

UK Perspective on Biodiversity-Related Aspects of REDD+

*Combined safeguards and sub-regional capacity
building workshop on REDD-plus,
Cape Town, South Africa
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Strategic synergies between international work on climate change and biodiversity:

Essential to pursue **policy coherence and co-operative action** in efforts to tackle climate change & protect biodiversity

Need to: deliver maximum benefit through resources deployed; avoid contradictory policies; enable informed decisions about trade-offs; minimise burdens on countries (e.g. on reporting)

This requires co-operation at all levels, including international work between Conventions and their Secretariats (while respecting separate mandates), through to national strategies and ground level implementation

Nagoya decision X/33 mandates work to improve synergies in several policy areas, including ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation – and through **advice on the application of REDD+ biodiversity safeguards**

Co-Benefits but also Risks for Biodiversity from REDD+

- Reduce loss, degradation & fragmentation of habitat for forest biodiversity; reduced disruption of ecological interlinkages within the landscape
- Increase in forest area, restoration of habitat quality or connectivity for forest biodiversity, and restoration of ecological interlinkages
- But also: Displacement of land use pressures to ecosystems of high biodiversity value
- Introduction / expansion of intensive agriculture or forestry methods harmful to biodiversity (incl. plantations)
- Conversion of high biodiversity value non-forest ecosystems through afforestation or reforestation, if not well-managed
- Risks to indigenous people / local communities - including loss of traditional ecological knowledge

Engagement in UNFCCC

- **UNFCCC Cancun REDD+ safeguards:** the seven include one requiring consistency with national plans and the objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements (such as CBD); and another on conserving natural forests, biological diversity and ecosystem services
- There are also social safeguards, including the need for involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities
- **UK is actively engaged**, with EU and international partners, in UNFCCC work to develop guidance for implementation, including “**a system for providing information on how the safeguards (...) are being addressed and respected**”
- Submissions formally due with UNFCCC 19 Sept, ahead of informal discussions at Panama (30 Sept & 8–9 Oct)

Engagement in CBD

- **CBD** has crucial role developing further specification and advice - informed by these regional workshops – to help REDD+ and biodiversity actors interpret and **apply** biodiversity safeguards
- This will **help fulfil the mandates agreed at Cancun and Nagoya**. CBD can contribute to UNFCCC thinking ahead of a decision on guidance at Durban (26 Nov-7 Dec); and follow this up both through the development of safeguards advice and indicators for Hyderabad and inter-agency discussions (likely to involve other members of the Consultative Forum on Forests (CFF))
- **UK has supported this process**, including by: contributing funds and co-chairing the **regional workshops**; commissioning research by **WCMC** that provides draft operational guidelines on operationalising safeguards; and hosting the wider June CBD **indicators AHTEG**

Key elements of WCMC report

- Summary of opportunities and challenges for biodiversity
- Need procedural safeguards in addition to outcome-oriented safeguards – and coherent national planning is essential
- Below high level Cancun safeguards, scope to rationalise existing standards, criteria and safeguards (centred on World Bank “Common Approach” and UN-REDD Principles & Criteria)
- Additional capacity building required to enable countries to implement biodiversity safeguards as part of wider REDD+ efforts (estimated not to add significantly to overall cost)
- Draft operational guidelines, with checklists, set out in annex
- Full report available at <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/> (project number WC1003)

Emerging Lessons from Regional Workshops

- Participation in REDD+ is voluntary and **country ownership is essential for delivery**. The three regional workshops are crucial for developing a fully informed approach to biodiversity aspects
- Each region is different – and there are big contrasts within them (e.g. in Africa between the Congo Basin and drylands). But the **emerging conclusions** suggest the main risks for biodiversity at this stage are if REDD+ is not well designed and if a REDD+ mechanism is not sufficiently funded
- They also suggest **practical ways** in which forest nations, developed country partners and other stakeholders can achieve multiple benefits and operational efficiencies. For example:
 - Improve co-ordination of national REDD+ strategies and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) (as well as other relevant strategies)

Emerging Lessons from Regional Workshops 2

- Where possible, protect natural forests that are both carbon and biodiversity rich
- Invest in sustainable land use planning (looking wider than forests)
- Develop robust indicators and more integrated monitoring and reporting on carbon and biodiversity objectives, including through the use of satellite data and ground truthing
- Rationalise existing detailed standards, criteria and safeguards
- Previous workshops have also identified gaps, in particular:
 - No specific safeguards addressing the risk of inappropriate **afforestation** in areas of high biodiversity value. This is an important one for parts of Africa which could benefit from well-designed afforestation - and CBD should provide guidance
 - Thin coverage of **indigenous peoples** incl traditional knowledge

UK - Priorities for the future

UK priorities include:

- Continued active engagement in **UNFCCC and CBD** work on REDD+ multiple benefits and safeguards, plus development of robust forest indicators under the CBD Strategic Plan
- Working for **Rio+20** to agree substantive deliverables on forestry as a sector of the green economy
- Delivering the **REDD+ programme under the UK's £2.9billion International Climate Fund (ICF)**, over the next 4 years:
 - A substantial proportion goes to forestry/ REDD+ (including £100 million announced by Caroline Spelman at Nagoya)
 - This to deliver **climate, poverty and biodiversity benefits**
 - The programme will apply biodiversity safeguards informed by existing systems, our own research and the continuing international discussions

thank you!

merci!

¡gracias!

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