

Sir Michael Somare
Secretary General's High Level Event on REDD+
23 September 2009

Secretary General, let me begin by thanking you for hosting this meeting. In 2004, when we first called for action on REDD+ and launched the Coalition for Rainforest Nations (CfRN), most people believed it would fail. While the road ahead remains challenging, your support is truly reinvigorating!

Climate change has emerged as one of the greatest crises now facing humanity. The consequences appear dire; their breadth is truly global. Such a global challenge can only be met by a concerted global response.

For many small island states to survive, we must strive to roll-back atmospheric carbon concentrations to less than 350 parts per million and limit temperature rise to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius. Therefore, emissions of greenhouse gasses must peak by 2015 and be followed reductions of 45% by 2020 and 90% before 2050. Further, we will require healthy and expanded forest cover and widely disseminated low carbon technologies, including carbon capture and storage.

Within this context, the importance and urgency of extensive action on REDD+ can hardly be overstated. Deforestation continues at an alarming pace with around 13 million hectares of the world's forests lost annually – an area the size of [Denmark, Holland, and Switzerland], combined! The IPCC estimates that deforestation and degradation within developing countries may contribute approximately 20% of global greenhouse emissions caused by humans while also representing around 30% of the total cost-effective mitigation potential in the period up to 2020.

Simply put, without rapid and significant reductions in emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries added to deep emissions reductions by rich countries, it may be impossible to avoid global warming levels that prove catastrophic for many vulnerable nations.

Without question, immediate action on REDD+ is a crucial part of the climate change solution. Such efforts and support could incorporate the following features:

- Build upon principles agreed under the UNFCCC and incorporated into a global climate change agreement.
- Be fair, simple and environmentally effective, including national accounting systems.
- A 'light touch' framework to mobilize resources while ensuring consistency in approaches and standards.
- A stepwise system that accommodates different national circumstances and levels of development over time,
- Agreement by developed countries urgently and substantially to scale up resources that are adequate, predictable and sustainable, including public, private and market-based sources.
- Recognition of these financial contributions in the interim period as well as recognition of early action to support immediate REDD+ measures

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- Developing country plans and objectives to implement REDD+ within the context of broader low-carbon development programs that will facilitate permanent and additional reductions in deforestation rates.
- Coherence between institutions engaged in REDD activities to increase efficiency and reduce costs
- Cooperation between developing and developed countries to address all significant causes of REDD+.

It is a stark economic reality that propels most deforestation and degradation: standing forests are presently undervalued and worth more dead than alive. Developing countries deforest in order for local communities to survive.

There is hope! Significant early actions for REDD+ can be achieved at a reasonable cost, while protecting the livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities, protecting biodiversity, rainfall patterns and soil quality, and helping countries adapt to climate change.

To succeed, a REDD+ mechanism should accommodate countries at different levels of development through a phased approach. The agreement should be result-based and incentives driven. To achieve this, it must include both a reliable framework for monitoring, reporting and verification and encourage a predictable and sustainable system for financing.

Excellent analysis is underway via the *'International Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD+' (IWG-IFR)*. This work estimates that if a total of €15-25 billion were provided to catalyze early action from 2010-2015, then a 25% reduction in annual global deforestation rates may be achieved by around 2015. Resources on this scale could yield a reduction in annual deforestation of about 3 million hectares per year for an accumulated total emission reduction of 7 gigatonnes over the period.

This REDD+ construct is powerfully catalytic! With finance committed first and the rules agreed in partnership, developing countries could achieve significant quantified emissions reductions quickly!

And so, we must succeed in Copenhagen! If we are to succeed, rich countries must get serious! Without their collective leadership on emission reductions, finance and technology, developing country governments cannot make a compelling case at home for significant deviation! Therefore, let me be candid, without a transformative 'grand financial bargain' in Copenhagen that involves all nations, there will be no deal!

The global carbon budget is clear: we need dramatic reductions from rich countries, 'significant deviation' from industrializing countries and strong enabled action from all other developing countries. Take note, the global carbon budget quickly goes into the 'red' without REDD+!

Therefore, in the spirit of partnership, Papua New Guinea is committed to achieve the environmental and social benefits possible through REDD+ actions. I urge all other world leaders to join our call for an effective REDD+ instrument within the global climate agreement reached in Copenhagen. We cannot 'seal the deal' without REDD+!

Thank you!