



1.2 Introduction to REDD+

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Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD) is an international mechanism framed by international climate change negotiations. It aims to establish incentives for developing countries to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and protect their forests.

Approximately 13 million hectares of forest are lost every year to deforestation, an area around four times the size of Belgium. It is estimated that degradation and loss of tropical forests account for 15–20 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions, a higher percentage than that caused by transportation. Therefore, conserving the carbon stored in existing forests, reducing the rate of deforestation and forest degradation and improving the management of forests can contribute significantly to climate change mitigation.

In 2007, during the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP 13), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) launched negotiations on REDD. The concept was later broadened to include conservation of forests, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. This is referred to as REDD+ (“REDD plus”). International negotiations to define REDD+ and design an international REDD+ framework are ongoing.



REDD+ ALSO PROVIDES AN
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STIMULATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS.

The principle underpinning REDD+ is that developed countries will make results-based financing available to developing countries that reduce forest-based emissions at the national level, compared to an agreed baseline. In addition to delivering significant benefits for climate change mitigation, the international framework also promotes other advantages, often referred to as the non-carbon benefits of REDD+:

- biodiversity protection;
- poverty reduction;
- food and water security; and

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- improved livelihoods for communities that depend on forests, including through clarifying land tenure and strengthening governance.

Several issues still must be resolved in order for REDD+ to become an operational global mechanism: sources of financing; reference levels; approaches to measuring, reporting and verification (MRV); mechanisms to channel international financial support and benefit sharing; and adequate safeguard frameworks.

Progress on these issues in the international climate change negotiations has been slow. Nevertheless, several parallel approaches and initiatives that aim to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss are underway. These approaches include fast-start initiatives such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) administered by the World Bank, the UN-REDD Programme, the World Bank Forest Investment Program (FIP) and bilateral initiatives.

Most developing countries engaged in REDD+ are already undertaking early actions geared to building institutional and technical capacity. These efforts are known as REDD+ readiness activities. A few countries are engaging in results-based REDD+ mechanisms, whereby financial incentives are provided for verified emissions reductions. These countries include Brazil, Ethiopia, Guyana and Indonesia, all working through bilateral agreements with Norway.

REDD+ also provides an enabling environment to stimulate public-private partnerships and private-sector engagement in addressing the drivers of deforestation, inside and outside the forest sector. An increasing number of companies that supply consumer goods are committed to developing and applying responsible purchasing policies that minimize deforestation. These include voluntary certification and round tables for key agricultural commodities (including palm oil, beef and soya) that promote and implement responsible agricultural production standards.



