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UK non-paper

How can we maximise the biodiversity co-benefits from REDD+?

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Introduction

- Estimates suggest that forests contain between 50 to 80% of terrestrial biodiversity. The Amazon rainforest alone hosts about a quarter of the world's terrestrial species.
- Additional potential environmental benefits of REDD+ include the maintenance of biodiversity and ecosystem services (e.g. Watershed protection) supported by those forests.
- 1.2 billion poor people are dependent on forest related livelihoods.
- The *scale* of these benefits will depend on *how* REDD+ is designed and implemented



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Other benefits from securing biodiversity co-benefits

- Protection of biodiversity has the potential to enhance the climate mitigation performance of any REDD+ scheme as there is clear evidence that forests rich in biodiversity a) store more carbon and b) are more resilient to environmental stresses that are predicted to accompany climate change.
- Avoiding negative environmental impacts from REDD+ can strengthen REDD+ in the long term. If REDD+ becomes associated with negative outcomes, this could undermine social and political support.



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Economics and Ecosystem Services

- A UK Government Report (2008) estimated the costs of halving deforestation at around US\$17bn-33bn per year to 2030, but suggested that this investment would generate long-term net benefits of about US\$3.7 trillion (avoided climate impacts).
- The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) report estimated the loss in the capital value of the flow of services resulting from a single year's loss of forest due to deforestation to be worth in the region of US\$2 trillion to US\$4.5 trillion.
- Forests also provide important ecosystem services including commodities, such as timber, regulating services -especially related to water and climate, and supporting services such as nutrient cycling and soil formation.



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Negotiating Safeguards

The Draft REDD+ Decision following UNFCCC COP 15 in Copenhagen includes the following language:

*Further affirms that ...the following **safeguards** should be **[promoted]** **[and]** **[supported]**:*

*(a) That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and **relevant international conventions** and agreements;...*

...(e) Actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that actions ...are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits;

•But how will this work in practice?



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Options for Implementing safeguards

- Non-binding recommendations. Arguably the existing text constitutes a non-binding recommendation.
- Support; including financial support, technical support and capacity building. This could include 'preferential support' for activities that address co-benefits.
- Minimum standards; a gateway system to enable activities to qualify for further benefits (funding or a certificate that confers value on the activity)
- Incentives; where additional economic benefits are proportionate to the level of performance on co-benefits.



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Opportunities at CBD

As drafted, 2 of the targets provide an opportunity to underpin UNFCCC objectives on REDD+, by using the targets as a way of measuring progress on biodiversity safeguards:

- *Target 5*: By 2020, the rate of loss and degradation, and fragmentation, of natural habitats, [including forests], is [at least halved] [brought close to zero].
- *Target 7*: By 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity



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A way forward for REDD+

- To determine whether risks are being minimised and whether co-benefits are being delivered will require a means to measure the impact of REDD+ programmes.
- And this in turn will require agreement upon the criteria (indicators) to be measured.
- One of the 'relevant international conventions' referred to under paragraph 2a of the draft UNFCCC Decision on REDD+ is the Convention for Biological Diversity.
- This implies that, if the REDD+ Decision is adopted by the UNFCCC in its current form, then the safeguards should reflect the objectives agreed within the CBD Strategic Plan.

Questions for discussion

1. Will it be helpful for the CBD Strategic Plan to include a target that covers forest biodiversity and with that the development of indicators to measure progress on forest biodiversity?
2. Should the targets and associated indicators for forest biodiversity that could be developed under the CBD be used to help implement REDD+ safeguards and thereby support the objectives of the UNFCCC?
3. How can we ensure coherency between safeguards for biodiversity and those for social criteria and reporting on carbon emissions?

thank you!
merci!
¡gracias!



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