Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Enhancing countries' capacity to report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on greenhouse gas emissions for the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector: Colombia

2013-2016

1. Background

Colombia has submitted two national communications (NCs 2001, 2010) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), providing information on greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, and measures to mitigate and facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change, among other information. In 2015, Colombia also presented its First Biennial Update Report (BUR), including the REDD+ technical annex. In 2010 and 2012, GHG emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector contributed to respectively 58 % and 43% of the national GHG emissions.

Since 2013, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) and the Mitigation of Climate Change in Agriculture (MICCA) Programmes have provided support to Colombia for the implementation of the Quality Assurance process of the national GHG inventory (NGHGI), AFOLU component, to the UNFCCC. This brief relates the implemented activities and fruitful collaboration that were fundamental in assisting Colombia in successfully meeting its commitments to the UNFCCC reporting process for the Agriculture and LULUCF sectors[1].

2. Implemented activities and outcomes

FAO coached national experts and institutions and facilitated dialogue and exchange of knowledge for the following areas:

- Data collection process
- Quality Assurance and verification of the NGHGI - AFOLU
- South-south cooperation initiatives on data collection, GHG inventory System and reporting REDD+ activities

2.1 Data collection process (2013-2016)

Since 2013, the UN-REDD and MICCA Programmes have collaborated to support activities in Colombia. This collaborative process initiated through a series of dedicated calls between FAO and the Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies of Colombia (*Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales de Colombia,* IDEAM), which is the institution in charge for preparing the NGHGI in Colombia. The initial phase, also involved the National Statistical Office (*Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadísticas*, DANE) in the discussions. In parallel, a regular dialogue was established with the UNDP in order to identify synergies with the preparation of the Third National Communication. Finally, throughout the process, regular dialogues were held between the FAO and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The UN-REDD NP started at the end of 2014. Main activities related to supporting the NGHGI aimed at enhancing knowledge and capacity to report to the UNFCCC. Activities

[1] The brochure was written by Rocío D. Cóndor-Golec (FAO)

included the use of the FAOSTAT Emissions database, dialogue and exchange of information with key institutions involved in data collection, consistency of data and methods between the Forest Reference Levels and the NGHGI, and improvement of agricultural and forest statistics. Up to now, key achievements involved the creation of a space for dialogue among national institutions for the use of national official data as well as its submission to FAO through the questionnaires (FAOSTAT), and the generation of basic data and methodologies for other pools and categories (soil, wetlands and HWP) . Key country documents of the UN-REDD NP activities in Colombia are available here.

2.2 Quality Assurance and verification of the NGHGI – AFOLU (2015)

In July 2015, IDEAM requested support from the MICCA Programme to perform a Quality assurance (QA) and verification process for the AFOLU component of the NGHGI. Three main activities were implemented: i) a desk review in Rome (June, 2015), ii) a country visit to allow a more thorough review process of the NGHGI (29 June-2 July), including a national workshop with key national actors (3 July 2015), and iii) the preparation of a final QA report.

The national workshop took place on July 3rd, 2015 with the objective to share the initial results from the NGHGI for the AFOLU component as well as the findings and recommendations found during the review week in Bogota. FAO shared also the tools available to support QC/QA process as part of the reporting to the UNFCCC (FAOSTAT Emissions database, AFOLU Emissions Analysis Tools[2], GHG Manual on data requirements[3]). Main recommendations from the review week were related to the long-term sustainability of the NGHGI process, specifically suggesting that Colombia should focus its efforts not only on data quality and methodological improvements, but also on ensuring long term arrangements and necessary technical training for personnel involved in the compilation process, in order to maintain the quality of NGHGI over time. More information is available here (only in Spanish).

2.3 South-south cooperation initiatives on data collection, GHG inventory system and reporting REDD + activities (2013-2106)

On June 3-4, 2013, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia was among the eighteen countries to attend the Second FAO Workshop on Statistics for Greenhouse gas Emissions, organized by the FAO[4]. The aim of this workshop was to raise awareness on the importance of agricultural statistics as a basis for both preparing the NGHGI and planning national mitigation actions, and to facilitate communication and exchange of relevant knowledge at national and regional level. A representative from DANE attended this workshop, and DANE has been actively involved in the preparation and consultation processes of the NGHGI since then. The DANE, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (*Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural,* MADR) and the IDEAM are all part of the Spanish discussion group platform (*Grupo de discusión en línea sobre las*

[2] Available also in Spanish: http://www.fao.org/in-action/micca/resources/tools/ghg/es/

[3] Available also in Spanish: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4260s.pdf

[4] The Spanish version of the report is available here: http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3397s/i3397s.pdf

emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero en agricultura) that was launched in September 2013 after this workshop.

On July 21–23, 2014, in San José, the FAO in collaboration with the government of Costa Rica[5], organized the Mesoamerican workshop on national emission inventories and mitigation plans in agriculture & land-use, land-use change and forestry. The aim of the workshop was to acknowledge technical and institutional capacities and to identify gaps for the preparation and presentation of the NGHGI and the BUR for the Agriculture and LULUCF sectors. The workshop was jointly organized by the MICCA, the UN-REDD and the Reinforcing REDD+ readiness in Mexico and enabling South-south cooperation Project. Fifty-six (56) representatives from 15 countries participated in this workshop. Representatives from the MADR and the IDEAM attended. Colombia shared its barriers and improvements on data collection as well as its main challenges to prepare the NGHGI for the AFOLU sector.

The FAO, through the UN-REDD NP, in collaboration with the UNDP, provided technical support to the government of Colombia to implement the Latin American workshop exchanging experience on the preparation of the national greenhouse gas inventory, held on November 17-20, 2016, in Bogota. Twenty five (25) representatives from 6 countries (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, México and Colombia) participated. The aim of the workshop was to share experience and lessons learnt on the progress made with regards to implementing the IPCC methods for the preparation of the NGHGI, the establishment of the NGHGI system and the presentation of the BUR in the Latin American Region. Colombia shared its experience on institutional arrangements and key figures from the First BUR, and also discussed technical issues for the preparation of the national GHG inventory, focused on the AFOLU sector. Detailed information on the workshop is available here.

Finally, the UN-REDD Programme organized a series of webinars on "*Moving from reference levels to REDD+ results reporting*" for Latin America and Asia/African countries. The objective was to share knowledge and discuss with experts, and REDD+ results reporting under the UNFCCC, including the BUR REDD+ technical annex and Forest Reference Emission Level/Forest Reference Level (FREL/FRL) submission and related technical assessment and analysis processes. For Latin America, Colombia and Mexico shared their experience and lessons learnt. Main outcomes of the webinar are available in the UN-REDD newsletter (available here only in Spanish).

3. Conclusion

Colombia represents an example of country ownership and leadership that supports the enabling environment for lasting change under the UNFCCC reporting process for the AFOLU sector. Currently, Colombia is among the thirty-four countries that have submitted their First BUR and among the four countries that have also included the REDD+ technical annex together with Brazil, Ecuador and Malaysia. The BUR will now go into the ICA under the UNFCCC. In fact, Colombia can now seek to obtain and receive results-based payments for REDD+ activities.

[5] For more information, consult the country brief from Costa Rica: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5741e.pdf (en); http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5741s.pdf (es)

The support provided by the FAO has allowed individuals and national institutions to learn about the FAOSTAT Emissions database and the AFOLU Emissions Analysis Tools, as well as to enhance their knowledge about conceptual and methodological requirements in order to estimate and report national GHG emissions for the AFOLU sector to the UNFCCC.

The FAO has successfully used all technical resources and know-how available within the FAO Headquarters, Sub Regional Office for Mesoamerica (SLM) and country-office to support Colombia. A joint effort between the UN-REDD and the MICCA Programmes has also allowed for the AFOLU sector of the NGHGI to be reported in the BUR, including its REDD+ technical annex. Finally, the fruitful collaboration among UN agencies and other initiatives was undoubtedly key in successfully supporting Colombia's capacity development activities.

In 2017, the FAO will continue to strengthen Colombia's capacity to report to the UNFCCC, in supporting the Third National Communication, through the generation of activity data for the six IPCC categories.

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