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Nigeria REDD+ University

Calabar, 19-21 March 2012



Cross River State

Nigeria is organising the first national **REDD+ University** event, in Calabar, as a short course on the basics of REDD+ and its development dimensions. REDD+ is an environmental policy & financing mechanism, a part of the current international climate negotiations, linking forest conservation, climate change mitigation and green development modalities. The REDD+ University aims at fostering understanding, learning and stakeholder dialogue in Nigeria on the REDD+ mechanism and how to craft it.

The event has raised enormous interest among stakeholders. An unexpected audience, **around 150 participants**, are actually gathering in Calabar to learn and discuss REDD+. The REDD+ University will last **3 intense days** and will feature **more than 25 national and international speakers** from different Nigerian states as well as from DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, the USA and Zambia. This event will build capacities in Nigeria for its REDD+ process. It will boast talks on technical and policy issues, presentations from projects that provide lessons and best practices in the domain, and sharing of REDD+ initiatives from other countries. Participants include federal and state officials, NGO practitioners, civil society organisations, representatives from forest-dependent communities in Cross River State, researchers, lecturers, students, extension workers, delegates from states interested in REDD+, journalists, and private sector entrepreneurs.

REDD+ intends to reward countries for demonstrated efforts in forest conservation (i.e. for **reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus** for enhancing carbon stocks, sustainable forest management and the multiple benefits of forests). REDD+ is a gateway for green development and economies, allowing countries to access climate funds. A few countries are engaged in REDD+, and Nigeria joined them in 2010. Nigeria envisions a two-track approach: establishing the basic federal capacities and conducting intense and demonstrative work in Cross River State (as pilot state, which other states interested in REDD+ may follow subsequently).

The event is organised by **Cross River State Forestry Commission**, in close liaison with the Federal Ministry of Environment and the National REDD+ Secretariat, and with the support of UN-REDD (a U.N. partnership for REDD+ by FAO, UNDP and UNEP). The event is hosted by the **University of Calabar**. It has been inaugurated by the Governor of Cross River State, **His Excellency Senator Liyel Imoke**, alongside the National REDD+ Coordinator, Mr. Salisu Dahiru, representing Her Excellency the Federal Minister of Environment, the Chairman of Cross River State's Forestry Commission, Mr. Odigha Odigha, the UNDP Deputy Country Director in Nigeria, Mr. Janthomas Hiemstra, and the UN-REDD Advisor for Africa, Mr. Josep Garí.

The REDD+ University is a preamble activity for the implementation of **Nigeria's REDD+ Readiness Programme**, which was approved by the last UN-REDD Policy Board with a budget allocation of US\$ 4 million (around 650 million Naira). It will start full-fledge implementation within the next 2 months. The REDD+ University represents a public inception of this programme and to prepare the knowledge base for its implementation.

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