



PRESS RELEASE

New publication outlines biodiversity elements for design and implementation of REDD-plus

Montreal, 1 June 2011 – A new report from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), *REDD-plus and Biodiversity (CBD Technical Series No. 59)*, provides technical and scientific information on the ways to ensure that the design and implementation of REDD-plus policies support the objectives of the CBD.

REDD-plus refers to policies for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries that are promoted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

It is a growing conclusion that climate change, land degradation and biodiversity are interconnected, not only through the effects of climate change on biodiversity and land management, but also through the changes in biodiversity and ecosystem functioning that affect climate change.

Observed changes in climate have already adversely affected biodiversity at the species and ecosystem levels, with further changes in biodiversity being inevitable with further changes in climate. The degradation of many ecosystems is in turn significantly reducing their carbon storage and sequestration capacity, leading to increases in emissions of greenhouse gases.

REDD-plus may be part of the solution to simultaneously combat climate change and save biodiversity. If well designed and implemented, REDD-plus can decrease emissions of greenhouse gases and provide considerable benefits for biodiversity and livelihoods.

This potential has been recognized by the Parties to the CBD, who invited Parties, other Governments, and relevant international and other organizations to ensure that REDD-plus actions do not run counter to the objectives of the CBD, but support the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity, and provide biodiversity benefits for forests, and, where possible, to indigenous and local communities (decision IX/5).

The *REDD-plus and Biodiversity* report aims to:

- Outline potential benefits of REDD-plus for biodiversity and indigenous and local communities;
- Demonstrate the importance of biodiversity and indigenous and local community co-benefits for the long-term success of REDD-plus;
- Outline possible risks of REDD-plus for biodiversity and indigenous and local communities, with a view to contributing to the development or improvement of appropriate policy recommendations;
- Outline ways in which the CBD can contribute to the success of REDD-plus, and in turn, outline the potential ways in which REDD-plus can contribute to the objectives of the CBD;
- Present various tools for achieving multiple benefits in planning and implementing REDD-plus activities.

The publication is also intended to contribute to the achievement of the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, approved at the most recent meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, in October 2010 in Japan. Of the 20 targets to be achieved by 2020, agreed in Nagoya, the following four are most relevant in the context of REDD-plus:

- To at least halve deforestation, and where feasible bring it close to zero (Target 5).
- To manage all areas under forestry sustainably (Target 7).
- To conserve at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas (Target 11).
- To restore at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification (Target 15).

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the CBD, said: “If we are going to achieve sustainable development, and avoid some of the devastating impacts of climate change on biodiversity, it is imperative that the global community find ways to harmonize the implementation of all three Rio conventions. REDD-plus offers such an opportunity. The Secretariat is pleased to provide this detailed guidance, as a contribution to the ongoing discussions on the sustainable use of forest biodiversity.”

The publication also contributes to a broader series of regional consultations and capacity-building workshops in 2011 and 2012, including with the participation of indigenous and local communities, as a means to consult effectively with Parties and obtain their views on the application of relevant safeguards for biodiversity and other aspects of biodiversity within REDD-plus.

This includes the identification of possible indicators to assess the contribution of REDD-plus to achieving the objectives of the CBD, and to assess potential approaches to monitor impacts on biodiversity from these and other ecosystem-based activities for climate change mitigation.

The advice on biodiversity aspects of REDD-plus developed on the basis of these workshops and views received from Parties will be presented to the COP for approval at its eleventh meeting, scheduled to take place in India in fall 2012.

The document, and the other activities of the CBD Secretariat in relation to REDD-plus, are being undertaken without any intention of pre-empting any future decisions taken under the UNFCCC.

This document and other results of the CBD process to develop advice on relevant biodiversity safeguards of REDD-plus, and other information on biodiversity co-benefits of REDD-plus, will be made available to the UNFCCC through appropriate means, including to its Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in the context of its work on REDD-plus safeguards.

The *REDD-plus and Biodiversity* report is available at: www.cbd.int/ts

Notes for Editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 159 countries plus the European Union have

ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int.