

Report from the meeting on UNFCCC Decisions on REDD+
and the possible implications for REDD+ in Cambodia

This meeting took place at Hotel Himawari in Phnom Penh on May 22nd, 2013. 28 participants attended, including from the three line agencies, FA, GDANCP and FiA, development partners and NGO representatives involved in REDD+ and the REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat.

The meeting consisted of four presentations to address the following key subjects:

1. **The UNFCCC negotiations with focus on REDD+:** This presentation provided an overview of the UNFCCC process and the history of REDD+ development. Among others, it highlighted the similarities to how Forest Management is being treated under the Kyoto Protocol, and the linkages to the overall negotiations including on financing, the Durban Platform negotiation track and the opportunities under both work stream 1 on a post 2020 agreement and work stream 2 on increasing the level of ambition before 2020 as well as the possible demand for REDD+ credits to fulfill countries reduction pledges under the Convention.
2. **REDD+ financing:** This presentation provided an overview of current REDD+ financing options under UNFCCC, including the Green Climate Fund, global, national and regional carbon markets and voluntary carbon market. The presentation highlighted the challenge in predicting a future carbon market price for REDD+ carbon credits by noting that demand for REDD+ CO2 emission reductions is political decisions in the countries which have reduction commitments. The presentation also noted that a compliance carbon market is likely to focus more on the carbon price itself with less focus on co-benefits than a voluntary carbon market. The presentation also noted on the current focus of donor on result-based payment (i.e. payments will be provided upon actual CO2 emission reductions)
3. **UNFCCC guidance on REDD+:** The presentation provided explanations for key UNFCCC decisions made at COP15, 16, 17 and as well as the draft decision from COP18. These decisions provide important guidance on 1) scope for REDD+ activities, 2) implementation framework, 3) phased approach, 4) principles and safeguards, 5) monitoring, assessment of results, 6) construction of reference levels, 7) reporting on safeguards and 8) national forest monitoring systems and MRV.
4. **UNFCCC scale of implementation:** This presentation introduced some advantages and disadvantages of implementing REDD+ at project, subnational and national scales. It noted that possible complications may arise from implementing REDD+ activities at project and subnational levels in carbon accounting at the national level. Hence, it was highlighted that national level monitoring should be consistent with the REDD+ activities and carbon pools accounted for at the project and subnational scales. The presentation also touched upon benefit sharing and challenges from the national to the individual project levels. Additionally, the presentation noted on the need to address the following

issues in the future: forest definition, CO2registry, possible national standards for constructing reference levels, implementation and reporting on safeguards. Lastly, the presentation pointed to the difference between the project approach possible under the voluntary carbon market and the subnational and national approach being discussed under the UNFCCC and the uncertainties on what scale of implementation will be eligible for financing under e.g. the Green Climate Fund.

Each presentation was followed by numerous questions and lively discussion. Some of the concerns that participants raised included:

- lack of fund for REDD+ implementation on the ground;
- possible complications with different forest definitions;
- lack of historical data on forest resources and carbon needed for constructing the reference level;
- uncertainties on financing options for REDD+;
- potentially high costs of REDD+ implementation; and
- difficulties of addressing safeguards in a comprehensive way.

Another comment was made to highlight the importance of using safeguards not only to avoid negative impacts of REDD+ on local livelihoods and biodiversity but also to ensure positive impacts of REDD+ on them. A further comment was made on the need to consider the question of how to scale up REDD+ activities from project to subnational/national levels. Finally, a participant shared the experiences from an existing REDD+ pilot project in Cambodia.

Participant expressed interest for additional meetings to be held with an objective to learn from existing REDD+ pilot projects and to discuss future REDD+ implementation options on the ground. One suggestion was to organize a seminar on safeguards and possible benefit sharing drawing on existing experiences, some suggested to having two day meetings instead of one day while other supported one day and some mentioned the need for keeping presentations simpler in order to improve the understanding.