



WWF Forest and Climate Programme

Policy Report – UNFCCC COP 20, Lima 2014

December 2014, Josefina Braña-Varela, FCP Policy Director

UNFCCC's 20th Conference of the Parties (COP 20) was held in Lima, Peru, from Dec. 1-12, 2014. COP 20 was a key stepping stone in the run-up to Paris 2015, where Parties to the Convention are due to adopt a new climate agreement. While there are still a few topics related to forests under negotiation in the UNFCCC, the key methodologies and guidance for the REDD+ incentive mechanism were adopted in Warsaw allowing countries to move forward with REDD+ implementation. When it came to forests, Lima was all about action.

This report captures the main developments related to forest discussions and negotiations, and presents highlights of the analysis of the adopted decision, as well as the conclusions derived from the two weeks at the COP.

Introduction

In Lima, the forest and climate agenda was addressed in different forums: in the REDD+ Partnership (before COP 20 started); in the technical discussions under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and in the Subsidiary Body for Implementation; in the voluntary Focal Points Annual meeting; and in a more tangential manner, in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) discussions.

In addition to these forums, there were several side events throughout the two weeks of climate negotiations under the UNFCCC, including the first REDD+ day celebrated during a Conference of the Parties.

Results of technical negotiations and discussions

SBSTA discussions: marked differences resulted in no agreement

There were two topics under discussion pertaining to REDD+ under SBSTA: the consideration of the need for further guidance for **safeguards** information summaries, and the consideration of methodological guidance for non-market based approaches, including the **joint mitigation and adaptation mechanism**.

Parties spent a considerable amount of the time allocated by the SBSTA Chair coming to an agreement on what they should discuss first: safeguards or non-market based approaches; therefore, the actual time spent discussing and negotiating conclusions was quite limited.

Parties were unable to agree on the need for further guidance for the summaries of information on how countries are addressing and respecting the safeguards adopted in the Cancun Agreements. There was clear divergence in the positions from developed and developing countries, given that the vast majority of REDD+ countries consider that no further guidance is needed and what they need is to move forward with implementation activities. Developing countries were adamant in highlighting the fact that developed countries are assuming, without evidence, that REDD+ countries won't provide the information needed to carry out an assessment of the respect of safeguards in the summaries of information. These differences could not be overcome and no decision was reached.

Similarly, Parties were unable to agree on the terms under which methodological guidance for the joint mitigation and adaptation mechanism could be developed/adopted. Bolivia put a draft text on the table to be the basis of the discussions, also known as a Conference Room Paper (CRP), which would have managed to close this issue in Lima if it would have been accepted by Parties. It is unclear if this proposal or some of its elements will be considered or not in the next session in June 2015.

First meeting of the REDD+ Focal Points: voluntary meetings to exchange experiences and information

Decision 10/CP.19 invited Parties to designate a **national entity or focal point for REDD+** and encouraged these to meet annually on a voluntary basis. The first meeting of the national entities or focal points was scheduled during COP 20 to discuss procedural matters.

The meeting of the focal points for REDD+ took place without eventualities. The meeting was co-chaired by the incoming and outgoing COP Presidencies and Parties agree to continue with this arrangement for future meetings. Some Parties tried to push for the meeting to be recognized as having a formal status under the UNFCCC (e.g. able to produce decisions for adoption by the COP or provide formal recommendations to the Green Climate Fund), but the co-presidents quickly clarified that this meeting does not have a formal status under the Convention and that Parties are encouraged to keep meeting on a voluntary basis. A great number of participants expressed the need to hold these annual meetings in a venue that really promotes dialogue and exchange of experiences and information, and not in a format similar to the negotiations. The annual meetings are open to observers, and active engagement and participation was encouraged by the Parties.

Next steps for the Information Hub: adoption of the report of the Experts Meeting by the SBI

The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) needed to consider and adopt the report from the expert meeting on the **Information Hub** for REDD+, to allow the Secretariat to move forward with the operationalization of decision 9/CP.19 regarding the establishment of a platform to publish all information on results from REDD+ implementation.

The SBI did adopt the report of the Information Hub experts meeting, so the Secretariat can now move forward with the design of the platform in 2015. As decided in Warsaw, the Information Hub is the repository of all the documentation necessary for REDD+ countries seeking results-based payments for REDD+. The UNFCCC REDD Web Platform is serving as the temporary home for this information.

Beyond REDD+ negotiations, trying to influence the ADP discussions

WWF worked in partnership with other civil society organizations (CSOs) to try to influence the negotiations under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) to have consideration from Parties of the land sector when developing their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). However, the difficulty that Parties had in reaching agreement on a decision in Lima foreshadows the challenges ahead to Paris. So far the only element related to the land sector that Parties agreed to incorporate can be found in paragraph 14 of the Lima Call for Climate Action, which states that *“the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions, (...) may include, as appropriate, inter alia, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, (...) assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals (...).”* This paragraph contains elements that open the door to include information relevant for the land sector, in particular, the mention of “removals” (which implies the inclusion of “sinks”, referring to forests, agriculture and the land sector in general). No other mentions or explicit agreement on the relevance of incorporating the land sector was made. Regarding the elements for a new protocol or legal instrument, which is included in the annex to the *Lima Call for Climate Action*, we find several references to the land sector and, in some options, explicitly to forests. However, the elements will need to be negotiated thoroughly and there is no certainty regarding the final result. We have provided specific language and suggestions of insertions for different topics of the elements, which have been well received by some Parties. We will keep working on this direction in the following session of the ADP.

Side events and workshops focused on REDD+

Despite the lack of progress in the technical negotiations under SBSTA, many events took place on the margins of the COP 20 related to REDD+ and forests. For the first time in a COP, the Presidency organized a “REDD+ day” to give space and visibility to the progress made by Parties in implementing the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. During REDD+ day, five countries presented their Reference Levels for REDD+ to the UNFCCC: Colombia, Guyana, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Mexico. Brazil presented a revised version of its Reference Level, after having undertaken the technical assessment in accordance to the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. Many other events during the COP showcased progress made in the implementation of REDD+; of particular interest was the progress made by Indigenous Peoples moving forward with their Indigenous REDD+ concepts and plans.

In another show of support for forests, the government of Colombia, with the support of the Peruvian government, launched the “*Lima Challenge*.” This declaration, signed by 14 forest nations, is a statement of willingness and intent to put their own effort and resources into reducing their national emissions from deforestation and degradation of forests and to take this even further with additional support from the international community. It is a direct follow up from the New York Declaration on Forests, which was announced in September 2014 at the UN Climate Summit. This declaration is a challenge to donor governments to take them up on their offer and to stand by the shared commitment in New York: to at least halve forest loss by 2020 and end it by 2030.

These activities and events demonstrated that developing countries are willing to act immediately to reduce their emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, as a way to contribute to close the gigatonne gap pre-2020. Inside the UNFCCC negotiations, however, no explicit recognition of the role of forests or the land sector was made in the context of pre-2020 ambition or action.

In short, during the two weeks in Lima, WWF participated in numerous panels, side events and meetings to promote our work and our partners’ efforts on REDD+, including Indigenous Peoples’ Dialogue, REDD+ Partnership, a workshop on positioning the land-use sector to be a source of ambition in the ADP, and Climate Action Network (CAN) coordination meetings. Highlights include:

- ✓ **Nov. 27-28:** Final meeting of the REDD+ Partnership – Peter Graham (WWF FCP representative)
- ✓ **Dec. 1-2:** Amazon Indigenous Fund for Humanity (working meeting with Amazon Indigenous Peoples) – Liliana Lozano (WWF representative)
- ✓ **Dec. 3:** Launching of the Meridian Institute report on REDD+ safeguards – Josefina Brana-Varela (panelist)
- ✓ **Dec. 4:** “REDD+ beyond carbon and markets: COICA and the government of Bolivia” in Peruvian Pavilion – FCP, moderator
“WWF’s perspective on REDD+” in the Korean Pavilion, Korea Forest Research Institute side event – Josefina Brana-Varela (panelist)
- ✓ **Dec. 5:** WWF’s experience with community MRV, side event co-hosted with Global Canopy Programme – Bruno Perodeau, WWF-DRC (panelist)
- ✓ **Dec. 6:** Global Landscapes Forum session (GLF) on REDD+ in Madre de Dios, Peru, organized by WWF-Peru – Josefina Brana-Varela (moderator) Peter Graham (panelist)
- ✓ GLF Session organized by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) on land use in a post-2020 world. – Josefina Brana-Varela (panelist)
- ✓ **Dec. 7:** GLF session on Learning from REDD Safeguards Information Systems (SIS) – Peter Graham (moderator)
- ✓ **Dec. 8:** ‘Lima Challenge’ event (press/outreach support)
- ✓ **Dec. 9:** Press conference to present the Amazon Indigenous REDD+ collaboration with COICA, the German government, and WWF (press/outreach support)
- ✓ CAN Latin America press conference on climate finance, Josefina Brana-Varela (panelist)
- ✓ **Dec. 11:** Panel organized by COICA on Amarakaeri Co-management partnership of protected area and indigenous REDD+ Josefina Brana-Varela (moderator)

Land use in the post-2020 agreement

A few days before COP 20 started, on November 29th, a coalition of organizations, including WWF, organized a workshop to discuss the inclusion of the land sector in the post-2020 agreement. Round table discussions focused on two overarching themes: (1) the potential roles of principles/parameters in informing Parties' consideration of the land-use sector, and (2) options for accounting for Parties' mitigation efforts in the land-use sector. This workshop is the second effort to bring together Parties and stakeholders to discuss this important issue, following the first workshop organized in June 2014.

Outcomes from the workshop were presented and discussed by a panel in a 'sold-out' session during the Global Landscapes Forum on December 6.

The eight principles discussed during the workshop and touched up on during the panel were included in the Global Landscapes Forum Outcome Statement (available for download in <http://bit.ly/1xJaSTt>).

Next steps for UNFCCC

More work needs to be done, and the following REDD+ items will be on the agenda again in June 2015 at the UNFCCC intersessional meetings in Bonn:

- ✓ Consideration of the need for further guidance for safeguards summaries of information
- ✓ Consideration of methodological guidance for non-market based approaches, including the joint mitigation and adaptation mechanism
- ✓ Non-carbon benefits

Next steps for WWF

As countries move from negotiations into action on REDD+, WWF's efforts will focus in making REDD+ a reality. WWF will continue to:

- ✓ Reaffirm its commitment to supporting REDD+
- ✓ Reaffirm its commitment to tropical forest national and communities and to supporting their efforts to implement REDD+ and conserve their forests
- ✓ Continue to push for developed nations to increase funding of all phases of REDD+
- ✓ Continue to support capacity building and knowledge sharing efforts necessary for effective REDD+ implementation
- ✓ Continue to support the UNFCCC system as discussions move towards defining a post-2020 agreement.
- ✓ Continue to work with national and multilateral entities (e.g. Norway, World Bank) to support coordination and synergies in ways that ensure the effectiveness of REDD+ globally

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