



Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD)

Fifth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA)

Bonn, 29 March to 8 April 2009

Deforestation and forest degradation account for 17% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In its Fourth Assessment Report, the IPCC concluded that 'forestry can make a very significant contribution to a low cost global mitigation portfolio that provides synergies with **adaptation** and **sustainable development**'. The IPCC also cautioned that 'without better policy instruments, only a small portion of this potential is likely to be realized. Further scientific research since the IPCC AR4 indicates an even greater urgency to reduce emissions as to stabilise atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at safe levels. The incorporation of REDD within a post-2012 agreement could provide an immediate way to reduce emissions and provide a bridging mechanism in transitioning towards a low-carbon economy.

Building on this understanding, at COP14 in Poznan in December 2008, IUCN called on Parties to make Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) part of the post- 2012 UN climate change regime, as a **complement to ambitious targets for emissions mitigation**. IUCN also urged Parties to include **restoration of degraded forest lands** in future REDD mechanisms.

IUCN renews these calls and requests that AWG-LCA urgently includes the discussion of REDD mechanisms as part of its deliberations on mitigation.

IUCN suggests that the AWG-LCA could usefully:

Explore the full scope of REDD, particularly with respect to maintaining existing carbon stocks and enhancing those on degraded forest lands

For REDD to be effective as a complementary mechanism to emissions reduction targets in the post-2012 regime, it is essential that the real potential for large-scale emissions avoidance and additional sequestration from forest-based mitigation options is not missed. It is therefore necessary to decide on the scope of forest-based mitigation options that will be included- in other words whether REDD will ultimately be defined in broad or narrow terms. IUCN fully supports the important role of forest conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in mitigation, as identified in the Bali Action Plan.

With respect to enhancement of forest carbon stocks, there are 850 million hectares of degraded forest lands that are unlikely to be converted to another land-use and yet if restored to diverse natural forest, are estimated to deliver at least the equivalent mitigation benefit as avoided deforestation. Indeed the restoration of degraded forests offers a triple climate benefit: avoided emissions from further degradation, significant additional sequestration and enhanced ecosystem and livelihood resilience to the impacts of climate change.

For more information, please contact :

Stewart Maginnis
Director
Environment and
Development Group
IUCN Headquarters
Tel: ++41 (22) 999 0264
Fax: ++41 (22) 364 97 20
stewart_maginnis@iucn.org

Consuelo Espinosa
Senior Forest and Climate
Change Officer
IUCN USA Multilateral Office
Tel: (202) 387 4826 ext
2003
Fax: 202 387 4826
cespinosa@iucn.org

Ninni Ikkala
Climate Change Coordinator
IUCN Headquarters
Tel: +41 22 999 0106
Fax: +41 22 364 9622
ninni.ikkala@iucn.org

Claire Parker
Fairhaven
Long Lane
Fowlmere, Cambs
SG8 7TG
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 7769664701
Claire.n.parker@btopenworld.com

IUCN World Headquarters
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 999 0000
Fax: +41 22 999 0002
mail@iucn.org
www.iucn.org

IUCN is of the view that the REDD debate should urgently be broadened to exploring the scope of the future REDD mechanism and that this scope should include forest degradation.

Explore the mix of financial mechanisms that could be employed to compensate for forest-based mitigation action

The type of compensation that developing countries with tropical forest lands should be offered for maintaining and/or restoring tropical forest lands should be explored as soon as possible. The possible options range from full market-based mechanisms to full public funding, or a mix of both, possibly as a temporary measure. The Forests Dialogue¹ has initiated an informal dialogue stream on “finance mechanisms” that will bring together the main interested Parties and organizations working on REDD.

IUCN reiterates its call to Parties, made at Poznan, to ensure coordination among the various financing initiatives currently being developed with which they may be involved. IUCN also urges Parties to ensure that up-front financing be made available to support capacity building in REDD candidate countries.

Make explicit the co-dependence relationship between good forest governance and emission avoidance without overburdening future post 2012 arrangements

Opportunities that forests present for climate mitigation are more likely to be successful if REDD modalities explicitly complement progressive forest governance reform (such as those being put in place to tackle illegal logging), respect and reinforce the rights of forest-dependent people and underpin the conservation and sustainable management of forests.

While IUCN recognizes that there may be limited scope within the post 2012 regime for the inclusion of measures that explicitly address forest governance, there may however be options for facilitating supportive nationally-defined responses. For example, one such option could be to encourage country level annual reporting on the drivers of deforestation that could inform national forest governance processes. IUCN is of the view that such options could usefully be discussed within the AWG-LCA.

Begin to explore modalities by which REDD will be incorporated into the post 2012 climate change architecture.

It is clear that many of the issues mentioned above go well beyond the scope of the current REDD discussions in SBSTA, where the debate is focused on methodological issues. Therefore IUCN, like a number of Parties and many involved directly with the forest sector, believes that it is timely to explicitly include REDD as part of the AWG-LCA's mitigation agenda.

Opening the debate on these issues as we enter the final preparatory phase for COP15 offers opportunity to prevent them becoming a sticking point later in the negotiations process and potentially delaying the adoption of a post 2012 regime that includes a REDD mechanism.

¹ For more information on The Forests Dialogue, please visit <http://research.yale.edu/gisf/tfd/>