

Glossary

Terms in **green** have their own definitions in this list.

Additionality

Additionality is the requirement that a REDD+ activity or project must generate impacts, such as reduced emissions or increased removals, that would not have happened without the activity, i.e., in the **business-as-usual (BAU)** scenario. In practice, this boils down to setting a realistic counterfactual or **reference level**, against which future emissions can be measured.

AFOLU

AFOLU is an acronym for 'agriculture, forestry and other land use.' The term was introduced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Guidelines (IPCC GL) (2006) following on from the 1996 Guidelines, which covered only agriculture and forestry.

Agents of deforestation and forest degradation

Agents of **deforestation** and **forest degradation** are individuals, households, companies, associations, states or other actors linked to both the **direct drivers** and the **underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation** (Chapter 5).

Benefit sharing

The distribution of direct and indirect gains (monetary and non-monetary) from the implementation of REDD+ is known as benefit sharing. Some use the term to also include the costs of REDD+, focusing on the *net* benefits.

Business-as-usual (BAU)

This term refers to estimated future **deforestation** and **forest degradation** rates or emissions that are expected to occur in the absence of any intervention such as REDD+, i.e., under the continuation of policies and practices which were in place before REDD+. The BAU scenario for changes in **carbon stocks** is used as a **reference level**/baseline/benchmark against which to assess the impact of REDD+ policies and actions and to define **emissions reduction**.

Cap and trade (CAT)

CAT is an approach used in a compliance **carbon market**, where **carbon credits** are traded to meet regulated emission targets (caps). In an international market, countries agree on the permitted emissions for each country (or subnational unit) - the cap. Countries that emit less than the cap can sell **carbon credits** to countries emitting more than the cap. In domestic CAT markets, emission caps are allocated to sectors or companies. A major rationale for the CAT approach is its ability to lower aggregate **mitigation** costs.

Carbon credit

A verified (voluntary market) or certified (compliance market) **emissions reduction** of one **tCO₂e**, generated by a project or another intervention.

Carbon markets

A market in which carbon **emissions reductions** are traded, usually in the form of **carbon credits**. This can be: (i) a voluntary market, where **emissions reduction** targets are not regulated by a public authority; or (ii) a compliance market, where **carbon credits** are traded to meet emission caps (regulated emissions reduction targets).

Carbon rights

Carbon rights define which parties have the right to the benefits generated from carbon emission reductions, e.g., by selling a **carbon credit** in voluntary and compliance **carbon markets**, or through a government-sponsored **PES** scheme. They can be - but are not necessarily - tied to the ownership of forest land. Carbon revenue can also be shared among stakeholders, e.g., different levels of government.

Carbon stock

The quantity of carbon contained in a carbon pool, e.g., in tree biomass or in soil.

Co-benefit

These are the positive effects that a policy or measure aimed at one objective might have on other objectives. Co-benefits, also called ancillary benefits, are often subject to uncertainty and depend on, among others, local circumstances and implementation practices. In REDD+ these may be social and environmental co-benefits, which result in better **well-being outcomes**.

Environmental co-benefits might include the provision of **ecosystem/environmental services**.

Deforestation

The permanent conversion of land from forest to non-forest cover. In the 2001 Marrakesh Accords, deforestation is defined as “the direct human-induced conversion of forested land to non-forested land”. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines deforestation as “the conversion of forest to another land use or the long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum 10% threshold”. Forest cover loss is a broader term than deforestation as it also includes changes in plantation forests and natural losses (e.g., from wildfires), where land use as a forest remains the same.

Direct drivers of deforestation and forest degradation

Direct drivers are human activities that directly cause **deforestation** or **forest degradation**, e.g., agriculture expansion, infrastructure extension and wood extraction. Compare with ‘**Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation**’.

Disincentive-based instruments

Policies or interventions that discourage or prevent actions. In the case of REDD+ these disincentives include the establishment of protected areas and other actions that restrict access to and/or conversion of forests, e.g., enforcement of forest protection laws and regulation, forest monitoring or the imposition of fines. It may also be referred to as ‘direct regulations’ or ‘command-and-control’ instruments.

Displacement (emissions displacement) - see **Leakage**.

Ecosystem/environmental services

Services provided by the environment or ecosystems, which provide benefits to humans, e.g., water provisioning or carbon storage. Payments can be made for the provision of these services (see **PES**).

Emissions reduction

Emissions reduction (ER) is the actual emissions (AE) over a given time period, relative to the counterfactual or **reference level** (RL): $ER = AE - RL$.

Enabling policies and measures

Enabling measures are policies and measures (sometimes abbreviated as PAM) that create the appropriate conditions for REDD+ initiatives to operate, but that in themselves do not necessarily lead to reduced emissions or other goals. Such measures include capacity building, and activities and policies aimed at clarifying ownership and access rights over forests, trees and carbon.

Externalities

Externalities (or, external effects) are consequences (negative or positive) on other stakeholders that arise from an activity. **GHG** emissions are the prime example of a negative global externality. **PES**, or **results-based payment**, aims to give economic incentives for the recipients to 'internalise the externalities' in their decisions.

Forest restoration

Forest restoration refers to actions to increase the productivity and ecosystem functions of forested or previously forested land. It includes sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and restoring degraded lands. These actions relate to the 'plus' in REDD+, which calls for the enhancement of forest **carbon stocks** along with actions to support conservation and the sustainable management of forests.

Forest degradation

Degradation refers to changes within a forest that negatively affect the structure or function of the forest stand or site, and thereby lower its capacity to supply products and **(ecosystem/environmental) services**. In the context of REDD+, degradation can be measured in terms of reduced **carbon stocks** in forests that remain as forests. No formal definition of degradation has yet been adopted, because many forest **carbon stocks** fluctuate due to natural cyclical causes or management practices.

Forest transition theory

The forest transition theory depicts a typical pattern in forest cover change over time in a given geographical area. It follows four phases: (i) high forest cover and low **deforestation** (pre-transition); (ii) high forest cover and accelerating **deforestation** (early-transition); (iii) medium/low forest cover and declining **deforestation** (late transition); and (iv) low forest cover and minimal **deforestation**, where secondary forest recovery or tree planting contributes to an overall increase in forest cover (post-transition).

Free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC)

FPIC refers to peoples' right to give or withhold consent to developments that may affect them. It is a specific right of indigenous peoples recognised by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but is also a fundamental principle in international law, embedded in the universal right to self-determination. It is widely considered a minimum ethical requirement for REDD+. 'Free' refers to consent given voluntarily; 'prior' means consent given in advance of any activities beginning; and 'informed' refers to the quality of information available for the decision. Consent may also be withdrawn.

Greenhouse gases (GHGs)

The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The major greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Less prevalent, but very powerful, greenhouse gases are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Impact evaluation/assessment

An analysis of impacts resulting from an action, in this case the performance of REDD+ policies, programmes, projects or other interventions. 'Impact assessment' commonly refers to more rigorous scientific methods than 'impact evaluation'. The key in any impact assessment is to establish the counterfactual, e.g., by using control sites (Chapter 10).

Incentive-based instruments

Policies or interventions that use positive economic incentives (monetary rewards) for actions that promote societal objectives. The intention is to stimulate desired action and to compensate stakeholders for any losses associated with the change in behaviour. Traditionally, the term 'incentive' has been used for conditional rewards, e.g., **PES**. Currently, incentives can be referred to as being both conditional and non-conditional, the latter referring to, for example, monetary transfers to forest users with 'no strings attached'.

Indirect drivers – see **Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation**.

Jurisdictional approaches

Government-led, comprehensive approaches to forest and land use across one or more legally defined territories. Jurisdictional sustainability approaches seek to protect forests, reduce emissions and improve livelihoods across entire political-administrative territories (Chapter 12).

Land tenure

The social relations and institutions regulating access to and use of land. It includes who owns the land and who uses, manages and makes decisions about it. The concept refers to both formal (legal) and informal (customary) rules (Chapter 8).

Leakage

Carbon leakage happens when interventions to reduce emissions in one area (subnational or national) lead to higher emissions outside the intervention boundaries. The official UNFCCC term is 'displaced emissions'. A typical example would be when designation of a protected area reduces or restricts forest clearing inside the boundaries, but farmers clear more land outside. Leakage may also happen through output markets, e.g., lower timber harvesting in one area/country increases prices and stimulates logging elsewhere.

Low-carbon development

Low-carbon development – often used interchangeably with the terms low-emission development and green development – describes national economic development plans and strategies that encompass low-emission and/or climate-resilient economic development (Chapters 6, 9, 12).

Measurement, reporting and verification (MRV)

MRV is a technical instrument to confirm **GHG** emissions and **GHG emissions** reduction objectively. For example, in order to obtain **results-based finance**, countries should measure, report and verify (MRV) their **GHG** emissions and **GHG emissions reduction** from the implementation of REDD+ activities, in line with UNFCCC (technical) requirements. At times, the ‘M’ is referred to as ‘Monitoring’.

Mitigation

Action to prevent further accumulation of **GHGs** in the atmosphere by reducing the amounts emitted or by storing carbon in sinks.

Multi-stakeholder forums or platforms

These are purposely organised interactive processes that bring together a range of stakeholders to participate in dialogue, decision-making and/or implementation regarding actions that seek to address a common problem or to achieve a goal for their common benefit. These are organised at different levels: global (e.g., Round Table on Responsible Soy), national (e.g., Brazil’s Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon, PPCDAm), and local (e.g., District Forest Coordination Committees in the Terai Forest, Nepal).

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

Post-2020 climate change **mitigation** and adaptation actions that, by ratifying the Paris Agreement, each party to the UNFCCC binds itself to pursuing. The Paris Agreement requires countries to prepare, communicate and maintain increasingly ambitious NDCs. By April 2018, 197 countries had submitted their NDCs or Intended NDCs (INDCs) (Chapter 6).

Opportunity costs

Opportunity costs refer to the foregone benefits of choosing a particular option, that is, the best alternative use of a resource. In the **REDD+** context, the opportunity costs of conserving one hectare of forest is the profit from the best alternative use of that forest land, e.g., converting it to oil palm. Opportunity costs can be measured per year or for all future years (net present value).

Payments for ecosystem/environmental services (PES)

PES is a conditional (**results-based**), **incentive-based instrument** in which payments are made for **ecosystem or environmental services**. In the case of

REDD+, these services are reduced emissions or increased removals relative to an agreed **reference level**.

Readiness – see **REDD+ phases**.

REDD+

Literally, REDD is short for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation. In the Bali Action Plan (2007), UNFCCC defined REDD+ (then RED/REDD) as: “Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from **deforestation** and **forest degradation** in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest **carbon stocks** in developing countries”. In the current debate, REDD+ may refer to different things, at time causing confusion: (i) an umbrella term for local, subnational, national and global actions whose primary aim is to reduce emissions from **deforestation** and **forest degradation** and enhance forest **carbon stocks** (increase removals) in developing countries; (ii) those activities within the definition that rely on **results-based** or conditional payments (**PES**), which was a core idea when REDD+ was first launched; (iii) the objective of reducing emissions and increasing removals from forests in developing countries; (iv) the mechanisms created under the UNFCCC framework.

REDD+ implementation – see **REDD+ phases**.

Reference levels

Generically, reference levels (RLs) is used synonymously with ‘baselines’ or the **BAU** scenario, i.e., for the case of **REDD+**, what will happen to **deforestation** and **forest degradation** – and resulting emissions – in the absence of any **REDD+** intervention. Under UNFCCC, two types of reference levels are discussed: forest reference emission levels (FRELs) and forest reference levels (FRLs), which are commonly recognised as gross and net emission levels respectively; thus a FREL includes only emissions from **deforestation** and degradation, whereas an FRL also includes enhancement of forest **carbon stocks**. Some also distinguish between RLs as a **BAU** scenario, and as the benchmark for REDD+ payments. This distinction is not made by UNFCCC, and the submitted FRLs/FRELs are both meant to reflect **BAU** and be used for **results-based payment**.

Results-based payment

A transfer of money conditional upon achieving a predetermined performance target, thus a type of conditional **incentive-based instrument**. This is related to the last of three **REDD+ phases** recognised by the UNFCCC (Chapter 4).

REDD+ phases

REDD+ is intended to be developed in three UNFCCC-recognised phases. The first, REDD+ readiness, includes the development of REDD+ country actions, including capacity building, policy design, consultation and consensus building, and testing and evaluation of a REDD+ national strategy; these actions are taken prior to the comprehensive implementation of REDD+. Implementation is the second phase, and the third is **results-based payment**. International financial support changes between the phases: from a focus on capacity building (inputs and activities) in Phase 1, to policy reforms (outputs) and successfully implemented (outcomes) in Phase 2, to actual **emissions reduction** (impacts) in Phase 3 (Chapter 2).

Social and environmental safeguards

The UNFCCC Cancún Agreements stipulate seven safeguards (UNFCCC 2011, Decision 1, App. 1 Para. 2) that encourage REDD+ programmes to take into account social and environmental issues in their design and implementation. Safeguards include: respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, effective participation in REDD+ design and implementation, promotion of biodiversity and social **co-benefits**, and avoidance of displaced emissions (**leakage**). Some multi- and bilateral donors and third-party certifiers require additional standards for demonstrating high social and environmental performance.

Swidden agriculture / shifting cultivation

Swidden, often used interchangeably with shifting cultivation, is a land-use system characterised by rotation of fields rather than crops, the use of fire to clear fields, and a period of fallow.

Theory of change

A theory of change (ToC) is a roadmap to successful societal transformation. It explains how and why an initiative should work and makes explicit the underlying mechanisms and assumptions that allow a proposed action to achieve its expected outcomes and anticipated impact (Chapter 2).

Transaction costs

A cost that is incurred when making an economic exchange. It includes costs related to information, enforcement, implementation and monitoring. Transaction costs are typically used in relation to a **PES** system, but the term is sometimes also used beyond the original meaning, to include any REDD+ costs except **opportunity costs**.

tCO₂e

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), in tonnes, is a way to place emissions of various radiative forcing agents on a common footing by accounting for their effect on climate. It describes, for a given mixture and amount of greenhouse

gases, the amount of CO₂ that would have the same global warming ability, when measured over a specified time period.

Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation

Underlying causes are social, economic, political, cultural and technological variables and processes that are often distant from their area of impact, e.g., rising global market prices, national policies that provide incentives for agricultural expansion, and public resettlement schemes (Chapter 5).

Voluntary standards

These are standards established generally by private sector bodies, for which demonstration of compliance with production or management practices is voluntary. In the context of REDD+ this includes **zero deforestation commitments** (Chapter 13).

Well-being outcomes

Well-being impacts of REDD+ can be measured in terms of income, perceived well-being, distributive equity and social capital. Other dimensions related to well-being, such as **land tenure** security, local capacities, institutions, and social networks, can also be impacted by REDD+. Well-being outcomes, when positive, can be viewed as social **co-benefits** (Chapter 11).

Zero deforestation commitments

These are voluntary commitments by companies to eliminate **deforestation** from their supply chains. These can include individual company or group-level adoption of **voluntary standards**; sector-wide supply chain-based initiatives; and mixed supply chain and territorial initiatives at jurisdictional levels (Chapter 13).