building on existing experiences.* Greater use should be made of existing, trusted platforms for communication and conflict resolution to facilitate engagement on REDD+. For example, existing rights-based FPIC processes can be good tools for meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

*Strategic capacity-building for local stakeholder groups.* The participation of marginalized groups such as Indigenous Peoples, women and youth can be institutionalized by building capacity among their leaders. Building trust and formalizing interactions can increase participation, both nationally and internationally.

## Information

Although financing bodies have earmarked considerable resources for gathering information, much less has been done to make such information accessible. There are insufficient funds to facilitate the flow of information, both upwards and downwards.

*Mapping and prioritizing.* Information should be mapped, prioritized and coordinated and gaps identified. There must be a clear vision of the type of information each actor is to produce and how it is to be managed, and an understanding of the information needs of each stakeholder group. Attention must be paid to both content and access.

*Creating two-way information flows.* Education and training should be provided based on local context to ensure that information can flow from international negotiation platforms and national governments to the local level. Local communities hold key information that can help guide REDD+. Protocols are needed to ensure that information from pilot projects is compiled and made available to all stakeholders in useful ways.

## Finance and benefit distribution

For REDD+ to be effective, stakeholders, in particular the forest-dependent poor, must be incentivized to participate through a benefit-distribution system.

*Consistent and timely performance-based payments.* Donor countries should require contracting parties to take on obligations directly related to deliverables, ensuring that money flows in a consistent and timely way to where REDD+ is being delivered. A legislative framework that allows funds to be earmarked and set aside for REDD+ can prevent them from disappearing within national budgets. Local people often have clear ideas on the framework they would like to see deployed for the distribution of benefits. Principles and guidelines should be developed on how benefits from REDD+ should flow to forest communities and within those



Dialogue Co-chair  
James Mayers



Ecuador Dialogue Co-chair  
Luis Suarez

communities. Pilot projects on benefit distribution can be used to build understanding among stakeholders on how to develop locally effective and equitable distribution schemes.

*Active involvement of private sector.* Incentives should be put in place to encourage the increased participation of the private sector in REDD+ readiness. This would help national authorities to better focus their REDD+ readiness activities on local needs by reducing dependency on donor funds.

*Integrating REDD+ with other funding streams.* The integration of REDD+ funding with other pro-development funding streams for forest-dependent people is key. Such an approach should aim to strengthen activities that protect forests and their important social and environmental functions, including their contributions to the livelihoods of poor and disadvantaged communities.

*Cost reduction.* Current discussions on the management of REDD+ costs and benefits are focused too narrowly on benefits, thus ignoring opportunities that can help reduce costs. Governments and international initiatives should create systems that incentivize lower-cost approaches to REDD+ implementation so as to increase the benefits available for distribution among stakeholders.

*Bundling benefits beyond forest carbon.* Benefits from REDD+ should be treated as seed money that can be multiplied through investment in sustainable livelihood activities. Community-based forest management initiatives should be integrated with REDD+ activities to ensure that social safeguards come to fruition on the ground.

### Policy and legal reform

There is a risk that the rush to REDD+ will entrench existing arrangements on tenure and governance, which are almost always detrimental to marginalized people. Tenure and governance reform is crucial for the

success of REDD+; it must ensure that REDD+ interventions take the interests of forest-dependent communities fully into account.

*Defining carbon rights.* Rather than formalizing land and tree tenure up front, countries can first work through existing laws, including on concessions and customary arrangements, to define carbon rights and design equitable benefit-distribution systems. Discussions on REDD+ need to broaden; successful examples should be sought from other sectors where land-tenure barriers have been removed.

*Integration of cross-sectoral policies.* The implementation of existing policies and laws in relevant sectors should be reviewed. Often, responsibilities for land-use planning are divided among government bodies and overlap with existing customary arrangements. An integration of various levels of government, with a focus on tenure rights, can reduce confusion and lead to improved outcomes.

*Participatory policy-reform model.* Effective policies require the engagement of all stakeholders. All levels of government and all political parties should be adequately informed about REDD+. Dividing legislation into smaller and more easily understood and assimilated policy instruments can greatly ease pressure on legislative bodies to pass new laws. Local practices and policies could potentially be used to address many of the challenges posed by REDD+. Consulting and learning from communities can save time and produce better, more effective policies. Designing stakeholder consultation processes to absorb as well as disseminate information can save time and effort that otherwise might be spent trying to reinvent policy mechanisms that already exist and function smoothly on the ground.



Guatemala Dialogue  
Co-chair Consuelo Espinosa

## Acronyms

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>AWG-LCA</b> | Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (UNFCCC)   |
| <b>CBD</b>     | Convention on Biological Diversity   |
| <b>CCBA</b>    | Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance   |
| <b>CDM</b>     | Clean Development Mechanism  |
| <b>COP</b>     | Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change   |
| <b>NFA</b>     | National Forestry Authority (Uganda)   |
| <b>FCPF</b>    | Forest Carbon Partnership Facility   |
| <b>FIP</b>     | Forest Investment Program  |
| <b>FPIC</b>    | free, prior and informed consent   |
| <b>INAB</b>    | National Forest Institute (Guatemala)  |
| <b>IUCN</b>    | International Union for Conservation of Nature   |
| <b>MRV</b>     | Measurement, reporting and verification  |
| <b>NGO</b>     | Non-governmental organization  |
| <b>NORAD</b>   | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation   |
| <b>OM</b>      | Oddar Meanchey (Cambodia)  |
| <b>PINFOR</b>  | Forest Incentive Program (Guatemala)   |
| <b>PINPEP</b>  | Program of Incentives for Smallholders (Guatemala)   |
| <b>RED</b>     | Reducing emissions from deforestation  |
| <b>REDD+</b>   | Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation through forest conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries |
| <b>TFD</b>     | The Forests Dialogue   |
| <b>UNDP</b>    | United Nations Development Programme   |
| <b>UNEP</b>    | United Nations Environment Programme   |
| <b>UNFCCC</b>  | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  |
| <b>UN-REDD</b> | United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries   |
| <b>WTO</b>     | World Trade Organization   |

## Introduction

In the evolution of REDD+<sup>1</sup> as a viable option for climate-change mitigation there have been few opportunities for truly open discussions, in a safe and equalitarian environment, between all sectors of society. The Forests Dialogue<sup>2</sup> (TFD)'s REDD+ readiness dialogue series was conceived and carried out to address this gap; it sought the engagement of stakeholders worldwide using the TFD's recognized model of wide and participatory debate.



This review reflects the many discussions that have formed the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series in the last two years. The series was convened in six countries and involved 240 key stakeholders from more than 30 countries representing governments, businesses, communities, non-governmental organizations and academia. Those 240 voices confer a unique legitimacy on this review.

The TFD REDD+ readiness series began in October 2009, shortly before the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), with a dialogue held in Belém, Brazil. Much has happened since. REDD+ is now officially part of the UNFCCC negotiation agenda, and many countries have embarked on and made progress in national REDD+ planning processes. The TFD REDD+ readiness series captured and analysed the main challenges presented by the preparatory phase of REDD+.

This review does not aim to provide a comprehensive update of the latest developments in REDD+ readiness. Rather, it uses the information shared in the dialogues to analyse the commonalities and particularities between countries and to link realities on the ground with international discourse on REDD+ readiness.

### INTERNATIONAL REDD+ READINESS DEVELOPMENT

Initially, a narrow instrument was proposed for the funding of avoided deforestation through the commoditization of forest carbon ('reducing emissions from deforestation' — RED). This quickly developed into a

more comprehensive strategy, widely known as REDD+, to address deforestation and forest degradation by supporting forest conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

As discussions at the UNFCCC gained momentum and the scope of the idea broadened, increasing attention was drawn to the need for governance reform before REDD+ could be implemented (Eliasch 2007). A preparatory phase using ‘fast-start’ funds was proposed, during which national REDD+ strategies could be designed, systems for monitoring and reference levels could be built, capacity to implement REDD+ could be increased and governance reforms could be coordinated. The inclusion of social safeguards in the Cancun Agreements — an outcome of the 16th Session of the COP to the UNFCCC — further reinforced the need for a deeper reflection at the country level on the development and implementation of REDD+.<sup>3</sup>

The need for a readiness phase before investments in policies and measures could be made led to the idea of a phased approach to REDD+. This was incorporated intrinsically in the negotiations taking place in the UNFCCC’s Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) and then formally ratified in the Cancun Agreements. Although for a long time it was feared that the issues of safeguards and rights would derail the UNFCCC, by 2009 a consensus had grown, largely thanks to the constructive inputs of civil-society organizations, on the inclusion of social and environmental safeguards and references to the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Safeguards were ultimately referred to in both the 2009 Copenhagen Accord and the Cancun Agreements.

The phased-approach model was developed initially by the Meridian Institute (Angelsen *et al.* 2009) at the request of the Norwegian government as a way of providing countries with the flexibility to move forward according to their specific needs. It comprises:

- *Readiness phase:* This phase should be dedicated to the development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and initial capacity-building. Strategies should build on thorough assessments of the country-specific drivers of deforestation. Importance should be given to the meaningful participation of broad stakeholder platforms and the development of systems for measurement, reporting and verification (MRV).
- *Intermediate phase:* During this phase, national policies and measures should be implemented as part of national action plans. Capacity-building and demonstration activities should be scaled up and technology transferred. Many countries will need to focus on tenure reform and the clarification of carbon rights.
- *Third phase:* This phase would involve the consolidation of the implementation of policies and measures; it should be results-based and fully measured, reported and verified. Depending on the outcome of UNFCCC negotiations, REDD+ could be linked to compliance markets.



Dialogue Co-chair  
Joe Lawson

#### TFD IN THE REDD+ READINESS PROCESS

Since its inception in 1999, TFD has convened many international dialogues on pressing issues related to forest conservation and the sustainable use of forests. Individuals representing forest stakeholder groups from different regions and with diverse interests come together to explore ‘fault lines’ in existing forestry debates or areas of opportunity in which dialogue may be helpful. Participants take part in these interactions on a personal basis rather than as delegates of their countries or organizations. Each dialogue stream involves face-to-face meetings and field visits and is complemented by periods of information exchange and other interactions at distance.

The first of TFD’s dialogue initiatives on forests and climate was held at the UNFCCC’s COP 13 in Bali in 2007. The four meetings that were part



of that dialogue led to the publication of the report *Beyond REDD* (TFD 2008). This was followed by a second series of dialogues in 2009 focusing on financing and implementation frameworks for REDD+ (TFD 2010). A third series of dialogues, which is the subject of this review, zoomed in on the challenges and opportunities of the REDD+ readiness phase.

The TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series brought together 240 forest leaders from more than 30 REDD+ countries. The six dialogues that comprised the series took place between October 2009 and March 2011 in Brazil, Ghana, Guatemala, Ecuador, Cambodia and Switzerland. In a field in which greater debate and participation is often demanded but seldom achieved, this was a unique opportunity to hear the voices of stakeholders from different fields and places. The dialogues generated a complex picture of the global REDD+ readiness process and the state of REDD+ readiness. It was clear that countries with different contexts were all struggling to make sense of REDD+ and to incorporate the REDD+ readiness agenda into their own realities.

Among other things the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series highlighted a key challenge for the globally engineered and locally implemented REDD+ process: synchronicity. Nations as diverse as Cambodia and Brazil, for example, with their unique contexts, will never progress simultaneously on all issues in the same way. It is crucial that this diversity is embraced and an understanding sought of REDD+ in its full multiscale complexity — so that mechanisms can be built that are flexible to local needs while also coherent with global processes.

The first of the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogues was held in Belém in the state of Pará, Brazil, on 26–29 October 2009 (Griffiths *et al.* 2009). This dialogue was hosted by the Governor of Pará and co-organized by Amigos da Terra Amazônia Brasileira, the Roberto Marinho Foundation, Orsa Florestal, Amazon Solutions, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the International Union for Con-

servation of Nature (IUCN). A total of 43 stakeholders participated, representing business, environmental, social and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Indigenous Peoples and government organizations. The dialogue included a field visit to Orsa's facilities, a large timber-production unit in the heart of the Amazon. This was the only field visit to a privately owned corporate project held during the dialogue series, a telling sign of Brazil's highly developed and powerful private sector and the influence it has in the country.

The Ghana dialogue (Mayers *et al.* 2010), which brought together 46 participants, was held on 16–19 November 2009 in Busua in the Agona Ahanta Western Region of Ghana. It was co-organized by the IUCN Regional Office for West and Central Africa and sponsored by NORAD. The field visit took place in the Wassa Amenfi West District, where the landscape consists of a mosaic of forest areas (protected areas, production forest reserves and individual tree plantations) mixed with cocoa farming and food crop production. The land-tenure system, which is based on customary land tenure (legally recognized in Ghana), is complicated by the presence of migrants, who generally farm land through tenancy arrangements.

Nearly 80 forest leaders met in Flores and Antigua, Guatemala, for TFD's third REDD+ readiness dialogue, which was held on 11–15 January 2010 (Espinosa *et al.* 2011). The dialogue was organized with the support of NORAD and Guatemala's Ministry of Environment, National Forest Institute and National Council of Protected Areas. The dialogue's initial conversations and discussions took place in Flores in the Petén, and participants also visited the Uaxactún concession and Tikal National Park, both of which are located in the Maya Biosphere Reserve. Currently, 500,000 hectares of the more than 2 million hectares in the Maya Biosphere Reserve are certified as community forest concessions. These are showing positive results for sustainable natural resource management and forest protection while also helping communities to improve their livelihoods.



Dialogue Co-Chair  
Jeannette Gurung

The Ecuador TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue (Lawson *et al.* 2010) took place on 15–18 June 2010; it involved 50 participants in field visits to three Indigenous communities in the provinces of Napo and Orellana and a forum in Papallacta. This dialogue was co-organized by the IUCN Regional Office for South America and Ecuador's Ministry of Environment. In Napo province, participants interacted with the Kichwa Indigenous community at Campo Cocha, which is taking part in the government's Socio Bosque Program. The community's 280 inhabitants in 61 families occupy 2452 hectares of land, 2380 hectares of which are dedicated to conservation through Socio Bosque.

The Cambodia TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue (Gurung *et al.* 2010) was convened on 1–4 November 2010 in Oddar Meanchey (OM) Province and attended by 50 participants. It was hosted by the IUCN Regional Office for Asia and sponsored by NORAD and the International Institute for Environment and Development. The dialogue came at an exciting time for the national REDD+ movement: Cambodia's REDD+ readiness plan proposal (the national 'REDD+ roadmap') was being finalized, and a deal was imminent to secure the first tranche of funding for a national REDD+ readiness strategy. Participants visited three of the 13 community forestry groups participating in the OM-REDD project, accompanied by members of NGOs and communities associated with the project. The OM-REDD project is one of the first REDD+ projects to adopt a mosaic landscape approach to forest carbon and is expected to sequester 7.1 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide over 30 years.

The final REDD+ readiness dialogue was held in Gland, Switzerland, on 17–18 March 2011 (TFD 2011). This meeting brought together 30 people who had participated in the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series to reflect on and discuss the key messages to emerge from it. It was an opportunity not only to systematize the considerable wealth of information that had been amassed through the dialogues but, importantly, also to find synergies and ways forward that could support countries and stakeholders to improve both the process and implementation of REDD+.

## "What will be ready? And ready for what?"

REDD+ is at the crossroads. There is general acknowledgement that transformational governance reform and improvement is possible. The design of REDD+ has grown beyond the initial idea of payments for carbon and the myth of opportunity costs. This is groundbreaking, but REDD+ has the potential to go even further. REDD+ can create a policy environment in which it is possible to tackle some of the most fundamental issues in forestry. This chapter takes stock of where REDD+ readiness stands and discusses what it is that countries should be getting ready for.

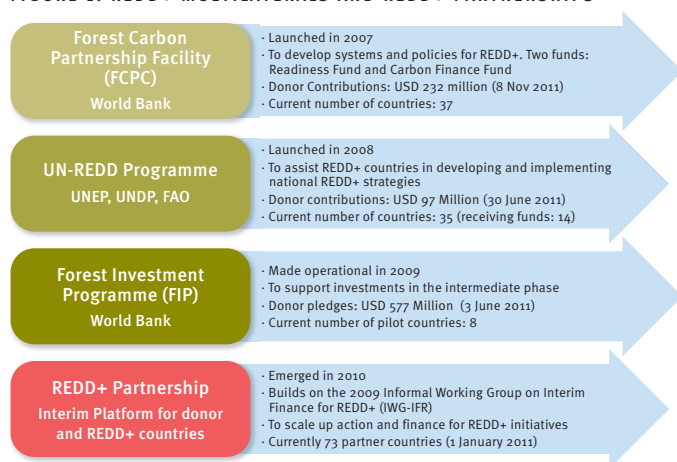


### FROM EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Previous global attempts have been made to grapple with the drivers of deforestation. What makes REDD+ different is the comprehensiveness of the proposed regime. The origins of REDD+ lie in the idea that deforestation can be reduced by giving value to standing forests as a means to mitigate climate change. This basic idea has evolved to focus predominantly on governance and capacity as part of the readiness phase.

Close to 50 developing countries with forests are engaged in formal REDD+ readiness processes. Many are working on national strategies and are supported financially through bilateral agreements or multilateral arrangements such as the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD), the World Bank's Forest Investment Program (FIP) and the REDD+ Partnership; the figure below/above/to the left/to the right provides more information on each of these. Discussions continue over the transparency and inclusiveness of multilateral processes and, in light of increasing collaboration between the initiatives, the standardization of sufficiently strong safeguards. The FCPF and UN-REDD have contributed to the development of guidelines on, for example, the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and the structuring of readiness processes.

FIGURE 1: REDD+ MULTILATERALS AND REDD+ PARTNERSHIPS



Sources: FCPF (2011), REDD+ Partnership (2011), UNDP (2011), World Bank (2011).

If REDD+ is to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in the long term it must address the multiple functions performed by forests. Observations made during the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series highlight the need to align REDD+ across the various scales, to adopt a cross-sectoral approach so that REDD+ can be integrated into land-use and development strategies, and to follow an enhanced phased approach that allows learning by doing.

### STRATEGIC NEEDS

**Aligning international, national and local REDD+ perspectives.** REDD+ is a complex concept, with negotiations on it happening at the international level, readiness plans being hashed out at the national level, and pilot projects and consultations taking place locally. Seeking cohesion between these processes can be daunting. There is a disconnection between perspectives on the scope of what REDD+ should address.

The Cancun Agreements address the need for social and environmental safeguards on REDD+ and broaden the original narrow focus on carbon. Nevertheless, international negotiations on REDD+ proceed as if in a vacuum and are failing to engage with broader land-use issues. A telling sign of this is the fact that international REDD+ funding is skewed towards technical issues such as MRV and the development of reference levels for forest carbon.<sup>4</sup>

At a local level, the issues of Indigenous rights and poverty, if left unresolved, will strip the REDD+ mechanism of its much hailed 'win-win' status and seriously challenge its legitimacy. Since REDD+ gained traction in the UNFCCC, local-level NGOs and communities have been calling for an integrated sustainable development approach that goes far beyond carbon sequestration in order to protect and improve local livelihoods. All field visits made as part of the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series illustrated the great complexity of deforestation and its social and economic ramifications. In most REDD+ pilot projects there is, rightly, a stronger focus on the development needs of communities than on technical issues — this is crucial if the project is to work in the long term.

The different perspectives between the international and local levels create bottlenecks at the national level, where authorities grapple with reconciling them. A deeper analysis of the drivers of deforestation shows that countries need to adopt a broad approach to REDD+. In Brazil, for example, participants pointed out that the importance of agriculture to the national economy creates perverse incentives for deforestation, particularly in the Amazon. In their view it is futile to enact new policies, however groundbreaking, while existing policies, such as the credit schemes of the Brazilian Development Bank (the world's largest development bank), continue to foster deforestation. Participants saw a need to better tease out all the factors that affect deforestation in Brazil to truly put the country's new policies on a sustainable path.



George Asher

Encouragingly, a trend is emerging in which countries answer to the needs of local communities by integrating REDD+ into their national sustainable development strategies. For example, the Government of Ecuador has been engaged in a UN-REDD project to collect additional socioeconomic and environmental data that can help rank the drivers of deforestation in terms of their importance and the economic feasibility of and opportunities for addressing them. Nevertheless, the continuing narrow focus of international negotiations means that many countries still wonder what it is they are getting ready for and therefore how to go about their preparations.

Participants in the REDD+ readiness dialogue series called on international platforms to broaden their scope, to cater to local needs and to adopt a landscape-based approach to REDD+.

**Broadening without paralysing:** cross-sectoral alignment of REDD+ with broader development and land-use strategies. Linking the scope and ambition of REDD+ discussions at different levels requires the cross-sectoral engagement of stakeholders so that REDD+ can be integrated into broader development and land-use strategies. To what extent can this be done without making REDD+ too big a task to be implemented effectively? Participants in the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series argued that a cross-sectoral approach does not imply that REDD+ would be expected to address all aspects of issues such as energy and food security. What matters is the impact that developments in those sectors and others will have on the drivers of deforestation and the implications for REDD+. REDD+ should not be expected to resolve all problems, but its objectives cannot be achieved if it is confounded by cross-sectoral issues.

A narrow focus on forests with the highest carbon content could cause leakage to areas with open woodland, forest margins and dry tropical landscapes with lower carbon stocks but often high levels of biodiversity. In the context of the UNFCCC, REDD+ must be aligned with other land uses under agriculture, forestry and land use or a comprehensive land use, land-use change and forestry mechanism.

Global demands for energy, the production of agrifuels, rising prices for agricultural commodities or food insecurity might encourage deforestation. REDD+ cannot be seen in isolation of such land-use issues. Global demands for land in the tropics — due to, for example, increasing energy demand, population growth and rising food prices — increase pressure on forests. In Ghana, forests provide rural and urban households with essential energy in the form of charcoal and fuelwood. Providing alternative energy sources could help to combat forest degradation there but would require the involvement in the REDD+ strategy of the Ministry of Energy. At the time of the TFD dialogue in Ghana, however, that ministry had had no contact whatsoever with the REDD+ readiness process.



Keshav Prashad Khanal

The multi-dimensional nature of forests means that REDD+ has implications for many fields of practice and policy, each of which has distinct sets of actors. Issues around biodiversity, for example, are addressed internationally by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and conservation NGOs; issues of trade, particularly agricultural trade, are the focus of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and powerful corporate interests. Making links between such bodies and stakeholders at the global level could help to ease the pressure on national governments. Such alignments may be starting to happen: for example, a WTO report published in 2010 identifies links between trade and deforestation; The CBD is going through a consultation process to build the necessary bridges between its framework and that of the UNFCCC.

As well as aligning international policies and commitments, countries need international support to garner political will for national-level cross-sectoral harmonization. The incorporation of REDD+ into existing development models would provide a stronger base from which to truly hash out tradeoffs and complementarities at the national and international levels.

**Learning by doing:** enhanced phased approach. While recognizing the need for and complexity of a cross-sectoral approach to align the scope of REDD+ with broader land-use strategies, participants in the TFD

REDD+ readiness dialogue series acknowledged that moving toward fairer interventions will be time-consuming. Moreover, REDD+ readiness is slowed by a lack of straightforward definitions, a set timeframe and differences in baseline conditions between countries. Countries are unlikely to get everything right at the first try: REDD+ readiness should allow countries to learn by doing with the ultimate aim of complying with international obligations, including those related to Indigenous Peoples' rights, and delivering reductions in deforestation and forest degradation. In recognition of the learning-by-doing nature of REDD+ readiness, the phased approach should be iterative. Countries may need to move back and forth between phases as they learn from their experiences and those of others. This requires a refined or enhanced phased approach that prescribes specific triggers by which countries move between phases.

The next chapter further identifies the key challenges to be addressed during an enhanced phased approach to REDD+.



Plenary discussion in Ecuador

## Key challenges and ways forward for REDD+ readiness

Certain themes recurred during the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series, irrespective of the country or its state of readiness. To some extent these reflect the well-known difficulties associated with forest conservation and management in developing countries. Despite enthusiasm for REDD+, it is not a panacea. There exists a struggle between the desire to move forward quickly with REDD+ by riding the existing momentum for it and the need to address the underlying issues in all their gravity and depth. The challenges described below are representative of that struggle.

In addition to identifying key challenges for readiness, the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series collected a wealth of knowledge on how to move forward. These are not 'one size fits all' solutions, and the REDD+ readiness process remains one of tailoring remedies to suit national and local conditions. Yet it has become clear that platforms such as the dialogue series that enable the sharing of experiences and ideas can help developing countries to jointly find creative solutions to complex problems.

### THE ENGAGEMENT CHALLENGE

The REDD+ framework demands great changes in behaviour and has the potential to affect all sectors of society. In order to achieve this transformation in a legitimate way the participation of all affected stakeholders in decision-making is crucial. But most REDD+ countries lack the political structure and experience to support multi-stakeholder decision-making processes, and governments are at a loss as to whom to engage and how to do so effectively.

**Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.** Undoubtedly the stakeholders with the highest likelihood that decisions on REDD+ will affect them are forest-dwellers — such as Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, small miners, itinerant extractivists and subsistence farmers — who rely directly on forest resources for their livelihoods. While these people could potentially gain a great deal from



Jennifer Rubis



REDD+ they could also be disadvantaged by it, depending on how their access to resources is restricted. In the case of Indigenous Peoples, the entire suite of rights recognized by relevant international obligations and instruments is at stake. In the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series, community leaders repeatedly voiced concerns about the potential impact of REDD+ on their livelihoods and their lack of access to decision-making processes. The principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), as set out in international human rights instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, is therefore integral to REDD+ readiness.

REDD+ is happening at many levels in many different places, and this complexity hinders the involvement of those stakeholders who have traditionally been marginalized from decision-making and who have little experience in meaningful participation. In some of the countries involved in the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series, the effectiveness of readiness activities such as workshops in ensuring the representation of local stakeholders and their capacity to influence high-level decision-making has been called into question.

Some civil-society and community representatives involved in processes of engagement at the national level do not keep their constituencies sufficiently informed of the process. Several of the countries involved in the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series lack truly representative community organizations operating at the national level with the capacity to legitimately and consistently assume the role of interlocutor with national governments. In Guatemala, the creation — with the support of international organizations — of ‘Allianza’ represents a substantial advance, greatly amplifying the voices of forest-dwellers at the national level. Allianza builds on the existing strong structures among Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala, which formed as a survival mechanism during and after the long civil war. Nevertheless, Allianza is a new platform and is yet to achieve the necessary cohesiveness and capacity to engage stakeholders at the national level or an ability to percolate information through its structure.

**Engaging the private sector.** Notably absent from much of the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series, the private sector is another key to successful REDD+ readiness. It includes businesses that, directly or indirectly, exploit forest resources and are often responsible for deforestation. Such businesses may also wield significant political clout and have access to much-needed capital; they may also have expertise in project management and implementation, especially those involved in forest certification. Unfortunately, the business community is often uncomfortable sharing the table with NGOs and community leaders, and vice-versa. The sizeable forest-based private sector in Ghana, for example, which includes sawmillers, furniture companies and other forest industries, was not represented in the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue there. Unless all interested parties are prepared to sit at the table and engage as equals there is little chance that a fully participatory environment will take shape.

In Brazil, large corporate conglomerates were described during the TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue as a big hurdle to fair stakeholder participation. Brazil's economy is dominated by concentrated and powerful groups with close ties to high levels of government, and there is a very poor track record of real public discussion and participation. Rebuilding trust among all stakeholders in countries like Brazil will take time, transparency and great political will.

**Engagement within governments.** Participants felt that better engagement was also necessary within governments. For example, also in Brazil, REDD+ is negotiated internationally by the Foreign Ministry and implemented nationally by the Ministry of Environment. There is little collaboration between the two ministries and, indeed, a history of disagreement. Moreover, there is very little engagement between political parties, and the legislative and judicial branches are mostly unaware of the REDD+ readiness process. In Guatemala, REDD+ is being led by national authorities, yet a great deal of decision-making on land use is the prerogative of local governments.



Victor Kabengele

In Cambodia, the armed forces are known to have a significant impact on deforestation, but they are yet to be engaged in REDD+ readiness efforts. As awareness grows of the multidimensional impact of REDD+, it has become clear that governments must make greater efforts to integrate across sectors and scales in order to build the necessary platforms for implementation. Cambodia's recent history of military rule and civil conflict makes participatory decision-making a particularly thorny challenge. Participants felt that much remained to be achieved in effecting the participation of communities in the REDD+ readiness process. A key hurdle is the lack of easily understood information in local languages.

**Engagement platforms.** Considerable investment — not just financial, but also of time and energy — is required if an ongoing, meaningful dialogue is to be sustained. Many workshops and consultations have been held as part of REDD+ readiness activities, but lasting processes are lacking. In many countries, existing platforms for ongoing engagement have been ignored by REDD+ readiness implementing bodies, which instead have created often fragile platforms from scratch, spending unnecessary resources and forcing civil society to spread itself thinly in an attempt to participate. In Ghana, where little money was available for stakeholder engagement, participants felt that an opportunity was missed in not using the participation mechanisms that had matured during the preparation there of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

#### POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD ON ENGAGEMENT

**Mapping stakeholders and incentives.** The adequate engagement of disenfranchised actors starts with the thorough, participatory mapping of rights, both statutory and customary, including the identification of stakeholders outside the forest sector who may be driving deforestation. While the prospect of involving so many stakeholders may be daunting, there can be no real engagement without the participation of all affected sectors of society.

- To avoid having too many actors involved at every step of the way, participants in Cambodia suggested mapping stakeholders by relevance and region and dividing consultation along those lines.

As well as mapping the stakeholder groups that should be involved in REDD+, it is equally important to understand the incentives for such involvement. This type of social mapping can help sustain existing multi-stakeholder platforms while also attracting actors who are currently missing from the table, such as the private sector. Participants suggested that private-sector entry points to the REDD+ conversation could include corporate social responsibility, sustainable forest management practices and the potential benefits of carbon trading.

**Highest political buy-in.** It is important to both inform stakeholders and to view them as key informants. Most groups with a stake in REDD+ have been confronting the key issues associated with deforestation for many years and have information and insights that can help in the successful implementation of REDD+. There is a need to build formal and ongoing stakeholder consultation forums that harness that knowledge and feed it into the REDD+ readiness planning process. The support of high-level decision-makers for multi-stakeholder platforms is crucial if stakeholder inputs are to influence the design and implementation of REDD+.

The engagement of high-level decision-makers and politicians from a broad spectrum of political affiliations can also encourage the participation of sectors such as mining and energy in REDD+.

- The inclusion of REDD+ in Ghana's 2020 development strategy has given the initiative much greater visibility.
- The multistakeholder involvement process carried out as part of forest certification can serve as a useful model of how different groups of society can be brought together.



Omar Samayoa

### APPLYING FPIC TO REDD+ IN VIET NAM

by Nguyen Quang Tan

In March 2009, the UN-REDD Policy Board approved US\$4.4 million for Viet Nam's National UN-REDD pilot activities in the districts of Di Linh and Lam Ha in Lam Dong Province. Before the start of the pilot activities, an FPIC process was undertaken in both districts. At the national level, multi-stakeholder processes have been undertaken through a national REDD+ network and REDD+ working groups.

In the context of UN-REDD in Viet Nam, the consent of local people in the intended project sites is required before activities (i.e. protecting the local forest for carbon sequestration) can commence. The FPIC process was undertaken with the help of 24 local facilitators in teams of 3–4 people, which entered villages to provide information about climate change and the role of forests in climate-change mitigation; explain the planned UN-REDD activities in the local area; and seek the consent of local people to implement activities in their villages.

Brief guidelines on the application of FPIC principles was provided by the UN-REDD regional office and the FPIC process was undertaken by UN-REDD Viet Nam in a learn-by-doing approach.

The guidelines propose the following steps:

- **Steps 0–2:** Preparation, consultation with local officials, and recruitment of local facilitators.
- **Steps 3–4:** Training of local facilitators and awareness-raising.
- **Steps 5–6:** Village meetings and recording of the decision.
- **Steps 7–8:** Reporting (by facilitators) to UN-REDD Viet Nam and verification and evaluation.

The FPIC guidelines were applied with some modifications. For example, the first three suggested steps were undertaken almost simultaneously, and the awareness-raising, village meetings and recording of the decision were combined.

At the end of the process the Center for People and Forests was commissioned to evaluate the application of FPIC by UN-REDD Viet Nam and has

reported its findings (Nguyen *et al.* 2010). It found that some information on the risks and costs associated with the activities was not provided to local people during awareness-raising. There should have been time for internal discussion within villages before a final decision was made. In addition, no grievance or review mechanism was established independent of the FPIC team.

The evaluation team made four recommendations for immediate action:

- UN-REDD Viet Nam should check to see if the mission's findings apply to those villages not covered by the evaluation and whether further evaluation is needed.
- UN-REDD should review the scope of information that should be provided to local people and fill information gaps, particularly regarding the risks and costs associated with the implementation of activities.
- Further awareness-raising should be provided to villagers, particularly on risks and costs.
- A check should be made on whether any complaints or concerns about the FPIC process remain unspoken or unaddressed among villagers.

While it is commendable that the Government of Viet Nam and UN-REDD have taken the initiative to pilot an FPIC process among ethnic minorities, it is also important to draw lessons from it as a guide to other similar processes, not only in Viet Nam but also in other REDD+ countries. The evaluation team made recommendations to UN-REDD on improving the design and implementation of the FPIC process (Nguyen *et al.* 2010).

Insufficient time was provided for proper awareness-raising on REDD+ and UN-REDD among the local communities, particularly on the possible implications of REDD+ for livelihoods, land tenure and other issues. The process revealed that awareness on climate change and REDD+ was very low among the communities in Lam Ha and Di Linh, raising questions about the level of understanding that local communities may be expected to have and the time required for a meaningful FPIC process.

**Government as convener.** To ensure that actors have effective space in which to participate it is crucial that governments of REDD+ countries ‘deliver’ and guarantee REDD+ stakeholder engagement processes while not attempting to command them. Governments should act as conveners and a third party should take on the role of facilitator. This structure should ensure that stakeholders have the space to truly and openly debate their viewpoints and share their experiences.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY HELPS STEER REDD+ READINESS PROCESS IN UGANDA

*by Joshua Zake*

In Uganda, initial informal civil-society interventions grew into an important driver of the formal REDD+ readiness process. The development of the REDD+ readiness plan for Uganda is led and coordinated by the Ministry of Water and Environment through the National Forestry Authority (NFA). Initial interventions facilitated by Environmental Alert in collaboration with the NFA and other stakeholders in March 2010 led to the first national stakeholder dialogue on advancing REDD+ readiness. In turn, this resulted in the formation of:

- A National REDD+ working group charged with providing strategic guidance in the development of the REDD+ readiness plan for Uganda.
- The National Policy Committee on REDD, charged with giving policy guidance and integrating REDD+ in national policies and frameworks.
- The REDD+ Secretariat within the NFA to improve coordination during the development of the REDD+ readiness plan.

The first national stakeholder dialogue targeted 15 civil-society organizations working on issues related to forestry, climate change and the environment; representatives of local governments, ministries and agencies (e.g. the NFA and the national Environment Management Authority); and donors such as the World Bank. Key outcomes of the dialogue included the initiation of the REDD+ readiness plan for Uganda and a clarification of the roles of key institutions. Awareness was raised among stakeholders of the status of the

- Voluntary standards such as the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards can be a good base from which to build the necessary guidelines for effective stakeholder consultation.

**Building on existing experiences and platforms.** Participants in the TFD REDD+ dialogue series learned of a number of initiatives that are serving to engage stakeholders in each country. Yet many countries don't make



Joshua Zake

REDD+ readiness plan and of opportunities under REDD+, and those stakeholders became actively involved in the process of decision-making.

As well as national-level consultations, meetings were organized in various parts of the country to generate information on the key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to build awareness of REDD+ among stakeholders at all levels. Thematic studies were carried out to understand specific issues. Consultations facilitated by Environmental Alert and coordinated by other civil-society organizations reached and engaged over 2,000 people at the local and village levels, including collaborative forest management groups, community executive committees, local community leaders, timber dealers, hunters, charcoal-burners, sand-miners, herbalists, handcraft artisans and brick-makers. Close to one-third of participants were women. Among other things, the results of the thematic studies and consultations were analysed and consolidated to form content on the key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and practical strategies to address them.

The REDD+ working group reviewed, discussed and addressed comments made by the World Bank and gave guidance to the REDD+ Secretariat on integrating those comments in a revised advanced draft of the REDD+ readiness plan. There is optimism that following the approval of the plan the various stakeholder groups will be actively involved in implementation and coordination. This will provide further opportunities to clarify unknown or grey areas and to fully develop the national REDD+ strategy. Civil-society organizations in Uganda will continue to play an active role in creating awareness and influencing the national REDD+ strategy by facilitating policy dialogue at all levels.

best use of such initiatives, even though they could further legitimize stakeholder consultations on REDD+ and also speed up the process considerably. By latching onto existing and long-trusted channels of communication and conflict-resolution programs, the process of REDD+ readiness stakeholder engagement would gain in efficiency and trust and avoid the fatigue that constant, lengthy and disparate consultation processes can generate among stakeholders. Using such channels would also help to address REDD+ in an integrated, holistic fashion. For example, rights-based FPIC processes can be good tools for meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

- Ghana's district forest forums, which have functioned for years, can be engaged to discuss REDD+ readiness.
- Stakeholder groups with constituencies similar to the United Nations Major Groups could form the basis of stakeholder engagement at the national and subnational levels.
- In Cambodia, stakeholder learning is possible through participatory rural appraisal and the participatory land-use planning process.

Strategic capacity-building for local stakeholder groups. The participation of the most marginalized groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, women and youth, must be clarified and can be institutionalized and strengthened by building capacity among their leaders. Trust-building and the formalization of stakeholder interactions can increase participation in national and international debates. A balance needs to be reached between the building of technical capacity on the one hand and, on the other, the strengthening of institutional capacity and training to facilitate the engagement and participation of stakeholders.

- The formation of Alianza in Guatemala shows how strengthening the capacity of marginalized stakeholders can build a more legitimate platform for debate.

## THE INFORMATION CHALLENGE

An effective information strategy is the foundation of meaningful stakeholder engagement. A lack of funding to develop and implement REDD+ information strategies, however, has restricted access to good-quality information. How to consolidate and use information effectively remains a key issue for REDD+.

**Lack of funding.** Although financing bodies have earmarked considerable resources for the gathering of information, much less has been done to make such information accessible. There are insufficient funds to facilitate the flow of information, both upwards and downwards. National governments often become bottlenecks because of insufficient funding and capacity.

**Access barriers.** Very little information on REDD+ is available to communities, who may lack internet access and contact with relevant government bodies. For many stakeholders, much information remains out of the reach because it is in highly technical wording or foreign languages. This means that, in many places, informed consent, a fundamental aspect of FPIC, is far from a reality. Although REDD+ is still taking form, and clear information is not always available to be divulged, it is important that an effort be made to package information in formats that can be comprehended by communities and also that the uncertainties associated with REDD+ are disclosed. Communities may be unclear about what REDD+ can and cannot do for their livelihoods. Many may believe that it will be a panacea for their problems and that they will be able to derive all their income from it. It is essential that community expectations are realistic; therefore, they must be based on accurate information and a sound understanding of both the concept and the uncertainties around it.

Other stakeholder groups, such as the private sector, the media and academia, lack information on how they can take part in REDD+. Very few efforts have been made to map stakeholder information needs, and



Sarah Price



the formats best suited for different actors, in order to ensure that information is received, processed and used. Communities are likely to want to know how their access to forest resources could be restricted, the private sector will be interested in knowing how investments can be channeled, and academics might wish to know how they can align their research agendas with REDD+ processes. The same information, in the same format, will not suit all audiences.

**Lack of bottom-up information flow.** It is just as important for REDD+ decision-making for information to flow up from the local level as it is for it to flow down. Communities and local organizations hold a wealth of vital information on forests. Apart from increasing the legitimacy of REDD+, the use of traditional knowledge systems can inform practical REDD+ interventions on issues such as community-based conservation, benefit-sharing, sustainable income generation, sustainable forest management and fire management. MRV processes can be improved by using customary experience and knowledge and community monitoring capacity. Grassroots organizations can help build arrangements for the recognition of tree and carbon rights based on traditional tenure systems.

During the field visit in Ghana, for example, participants learned that communities have sophisticated ideas about benefit-sharing that could and should be harnessed in creating a REDD+ benefit-sharing scheme. In building national REDD+ strategies the wide variety of interesting communal policies should be mapped and taken into consideration. On several occasions participants flagged the need to map the existing context in Ghana. Such a mapping exercise would apply to policies that foster deforestation, the conflicting land uses currently in place, the stakeholders who need to be involved and the beliefs of those stakeholders on how benefits should be shared.

**Lack of systematic use of good-quality information.** The issue with REDD+ information is not so much its quantity as its quality. The challenge is to map and share high-quality information and to make

purposeful and effective use of it. The irresponsible sharing of incomplete or unreliable information can lead to inflated expectations and, in the long run, a loss of trust in REDD+. The potential for this was apparent during the Guatemala dialogue, when disappointment and confusion over the outcomes of the Copenhagen Accord resulted in strong calls for 'expectation management'.

Very little systematized information is available on REDD+ across regions and countries. When information is compiled and shared haphazardly it is hard to compare, collaborate or learn from ongoing REDD+ activities. This is particularly true of pilot projects, the main purpose of which should be to inform the REDD+ readiness plan. If learning from these pilots is not gathered, systematized and shared, the piloting experience becomes disconnected and hollow, greatly diminishing the transparency of the process and making participation much more difficult.

#### POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD ON INFORMATION

**Mapping and prioritizing.** Available information should be mapped, prioritized and coordinated and specific information gaps identified. There must be a clear vision of the type of information each actor is to produce and how it is to be managed, as well as of the specific information needs of each stakeholder group. While businesses may want information on investment options, communities may be more interested in how their access to forests will be limited, and what the tradeoffs might be. Attention must be paid not only to content but also to the channels of access to all information, and its format, so that it can be shared effectively.

- Information management should be an integral part of every project so that it receives adequate planning and budgeting.
- The networks and know-how of agricultural extension workers should be used to disseminate relevant and well-packaged information on REDD+ and to absorb and systematize local knowledge.



Brazil Dialogue Co-Chair  
Roberto Smeraldi

**Creating two-way information flows.** Education and training programs should be designed to suit the local context to ensure that information can flow from international negotiation platforms and national governments to the local level. The language used in education and training materials should be easily understandable and the information should be tailored towards local stakeholder needs based on the mapping exercises suggested above. Two types of materials will be needed — those that can be used without training, and those that can be integrated into training programs. Once designed, the former should be disseminated immediately through diverse but easily accessible media, such as leaflets, posters and local newspapers, radio and television. Training programs should adopt a standard curriculum and their materials should help communities to understand their full rights and to negotiate with others to protect those rights.

To ensure that information also flows from the local to the national and international levels, support should be provided for building networks among grassroots organizations and communities. Pilot projects can be a great channel through which local knowledge can reach national and international decision-making platforms. Protocols should be put in place to ensure that information from pilot projects is gathered, compiled and made available in accessible and useful ways. Pilot studies should not only gather technical data; they should also compile traditional knowledge and assess issues such as forest-related dependence, tenure and customary arrangements around benefit-sharing. Information on social safeguards and traditional livelihoods should be emphasized over technical data. Local communities and stakeholders hold key information that can guide REDD+ towards successful, fair and effective implementation, and pilot projects are in a privileged position to absorb and transmit that information.

- **Protocols should be put in place to gather and systematize information from pilot projects, particularly on safeguards, livelihoods and benefit-sharing.**

## THE FINANCE AND BENEFIT-DISTRIBUTION CHALLENGE

For REDD+ to be effective, a benefit-distribution system is needed to incentivize stakeholders, in particular the forest-dependent poor, to participate in REDD+. But a range of critical questions remain on the nature of such a system.

**Continuity and effectiveness of fund-based approach.** In the REDD+ readiness phase, funding for in-country activities is coming mainly from international funding bodies such as UN-REDD and the World Bank and bilateral agencies such as Norad. Uncertainty over funding continuity makes planning difficult. Such funds also come with many strings attached and detailed instructions for their use. A great deal of the funding, for example, is set aside for developing MRV, while much less is available to encourage the participation of communities. While funding will always come with certain conditions, strict adherence to internationally established protocols sometimes leads to the neglect of local needs and the inefficient use of resources. Participants in Ghana, for example, were frustrated that a significant amount of funds for the REDD+ readiness plan ended up in the hands of foreign consultants, while insufficient funding was available to enhance the participation of stakeholders during the readiness phase.

**Role of the market.** It is still unclear what role the compliance market will play in REDD+ at the international level. While some pilot projects have started selling REDD+ credits on the voluntary market, some states and various non-state actors are still opposed to a market-linked approach. With the future role of the carbon market unclear, governments are at a loss as to what they can expect to gain from carbon projects and how such benefits should be distributed and managed.

**High cost of small-scale initiatives.** The TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series exposed a fear that the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) experience — where projects have mostly been handled by large corporate groups and generated few social benefits — could be



Vanda Radzik



Juan Carlos Rueda

repeated. In Brazil, where many CDM-type projects have been implemented, participants were adamant that they would not welcome such a repetition; with millions of the country's most vulnerable people relying directly on forest resources, the consequences could be tragic. Yet the transaction costs of implementing smaller-scale projects with local communities cannot be ignored. It is still uncertain how these costs will be met and how funds and markets will be harmonized in each country.

**Equity and effectiveness of benefit-distribution mechanisms.** There is concern that the benefits of REDD+ will not reach communities. Costly technological, organizational and operational arrangements could diminish the earnings from REDD+ received by communities to the point where they might be insufficient to discourage illegal activities. During the field visit in Cambodia, participants learned that communities were guaranteed 50% of net revenue from REDD+ activities. It was unclear, however, how net revenue would be calculated and therefore how much cash would revert to communities after subtracting the costs incurred by implementing agencies, including the Forest Administration. Participants in the dialogue in Ecuador also expressed worries that there would be too many intermediaries, thus depriving communities of a great deal of their potential earnings.

Even if substantial benefits reach the community level, there is a risk that, in the absence of an effective and equitable community-level benefit-distribution mechanism, the promise of new revenue will spark conflicts within and between local communities. There is also concern that the revenue would be diverted to fund public infrastructure, such as schools, which is the responsibility of the state.

Participants noted that communities were very clear that the money from REDD+ should be used to sustain productive activities that would enhance community income rather than paid to individuals. Such activities would require the involvement of local entrepreneurs, who may be rare in some communities.

**Sufficiency of payment for forest carbon.** There is a growing realization that REDD+ payments alone will not be sufficient to incentivize forest-dwelling communities to adopt sustainable land-use models and that other forms of income-generation must be incorporated into benefit-sharing mechanisms. Globally, forest communities derive an estimated US\$130 billion from forests annually that is not accounted for in official socioeconomic data (IUCN 2011). The scope and extent of forest dependency and the role of forests in local livelihoods are generally poorly understood; forest dependency tends to be underestimated by governments, donor agencies and NGOs and is often not monetized or acknowledged in conventional cost-benefit analyses.

#### POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD ON FINANCING AND BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION

Consistent and timely performance-based payments from donors. It is important that donor countries require contracting parties to take on obligations directly related to deliverables, ensuring that money will flow in a consistent and timely fashion to where REDD+ is being delivered. This applies both to carbon credits and to progress in institutional and policy reforms designed to address the drivers of deforestation and degradation. A legislative framework that allows funds to be earmarked and set aside for REDD+ can prevent them from disappearing within national budgets.

- In Brazil, the establishment of the Amazon Fund, with earmarked funds and transparent rules, has ensured that progress can be made irrespective of uncertainties at the international level.

**Participatory design of benefit-distribution mechanism.** REDD+ can make use of the often clear ideas that local people have on frameworks for the distribution of benefits associated with good forest stewardship. Early on in the process, a set of principles and guidelines should be developed on how benefits from REDD+ and payments for other forest

Cambodia Co-chair  
Ratanakoma Long

### THE AMAZON FUND

The Amazon Fund was created by the Brazilian government in 2009 to pilot fund-based activities for REDD+. It is the single largest source of finance for REDD+: the Government of Norway has pledged US\$1 billion, for example, and the Fund is nearly three times as large as the FCPF. By creating its own structure, Brazil has ensured that it will be able to conduct REDD+ activities according to its own priorities and at its own pace. It has also created a platform that is accountable and that can receive, earmark and track international funds without them being absorbed and lost in national budgets.

The fund is available to finance the following activities:

- Management of public forests and protected areas.
- Environmental control, monitoring and inspection.
- Sustainable forest management.
- Economic activities created through the sustainable use of forests.
- Ecological and economic zoning, territorial arrangement and agricultural regulation.
- The preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- The recovery of deforested areas.

To date, nine projects have been proposed by a range of bodies, from NGOs to local governments, and US\$99.8 million has been disbursed. The projects revolve around improved monitoring capacity, payments for ecosystem services, environmental management and zoning.

The Amazon Fund, which was designed to become operational quickly, has encountered several hurdles since its inception. Procedures for project approval have proven too technically complex to allow access to grassroots and other small-scale projects, and the liberation of funds has been slower than expected. There are also questions about the transparency of the decision-making process.

ecosystem services should flow between and within forest communities. This will prevent the creation of false expectations. Pilot projects on benefit distribution can also be used to help build understanding among stakeholders about how to develop an effective and equitable scheme that suits the local context.

- In Ghana, communities have gained a clear vision of how they want to share their benefits at the local level based on community forestry experiences. There is strong support for using carbon revenue in locally controlled revolving credit schemes and less enthusiasm for distributional schemes predicated on individual payments.

**Reducing dependency on foreign funds by active involvement of private sector.** There is growing consensus that national authorities can better focus their REDD+ readiness activities on local needs by reducing their dependency on foreign funds. The participation of private-sector stakeholders is particularly important, and incentive structures should be put into place to encourage investments in REDD+ activities that will tackle the drivers of deforestation.

- In Brazil, the visit to a fully private pilot project demonstrated how private-sector actors can be incentivized to invest resources and time into making REDD+ a win-win-win reality.

**Integrating REDD+ funding with other pro-development funding streams.** REDD+ has moved recently from a focus on compensation on the basis of opportunity costs to an emphasis on national strategies that enable governments to create incentives or funds for REDD+ activities. Such an approach should strengthen activities that protect forests and their important social and environmental functions, including their contributions to the livelihoods of poor and disadvantaged communities. The integration of REDD+ funding with other pro-development funding streams for forest-dependent people is key. Sharing experiences and



Edgar Maravi

## INCENTIVES FOR FOREST CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION IN GUATEMALA

by Mario Escobedo

For more than 13 years, Guatemala's National Forest Institute (INAB) has been implementing a program of forest incentives to encourage landowners to engage in forest conservation and forest management for productive and restoration purposes. In developing its REDD+ payment scheme, Guatemala has drawn on the experience of this incentives program.

### Forest Incentive Program

The Programa de Incentivos Forestales (Forest Incentive Program — PINFOR) is an economic instrument funded by 1% of the national budget. Designed for landowners with more than two hectares of land, it focuses on reducing deforestation, stimulating the supply of competitive forest products and generating ecosystem services and employment in rural areas. PINFOR supports investments in the establishment and management of forest plantations, the sustainable management of natural forests and the development of forestry activities for environmental purposes. Potential beneficiaries include individuals, private companies, cooperatives, municipalities and organizations.

Payments of around US\$1,500 per hectare are made directly to landowners who carry out reforestation or restoration activities and payments of US\$300 per hectare per year are made for up to ten years to landowners who manage and conserve natural forests. Payments are made directly to the beneficiaries once they have been certified by INAB.

Since 1997 PINFOR has provided more than US\$130 million in forest incentives. By 2016 it will have stimulated the establishment of 285,000 hectares of forest plantations and the regeneration of 285,000 hectares of degraded forests and provided incentives for the management (including conservation and production) of 650,000 hectares of natural forest (INAB 2009).

### Small stakeholder incentive program

INAB created the Programa de Incentivos para Pequeños Poseedores de Tierras de Vocación Forestal o Agroforestal (Program of Incentives for Smallholders — PINPEP) in 2006 as a complementary program to PINFOR to include forest communities unable to participate in PINFOR, including socially organized groups and small landholders without formal property rights. PINPEP focuses on very poor municipalities and currently covers 79 municipalities.

PINPEP offers financial support for four main types of project:

- Agroforestry projects — payments over three years, and projects receive, in total, US\$556 per hectare.
- Forest plantations — payments over three years, and projects receive, in total, US\$1,112 per hectare.
- Forest management for protection — payments over five years, and projects receive US\$332 per hectare per year. In these areas the communities are not allowed to extract timber but may harvest non-timber forest products.
- Forest management for production — payments over five years, and projects receive US\$350 per hectare per year.

The PINPEP program covers a total of about 8,000 hectares of forest and has received proposals covering more than 22,000 hectares. The fifth year of the program was funded by the Government of the Netherlands (US\$8 million) and the national government (US\$3 million). The Government of Guatemala has approved a regulation that ensures public funds for PINPEP.





Sigrid Vasconez

research between countries and programs can increase the opportunities for communities to supplement potential REDD+ funding sources.

- Guatemala's PINFOR and PINPEP programs can provide important guidelines on how benefit-sharing and the financing of sustainable forest activities can work on the ground.

**Cost reduction.** Current discussions on the management of REDD+ costs and benefits are focused too narrowly on the benefits, thus ignoring opportunities that can help reduce costs. International initiatives as well as governments should create systems that incentivize lower-cost approaches for implementing REDD+ activities so as to increase the net benefits that can then be distributed among stakeholders.

**Bundling benefits beyond forest carbon.** To fully incentivize forest-dependent communities to adopt sustainable land-use models it is imperative that benefits from REDD+ be treated as seed money that can be multiplied by investment in sustainable livelihood activities. Community-based forest management and sustainable forest management initiatives must be integrated with REDD+ activities to ensure maximum impact on livelihood improvement and the full and consistent application of social safeguards.

- The proposed investment of REDD+ benefits in improving the extraction of non-timber forest products in Cambodia has received great support from local communities and can supplement revenue from REDD+ to produce long-term, transformative social improvements.
- In Ecuador, REDD+ payments will be bundled with existing payments for forest conservation made by the Government of Ecuador to conserve native forests while alleviating poverty.

#### LEARNING FROM ECUADOR'S SOCIO BOSQUE PROGRAM

The Socio Bosque Program was set up in 2008 to create incentives to reduce deforestation while achieving social and environmental objectives, with the aim of benefiting 500,000–1,000,000 people. It is designed to:

- Conserve native forests and other native ecosystems, thereby protecting their ecological, economic, cultural and spiritual assets. The target is to conserve 4 million hectares of forest and other native ecosystems within the next seven years.
- Significantly reduce deforestation and associated greenhouse gas emissions.
- Enhance the living conditions of local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other rural inhabitants.

Through Socio Bosque, forest-owners and Indigenous communities earn yearly payments (up to US\$30 per hectare) for their voluntary commitment to conserve forests on their lands for a period of 20 years. The program is meant to supplement traditional forest control measures and aims to reduce deforestation rates by 30%. One of its merits is that it focuses not only on high deforestation but also on forest degradation and the drivers of deforestation. It balances livelihoods and human well-being with conservation.

Between September 2008 and December 2009, 413 conservation agreements were signed with private landowners and Indigenous communities, thereby conserving 416,509 hectares of forests, páramos and other native vegetation and benefiting 40,273 people. About 17% of the incentives were used for conservation purposes, 20% for institutional strengthening, 12% for savings, 8% for education, 16% for infrastructure and 12% for production activities.

Despite these advances, there is concern that the primary stakeholders have not gained ownership over the development of the program. Another weakness is that sustainable forest management and the enhancement of carbon stocks are not yet incentivized. There is also concern that there is a conflict between poverty reduction aims and the exclusion of people without clear property rights, and that the monitoring system might be insufficiently robust to assess impacts on conservation and livelihoods, reducing the capacity of the program to act as a performance-based incentives system.

### THE POLICY AND LEGAL REFORM CHALLENGE

A range of policy reforms is required at the international, national and subnational levels if REDD+ is to become a reality. There is a risk that, in the rush to REDD+, existing arrangements on tenure and governance, which are almost always detrimental to marginalized people, will be cemented in place. Tenure and governance reform is crucial for the success of REDD+ because it will encourage equitable REDD+ interventions that take the interests of forest-dependent communities into account.

**Rights to land, trees and carbon.** In many regions, disputes over tenure have persisted for generations and it is unlikely that all will be fully resolved in time for REDD+ implementation. In Guatemala, for example, issues related to property rights continue to stand in the way of improved forest governance, 15 years after the end of the civil war there. The fragmented nature of forests and overlapping claims contributes to tension and insecurity over land tenure and ownership.



Forest workers in Ghana

Defining rights over carbon and their relationship to underlying land and timber rights remains among the greatest challenges for countries as they build their REDD+ strategies. Tenure over carbon is confusing at best and in many cases it is contradictory and misaligned with land rights. Carbon rights are rarely defined legally, and customary and formal rights over land and trees are often insecure. In Ghana, land ownership does not guarantee rights over trees and all naturally occurring trees are the property of the state. This adds to confusion about how rights to the carbon stored in trees will be allocated.

### Forest governance policy reform linked to broader land-use planning.

Conflicting land-use policies are a major obstacle to REDD+. Land-use planning and attempts to reform forest governance are often in conflict with economic policies and those of other sectors. Attempts at reform can create perverse incentives because national policy and legal frameworks lack integration. A combination of high demands for land and complex property rights regimes can be particularly problematic. In some areas the situation is exacerbated by high population growth and unequal land distribution.

**Implementation.** Many countries may have good forest policies and laws on the books but the capacity of government to implement, monitor and verify REDD+ implementation is limited, as is the institutional capacity to clarify roles and to ensure stakeholder participation in decision-making. In Brazil, for example, while initiatives such as the Amazon Fund exist to prevent deforestation, the Brazilian Development Bank, which manages the fund, is known to give credit to the large agricultural conglomerates that are themselves responsible for deforestation. Without proper mapping of existing policies and their modes of implementation, combating deforestation will be very difficult.

### POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD ON POLICY AND LEGAL REFORM

**From resource access rights and customary rights to land tenure.** Rather than insisting on formalizing land and tree tenure upfront, countries can

### LEARNING FROM GHANA'S CARBON AND TREE TENURE SCENARIO

Ghana has four main tree-tenure contexts:

- Production forest reserves.
- Protection forest reserves.
- Off-reserve areas (mainly trees on farms).
- Community forests in off-reserve areas.

Under current legal arrangements, carbon stored in trees would, like timber, be classified as an economic resource and commodity. On top of that, the state effectively owns the timber in the first three of the four tenure contexts. The question is, who will have the rights to carbon credits and, consequently, who will receive the payments for conserving forest carbon? Currently, landowners and users cannot cut trees for commercial purposes. The clarification of carbon tenure is therefore a vital issue, both for the effective and equitable distribution of benefits and to guarantee the permanence of any emissions reductions achieved.

Encouragingly, REDD+ could build on existing laws and experiences such as the rights people have over trees they planted themselves, the right of farmers to veto the felling of timber on their farms, and the protection of timber stands in cocoa plantations. The 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy, and commercial plantation agreements, require the involvement of local stakeholders in decision-making about resource management. In off-reserve areas, provisions designed to support community forests could be key mechanisms for local control and participation in natural resource management. Their potential depends in part on how carbon property rights are resolved and on greater legislative backing. Civil society has put forward a proposal for legal reform, taking into account customary laws.

first work through existing laws, including on concessions and customary arrangements, to define carbon rights and design an equitable benefit-distribution system for communities and Indigenous Peoples. Discussions at all levels on REDD+ need to broaden; successful examples should be sought from the agricultural and development sectors where land-tenure barriers have been overcome to balance conservation and development needs.

- Guatemala's PINPEP program has bypassed the need for formal land titles when distributing benefits to forest-dwellers, removing unnecessary bureaucracy and bringing decision-making to the national level.

**Mapping and integration of cross-sectoral policies.** Public policies and laws must be reviewed, such as those that provide incentives for 'cut and run' and those governing the mining, agriculture and energy sectors. It is essential that the actual pattern of implementation, and not only the legislative texts, be taken into consideration. Often, responsibilities for land-use planning are divided between several government bodies and overlap with existing customary tenure arrangements. An integration of the various levels of government, with a focus on tenure rights, can greatly reduce confusion and lead to improved outcomes.

- In Brazil, investments are being made to ensure the efficacy of existing legislation by improving satellite monitoring and the response capacity of local authorities.

**Participatory policy-reform model.** Transparent and effective policies require the engagement of all stakeholders. In addition to civil society, legislative bodies and opposition parties must be able to adequately comprehend and debate legislative proposals. In some countries only certain sectors of government are aware of REDD+ and its implications. To generate the right policies, all levels of government and all political parties should be adequately informed about REDD+. While this may



Peter Gardiner

seem difficult, dividing the needed legislation into smaller and more easily understood and assimilated policy instruments can greatly ease pressure on legislative bodies.

- In Ecuador, the government has divided relevant legislation into parcels, allowing more time for discussion and for legislators to accustom themselves with each new measure, while ‘keeping the ball rolling’ through administrative measures.

National legislative bodies often struggle to create policies that will lead to the desired outcomes, but local practices and policies could be used to address many of the challenges posed by REDD+. Consulting and learning from communities can save time and produce better, more effective policies. Designing stakeholder consultation processes to absorb as well as disseminate information can save time and effort that otherwise might be spent trying to reinvent policy mechanisms that already exist and function smoothly on the ground.

- In Ghana, where there are many doubts over tree tenure, local arrangements already exist in many regions that bypass the complications of national legislation and count on the support of local actors.
- In Guatemala, the inputs of local NGOs and community groups through a subnational initiative of REDD+ pilots in the north of the country helped inform government on how to define a legal framework that can ensure equitable benefit-sharing.

## Conclusion

The TFD REDD+ readiness dialogue series has shown a growing consensus around the need to bring REDD+ out of isolation and to truly integrate it into development plans. Not only would this be a fundamental step in ensuring that the indirect drivers of deforestation are tackled, it would also guarantee that social safeguards become a key component of implementation practice. While there are fears that a broadening of discussions on REDD+ will paralyze the process, there is also a growing realization that REDD+ alone will not resolve the long-standing issues surrounding tropical forests, local livelihoods and sustainability.

The integration of REDD+ into broader development strategies requires deeper, more comprehensive stakeholder engagement. The REDD+ community must find ways of engaging actors outside the forest sector — including among the private sector and development NGOs. There is an urgent need to give greater voice to forest-dependent communities and their vision for their forests. The full complexity of conservation and livelihoods manifests at the local level, and it is there where much of the knowledge lies.



Karen Podvin

Learning to engage, hear and respect local voices is not only crucial for genuine FPIC, it is also a necessary pathway for the construction of an effective and efficient future for REDD+. In that sense, it is imperative that pilot projects fulfill their promise of learning by doing. They need to absorb and process local knowledge and use it to inform decision-makers, not only on technical issues but also crucially on social, political and economic matters.

In a context that involves so many different actors at so many levels and in so many different places, the adequate management of information is critical for avoiding the simultaneous cacophony of conflicting discourses and an absence of practical, useful and tailored data. There will be no moment at which all REDD+ activities worldwide are in total harmony, and international negotiations are themselves an ongoing process. Mechanisms must be put into place to keep information flowing, in appropriate formats, between all actors, from communities to legislators, from NGOs to negotiators, and particularly from South to South, so that experiences can be shared and incorporated in policies and on-the-ground activities.

The REDD+ phased approach must live up to its promise of flexibility. As they stand, the protocols of funding bodies have tied countries to cookie-cutter actions without due consideration of local contexts. While it is necessary for certain conditions to be met for funds to be released and to ensure that safeguards are respected, current approaches encourage the bureaucratic, pro-forma conduct of REDD+ activities and the draining of funds by international consultants. To encourage more profound and consistent consultation processes, and to enable effective transformational change, countries must be allowed flexibility in their transitions between REDD+ phases without, however, undermining a full respect for social and environmental safeguards. Greater fluidity between phases and greater attention to local needs will only be achieved if REDD+ countries are empowered to better negotiate the terms of financing with large international donors.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> REDD+ is a mechanism to mitigate climate change that implies paying for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation made through forest conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://environment.yale.edu/tfd/>.
- <sup>3</sup> Among other things, the Cancun Agreements encourage developing-country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation through the conservation of forest carbon stocks, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.iucn.org/?6645/Make-Sure-the-Poor-Dont-Miss-Out-on-REDD-Says-IUCN>.



l to r: Julieta Bono, Yves Paiz and Oscar Rojas





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The Forests Dialogue (TFD), formed in 1999, is an outgrowth of dialogues and activities that began separately under the auspices of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, The World Bank, the International Institute for Environment and Development, and the World Resources Institute. These initiatives converged to create TFD when these leaders agreed that there needed to be a unique, civil society driven, on-going, international multi-stakeholder dialogue forum to address important global forestry issues. TFD's mission and purpose is to bring key leaders together to build relationships based on trust, commitment and understanding and through them, generate substantive discussion on key issues related to achieving sustainable forest management around the world. TFD's dialogues serve as a platform to share aspirations and learning and to new seek ways to take collaborative action on the highest priority forest conservation and management issues.

TFD is developing and conducting international multi-stakeholder dialogues on the following issues:

- *Forest Certification*
- *Illegal Logging and Forest Governance*
- *Intensive Managed Planted Forests*
- *Forests and Biodiversity Conservation*
- *Forests and Climate Change*
- *Forests and Poverty Reduction*
- *Investing in Locally-Controlled Forestry*
- *Free, Prior and Informed Consent*

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#### **TFD's Mission**

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