

Monitoring and Information for REDD+ Interim Report

UN-REDD PROGRAMME SEVENTH POLICY
BOARD MEETING

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Monitoring and Information for REDD+

Interim report to the seventh meeting of the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board

Prepared 19 September 2011

Background

The 6th meeting of the UN-REDD Policy Board requested “a report on Monitoring and Information for REDD+” to be submitted by the UN-REDD Programme agencies to the next meeting, based on the presentations and discussions at the meeting.

The purpose of such (full) report is to inform and guide on ways to consider the REDD+ monitoring and information provision needs in the broader context of national development and environmental strategies, at the implementation level.

As the topic is both complex and critical for REDD+ implementation, an extensive dialogue with countries and stakeholders will be conducted to develop the full report. That will be submitted to Policy Board 8. This short interim report is submitted to inform on the developments and to retain focus on this important subject, where the UN-REDD Programme has an important role to play in support of country efforts.

REDD+ context

The Cancun Agreements of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in December 2010, set out the basic framework for REDD+, which includes, among other things three key elements: mitigation activities, guidance on how they should be undertaken, and a set of seven safeguards¹. The guidance and safeguards make it clear that REDD+ mitigation activities are to be implemented in the context of broader environment and development objectives.

The Cancun Agreements also set out requirements for monitoring, reporting and information provision for the parties. Subsequently, SBSTA in June 2011 requested Parties and observers to make submissions on MRV, reference emission levels/reference levels and safeguards information systems in anticipation that a Decision will be taken in relation to modalities and guidance at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) of the UNFCCC in Durban in December 2011.

Negotiations are underway under the UNFCCC on guiding the reporting and information provision that should flow from parties to the convention. However, in the wider development and environmental contexts where REDD+ is implemented, there is a need (and an opportunity) to consider broader information needs to support national (and sub-national) decision making that may go beyond what is strictly required under UNFCCC.

Related elements of the UN-REDD strategy

As outlined in the UN-REDD Programme Strategy 2011-2015, forest resources have many other benefits beyond their ability to sequester or mitigate carbon. The Strategy also identifies the broad needs for information at the domestic level under the work area on MRV and Monitoring, as well as on Governance:

¹ Decision 1/CP.16, The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1. http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594.php#beg

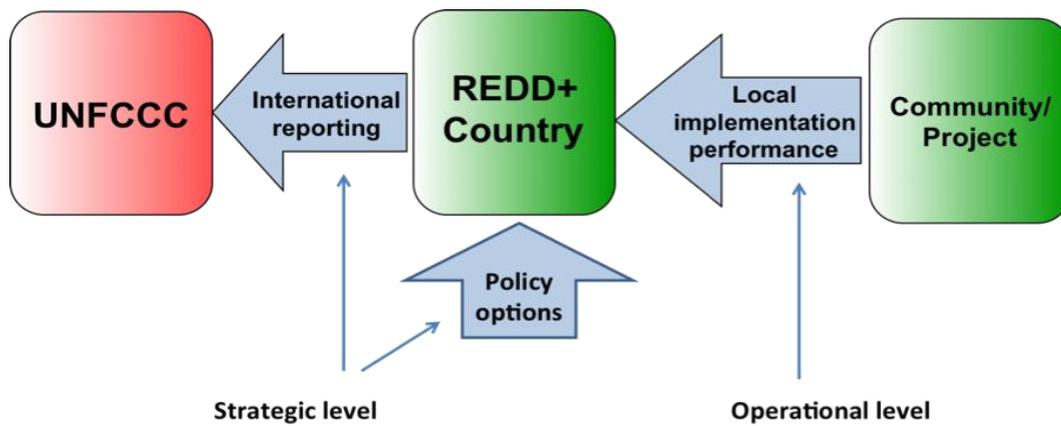
... the monitoring efforts must generate information that helps policies and forest management navigate between multiple objectives and maximization of total benefits, one of which is REDD+ payments.”

So, while addressing the requirements stipulated in the Cancun Agreements, the UN-REDD Programme is also supporting countries to prepare for implementation of REDD+ in within national development strategies. This is further elaborated in the UN-REDD “Support to National REDD+ Action – Global Programme Framework 2011-2015”, on the basis of which the Policy Board has approved a two year budget.

Indicative key considerations

The following provides an indication of issues that countries may want to consider, in light of monitoring and information requirements for REDD+, specifically for the national implementation of REDD+.

- Monitoring and information needs for REDD+ overlap with requirements for other policy areas related to, *inter alia*, forests, land use, land tenure, food security, biodiversity and rural livelihoods. For efficiency reasons, monitoring systems and related institutions should therefore be developed to serve multiple purposes, and synergies in data collection and analyses should be sought.
- Monitoring systems are long-term efforts that need a strong institutional base. There is value in building on existing institutions in light of the cross-cutting needs (see above) and to help ensure continuity over several decades.
- Monitoring systems must respond to specific social, environmental and governance situations in countries and are therefore likely to be nationally specific, without losing their global compatibility. It is therefore not possible or desirable to develop blue-print approaches to national level monitoring. At the same time, there are several key functions of monitoring systems where capacities or resources at the national level are insufficient, but where international efforts can bring together a critical mass to fill in the gaps. This includes provision of remotely sensed data, research and development of common methods and models, and education and capacity development.
- Information is required for several purposes and uses to achieve REDD+. One reason to distinguish these is because the types and characteristics of information will be different for different purposes and therefore lead to different approaches to monitoring. For example, experiences from forest monitoring approaches suggest that strategic level analyses and reporting do not require full-cover data and are therefore for efficiency reasons normally collected on a sampling basis, whereas operational level monitoring normally involves data collection from all locations. The figure below illustrates basic information flows for the following three general purposes:
 - Meeting international reporting requirements (in this case REDD+);
 - Serving integrated national policy processes and decisions; and
 - Ensuring effective local implementation acceptable to stakeholders.
- It is also important to keep in mind the “feedback loop” from the information provided to UNFCCC back to both the strategic and operational levels, while it is not presented in the figure to keep it simple.



Proposed next steps:

UN-REDD Programme agencies to:

- lead a dialogue with UN-REDD Programme countries and stakeholders on comprehensive the monitoring and information needs for REDD+;
- link closely with other on-going UN-REDD Programme initiatives;
- provide an update to the next Policy Board meeting.