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Agenda Item 10

IMPLEMENTATION OF REDD AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

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I. Introduction

1. This information note presents the latest developments of The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme).

REDD

2. Deforestation and forest degradation account for nearly 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, more than the entire global transportation sector and second only to the energy sector. This is attributed to agricultural expansion, conversion to pastureland, infrastructure development, destructive logging, fires, etc. It will be practically impossible to stabilize global temperatures within two degrees Celsius to reduce impacts of climate change without reducing emissions from the forest sector, in addition to other mitigation actions. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) aims to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development.

3. It is predicted that financial flows from reducing greenhouse gas emission through REDD could reach up to US\$30 billion a year. This significant North-South flow of funds could reward a meaningful reduction of carbon emissions. It could also support new, pro-poor development, help conserve biodiversity and secure vital ecosystem services.

4. Furthermore, maintaining forest ecosystems can contribute to increased resilience to climate change. To achieve these multiple benefits, REDD will require the full engagement and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

5. REDD is increasingly likely to be included in a post-2012 climate agreement, yet many questions remain unanswered. How will the REDD mechanism link to existing national development strategies? How can forest communities and indigenous peoples participate in the design, monitoring and evaluation of national REDD programmes? How will REDD be funded, and how will countries ensure that benefits are distributed equitably among all those who manage the forests? Finally, how will the amount of carbon stored and sequestered as a result of REDD be monitored?

UN-REDD Programme

6. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (The UN-REDD Programme) was created to assist developing countries prepare for REDD readiness and participate in a future REDD mechanism. Readiness requires preparation of a REDD strategy that is aligned to existing national policies and strategies, and engagement with indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

7. To achieve the goal of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation by 25 per cent by 2015, a strong partnership between developed and developing countries has emerged. The partnership involves a commitment by developing countries to embark on low-carbon economic development. In return, developed countries commit to provide predictable and significant funding to reward countries for reducing forest-based carbon emissions.

8. Through its nine initial country programme activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the UN-REDD Programme supports the capacity of national governments to prepare and implement national REDD strategies with the active involvement of all stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

9. The UN-REDD Programme builds on the convening power and 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).
10. The UN-REDD Programme works in close coordination with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the Forest Investment Program (FIP). The Programme also works with the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as well as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), donors, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and academia. The programme was officially launched by the United Nations Secretary-General and the Prime Minister of Norway on 24 September 2008 during the United Nations General Assembly 'MDG Summit' of Heads of States in New York.
11. The UN-REDD Programme is governed by a Policy Board composed of representatives from partner countries, donors to the multi-donor trust fund, civil society, indigenous peoples and FAO, UNDP and UNEP. All members have an equal voice in decisions on overall leadership, strategic directions and financial allocations. Current funding amounts to US\$75 million committed by the Governments of Norway, Spain and Denmark.
12. During its fourth meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on 18-19 March 2010, the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board approved US\$14.7 million in funding for national UN-REDD programmes in Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia, bringing the total amount of funding for UN-REDD national programmes to US\$48.3 million. Budget allocations for national programmes vary between US\$4.5 million and US\$6 million; about one-third of each budget allocation is channelled through FAO.
13. It might be too early to talk about exact figures when talking about how much money REDD could bring into countries, but it is estimated that, for example, in Viet Nam the amount could reach about ~US\$200 million per year.
14. In the Asia and Pacific region, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Viet Nam were the original pilot countries, but new countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands and the Philippines) have already joined the programme as observers.

FAO in UN-REDD

15. In the UN-REDD Programme a major role of FAO is to lead the work area on Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and Monitoring. This includes MRV of carbon, and also monitoring of broader benefits and impacts on forests, as well as monitoring of governance. However, FAO also provides technical inputs to all other components of the programme.
16. Monitoring systems that allow for credible and affordable MRV and Monitoring of REDD mitigation activities and related safeguards are among the most critical elements for successfully implementing a REDD mechanism. Monitoring in support of implementation of REDD and development of national systems for MRV of carbon is one of the main pillars of the work of the UN-REDD Programme.
17. In the UN-REDD Programme, FAO is supporting countries to develop cost-effective, robust and compatible MRV systems, building upon national monitoring and assessment programmes. Such systems are designed to use a scientific base and available technology – and most importantly to respond to national needs. The programme provides planning tools and

advice to help countries strengthen their technical and institutional capacity to develop and implement an effective national REDD+¹ monitoring system.

18. Capacity-building efforts are an integral part of almost all UN-REDD activities on MRV. Regional training of counterparts and sharing of experience with various partners have been on-going since the launching of the programme, mainly through financial and technical support to other partners such as the Coalition for Rainforest Nations and its Capacity Development-REDD workshops.

19. Generating knowledge that will feed into the policy processes is key. It will help strengthen institutions to reach verifiable emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation. The UN-REDD programme is providing training in the use of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance and for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories in Non-Annex I Countries.

20. FAO also cooperates with space agencies and facilitates coordination among various data suppliers, ensuring that the data are available and free of charge. One of the most recent achievements in cooperation includes the improvement of remote-sensing datasets and user tools with the GEO Institution. In this collaboration, FAO will deliver the datasets, and help build country capacities to assess, report and verify changes in forests and carbon stocks.

21. During the COP-15 in Copenhagen, FAO and the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research Centre (INPE) signed an agreement to join forces to help countries develop MRV systems. For many years, Brazil has been a champion in remote sensing and continues to lead the way in large-scale monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation.

22. Parameters of forest degradation and the best practices for assessing them are also currently under development with the support of CPF, which is developing methodologies for assessing and monitoring forest degradation.

23. Good governance is critical for a transparent and accountable implementation of REDD+. Therefore, monitoring of governance is an important component within the overall MRV and Monitoring efforts. FAO, UNDP and Chatham House organized an expert consultation on this topic in May 2010, resulting in a first attempt of a framework for monitoring governance under REDD+.

24. The programme draws on FAO's work and experience to support Global Forest Resources Assessment, national forest and land-use assessments that are being renewed to respond to REDD+ requirements. It also counts on UNEP's expertise on biodiversity-related monitoring through its World Conservation and Monitoring Centre, and links to training programmes on forest greenhouse gas inventories under the UNDP National Communications Support Programme.

25. MRV and Monitoring is the current main focus of FAO's contribution to the UN-REDD programme. However, to achieve increased impact on REDD, other multiple benefits of forests must be addressed taking into account national needs and contexts. FAO is also increasingly engaging on topics related to land tenure and payments for ecosystem services, which are critical for successful REDD+ implementation, and where FAO has significant experience and capacity to support member countries.

¹ "REDD+" goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

II. Update of activities in the Asian countries

Viet Nam

26. The Government of Viet Nam requested assistance under the UN-REDD Programme to prepare itself for REDD under a post-Kyoto climate regime. Among the UN-REDD pilot countries, Viet Nam's progress in officially launching its UN-REDD national programme in September 2009 and starting up some key activities puts the country in a leading position to share lessons with other countries preparing for REDD.

27. UN-REDD's three main areas of action are:

- capacity building and coordination of work at the national level;
- capacity building and piloting of activities at the provincial and local levels; and
- cooperation and dialogue at the regional level – particularly with neighboring countries in the Lower Mekong sub-region.

28. The Programme also provides a framework for national REDD preparation, taking into account the other related initiatives taking place in the country. So far, the UN-REDD Programme for Viet Nam has assisted the Government in establishing a national network for REDD, where various governmental agencies, donors and NGOs (both international and national) come together to discuss REDD-related issues.

29. The programme has also undertaken a preliminary study on benefit distribution, identifying key national policy actions, as well as proposed options at the local level, for an equitable benefit distribution system. A review of methodologies for the establishment of Reference Emission Levels and Reference Levels for REDD in Viet Nam has also been completed. This report provides an overview of the options that Viet Nam has for establishing reference levels for reduced deforestation and forest degradation and enhanced carbon stocks under the REDD mechanism of the UNFCCC.

30. The next steps and challenges identified for Viet Nam's REDD preparedness will be to align itself with the outcomes from the COP-15 deliberations; building and coordinating national capacity in various technical areas; mainstreaming REDD into national policy; establishing mechanisms for sub-national coordination and collaboration; piloting options proposed under the benefit distribution study; and promoting regional collaboration to address regional leakage.

31. FAO's role is to develop an appropriate MRV system, as well as establish Reference Emission Levels.

Indonesia

32. Indonesia is also one of the nine pilot countries for implementing the UN-REDD. The programme aims to support the Government of Indonesia to develop a REDD architecture that will allow a fair, equitable and transparent implementation of REDD, and a sustainable contribution of forestry to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

33. The programme will be guided by the National REDD strategy. Three outcomes are being pursued:

- Outcome 1:** Strengthened multi-stakeholder participation and consensus at national level
- Outcome 2:** Successful establishment of Reference Emission Levels, MRV and fair payment systems based on the national REDD architecture
- Outcome 3:** Capacity to implement REDD at decentralized levels

34. The UN-REDD National Joint Programme Document was signed on 23 November 2009, The Ministry of Forestry is the lead implementing agency and has appointed the National

Programme Director. UN-REDD has managed to make some preliminary contributions to REDD readiness; for example, in compiling and analysing data on deforestation and forest degradation in Sulawesi.

35. The UN-REDD Programme Mission visited the country twice in the beginning of the year. The primary objective was to discuss and reach final consensus with the Ministry of Forestry on programme implementation arrangements between UNDP, FAO, UNEP and third parties. Other issues included: the establishment of Project Management Unit, including staff recruitment; development of the 2010 work plan; selection of the pilot province; organization of the inception workshop (which was held in Jakarta at the end of March); and proceedings to obtain Free Prior and Informed Consent.

36. Due to the many actors involved in REDD in Indonesia, UN-REDD will focus on the area of Sulawesi, while other actors are active in Kalimantan and Sumatra. By 2012, the results from the activities of the different actors will be used to design one national system for Indonesia.

37. FAO's role in the UN-REDD Programme is to develop an appropriate MRV system, as well as establish Reference Emission Levels.

Papua New Guinea

38. The Papua New Guinea UN-REDD Programme also aims to initiate the Quick Start phase of readiness support for REDD. In contrast to Viet Nam and Indonesia, Papua New Guinea has only recently secured initial funding. This funding will be used to assist Papua New Guinea to prepare a draft National REDD Plan for consideration by the Cabinet and to develop a full national programme that will be resubmitted to the UN-REDD Policy Board.

39. A number of activities have been undertaken towards signature of the Papua New Guinea Programme document. Towards finalization of the document, various drafts have been discussed with key government and nongovernmental stakeholders. In addition, a series of regional conferences was organized by the Office of Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability (OCCES) to discuss with provincial governments, landowners and relevant stakeholders their roles and functions on mitigation programmes under REDD, such as forest inventory, monitoring and reporting, and benefit sharing. Representatives of FAO, UNEP and the Government of Australia met with OCCES and the Forestry Administration to develop a mutually agreed roadmap on the development of a comprehensive MRV system, and to determine the capacity-building work that will be required to implement it.

Cambodia

40. Upon the request of the Director General of the Forestry Administration of Cambodia to UN-REDD, FAO and UNDP are providing support to the Government to undertake REDD readiness planning activities. Cambodia has already been accepted by the World Bank REDD financing mechanism (FCPF) and the UN-REDD, but significant programme funding is not yet available. FAO and UNDP have therefore provided funding at the national level to support Cambodia to prepare the roadmap for REDD readiness.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka

41. Activities are still to be initiated in these new UN-REDD countries, depending on funding availability.

III. Implications of the outcomes of the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties (COP 15)

42. The failure to reach a binding agreement on emission reductions has not set back the progress on REDD, although an agreement would have given REDD a significant boost. REDD negotiations are much more advanced compared to others. The REDD text that came out of COP 15 provides a firm basis for further discussions and progress, especially in the light of important unresolved design and implementation issues that require more detailed and informed discussions.

43. Even as negotiations continue at global level, momentum is being maintained at national and regional levels. As the final decision on REDD and subsequent technical guidance are being awaited, the consensus is that REDD will be implemented in phases, the first of which will be preparation and readiness. Activities under this phase include developing national REDD strategies and protocols, and building capacities. A number of multi-lateral programmes like UN REDD, bilateral initiatives, government-supported pilots and the efforts of civil society have resulted in the Asia-Pacific region being more advanced in Phase I activities compared to other regions.

44. Finally, it would be erroneous to describe the COP 15 as a failure. The Copenhagen Accord provides the platform and necessary components for countries with different priorities to discuss and move ahead with the negotiations and may actually have laid the foundation for a more meaningful outcome in the forthcoming COPs.

IV. Next steps

45. FAO together with UNDP, UNEP and other partners are planning to organize or support the organization of a regional MRV meeting for the Mekong countries. A similar meeting/workshop is also being considered for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka and for the Pacific Islands (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu).

46. A roundtable meeting for the donor countries and organizations in the region is also being planned in order to coordinate the REDD preparedness efforts in the region; and the fifth meeting of the UN-REDD Policy Board will be held in September/October 2010.

47. Current UN-REDD funding is programmed for its original pilot countries, but observer countries can take advantage of many other benefits of the UN-REDD Programme, such as networking and knowledge sharing, which are facilitated by the UN-REDD Programme's online community of practice through its dedicated workspace.

48. Observer countries can also participate in global and regional workshops and have official observer status at UN-REDD Policy Board meetings. The UN-REDD Programme considers requests from all countries. As more funding becomes available, the Programme hopes to extend full programme participation to observer countries.

49. Applications for countries wishing to join the UN-REDD Programme can be downloaded from the UN-REDD website: <http://www.un-redd.org/>