



2015 Expectations for Forests and Climate

WWF calls on Parties to include the forest and land sector in the new climate agreement, integrate REDD+ within the broader climate architecture and address technical issues for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+) still under discussion under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA).

Land sector and REDD+ in discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP)

It is crucial to guarantee the inclusion of the forest and land sector in the new climate agreement, using a simple, flexible and transparent approach, which at the same time promotes high ambition and environmental integrity of the emissions reductions. Negotiators must take clear steps in Bonn to:

- Provide a framework that encourages Parties to include the land sector comprehensively in their nationally determined contributions;
- Promote mitigation actions in the forest and land use sectors, including through REDD+, to help close the "gigatonne gap" before 2020;
- Show a real commitment to defining ways and means to deliver results-based payments and a strategy to scale up financing for REDD+ in all phases, by including the appropriate references in the Finance section of the draft text of the agreement.

In addition, WWF expects Parties to include principles in the climate agreement that guide the treatment of the land sector in a way that enforces transparency and guarantees environmental integrity, while promoting positive social and environmental outcomes. Furthermore, REDD+ should be explicitly mentioned in the Finance section of the agreement to ensure that adequate incentives will be in place for developing countries to keep advancing efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and to promote conservation, enhancement of carbon stocks and sustainable management of forests.

SBSTA

WWF calls for Parties to work together to find consensus and move forward with the three pending technical issues still under discussion in the SBSTA.

Safeguard Information Systems (SIS)

In previous UNFCCC decisions, Parties agreed on the “Cancun safeguards” for REDD+ actions and asked REDD+ countries to develop SIS for providing information on “*how the safeguards are being addressed and respected*,” in a manner that ensures “*transparency, consistency, effectiveness and comprehensiveness*.” Such information is to be periodically updated and shared through countries’ national communications, and voluntarily on the UNFCCC web-based information hub. In order to receive results-based payments, REDD+ implementing countries are to share their latest “summary of information.” However, there are **two key gaps** in the existing guidance on safeguards that should be filled. First, there is **no specification of what type of information the summaries should contain**. Second, there is **no guidance on how to ensure the SIS are transparent, consistent, effective and comprehensive**.

Developing stronger SIS and summaries of information can have multiple benefits, from helping countries’ actions to gain more support (internally and externally) by building credibility on their strategies or action plans, to creating acceptance of a common set of expectations that could eventually simplify the multiple reporting requirements from donors, among other benefits.

WWF therefore asks SBSTA to develop further guidance that is **supportive** of developing countries’ efforts to implement REDD+, and **not a burden**.

For further information, please see WWF submission to SBSTA 41 on “Addressing safeguards in REDD+: the need for further UNFCCC guidance” and “WWF REDD+ Expectations – UNFCCC-COP20.”

Joint Mitigation and Adaptation Mechanism (JMA)

WWF calls for **progress on how to address the SBSTA mandate regarding the need for further guidance for other policy approaches such as Bolivia’s proposal on joint mitigation and adaptation**, while also allowing REDD+ to move forward.

Integrated approaches, such as the joint mitigation and adaptation mechanism, can help achieve carbon emission reductions, adaptation benefits and other non-carbon benefits at the same time. UNFCCC Parties have recognized the potential for REDD+ actions to generate adaptation co-benefits. One particular proposal in this direction is the joint mitigation and adaptation mechanism. This mechanism, proposed by Bolivia, includes policy integration and land planning, promotion of biocultural conservation initiatives, and actions oriented to articulate agricultural productive processes managed at the local level.

Pairing the discussions on non-carbon benefits (NCB) with indicators of adaptation, could be a way forward to accommodate the main elements of the JMA at the national and local level, and could provide a framework for assessing such integrated interventions.

WWF emphasizes that **any policy approaches**, non-market or market, towards reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation will **need to incorporate the COP16 safeguards agreed upon in Cancun**.

For further information, please see WWF's submission to SBSTA 40 on "Addressing methodological issues of non-carbon benefits and non-market-based approaches in REDD+" and "WWF REDD+ Expectations – UNFCCC-COP20."

Non-carbon Benefits (NCBs)

WWF calls for the **recognition and targeting of non-carbon benefits in REDD+ policy and initiatives to help create broader environmental, social and governance benefits.**

Forests do much more than sequester and store carbon – they perform a large number of ecosystem services such as providing clean water, habitats for species, and cultural services. Forests are particularly key to biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods. As such, efforts to conserve forests may secure a broad range of benefits in addition to carbon emission reductions, i.e. NCBs. Earlier UNFCCC COP decisions¹ have made clear that REDD+ actions need to be consistent with biodiversity conservation and seek various social and environmental benefits.

The concept of NCBs therefore goes beyond that of safeguards, in recognizing that REDD+ activities should not only "do no harm," but should explicitly "do good." NCBs may include the maintenance and enhancement of various ecosystem services, the promotion of sustainable local economic development and improvements in governance (e.g. land tenure or participatory decision-making arrangements). Such benefits may also reduce the risk of reversals and thereby help ensure the permanence of forest carbon stocks and emission reductions. Therefore, NCBs should be actively pursued.

For further information, please see WWF's submission to SBSTA 40 on "Addressing methodological issues of non-carbon benefits and non-market-based approaches in REDD+."

Conclusion

As Parties start the process of streamlining the negotiating text and get ready for the final stretch towards Paris, they must recognize the importance of the land sector, including forests, to achieve the objective of the Convention. It is also vital to recognize that REDD+ is one of the most immediate large-scale mitigation and adaptation opportunities to combat climate change.

Regarding the SBSTA, while REDD+ can and will move ahead based on the framework agreed upon in Warsaw, resolving the pending technical issues will make REDD+ a stronger mechanism for combating climate change and conserving forests.

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For additional information on WWF's REDD+ related work, visit: www.panda.org/forestclimate

¹ See Decision 1/CP.16, "The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Longterm Cooperative Action under the Convention." <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>, Appendix I.