



Workshop on forest governance, decentralisation and REDD in Latin America

Mexico, August 2010

A country-led initiative in support of UNFF,
initiated by the Governments of Mexico and Switzerland

Background

In 2004, Switzerland and Indonesia jointly organised the Interlaken Workshop on Decentralisation in Forestry as a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The purpose of that workshop was to capture the global situation in the interplay between forest governance and decentralisation. The Interlaken workshop was followed by regional workshops on Forest Governance and Decentralisation in Asia and the Pacific (Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2006) and Africa (Durban, South Africa, 2008). The Mexico Workshop, which will also be organised as a country-led Initiative in support of UNFF, will serve as the Latin American chapter of this series of discussions on decentralisation and forest governance.

These workshops have a dual focus. Each workshop gives special attention to regional realities. The series of workshops also aims to better our understanding of how decentralisation and broader forest governance reforms contribute to sustainable management of forests (SFM), as well as to the improvement of living conditions for people who depend on forests. In Mexico, a study of Latin American specifics will provide a regional perspective and build on findings from other regions and previous workshops. In addition, with the increased attention on the role forests play in climate change, the Latin American workshop discussions will also consider the linkages among forest governance, SFM and the increasing role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Hence, the workshop will contribute to improved understanding at the global level of forest governance, SFM and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD).

The results from the Mexico Workshop are expected to directly feed into the ninth session of UNFF. Scheduled for early 2011 the session's theme is 'Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication'. The workshop will be an important and timely contribution to the work of UNFF, since forest governance has a direct relationship to many issues on the agenda – community-based forest management; indigenous, local and forest-dependent communities; forest land tenure; and social and cultural aspects of sustainable forest management. Moreover, REDD as a new climate change mitigation measure has a strong potential to alleviate poverty, but its implementation needs to be better understood in the context of forest governance.

Purpose and expected results

Several factors underscore the relevance of discussing the relationships among SFM, forest governance, REDD and livelihoods. Forests in Latin America are home to tens of millions of people who depend directly on forest resources for their livelihoods. Current deforestation rates and their external drivers deprive these people of the primary resource they depend on. At the same time and in many places, deforestation and forest degradation is driven by poverty: Poor communities change the land use to improve their lives. The conditions of forest governance will determine whether REDD strategies, projects and schemes can realise their potential to preserve forests. These conditions will also determine whether REDD can bring real benefits to poor people who depend on forests and who often already serve as their traditional safeguards or whether those potential benefits are channelled to other stakeholders.

The workshop will

- identify trends, facilitate the sharing of experience and distil lessons learnt on SFM, forest governance and decentralisation
- explore synergies with emerging REDD strategies
- identify opportunities and threats to livelihoods and poor people
- contribute directly to the ninth session of UNFF
- inform pre-2012 discussions on REDD and its post-2012 design.

Sharing outcomes

The workshop will contribute to the development of a forest governance community of learning. It will produce a report to UNFF9, an edited volume of background papers and recommendations in Spanish and English, a CD of workshop presentations, and a wide range of accompanying shorter products for wider dissemination.

To encourage discussions to continue beyond the duration of the event, an interactive web platform, hosted by CIFOR, will incorporate collaborative learning tools and social networking activities for all relevant stakeholders. Outcomes of the discussions in Mexico will be captured using a variety of multimedia approaches. These will include podcasts, vodcasts, blogs, online wikis and other new media approaches. The website will be dynamic, actively linking to partner organisation's websites so that it is constantly updated.

Special attention will be paid to communicating relevant workshop outcomes to forest dependent peoples in media poor environments. Workshop participants and other stakeholders will be encouraged through the web platform to develop materials appropriate for these audiences.

Scope and themes of the workshop

Background papers and discussions will be organised round the general themes of governance/decentralisation, rural development and REDD.

FOREST GOVERNANCE

- **Policy processes**, their transparency and the inclusion of relevant actors influence profoundly policy outcomes and their potential to reduce poverty and protect livelihoods. The workshop will explore the actors involved in policy formulation; their agendas and interests, the reflection of the interests of the poor and forest dependent people in the policy outcomes.
- **Policies, programmes and practices** critical to livelihoods and poverty eradication in the context of forests are forest land tenure, payment for environmental services programmes, community based forest management, rights of indigenous, local and forest dependent communities, sustainable forest management. Decentralisation is also an aspect of governance which cuts across all these themes.

FORESTS, DEVELOPMENT AND THE POOR

- **Drivers of deforestation:** The main drivers of deforestation in Latin America are conversion of forests in commercial agriculture (cattle ranching, soy, orchards, etc), logging, mining, infrastructure development and shifting cultivation. These direct drivers are underpinned by fundamental social processes such as demographic changes or agricultural policies, which either operate at local level or have an indirect impact from the national or global level. The workshop will explore the interrelation between livelihoods, deforestation, forest degradation and its main drivers.
- **Illegal logging:** Recent studies have introduced a distinction between “greed-based” and “need-based” illegal logging and are calling for distinct approaches to address the two so that the poor who depend on forest resources are not deprived of a source of income. The focus of discussion will be the scope of illegal logging, the relevant shares of domestic versus international trade in illegal timber, the actors behind it, its impacts on forest dependent people, and the possible approaches to address the two different groups of illegal loggers.

FOREST GOVERNANCE, REDD AND LIVELIHOODS

- Open and transparent **policy processes** and inclusion of relevant actors is as important for the outcomes from REDD strategy formulation and project selection as for general forest policy. Papers and discussions will focus on actors in REDD strategy formulation and investments in project and whether their interests and agendas are likely to contribute to livelihoods and poverty eradication.
- The success of REDD will depend on **policies and practices** such as forest land tenure, payment for environmental services programmes, community-based and sustainable forest management, rights of indigenous, local and forest dependent communities, decentralised forest management. These policies and practices are also critical for livelihoods. REDD, however has the potential to introduce some new practices, such as community-based monitoring and reporting. The governance context is, therefore, both an opportunity and a challenge for REDD. Papers and discussions will explore the ways in which strengthening these policies and practices will support REDD and how REDD strategies could help promote and implement them and achieve its environmental objectives by supporting livelihoods and poverty eradication.
- Papers and discussions on **forest governance, development and REDD** will build on previous discussions and explore the opportunities for new development options with REDD, the policies needed to realise them and their potential impacts on livelihoods. It will explore whether REDD could address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to what extent and/or whether these should be addressed as a pre-condition for the success of REDD. It will identify opportunities in the context of a REDD regime to shift development paths and support livelihoods and poverty eradication.

The workshop discussions will be supported by background papers and presentations. The background papers and summary of discussions and recommendations will be published in a volume after the workshop. The workshop will also produce a report to UNFF9.

Participants

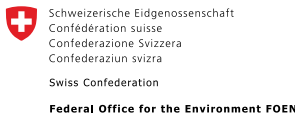
Participants will include governments (both central and decentralised government units), development and environmental NGOs, local and indigenous peoples representatives, private sector representatives, regional organisations, and other relevant stakeholders from Latin America and other regions, global organisations such as UNFF, FAO, ITTO, UNFCCC, and representatives of governments from Indonesia, South Africa, India, Russia and China.

About the conference organisers



Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR)

Comisión Nacional Forestal, or CONAFOR, is the Government of Mexico's national agency for forest development. The commission is part of the Environmental and Natural Resources Secretariat of the federal government. CONAFOR was created in 2001. Today it serves as the national focal point for the International Timber Trade Organisation, REDD initiatives and the UN Convention on Desertification. With headquarters in Guadalajara City, the agency operates the ProÁrbol programme that supports sustainable forestry management in Mexico.



Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

The Federal Office for the Environment is the Swiss government's centre of environmental expertise. It is responsible for forest issues and has been co-organising the UNFF Interlaken Workshop on Decentralisation in Forestry (2004), the Yogyakarta Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralisation in Asia and the Pacific (2006) and the Durban Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralisation in Africa (2008).



Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), headquartered in Bogor, Indonesia, is a leading international forestry research organisation established in 1993 in response to global concerns about social, environmental, and economic consequences of forest loss and degradation. One of the 15 members of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, CIFOR is dedicated to advancing human wellbeing, environmental conservation and equity by conducting research to inform policies and practices that affect forests in developing countries.



Intercooperation

Intercooperation is a leading Swiss Foundation engaged in development and international cooperation. Intercooperation is a resource and knowledge organisation, combining a professional approach with social commitments.

Intercooperation's expertise, process competence and services are grouped around three principal working domains: natural resource management, rural economy, and local governance and civil society. Intercooperation supports partner organisations in more than twenty development and transition countries.



Department for International Development (DFID)

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the part of the UK Government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty. It is headed by a Cabinet minister, one of the senior ministers in the Government. It has two headquarters (in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow) and 64 offices overseas and also have over 2500 staff, almost half of whom work abroad.



United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) established the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), a subsidiary body with the main objective to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The UNFF is guided by a Bureau and serviced by a compact secretariat, which also serves as a secretariat for the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.



International Tropical Timber Organization

ITTO promotes the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources. It develops internationally agreed policies and assists tropical member countries to adapt such policies to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects. As of 2009, it has supported more than 900 projects and activities with US\$330 million in funding.