

*Building REDD+ Policy Capacity  
for Developing Country  
Negotiators and Land Managers:  
Lessons learned*

*Task Force Meeting Report*

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January 2012

Written by Jessica Boyle

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## 1.0 Introduction

IISD and the ASB Partnership for the Tropical Forest Margins at the World Agroforestry Centre (ASB-ICRAF) have partnered to deliver a third and final phase of the *Building REDD+ Policy Capacity for Developing Country Negotiators and Land Managers* project.

Phase III activities (November 1, 2011 to May 31, 2012) will focus on identifying and “ground-truthing” the lessons learned from Phases I and II. This approach is particularly important as the focus of REDD+ moves from negotiation at the international level to implementation at the national level. During this final phase of activities, the project will continue to contribute to regional coordination, capacity building within ongoing REDD+ activities, and strengthening the foundations laid for sustained interactions between Southern actors and institutions well beyond the lifetime of the project.

Building on the establishment of the REDD Development Dividend (REDD-DD) Task Force in Phase II of the project, a small advisory group of experts was brought together on the margins of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa in December 2011.

The goal of this meeting was to identify a thematic area (or areas), informed by the work of Phases I and II, under which to develop lessons learned and case studies.

The expected outcomes from the meeting were:

- The prioritization of key thematic or issue areas on which Phase III activities will focus;
- Identification of potential countries for case study analysis and key experts/partners therein; and
- Development of a meeting report outlining the approach moving forward.

This report highlights the key messages that emerged from the discussions and provides an overview of the meeting proceedings. It concludes by providing thoughts as to how the outcomes of the expert meeting will influence the direction of the project moving forward.

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## 2.0 Main Messages

- **Measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), safeguards and financing are considered by many as the three key elements or “pillars” of REDD+ at present.** There is a need to link the international negotiating process with all levels of research in order to understand and identify where discrepancies or information gaps exist. These pillars of REDD+ are where research and policy development should be focused.
- **On MRV, the development of reference levels (RLs) and baselines should be flexible and based on the circumstances of countries.** Many countries will require assistance to scale up project and subnational RLs to the national level. It is helpful to consider and reflect on how early movers, and/or countries that are more advanced in the process, have gone through the development stages before informing countries that are new to the process how best to develop a framework or methodology.

- **Country experiences can provide lessons for measuring and reporting on safeguards.** Examples include: free, prior and informed consent (FPIC); community forest management; payment for ecosystem services (PES); REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (SES); Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT); and forest certification. These experiences need to inform the negotiations.
- **Financing remains a key sticking point in the REDD negotiations and is an important determinant in moving towards results-based REDD processes at the national level.** Further exploration of financing is needed to determine the role that both market and non-market mechanisms will play in REDD moving forward.
- **Communication and stakeholder engagement is critical to the future success of REDD.** There is a need for capacity building in order to translate international agreements into effective local and national level policies. Closer links need to be made between the enhancement of carbon stocks and the potential co-benefits that can be reaped. The potential benefits must be communicated effectively—what can “carbon stocks” and “co-benefits” mean to a community, and how can REDD+ be translated in a way that resonates with communities in order to make REDD “real”?
- **Measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), safeguards and financing are the three key elements of pillars of REDD+ being addressed in the international negotiations.** Current research and policy development should focus on these three pillars, and help to fill gaps in knowledge. For example, how can safeguards encourage the multiple functions of forests? What type of financing is needed to encourage Phases II and III (demonstration projects and result-based actions) of the REDD process?
- **The development of REDD+ policies and guidelines can be informed by processes and experiences at the national and international level.** For example, national participatory forest management and community forest management practices can inform the development of safeguards. International processes such as FLEGT and reporting under the Convention on Biological Diversity could potentially inform the development of safeguard information systems.
- **Countries that are early movers or more advanced can offer lessons** on methodologies, financing structures, reporting on safeguards, etc. While Latin American countries—such as Brazil and Costa Rica—are often put forward as such examples; many African REDD+ initiatives provide lessons. The Kasigau Wildlife Corridor Project in Kenya is one such example. This first REDD carbon project potentially provides lessons on addressing drivers of deforestation and financing structures.
- **Engaging the private sector is critical.** Lessons regarding both financing and implementation can be learned from projects that have private sector partners. Further exploration of the role of private sector financing is needed, including in regard to market and non-market mechanisms.
- **Communication and stakeholder engagement are critical to the future success of REDD.** The potential benefits of REDD + must be communicated effectively. For example, what can “carbon stocks” and “co-benefits” mean to a community, and how can REDD+ be translated in a way that resonates with communities in order to make REDD “real”? Capacity building is needed to improve communication as well as help translate international agreements into effective local and national level policies.

### 3.0 Summary of Proceedings

The meeting was opened by Deborah Murphy, an Associate of IISD, and Peter Minang, Global Coordinator of ASB-ICRAF. Murphy and Minang provided attendees with a brief overview of Phase I and II, as well as thoughts on Phase III, currently being undertaken. A discussion document was provided to participants prior to the meeting, which contained initial thinking on potential areas for future research to provide background for debate (see Annex 1). Murphy explained that the goal of the meeting was to identify and prioritize key areas of REDD+ under which the work of Phase I and II could be built upon to development of a series of “lessons learned” case studies.

Tony LaViña (Philippines), Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) REDD Contact Group, provided an overview of the status of REDD+ discussions in Durban and highlighted several issues of importance moving forward, particularly on the topics of measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), safeguards and financing. LaViña stated that there is a need to link research happening at all levels with the international negotiating process and identify where gaps currently exist. There are three key pillars of REDD+ on which research and policy should be based. The first is MRV, including all the processes needed to establish robust measurement and assessment systems at the national level. The second is safeguards and ensuring the multiple functions of forests are considered and addressed in the planning for and implementation of REDD. As a third pillar, consistent financing must be available in order to facilitate REDD’s progress through the progressive phases (from readiness to results-based action).

On MRV, LaViña noted that the MRV system will “kick in,” once discussions of the modalities for forest reference emission levels (RELS) and forest reference levels (RLs) are completed and RELS/RLs are determined at the national level.<sup>1</sup> Countries that are now beginning to develop RLs and RELS will ramp up over the next 12 months, and it is thus helpful to consider the actions and programs of early movers and countries that are more advanced. This information is key, as it can help inform the development of methodologies in other countries.

On safeguards, LaViña noted that the focus is now on developing a process for providing information on how they are being implemented and/or respected within the context of REDD. Discussions are focused on how to track or monitor the safeguards and the criteria or templates that will be used in reporting. There is resistance to the standardization of the process (cost and sovereignty concerns are often cited), and issues around land ownership and tenure can complicate the picture. Once again, it may be useful to reflect on the processes and experiences from countries that are considered leaders in these areas so other jurisdictions can learn from them.

On finance, there are several challenges associated with moving from Phase I (Readiness) to Phase II (Capacity building, Piloting). A number of questions remain about the types of financing required for Phase II, and what the use of market mechanisms might look like in Phase III (Results and Performance-based REDD+). The Durban outcomes included requests for the preparation of a technical paper and the hosting of a workshop (in conjunction with COP 18) to further explore and clarify views on the modalities and procedures for financing the results-based REDD actions (i.e., Phase III). While this work will be useful moving forward, a number of questions remain, including: What should REDD+ payments go towards, how should we measure what is to be paid for, and what form should payment take? There may be a trade-off between achieving emissions reductions and preserving livelihoods in the context of REDD+. Do

<sup>1</sup> Global guidance on RL/REL was expected to be finalized in Durban, but was not completed. The draft decision on Guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected and modalities relating to forest reference *emission levels and forest reference levels as referred to in decision 1/CP.16* can be accessed at: [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban\\_nov\\_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17\\_safeguards.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban_nov_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17_safeguards.pdf)

safeguards effectively address these concerns, or is more needed? Along this line, what are the “results” being referred to in the “results-based” phase. Is success measured on the emissions reductions achieved, amount of carbon stored, co-benefits realized, or some combination thereof? Lastly, how should the drivers of deforestation be addressed?

On this point, other participants noted that the links between REDD and agriculture should be further explored. The relationship varies country by country, and priority setting will be required to determine if REDD+ financing could/should go towards addressing agriculture as a driver of deforestation. It was highlighted that some REDD+ projects, such as the Kasigau Wildlife Corridor Project in **Kenya**, are working to address the drivers of deforestation. In the case of Kasigau, such drivers include charcoal and the expansion of the agricultural frontier. There may be opportunities for these project-level approaches to be applied at the country level. In Kenya, the opportunities for “+” elements of REDD are significant, and are closely related to the expansion of agricultural land.

Participants also observed that REDD+ has developed quite rapidly at the international level, and accordingly a number of questions and challenges remain with regards to the application of REDD at the local and national levels. There is a need for capacity building in order to translate international developments into effective local and national level policies. Some countries, such as **Ethiopia**, have found that community-based activities and participatory forest management (PFM) practices provide valuable inputs into the development of guidelines and policies around REDD+. PFM can be particularly helpful in developing systems for safeguards. **Ecuador** and **Brazil** were noted as leaders on safeguards. In this way, many experts felt there is a need to link the expansion of community-based forest management more closely with the development of REDD+, and that community forest management could be a good starting point for these REDD+ discussions. Though closely related to safeguards, there is a relative lack of information and capacity around benefits sharing. There are concerns around how the benefits of REDD+ (monetary or co-benefits) will be distributed. In many cases, benefits sharing is informal. For REDD to be successful, do such arrangements need to be formalized, and, if so, how?

Experts also noted the need for country-level experiences to help inform the development of common understandings of REDD+. There should be closer links made between the enhancement of carbon stocks and the potential co-benefits that can be reaped. These benefits need to be communicated effectively—what are the key messages, what does “carbon” and or “co-benefits” mean to a community, and how can REDD+ be translated in a way that resonates with communities to make REDD “real”?

Following a general discussion, several experts shared their country’s experiences with REDD+. **The Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) is currently establishing its national forest monitoring system. Drawing on the Brazilian experience, the DRC recently sent five technicians to Brazil to improve their expertise. The DRC is beginning to implement several pilot projects; the Forest Investment Program has invested in five projects, and one engages the private sector. The DRC is also working to address the drivers of deforestation; recognizing the need to reduce the impacts of agriculture on deforestation and land degradation.

In **Tanzania**, government and civil society is working together to assess the impacts of REDD+ at the activity design and early implementation states. Tanzania has placed priority on continuing to develop REDD+ policies and programming in a participatory manner.

**Indonesia** currently has over 40 REDD projects underway. There is a need for increased coordination and learning between projects, as many are donor-driven and lasting local capacity building is not achieved. The Indonesia

experience highlights the need to consider what the ‘three pillars of REDD’ referred to earlier mean at the community level. More thinking also needs to be done on how to effectively engage the private sector and to ensure that project-based learning filters up into the broader REDD+ policy making debate. While it is important to learn from project-level activities, it was stressed that there will be no “one size fits all” solution for REDD, and that while we can learn from one another, REDD+ policy design ultimately needs to account for and reflect national circumstances. In this way, REDD needs to be a country-driven process in which priorities and benefits are identified on an individual country basis. Though priorities are determined at the national level, the links between the drivers of deforestation and international trade, for example, must also be addressed. All of these dynamics need to be balanced; if REDD+ does not offset the opportunity costs of expanding agriculture production, for example, it will not be implemented.

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#### **4.0** *Conclusions and Next Steps*

The task force meeting held in Durban, South Africa brought together a select group of developing country experts and negotiators, many of whom have been involved in previous phases of the IISD/ASB project. The meeting was an important input into the issues identification and prioritization exercise that was further undertaken by the project partners following the expert meeting.

As a result of the initial research and input of the second task force meeting in Durban, the project trajectory has been established, and an analytical framework for the completion of individual case studies is being developed.

## *Annex I: Discussion Document*

### Discussion Document: Thematic Areas for Lessons Learned

Task Force Meeting  
December 2, 2011  
Garden Court Marine Parade Hotel  
Durban, South Africa

The overarching goal of this third phase is to improve REDD+ processes through the sharing of information and lessons learned. Project activities focus on identifying and ground-truthing the lessons learned from Phases I and II, with the intent of increasing understanding of effective REDD+ processes and sharing the lessons learned from this process. The project research team will develop case studies in select countries in Africa and Asia that have participated in previous project activities.

The aim of this meeting is to provide guidance on research directions. The research team is seeking input on:

- Theme(s) for case studies;
- Possible countries in which to undertake research and to highlight in case studies; and
- Potential contact names in country.

The work of Phase III is informed by the main messages from the workshops in Phases I and II, which indicated that it is important to:

- Establish mechanisms and processes to ensure that the REDD+ negotiations are informed by practical lessons from early implementation;
- Share information about good practices, opportunities and challenges in the implementation of REDD projects. Of importance is conveying lessons learned to negotiators on such topics as: implementation; measurement, reporting and verification (MRV); accessing funding; creating positive impacts on livelihoods; learning from those at the forefront; and building linkages in the region; and
- Share information about the “how” of REDD+ implementation at the country level, including case studies.

### **Possible Thematic Areas**

A review of main messages from previous workshops revealed potential areas for the development of lessons learned and case studies. These are suggested areas, and the case studies could be developed under one theme or various themes. Important will be the identification of an area(s) where there is sufficient information to develop a case study.

#### ***Governance: The Importance of the Enabling Environment***

- Situating REDD+ in its broader policy context as an element of success—e.g., REDD+ as a fiscal and policy driver for other policy issues, such as biodiversity and livelihoods that are important to government.
- High-level political will and support is a factor of success.

- Vertical and horizontal integration in the delivery of REDD+ activities—i.e., horizontal—project and subnational up to the national level; and horizontal—across government departments, and engaging stakeholders and the private sector.
- Addressing the drivers of deforestation—successful REDD+ implementation will require management of the linkages between forest and agricultural lands.

### *Safeguards: Lessons from Other Processes and/or Lessons at the Country Level*

- Country experiences in complementary/related processes can provide lessons for measuring and reporting on safeguards—e.g., Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards; Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT); forest certification; national processes that recognize conservation; information systems for illegal logging; and community forest management.
- Minimum safeguards—moving beyond “do no harm” to positive co-benefits.
- Safeguard information systems—details and components, ensuring transparency and accountability; linking of MRV and safeguard information systems.
- Participation of stakeholders—national guidelines for stakeholder participation; recognizing and involving as many stakeholders as possible; costs of engaging stakeholders.

### *MRV: Building Rigorous Approaches*

- Development of MRV REDD+ modalities (e.g., definition of forest, establishment of RL/REL and nested approaches) that are based on national circumstances.
- Linking subnational and national approaches in forest reference emissions levels (RELs) and/or forest reference levels (RLs) in monitoring and reporting systems—approaches to nesting; scaling up project and subnational RELs/RLs to the national level.
- Balancing scientific and local knowledge and undertaking participatory assessments with communities.
- Cost-effective developing country processes for verification (such as using regional bodies);

### Discussion Questions

1. What thematic areas require further exploration?—i.e., there is a gap in information, there is a research need in this area, there are policy/research lessons to be learned.
2. Are there important areas/themes that are not included above?
3. Which of these thematic areas can be addressed through a case study approach?—i.e., there is sufficient information that can be gathered at a country level; some countries have experience/are leaders in this area.
4. What countries have good experience that could inform a case study?
5. Should the research undertake case studies along a particular theme (e.g., examples of good governance that have engendered strong REDD+ programs in four countries) or should the research look at different areas (e.g., safeguards and governance)
6. Can you suggest names/contacts for further information?

## Annex II: Participants List\*

	COUNTRY	NAME	TITLE/AFFILIATION
1	Philippines	Tony LaViña	Facilitator, REDD LCA contact group
2	Zambia	Deutronomy Kasaro	National REDD+ Coordinator
3	Democratic Republic of Congo	Jean Muneng	Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism
4	Tanzania	Bettie Nanyonjo Luwuge	Project Manager REDD Project Tanzania Forest Conservation Group
5	Tanzania	Rahima Njaidi	Executive Director, Tanzanian Network of Community Forest Associations, REDD+ SES Committee
6	Ethiopia	Girma Amente	Director General, Oromia Forest and Wildlife Enterprise
7	Kenya	Alfred Gichu	Kenya Forest Service
8	Kenya	Fred Stolle	World Resources Institute (WRI)
9	Canada	Deborah Murphy	Associate, IISD
10	Canada	Jessica Boyle	Project Officer, IISD
11	Kenya	Peter Minang	ASB-ICRAF
12	Kenya	Elizabeth Kahurani	ASB-ICRAF
13	Kenya	Joyce Kasyoki	ASB-ICRAF

\*Please note: Because a late-night REDD+ drafting session was scheduled for the same time as the expert meeting, a number of attendees were pulled into the negotiations at the last minute and thus unable to attend the expert meeting.



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