

## **UN-REDD Programme Approves US\$8 million in Critical Funding for REDD+ in Republic of Congo and Sri Lanka**

**The UN-REDD Policy Board also endorses the Programme's Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria as a guiding framework for REDD+ countries.**

**(ASUNCION, PARAGUAY- 28 March 2012)** During its eighth Policy Board meeting 25-26 March 2012, the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board approved US\$8 million in funding for Republic of Congo and Sri Lanka's National Programmes for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+), bringing the total amount of approved funding for UN-REDD National Programmes to US\$67.3 million.



George Claver Boundzanga of Republic of Congo (left) and Anura Sathurusinghe of Sri Lanka offer congratulations on the endorsement of their countries' UN-REDD National Programmes.

These critical funds support the capacity of national governments to prepare and implement REDD+ strategies with the active involvement of local stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities. The ultimate goal of these REDD+ efforts is to contribute to the global fight against climate change. With these funding allocations to Republic of Congo and Sri Lanka, the UN-REDD Programme is now providing direct support to 16 countries while also working with 26 other partner countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean (see full list of all 42 partner countries below).

"It's a new dawn, it's a new life for our forestry sector", said **Mr. Anura Sathurusinghe**, REDD+ National Coordinator for Sri Lanka's Forest Department, after the Board's endorsement. In Sri Lanka, natural forests rich in biodiversity make up 30 per cent of the country's total land area.

"The approval of Republic of Congo's funding request is a way of recognizing the quality of our National Programme submission and encouraging sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation and the enhancement of carbon stocks in Republic of Congo," said **Mr. George Claver Boundzanga**, National

REDD+ Coordinator for the Ministry of Sustainable Development. The Republic of Congo is part of the world's second largest tropical forest basin.

In the opening session, Paraguay's distinguished Minister-Executive Secretary of Environment and winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize, **Mr. Oscar Rivas**, welcomed 118 participants from more than 30 countries to Paraguay and underscored how REDD+ and the UN-REDD Programme can play a significant role in, "protecting the fantastic natural assets of countries and contribute to the global fight against climate change."



Paraguay's Minister of Environment, Oscar Rivas, greets UN-REDD Programme Policy Board co-chair Ibrahim Thiaw (UNEP).

### Other Policy Board highlights

The Policy Board discussed progress on the implementation of National Programmes and approved the timeline for implementing a robust country needs assessment in collaboration with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), which will inform how the two initiatives can best deliver streamlined REDD+ support to countries. The Board also endorsed the Programme's Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria as a guiding framework for REDD+ countries. Participants heard encouraging updates from Mongolia, Paraguay and Sudan's REDD+ progress, as well as updates on the Programme's work in the areas of monitoring and information for REDD+ and the Programme's Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and recourse mechanism. The Programme was also pleased to take the opportunity of the eighth Policy Board meeting to launch its 2011 "Year in Review" report, available for download at [www.un-redd.org](http://www.un-redd.org).



Members of the UN-REDD Programme's 8<sup>th</sup> Policy Board meeting, 25-26 March, 2012 in Asuncion, Paraguay.

The Policy Board meeting was co-chaired by **Mr. Rodrigo Mussi Buzarquis**, Director of Strategic Planning for Paraguay's Secretariat for the Environment, and **Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw**, Director of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Participants included representatives from the Programme's partner and donor countries along with

permanent observers from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Indigenous Peoples representatives and civil society organization representatives from Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. Other observers included representatives from the Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Commission, Finland, Mozambique, New Zealand, Uganda and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies. The meeting was held at the Granados Park Hotel in Asuncion, Paraguay.

All documents and presentations from the eighth UN-REDD Programme Policy Board meeting are available on the Programme's [website](#), and additional photos can be seen on the UN-REDD Programme's [Facebook page](#). The ninth policy board meeting will be held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo in the fall of 2012.

### **Highlights from FCPF/UN-REDD Programme Joint Meeting**

As of part the back-to-back meetings of the governing bodies of the FCPF and the UN-REDD Programme in Asuncion, a joint meeting was held on 27 May to share knowledge and discuss a range of important issues common to both initiatives. The aim of the meeting was to share knowledge and experiences in REDD+ readiness, and ensure that support from the FCPF and UN-REDD Programme continues to be delivered to countries in a streamlined and coordinated manner.

In the morning, **Mr. Oscar Rivas** (Paraguay), **Mr. Lorenzo Jimenez de Luis** (UN Resident Coordinator for Paraguay), and **Ms. Rossana Polastri** (World Bank Country Manager for Paraguay), welcomed participants from both initiatives to Asuncion. An informative country panel highlighted early lessons in REDD+ readiness and participants discussed a range of issues related to robust stakeholder engagement. In the afternoon, participants engaged in a knowledge exchange on community-based Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV), land tenure, Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) for REDD+ and draft advice on REDD+ biodiversity safeguards.

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### **More on the UN-REDD Programme**

The UN-REDD Programme is the United Nations collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) in developing countries. The Programme was launched in 2008 and 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). For more information on the work of the UN-REDD Programme, visit [www.un-redd.org](http://www.un-redd.org) or email the Programme at [un-redd@un-redd.org](mailto:un-redd@un-redd.org).

### **UN-REDD Programme countries receiving direct support to National Programmes:**

Bolivia, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Republic of Congo, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zambia.

**Other Partner Countries:**

Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, South Sudan, Sudan and Suriname.