



Curbing Climate Change and Boosting Biodiversity—Getting the Biggest Bang for Your Buck Under a REDD+ Regime

New Country Maps Pinpoint Places Where Investments in Carbon Can Contribute to Community Livelihoods and Wider Conservation Goals

Nagoya, 18 October 2010-- Mapping where a country's carbon stocks overlap with areas that are rich in wildlife and important for local peoples' livelihoods is underway in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The aim is to support international efforts to conserve forests in order to combat climate change. But in a way that delivers other benefits including conservation of economically-important ecosystems linked with water, fertile soils and other crucial services.

Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), governments are negotiating a mechanism to provide payments for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation plus additional forest "activities" (REDD+), with the aim of halving deforestation by 2020.

It is estimated that currently close to 18% of greenhouse gas emissions—equivalent to around six Gigatonnes (Gt) of CO₂-- are linked with land use change, mainly through forest loss. In 2004, this amounted to more greenhouse gas emissions than those of the transport sector.

The maps, being compiled by a partnership led by the UN Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), are overlaying the carbon held in the vegetation and soils of a country's terrestrial ecosystems with other key features.

These include population densities; economic activities such as honey and gum production; the location of existing Protected Areas and biodiversity.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director, said: "The aim is to assist governments in setting priorities for carbon investments. In Tanzania for example, several carbon rich parts of the country are in areas where the ranges of almost 70% of the country's mammal species overlap".

"The mapping also reveals that almost a quarter of Tanzania's total carbon stocks are in high carbon density areas that are not formally protected. This is the kind of science and analysis that governments from Ecuador to Cambodia are also now looking at to maximize the benefits of investments in REDD+ and accelerate a transition to a low carbon, resource efficient Green Economy," he added.

UNEP-WCMC's work is being supported through two streams of funding: the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and the UN-REDD Programme.

Maps have been developed for Argentina; Cambodia; Jiangxi Province in China; Ecuador; Honduras; Nigeria and Tanzania. Under the UN-REDD Programme, UNEP-WCMC is expecting to do further work for the Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia.

The launch coincides with the Convention on Biological Diversity's 10th Conference of the Parties Meeting in Nagoya where progress on the 2010 Biodiversity Target committed to by the world's governments will be reviewed, and other issues, including biodiversity and climate change, will be considered.

The launch of the reports comes in advance of the UNFCCC meeting in Cancun, Mexico this November, where moving forward on REDD+ will be high on the agenda.

Jon Hutton, Director of UNEP-WCMC, said: "Tropical forests host more than two thirds of the world's terrestrial species, and provide vital ecosystem services that help to maintain people's livelihoods. With global biodiversity under unprecedented threat, identifying areas that are high in both carbon and biodiversity offers an opportunity to direct scarce financial resources in ways that create win-win situations for climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation."

Notes to Editors

All reports are publicly available and downloadable at:

<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/climate/publications.aspx>
www.carbon-biodiversity.net

http://www.un-redd.org/multiple_benefits/tabid/1051/Default.aspx

The carbon and co-benefits mapping work being carried out by UNEP-WCMC and country partners has kindly been made possible through contributions from two funding sources: the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (<http://www.bmu.de/english/aktuell/4152.php>), and the UN-REDD Programme (www.un-redd.org/).

The UN-REDD Programme is a collaborative partnership between the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Development Programme, and UNEP. The Programme supports countries to develop capacity to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and to implement a future REDD+ mechanism in a post-2012 climate regime.

The 10th Conference of the Parties to the UNEP-linked Convention on Biological Diversity
www.cbd.int/cop10

The sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP) and the sixth Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol www.unfccc.int

REDD+ has been proposed as a mechanism under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The aim of REDD+ is to contribute to climate change mitigation by maintaining and enhancing forest carbon stocks in developing countries. REDD+ encompasses the following activities: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and from forest Degradation (REDD); and conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (+).

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