

Bangladesh REDD+ Readiness Roadmap Process
Press Release

Dhaka, 18th January 2012

The role of forests in addressing climate change in Bangladesh: National consultations held.

Bangladesh is moving ever closer towards a comprehensive plan for realizing the role of forests in tackling climate change.

On 17th January, the Bangladesh Forest Department, with the support of UNDP and FAO, held a consultation workshop at Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel, Dhaka, to share and discuss progress on the national 'REDD+ Readiness Roadmap'. The Roadmap will set out the process by which Bangladesh will prepare for reducing deforestation and forest degradation by implementing new policies and on-the-ground activities that will increase the area and improve the condition of its forests. This is the first stage on a path that will lead to a national programme.

As noted by the Hon. Mesbahul Alam, Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, REDD+ offers an opportunity for Bangladesh to show how the country can make a significant contribution to mitigating climate change, at the same time as delivering real benefits to rural communities through healthier forests and more participatory management. About 100 participants, representing a wide spectrum of government and civil society stakeholders, attended the event. Mr Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad, Chief Conservator of Forests, hosted the event, with the participation of Mr. Stefan Priesner, Country Director, UNDP and Mr. Dominique Bourgeon, FAO representative.

A technical advisory team consisting of national and international experts in the field of forests and climate change described the progress made since the last national consultation meeting on 26th October 2011. Three informal working groups of volunteers from government, academia and civil society organizations have been formed. The first group is developing a work plan for improving measurement, reporting and verification of forest data. A second group is developing guidelines for effective consultation and ensuring the social and environmental integrity of a future REDD+ programme.

A third group is designing a process to identify the strategies and activities on the ground. Local workshops have been held in Rangamati and Cox's Bazar to help in identifying these strategies and more workshops will be held across the country over the next two months to help finalise the Roadmap.

Participants engaged in a lively discussion about the opportunities offered by a REDD+ programme, and the challenges that Bangladesh will face in implementing the Roadmap. The technical advisory team expressed their appreciation for these contributions and pledged that the Roadmap will incorporate these and other recommendations from the ongoing consultation process.