

**Statement Delivered on Behalf of the Convention on Biological Diversity
8 December, 2009**

UNFCCC SBSTA 31 Plenary

Agenda Item 5: Reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries: approaches to stimulate action.

Thank you chair,

I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Convention on Biological Diversity in my capacity as co-chair of the expert group on biodiversity and climate change, which met twice since it was established in May 2008, with generous support from the Governments of the United Kingdom, Finland, South Africa and Norway.

The group concluded that REDD efforts would most effectively support biodiversity objectives if planned and implemented in a landscape context, recognizing in particular the contribution of primary forests to long-term, effective carbon sequestration and storage. In this context, REDD methodologies based only on assessments of net deforestation rates could fail to reflect actual changes in carbon stocks and fail to deliver biodiversity co-benefits.

In forest landscapes currently subject to harvesting and/or degradation, co-benefits can be best achieved by addressing the underlying drivers of deforestation and degradation, and through sustainable forest management, while further supporting the establishment of ecological corridors and buffer zones through enhancement of carbon stocks.

As a further key issue, the group recommends that the implementation of rights recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples could be taken into account as a means of linking indigenous peoples' biodiversity-related practices to the potential benefits from REDD and other land management activities.

Finally, the group also stressed the significant opportunities for multiple benefits from REDD activities in tropical forested peatland areas.

The final report of the expert group was welcomed by the CBD COP9 Bureau in September 2009, and the report has been transmitted to the President of UNFCCC COP15 by the CBD COP9 President with a view to convening a joint meeting of the two Bureaux.

The key messages of the expert group will be made available to delegates in their pigeonholes. The final report as well as further information is available on the website of the CBD and will be circulated during a side event planned for 11 December (13:00-14:30h), as well as during 'Forest Day 3' on 13 December.

Thank you once again.