



Presented by
CIFOR in collaboration with other members of the
Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Summary of Forest Day 2

Produced by a drafting committee representing members of the
Collaborative Partnership on Forests
Presented to the UNFCCC Secretariat
Closing Plenary - Forest Day 2, December 6, 2008

Introduction

More than 900 people gathered on Forest Day 2 to discuss the opportunities and challenges of bringing forests into global and national strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Building on the discussion and summary of the first Forest Day in Bali, Indonesia¹, on December 7, 2007, participants stressed the broad importance of forest ecosystems and noted that forests comprise an inter-dependent web of animals, plants and microorganisms, which together provide a wide range of goods and services beyond carbon sequestration. These include biodiversity conservation, rainfall generation and products that are crucial to the livelihoods of local forest dependent and indigenous peoples as well as to the economies of many countries.

Those attending recognized the importance of building on the vast knowledge and experience that exists on sustainable forest management (SFM) and called on negotiators to consult with forest stakeholders as they develop climate policy.

¹ Summary of Forest Day 1: <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/Events/COP-ForestDay/summary.htm>

Forest Day 2 discussions built on areas of consensus that have emerged through other related processes in 2008, including contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and The Forest Dialogue².

While the topics covered in the discussions at Forest Day 2 (summarized below) were necessarily selective, the following key messages warrant special consideration:

- Speakers and participants agreed on the urgency of including forests in climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. They stressed that climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives will be impossible to meet if forests are not included.
- Urgent action should be combined with attention to managing risks and learning lessons from mistakes in previous efforts to include forests in the global climate regime. Particular attention should be given to indigenous peoples rights, consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Speakers noted the special role of forests, which offer the potential to contribute to both adaptation and mitigation objectives. Action on these should proceed concurrently.
- Processes to achieve new international action on forests should ensure adequate participation, inclusion and involvement of civil society.

Areas of consensus

On Forests and Adaptation to Climate Change

1. Forests provide important ecosystem services for reducing the vulnerability of societies to climate change, and are thus a key element in broader adaptation debates and strategies. At the same time, climate change has impacts on forests and the services they provide. The concept of Ecosystem-Based Adaptation could provide the framework for effective forest adaptation measures to emerge.
2. Mitigation and adaptation are linked. The discussion about forests and climate change has focused disproportionately on mitigation. Equal consideration should be given to forest adaptation.
3. Adaptation strategies that are based on the principles of sustainable forest management are likely to perform well across a range of possible future climatic conditions. Management decisions for adaptation should take into account local conditions and integrate landscape and ecosystem approaches in order to facilitate greater social and environmental benefits.
4. Effective policies for adaptation require more effective coordination among forest, agriculture and other related sectors. Accordingly, forest adaptation should be integrated

² <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-climatechange/en/>
<http://research.yale.edu/gisf/tfd/climate.html>

into society-wide adaptation programs, such as NAPAs, and adaptation should be integrated into forest management.

5. Adaptation measures and policies should be developed with the full participation of local communities and other stakeholders. Traditional forest knowledge is an important source of information for adaptation measures.
6. Adaptation measures should go beyond technical solutions. Adaptation should also tackle the human and institutional dimensions of the problem, including low adaptive capacity in many developing countries.

On Forests and Climate Change Mitigation

7. A global REDD scheme should be flexible enough to allow broad participation of countries with different national circumstances. National and sub-national mitigation programs can coexist in a nested structure.
8. REDD mechanisms should safeguard the principles of good governance and respect other international agreements relevant to forests and forest-dependent peoples. This includes the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
9. Financing of REDD from non-market sources is needed to meet important start-up costs, especially at the national level in developing countries. Market-based mechanisms (such as taxes on emission permit sales and offsets) are required in the long term to raise sufficient quantities of funding for full implementation of REDD.
10. Failing to include degradation in REDD mechanisms could leave considerable amounts of forest-based emissions unaccounted. A future REDD mechanism will need to fully incorporate measures to both halt and reverse forest degradation. Enhancing carbon stocks through restoring forest landscapes offers potential climate mitigation benefits that are equal to those available from avoided deforestation. In addition, it offers considerable significant climate adaptation benefits and more opportunities to contribute directly to the livelihoods of forest dependent communities.
11. Means of assessing forest carbon stock changes through a combination of field inventory and remote sensing exist. In addition, community-based monitoring of forest degradation is not only possible but also cost-efficient. Negotiations should now focus on reaching consensus on policy approaches, while addressing outstanding methodological issues.
12. Efforts to address forest degradation should be combined with work to restore forest landscapes. This will greatly enhance carbon stocks and increase all the other co-benefits generated by improved management of degraded forests.
13. Capacity building, training and guidance are needed in the next 6 to 12 months for countries that want to move forward quickly with implementation of REDD. Major international capacity building initiatives in REDD, such as the World Bank FCPF, the GEF's SFM/LULUCF,

and the UN-REDD, are beginning to coordinate their programs and activities in individual countries.

14. The need for quick action to reduce deforestation and conclude a new international agreement should be balanced with the need for that agreement to have a long-term impact in terms of reduced emissions. REDD will not be sufficient to deal with the many pressing issues related to greenhouse gas emissions from land use change. As the REDD policy process continues, there is a need for action to address related forestry and land use (AFOLU) issues.

Areas requiring further consensus-building

1. While there is agreement about the need to build adaptive capacity, it is less clear how this can be achieved.
2. Reconciliation of top-down national REDD mechanisms with bottom-up project-based modalities should be encouraged. The international community and processes can provide guidance, experiences and exchange of lessons learned.
3. There is a need for efficient, common and comparable monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems, as well as systems for setting reference scenarios. There is a need for consensus on how existing IPCC Good Practice Guidance and the 2006 National Accounting Guidelines can be made operational for REDD and on how to transfer these approaches to communities and countries. In addition, harmonization of definitions (including forest degradation and sustainable forest management) is needed.
4. There were varying views about the extent to which REDD should be combined with other mitigation measures including afforestation, reforestation, and carbon stock enhancement.
5. There is a need for further consensus building on the degree to which REDD should be developed with a narrow scope to facilitate quick agreement or with a broader scope to capture the full range of land-use mitigation opportunities in which action is needed.
6. The issue of flooding the global market with forest carbon credits is a major concern. There is a need for consensus on how to manage this risk.

Areas for further research and demonstration

1. There is need for further research on social impacts and vulnerabilities resulting from the effects of climate change on environmental services.
2. More research and demonstration is needed on the potential positive contributions of payments for ecosystem services to adaptation measures, and potential adverse effects on local communities.

3. More research and demonstration is needed on methods applicable at the national and sub-national and levels for: a) carbon accounting, b) project management, c) benefit distribution, d) cost sharing, and e) stakeholder engagement.
4. There is need for further research on the costs of REDD in terms of foregone forest use (opportunity costs), establishing alternative land use options and livelihood strategies and establishment of mechanisms and institutions.
5. New information is needed on the immediate and long-term impacts of sustainable forest management on carbon stock enhancement, especially in degraded forests.