



REDD+ STRATEGY SETTING: DEVELOPING A REDD+ STRATEGY



photo by Andrew Speedy

UNFCCC DECISIONS ON DEVELOPING A NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY

UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Paragraph 70:

“Encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances:

- (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation;
- (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation;
- (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks;
- (d) Sustainable management of forests;
- (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks”

UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Paragraph 71: “Requests developing country Parties aiming to undertake the activities referred to in paragraph 70 above, in the context of the provision of adequate and predictable support, including financial resources and technical and technological support to developing country Parties, in accordance with national circumstances and respective capabilities.

UNFCCC Decision 4/15 provides guidance on to the formulation of a National REDD+ Strategy. It recommends:

- Identifying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and the means to address them
- Identifying activities within the country that result in reduced emissions and increased removals and stabilization of forest carbon stocks
- Using the most recent IPCC guidance and guidelines, as appropriate, as a basis for estimating forest-related greenhouse gas emissions and removals, forest carbon stocks, and forest area changes
- Establishing robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems, using a combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches
- Monitoring systems should provide estimates that are transparent and consistent, accurate, and that reduce uncertainties, and results are available for review by the UNFCCC

DEVELOPING NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGIES

The UN-REDD National Programmes are helping to develop and implement National REDD+ Strategies and Action Plans in partner countries. To date, draft REDD+ National Strategies have been developed in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. The processes in these countries have differed, reflecting national circumstances – for example, in the Philippines, the NGO community played a leading role. However, in all countries, the process should begin with a review of international experiences in developing similar climate-related strategies, and an assessment of how best practice and UNFCCC guidance aligns with existing national policies. This helps to define the structure of the document.

At the same time, information gathering on key elements of the strategy is initiated, including quantification of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, environmental and socio-economic impact assessment, social and environmental safeguards, and design of elements of the REDD+ implementation framework. These elements include policies and measures to be implemented, a MRV and monitoring system for forest-carbon stocks and emissions, and a REDD+ benefit distribution system.

THE UN-REDD PROGRAMME

The UN-REDD Programme is the United Nations Collaborative Initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD). It builds on the convening role and technical expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Programme supports developing countries prepare and implement national REDD+ strategies.

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Photo by UN-REDD, Vietnam

Lesson 1: A successful consultation process requires that all participants clearly understand the issues.

The provision of suitable information at an early stage is crucial to enhance stakeholders' understanding of various aspects of REDD+ before constructive discussions can be initiated. Preparatory work is especially necessary to assist stakeholders with limited access to and control of information and decision-making processes, such as indigenous peoples, women and other vulnerable groups. The goal is to anticipate a variety of personal and practical problems that hinder the involvement of different stakeholders. Personal problems include low self-esteem if people are not accustomed to speak or express opinions in public, and lack of understanding of the substance because of limited or ambiguous information. Practical issues include lack of financial resources to attend consultation meetings.

Lesson 2: Predetermined deadlines for a consultation process may lead to premature decisions.

An inclusive process is crucial, but not easily carried out in a short time. The process in Indonesia suffered from a politically-imposed deadline. Creating a false sense of urgency may severely affect outcomes. Time limitations may create an unjust situation discriminating against parties with limited access to information and experience in decision-making processes.

Lesson 3: Process and outputs of consultations are only as good as the information they are based on.

REDD+ requires accurate, relevant, up-to-date, complete and verifiable data. Use of such data enhances the credibility of the process and the output.

Lesson 4: Genuine participation in strategy formulation requires trust in the process.

Building trust requires first the direct or indirect

encouragement and involvement of stakeholders at all levels of decision making. Second, an available feedback mechanism that clearly documents the inputs by the participants. Neglecting either aspect means that participants may lose interest and confidence in the process and the subsequent implementation of any decision. Experience has shown that stakeholders whose insights and opinions were not considered previously were reluctant to attend subsequent consultations. Consultations clearly benefit by being supported and facilitated by a mutually agreed neutral partner.

Lesson 5: National REDD+ Strategies need to be nested within broader national development strategies.

In order to develop and maintain strong political commitment, as well as to promote multi-sectoral support for a National REDD+ Strategy, it is important that the benefits of REDD+ are clearly elaborated in a broader national strategy. In the case of Viet Nam, the "National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change" provides such a framework. In the case of Papua New Guinea, a National Low-carbon Development Strategy can fulfill the same function.

Lesson 6: Formal review and approval of a National REDD+ Strategy does not preclude immediate action to implement critical activities.

While broad stakeholder review and endorsement of a National REDD+ Strategy is essential in order to ensure support and sustainability, the need for some critical interventions is self-evident. These include, for example, developing capacity for monitoring, strengthening law enforcement, and improving the quality of forest governance. As activities needed to achieve these results may be complex and inevitably time-consuming to yield results, implementation should commence even while the formal approval and endorsement process proceeds.

For more information, please visit www.UN-REDD.org or contact:

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