

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in Developing Countries

Tenth Session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Co-operative Action to the Convention

31st May – 11th June, 2010, Bonn, Germany

Summary of Recommendations

Objective

- IUCN urges Parties to reach an agreement on a REDD-plus mechanism that recognizes that avoiding greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is a necessary component of achieving deep cuts in all sources of anthropogenic emissions in order to mitigate climate change.

Scope

- IUCN urges Parties to ensure that the full scope of REDD-plus is respected and supported in the establishment of the mechanism, including through the provision of financial resources and investment.

Safeguards in National Strategies and MRV

- IUCN welcomes the safeguards that have been agreed in previous sessions of the AWG-LCA and that are now included in the Text to facilitate negotiations among the Parties. All of the safeguards listed in paragraph 2 are critical to retain.
- IUCN urges Parties to put in place the building blocks to operationalize the safeguards, including by:
 - Ensuring that the social, environmental and governance safeguards referred to in paragraph 2 of the Text to facilitate negotiation among the Parties are incorporated in national strategies and action plans and built into REDD-plus actions at the national and local level.
 - Ensuring that application of the safeguards referred to in paragraph 2 of the Text is included in the systems to be developed by Developing Country Parties for the measuring, reporting and verifying of REDD-plus activities, as considered in paragraph 5 (c) of the Text.

Provision of Financial Resources and Investment

- IUCN urges Parties to ensure that the provision of financial resources and investment for early action should:

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- Respect and encourage the full scope of REDD-plus
- Prioritize REDD-plus actions that optimize mitigation benefits and promote the application of the safeguards, delivering multiple-benefits for sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity
- Incentivize those people at the appropriate levels who actually need to implement the necessary REDD actions
- Prioritize REDD-plus activities that are framed within the context of national REDD-plus strategies or action plans.
- Support, contribute to or be aligned with national MRV systems, including the definition, testing and assessment of standards.

Nature-based Solutions: Biodiversity for effective Climate Change Mitigation

The REDD-plus mechanism should ensure that forests and the services they provide to humankind are conserved, managed and restored in ways that achieve climate change mitigation targets, help secure sustainable livelihoods and maintain the ability of an ecosystem to function healthily and continue to provide goods and services. Underpinning this is a necessary understanding of the relationship between biodiversity and climate change mitigation. Maintaining and restoring biodiversity promotes the resilience of forests to human-induced pressures and climate change impacts and helps maintain the long-term stability of the carbon pool. As such, maintaining biodiversity should be viewed as an indispensable prerequisite for reducing risks associated with REDD-plus actions.

Scope

IUCN has been encouraged to see the Parties putting the 'plus' in the REDD negotiations leading up to COP-15, as now reflected in the Text to facilitate negotiations among Parties. The Bali Action Plan provides scope for:

- **Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation through actions** that protect existing forests from immediate and/or medium term threats of forest conversion and further degradation.
- **Conservation:** actions to protect existing forests, especially primary forests, including those that face no immediate threat from deforestation and degradation but could in future be subject to land use pressures created by national and international leakage. This is particularly pertinent to countries and areas with currently high forest

cover and low rates of deforestation (HFLD).

- **Sustainable management of forests:** actions that safeguard, and as appropriate expand, existing carbon stocks in both community and industrial working forests, in particular forests subject to commercial logging and shifting agriculture, against long-term decline while ensuring the economically, ecologically and socially sustainable provision of associated ecosystem goods and services. These should be implemented as part of supportive national policy frameworks that also include conservation and enhancement activities in a coordinated way.
- **Enhancement of forest carbon stocks:** actions including 'restoration of forests' as previously proposed by a number of delegations. This is broader than 'increasing forest cover through afforestation and reforestation.' By 'restoration' IUCN means landscape-scale restoration of forest ecosystems that significantly increases and maintains carbon stocks and results in healthy resilient ecosystems, which provide the multiple goods and services people need, maintain biodiversity and enhance ecological integrity. A significant number of Parties already have established experience with such approaches. There are an estimated more than 1 billion hectares of degraded lands where forest landscape restoration opportunities may be found, whose restoration could sequester approximately 140 GtCO₂e by 2030.¹

¹ GPFLR: A World of Opportunity. November 2009. http://www.ideastransformlandscapes.org/media/uploads/GPFLR_OPPORTUNITY_A4_6.pdf

Examples of measures through which these activities can be achieved are provided in the annex to this paper.

It is critically important for the evolution in thinking from REDD to REDD-plus that was seen in the UNFCCC negotiations during 2009 to be reinforced in order to engage a wide range of countries in delivering the maximum possible reductions in emissions and increases in removals.

- **IUCN urges Parties to ensure that the full scope of REDD-plus is respected and supported in the establishment of the mechanism, including through the provision of financial resources and investment. (Also see below on Enhanced Action on the Provision of Financial Resources and Investment.)**

Safeguards in National Strategies and MRV

Safeguards are necessary to strengthen the potential contribution of forests to climate change mitigation. Without basic safeguards forests could be regarded as a high-risk option, one that will be less attractive to investors. Furthermore, the adoption and application of adequate safeguards is necessary to avoid unintended consequences from the application of defined terms and interpretation of undefined terms, such as the conversion of primary forests and/or natural forests to perennial woody tree crops.

- **IUCN welcomes the safeguards that have been agreed in previous sessions of the AWG-LCA and that are now included in the Text to facilitate negotiations among the Parties. All of the safeguards listed in paragraph 2 are critical to retain.**

We note that gender considerations are not currently included in the safeguards but welcome their inclusion in paragraph 7 of the Text regarding the development of implementation of national strategies or action plans.

The next step is to put in place the building blocks to operationalize those safeguards. Part of this will involve Developing Country Parties addressing the safeguards in the development and implementation of their strategies and action plans, as set out in Annex VI of the Text, paragraph 7. Also important to operationalizing

the safeguards will be their inclusion in systems for measuring, reporting and verifying emissions and removals and other changes resulting from the implementation of REDD-plus actions.

In this context, safeguards should be seen as evolving along with the phases of REDD-plus. For example, the most relevant safeguards in phase 1 may not necessarily be the most relevant for phase 3 and this will need to be reflected in MRV systems. Furthermore, testing and assessment of the safeguards will be as important as defining them.

- **IUCN urges Parties to ensure that the social, environmental and governance safeguards referred to in paragraph 2 of the Text to facilitate negotiation among the Parties are incorporated in national strategies and action plans and built into REDD-plus actions at the national and local level.**
- **IUCN calls on Parties to ensure that application of the safeguards referred to in paragraph 2 of the Text is included in the systems to be developed by Developing Country Parties for the monitoring and reporting of REDD-plus activities, as considered in paragraph 5 (c) of the Text.**

Enhanced action on the provision of Financial Resources and Investment

Given the scale of the challenge, there is a need for long term financial flows that are guaranteed, stable and reliable, and are underpinned by strong donor coordination and long-term commitments from both developed and developing countries. Significant upfront funding will be necessary for e.g. capacity-building, technology transfer, land-use governance reform, institutional strengthening and demonstration activities.

IUCN welcomes the call in the Text to facilitate negotiations among Parties (paragraph 23) for “scaled up new and additional, predictable and adequate funding, including substantial funding to REDD-plus for enhanced implementation of the Convention” with the funding to come from a wide variety of sources, primarily public sources but supplemented by private sector and other sources.

IUCN further welcomes the call in the Text to “establish a Copenhagen green climate fund... to support projects, programmes, policies and other activities related to mitigation, including REDD-plus” (paragraph 37).

With specific reference to REDD-plus, IUCN welcomes Annex VI, paragraph 1(j) that calls for the implementation of REDD-plus activities to be “subject to equitable, adequate, predictable and sustainable funding.” Annex VI, paragraph 12 deals, inter alia, with support for consideration of the safeguards and early action. Funding for REDD-plus actions is not unlimited and should therefore be directed to those actions that will not only result in reduced emissions and enhanced removals but that can also generate significant benefits for people and biodiversity, including new livelihood options, the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services inside and outside protected areas, and increased resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change. The design and implementation of REDD-plus actions should also safeguard and promote the engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities, including providing for gender-balanced and broad stakeholder participation.

Implementation of REDD-plus activities will require agreed national frameworks that enjoy the support of stakeholders. While the readiness phase is contributing to achieving this aim, it is important for early action or other fast-start initiatives to be firmly situated within the framework of REDD-plus national strategies.

Furthermore, support for early action support should respect the full scope of REDD-plus, while recognizing the different countries may need to focus their strategies and actions plans on certain aspects given their national context.

- **IUCN urges Parties to ensure that the provision of financial resources and investment for early action should:**
 - **Respect and encourage the full scope of REDD-plus**
 - **Prioritize REDD-plus actions that optimize mitigation benefits and promote the application of the safeguards, delivering multiple-benefits for sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity**
 - **Incentivize those people at the appropriate levels who actually need to implement the necessary REDD actions**
 - **Prioritize REDD-plus activities that are framed within the context of national REDD-plus strategies or action plans**
 - **Support, contribute to or be aligned with national MRV systems, including the definition, testing and assessment of standards.**

Annex 1: Examples of measures to implement REDD-plus activities

The Bali Action Plan provides scope for:

- **Reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation through actions** that protect existing forests from immediate and/or medium term threats of forest conversion and further degradation.

This can be achieved through such measures as:

- Clarification of tenure and rights for land and carbon
 - Adoption and enforcement of laws to reduce deforestation and forest degradation
 - Establishment of protected areas or community-managed forest reserves
 - Schemes that involve payment for ecosystem services
 - Activities outside the forest sector to reduce the pressure on forests (e.g. certified sustainable agriculture, removal of subsidies that encourage agricultural expansion into intact natural forests.
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- **Conservation:** actions to protect existing forests, especially primary forests, including those that face no immediate threat from deforestation and degradation but could in future be subject to land use pressures created by national and international leakage. This is particularly pertinent to countries and areas with currently high forest cover and low rates of deforestation (HFLD).

This can be achieved through such measures as:

- Establishing, expanding and effectively managing protected areas and connectivity corridors
 - Recognizing and supporting conservation actions by forest dependent communities, including indigenous peoples' and community conserved areas
 - Land stewardship agreements and conservation easements
 - Payments for provision of the ecosystem services generated by protected forest ecosystems, including carbon storage, water supply, provision of wildlife habitat, among others.
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- **Sustainable management of forests:** actions that safeguard, and as appropriate expand, existing carbon stocks in both community and industrial working forests, in particular forests subject to commercial logging and shifting agriculture, against long-term decline while ensuring the economically, ecologically and socially sustainable provision of associated ecosystem goods and services. These should be implemented as part of supportive national policy frameworks that also include conservation and enhancement activities in a coordinated way.

This includes such measures as:

- Independently certified production of timber that meets recognized international sustainability standards
 - Sustainable production of non-timber products
 - Low impact logging that aims to minimize collateral damage to trees, ground cover and soils
 - Active silvicultural interventions to safeguard forests against anthropogenic and destructive alterations to natural fire regimes, pest and diseases and alien invasive species
 - Improved forest-based rotational (shifting) cultivation practices to enhance food security while maintaining the integrity of forests and the extent of forest cover.
 - Adoption of continuous cover silvicultural systems that reduces logging intensity at any point in time and improves stand structure
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- **Enhancement of forest carbon stocks:** actions including 'restoration of forests' as previously proposed by a number of delegations. This is broader than 'increasing forest cover through afforestation and reforestation.' By 'restoration' IUCN means landscape-scale restoration of forest ecosystems that significantly increases and

maintains carbon stocks and results in healthy resilient ecosystems, which provide the multiple goods and services people need, maintain biodiversity and enhance ecological integrity. A significant number of Parties already have established experience with such approaches. There are an estimated more than 1 billion hectares of degraded lands where forest landscape restoration opportunities may be found, whose restoration could sequester approximately 140 GtCO₂e by 2030.²

This can be achieved through such measures as:

- Areas that are allowed to naturally regenerate or are regenerated through plantings
- Areas that are restored for watershed management
- Well-managed commercial and community plantations established on degraded lands
- Restored protective forests that protect against flooding, erosion and other catastrophic events
- Planting of on-farm trees and other sustainable agro-forestry systems.

² GPFLR: A World of Opportunity. November 2009.