



WWF

BRIEF

2010

# NATIONAL PROGRAMMES: PROPER FRAMEWORK FOR REDD+

National approaches protect against leakage, help get to the root causes of forest loss, and ensure accountability for results



Forests for GOOD

## Why national programmes?

A national-level approach to REDD+ programmes is vital to the long-term success of REDD+. Here's why:

- National carbon accounting promotes real emissions reductions by preventing so called in-country 'leakage' or 'displacement', when deforestation shifts from one place to another;
- National approaches allow countries to address the root causes of deforestation and degradation, which are often tied to national policies on agriculture, timber, and mining.
- National programmes show that countries are strongly supportive of REDD+, promoting accountability and results.

## A phased approach

- **Phase 1 (Planning and Capacity Building):** Countries would develop national REDD+ plans that create a strategy for building national REDD programmes. These plans should identify institutional and technical capacity needs, design public participation processes and designate a national entity to implement REDD+.
- **Phase 2 (Testing Approaches and Scaling Up):** Consistent with its national plan, countries should build the necessary capacity to implement national reference levels, accounting and MRV systems as well as safeguards. Pilot activities could be used to promote learning and support scaling up of REDD+ to the national level.
- **Phase 3 (Full National Implementation):** In phase 3, countries will have implemented a national reference level, national accounting and national MRV systems. Compliance credit funding should not be given before phase 3.

ALTHOUGH NATIONAL REDD+ PROGRAMMES ARE CRITICAL, THEY CANNOT BE CREATED OVERNIGHT. COUNTRIES SHOULD PROGRESS TOWARDS NATIONAL PROGRAMMES THROUGH A PHASED APPROACH SUPPORTED BY FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As this description shows, a national approach does not mean that all activity occurs at the national government level. Subnational implementation, coordination and capacity building is crucial! But all activities should come under a national umbrella and be developed in a coordinated fashion towards the goal of a national REDD+ programme.

## Benefits of a National Approach

- **Reduced leakage and clear additionality.** A national reference level and accounting system ensures that reductions are *real, verifiable and don't displace, or "leak" greenhouse gas emissions*. Because of the risk of leakage from sub-national and project activities, compliance market credits should not be awarded until national reference levels are in place.
- **Coordination.** National programmes allow for a *coordinated approach to addressing the drivers* of deforestation, (e.g. agriculture policy, subsidies, road building and unclear property rights). A national reference level and accounting system can allow areas with low historical rates of deforestation, as well as high rates, to be included.
- **Governance.** National approaches help *ensure that reductions are permanent* by promoting more effective forest governance and land tenure reforms. Without government support, a project-based approach could be easily undone.
- **Efficiency.** National approaches offer potentially *significant economies of scale* that allow greater efficiency in the cost of implementing REDD+ policy (greater emissions reductions at lower cost).



© Andri Bartschi / WWF-Canon

## Progress toward National Programmes

During recent years, a growing consensus has emerged among national governments, civil society and policy experts that national programmes are the most effective approach to implementing REDD+. For example:

- The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UNREDD are working with a combined 46 countries to develop REDD+ plans that will deliver national programmes. Although these processes are imperfect, they demonstrate a clear movement towards a national approach.
- Governments such as COP16 host, Mexico, have developed robust national REDD+ strategies that engage civil society, relevant national agencies and state governments.
- Despite its challenging national circumstances, Colombia recently adopted a position in favour of a phased approach towards a national framework, rather than purely subnational approach to implementing REDD+.

### Key recommendations for the LCA text:

- In the LCA text for Cancun contains bracketed text in paragraph 5(b) would allow countries to develop subnational baselines instead of national baselines. The text should make clear that *subnational baselines or reference scenarios should be used in conjunction with national baselines*, not as a substitute for them.
- In addition, paragraph 5(c) should be revised to clarify that *sub-national monitoring and reporting can be an optional interim measure only during Phase 2* and not for generating compliance credits
- The provisions in paragraphs 5, 8 and 12 need to explicitly state that *compliance grade offsets should not be allowed until a country has reached phase 3*, with functioning national programs, including a national reference level, national accounting and a national MRV system.



#### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[www.panda.org/forestcarbon](http://www.panda.org/forestcarbon)

#### For more information:

Gerald Steindlegger  
Policy Director  
WWF Forest Carbon Initiative  
[Gerald.Steindlegger@wwf.at](mailto:Gerald.Steindlegger@wwf.at)

Melissa Tupper  
Communications Director  
WWF Forest Carbon Initiative  
[Melissa.Tupper@wwfus.org](mailto:Melissa.Tupper@wwfus.org)