



Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Proposed Implementation of REDD+ via the Copenhagen Accord

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1. Executive Summary

Forests are important to everyone. They directly support millions of people and more than 80% of the world's biodiversity. They drive many of the earth's local and global climatic and hydrological cycles. They also, as it turns out, seriously contribute to climate change when they are cut down. Although rarely acknowledged in day-to-day discussions surrounding climate change, deforestation and forest degradation activities are the third largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, contributing more than the global transportation sector.

The United Nations, along with many national governments, has acknowledged that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. However, national desires for economic growth in both developed and developing countries often overshadow initiatives to prevent the global harm that will most likely occur if current temperatures increase more than 2°C. Very similarly, deforestation, although also generally acknowledged as a problem, is increasing on a global scale. The demand for timber products, or for beef, soy, mining, and palm oil that require the land forests occupy, simply has a stronger influence at the moment. A clear economic benefit exists for products that drive deforestation; the services and benefits that forests provide, while equally if not more valuable, cannot pay the rent as they stand today.

Since the whole world will pay if climate change is not mitigated, carbon has been given a value. Although broad market valuation of carbon has not yet occurred, carbon has been recognized as valuable when it is preserved. Burning fossil fuels, for purposes such as electricity and industry, releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere because oil and coal are a form of biomass, or biological material from living or once living organisms that store carbon. Trees are living biomass. Every year, they store more and more carbon in their roots, trunk, and leaves. When cut down, trees create a double impact: not only is years and years' worth of carbon released into the atmosphere, but the capacity to naturally store that carbon is also lost. This is particularly true in tropical forests because the growing season is much longer.

Over the years, a mitigation strategy called Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) has entered the international arena in order to address this fundamental issue. The general concept behind REDD+ is simple: developed countries, who produce most of the current greenhouse gas emissions, will pay developing nations, who are still seeking economic stability, to keep their trees standing.

In December 2009, the decision-making body of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), called the Conference of Parties (COP), met in Copenhagen where 114 nations signed the Copenhagen Accord. The Accord acknowledges the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to be adopted by both developed and developing countries, having "common, but differentiated responsibilities." This implies that developed countries should assume more responsibility, not only because of their historically disproportionate level of emissions, but also because developing countries have equally pressing problems to address, such as extreme poverty, that will rely partially on continued development to solve. The Accord acknowledges the critical role of forest-based solutions in mitigating climate change and emphasizes REDD+ as a viable mitigation option, especially given its potential to economically compensate developing countries in the process of saving trees.

Although a relatively simple and cost-effective concept, REDD+ is not without its challenges.

The notion of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation activities has been discussed over the course of more than 10 years. Discussion over a long period of time allowed many affected countries to voice their concerns regarding loopholes and shortcomings in the idea. Although the Copenhagen Accord marks considerable progress, issues of finance and carbon accounting, international coordination, governance, sovereignty, and indigenous rights must be addressed if REDD+ hopes to be legally binding and sustainable in the future.

Ideally, many of these unknowns, particularly a clear financial plan and carbon accounting, measurement, reporting, and verification methodologies, will be standardized soon during upcoming international negotiations. At the moment, various multilateral organizations such as the UN-REDD Programme, non-governmental organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, and various private groups are working toward implementing REDD+ through separate pilot projects and sponsorships. However, these efforts lack the authority and scope necessary to harmonize REDD+ into an organized and effective initiative. Both a strength and weakness inherent within a viable REDD+ framework is that it must be flexible according to each country's circumstances (ecosystem, political climate, etc). But this flexibility needs structure. An overarching body through the UNFCCC could harmonize all the existing efforts currently implementing REDD+ and provide a financial mechanism for equitable allocation and disbursement of funds to these varying projects.

Assuming certain standards are already in place through a future COP decision, we have proposed the creation of an umbrella organization we have called the 'International REDD+ Program' (IRP). The program we designed includes three phases of implementation: initiation, transition, and full-scale. Recognizing the current disparity between short-term and long-term sources of funding, these phases will allow donor-based funding to eventually transition into sustainable market-based funding when this becomes available (ideally through a carbon market).

IRP will regulate and coordinate REDD+ efforts on a global level, primarily through the assessment and eventual selection of REDD+ project candidates for funding. IRP will also facilitate capacity building activities for projects that wish to eventually qualify to be a REDD+ project by connecting them with other organizations that are promoting "REDD+ readiness."

The IRP structure is best understood by following a REDD+ project application. The initial group of applications will be filtered through the IRP Central Office. If general criteria are met, the proposal will then be distributed for approval by each of the working groups. Methodologies, monitoring, and verification of the proposal must be approved by the Technical Group. The Financial Working Group will review the budget design and ensure that best accounting practices are followed. The Cross-Cutting Working Group will ensure that issues such as indigenous rights are taken into account. The REDD+ Accredited Verifier (RAV) Panel will send a trained Regional RAV to visit the site and ensure that the existing conditions match those in the proposal. If these criteria are met, the proposal will be sent to the Executive Board, which acts as a direct link to the UNFCCC, for final approval. Funds will then be distributed to the project through the Green Climate Fund, as stipulated in the Copenhagen Accord. A second type of RAV, called a Local RAV, will then be trained and assigned to that particular REDD+ project, and will continuously verify on-the-ground progress. If an application is found to be unsatisfactory, the proposal will be sent to the REDD+ Network, which will then assess the weaknesses and help the applicant to resolve them before reapplication.

In the first year of the initiation phase, IRP will build upon the work of existing organizations and begin funding projects. Successful implementation of IRP in year one must consist of clearly defined workplans and a specified budget, although it is currently unclear how much of the Green Climate Fund will be allocated towards REDD+ specifically. Working groups and application criteria must be established, and RAVs must be trained. All progress will be reported to that year's COP.

Following the establishment of standards and a coordinating UNFCCC body, the main purpose of REDD+ can finally be realized: projects in developing countries will receive funding to keep their trees standing, and climate change mitigation efforts will be much closer to being realized as more and more carbon emissions reductions are verified by maintaining and enhancing forests.

A forested area the size of a soccer field is cut down every 4 seconds. Climate change mitigation must address deforestation, and REDD+ is a critical part of the solution: a solution that has the potential to address many global problems simultaneously, a solution that can work within many levels of governance, a solution that is cost-effective.



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and executive summary: Rebecca Brunner*

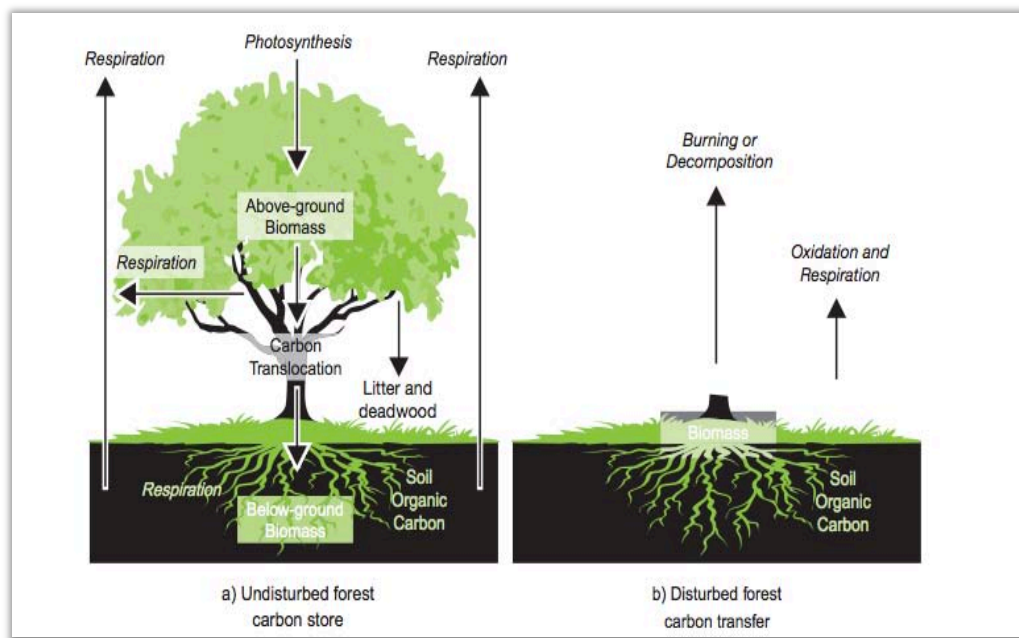
2. The Importance of Trees to Climate

Deforestation & forest degradation are the 3rd largest contributors to global climate change. REDD+ aims to reduce these emissions by providing financial incentives to maintain forests.

Many people will live their entire lives having never set foot in a rainforest. For those who have, the experience is humbling. Standing amongst trunks too wide to stretch your arms around, underneath a canopy so vast that sunlight from above penetrates only in small slivers, it is easy to fathom why these ancient giants are collectively considered the lungs of the world. But forests play other vital roles on our planet; they provide renewable raw materials, offer habitats to a multitude of species, including humans, and maintain ecosystem health and biodiversity. They are also instrumental in helping regulate the earth's climate.

All plants sequester carbon. Through photosynthesis, they extract carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and incorporate it into their biomass, converting it into sugars, which they use for energy to carry out their metabolic processes. However, trees store more carbon, on average, than any other type of land cover; carbon accounts for approximately half of the dry

Figure 1: the effects of deforestation & forest degradation on the carbon cycle



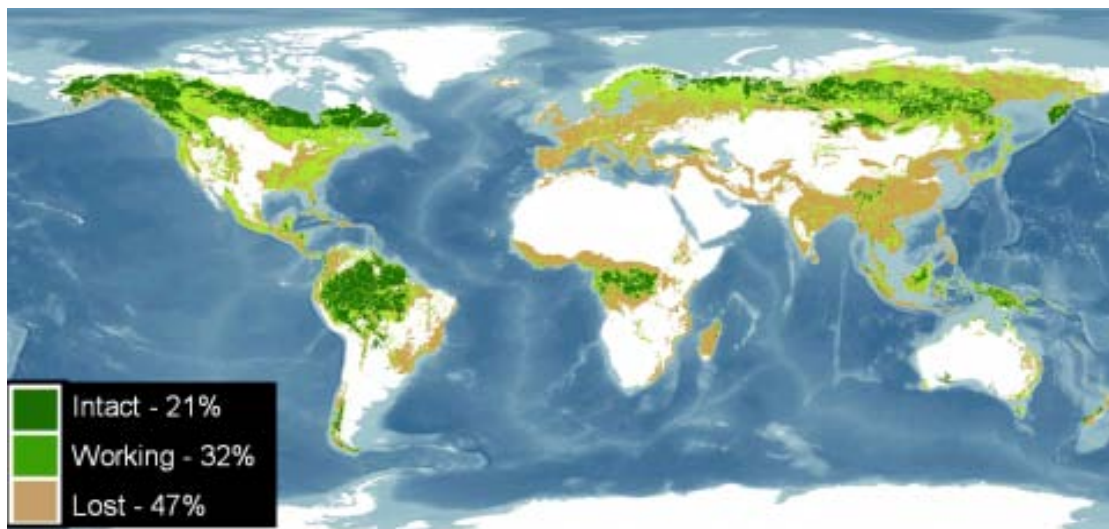
Source: Eliasch 2008: 19

weight of a tree. Tropical forests are particularly significant because they sequester as much CO₂ as temperate and boreal forests combined, mainly due to their longer growing seasons (Eliasch 17).

Forests thus provide the planet with an important carbon reservoir. Yet every year, deforestation clears approximately 13 million hectares of trees worldwide (UNEP, FAO and UNFF 4), which returns most of this stored carbon to the atmosphere either through burning or

decomposition. In total, the world's forestry sector contributes approximately 17% of total global greenhouse gas emissions, making this sector the third largest source of anthropogenic greenhouse gases and second largest source of CO₂ emissions on the planet (IPCC 36). The majority of forest losses occur in developing countries in South America, Africa and Southeast Asia (UNEP, FAO and UNFF 4) accounting for approximately 95% of total global forestry sector emissions (Eliasch 1). Therefore, climate mitigation strategies must focus on reducing

Figure 2: State of the world's forests, 1997



Source: World Resources Institute

deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, as a priority, if they are to have a significant impact.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Plus (REDD+) is an initiative that has steadily evolved since its 1997 inception in North East Bolivia as a long-term project aimed at both protecting approximately 1.6 million hectares of endangered tropical forest and avoiding deforestation-related CO₂ emissions. Since then, REDD+ has gathered significant momentum in the international community, culminating in its inclusion in the Copenhagen Accord as a crucial climate mitigation strategy in December 2009. At its core, REDD+ is an approach that aims to drastically cut global greenhouse gas emissions through the transfer of financial incentives from developed nations to developing nations to keep their forests standing. On December 10th of this year, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will conclude their annual global climate meeting in Cancún. At this time, it is uncertain whether they will achieve the legally binding climate agreement that eluded them in Copenhagen last year; significant obstacles continue to stand in the way, particularly disagreements between developed and developing nations concerning a shared vision, climate finance, adaptation, emissions reduction targets, and technology transfer. But whether or not an agreement is achieved this round, it is imperative that forest-based climate mitigation strategies endure. In support of this, the following report proposes a strategy for the international implementation of REDD+ based on the framework introduced by the Copenhagen Accord.

3. International Climate Negotiations

REDD+ has evolved over the past 13 years to its present form. The 2009 Copenhagen Accord was an important milestone, highlighting the role of REDD+ in mitigating catastrophic climate change.

Recognizing the urgent need to address global climate change, the international community established the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro during the Earth Summit, charging it with the objective of stabilizing anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In total, more than 160 countries ratified the convention. Since then, the UNFCCC has sought to reduce human interference with the global climate system; its decision-making body, the Conference of the Parties (COP) meets annually to further this goal.

At its 3rd meeting in 1997 (COP 3), the COP adopted the Kyoto Protocol, which set legally binding targets and timetables for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for 37 industrialized countries and the European Union to be achieved over the five-year period from 2008-2012. In February 2005, the Protocol went into effect after meeting its requirement that at least 55% of the Parties to the UNFCCC (incorporating at least 55% of the total 1990 CO₂ emissions of Annex I Parties) ratify, accept, accede or approve the Protocol. To date, the Protocol includes 193 Parties, accounting for 63.7% of the emissions of Annex I Parties (<http://UNFCCC.int>).

Kyoto was also significant in sowing the seeds for REDD+ by calling for the protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases through sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation. In the thirteen years following the UNFCCC's adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, this small clause steadily evolved into what is now known as REDD+.

Last December, the COP met in Copenhagen for their 15th session. The goal of COP 15 was to

The Copenhagen Accord: REDD+ Highlights

- Common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities will guide country actions against climate change
- A REDD+ mechanism must be established immediately to mobilize financial incentives from developed countries to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
- Substantial finance shall be provided to developing countries to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), and for adaptation, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building
- Copenhagen Green Climate Fund (GCF) will be created as an operating entity to support mitigation activities, including REDD+, in developing countries
- Developed countries commit 30 billion USD for 2010-2012 and 100 billion USD per year by 2020 for climate adaptation and mitigation, a large portion of which will flow through the GCF

A Brief History: International Climate Negotiations and REDD+

1992 – Earth Summit

Establishes the UNFCCC & its decision-making body, the COP, charged with stabilizing GHG emissions

1997 – COP 3 (Kyoto)

Kyoto Protocol is adopted & sets legally binding GHG emission reduction targets for 37 countries & the EU for 2008-2012

2005 – COP 11 (Montreal)

RED was first placed on the international agenda as a climate change mitigation strategy

2007 – COP 13 (Bali)

Bali Action Plan includes REDD as a strategy to reduce GHG emissions

2009 – COP 15 (Copenhagen)

Copenhagen Accord, seen as the only success of COP 15, officially names REDD+ as a key to mitigating climate change

negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol and to reinforce overall commitments under the UNFCCC. Issues on the main agenda included the burden-sharing between developed countries, the role of developing countries, the financing of mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries, and an international emissions trading scheme. A climate treaty proved elusive, however, as discussions quickly resorted to back-room negotiations. Driven by a small group of the most powerful nations, including the United States, China and India, the Copenhagen Accord evolved from one such side-negotiation. The Accord was signed by 114 countries and was formally acknowledged in the decisions adopted by the COP at Copenhagen (<http://UNFCCC.int>). To date, 140 countries have expressed their intention to be listed as parties agreeing to the Accord (<http://UNFCCC.int>).

Though voluntary and legally non-binding, the Accord nevertheless represents an important milestone in the advancement of REDD+ as an international climate mitigation strategy. It not only acknowledges the crucial role that reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation must play to cut greenhouse gas emissions, but creates a basic framework for implementing REDD+ on a global level. Specifically, this framework provides monetary commitments from developed nations (30 billion USD between 2010 and 2012; 100 billion USD annually by 2020) to developing nations to support REDD+ activities and establishes a financial vehicle, the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund (GCF), to facilitate the transfer of these resources. It further specifies the intent of its signatories to pursue various financial methods, including markets, to promote mitigation strategies and to increase their cost-effectiveness. Significantly, the Accord also introduces the concept of “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” as a guiding principle; this approach recognizes that the unique circumstances of individual countries must be taken into account when designing climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. This is particularly relevant to the developing world, where social and economic development and poverty eradication continue to be overriding priorities.

4. Challenges to a REDD+ Agreement

REDD+ must overcome challenges including finance & carbon accounting, governance, sovereignty & indigenous rights issues, & a lack of international coordination in order to reach an international agreement.

While support for efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation has been expressed at the highest political levels, including the Group of 8 and the United Nations General Assembly, a legally binding international agreement has yet to materialize, despite the framework provided in Copenhagen. The main obstacles to achieving this objective can be divided into three categories: finance and carbon accounting; lack of international coordination; and governance, sovereignty, and indigenous rights issues. Progress toward signing an international agreement depends on the resolution of these issues.

Finance and carbon accounting

Though the financial commitments made to REDD+ in Copenhagen extend to 2020, these commitments are currently voluntary and nonbinding. Furthermore, it is unclear what financial mechanism will support REDD+ afterwards. The assumption has always been that a global carbon market, in which forest-carbon credits are traded to offset industrial countries' emissions, would replace donor-based funding; market mechanisms are generally considered to be more suitable for providing the sustained flow of financial resources necessary for program longevity (Chutz 44). However, no such global carbon market has materialized to date and the United States' failure in July to ratify a cap-and-trade system does not bode well for one emerging in the near future.

Further, the existence of a global carbon market is critical to the long-term sustainability of an international REDD+ strategy. However, should one evolve, there is no guarantee that forest carbon products will be traded in it. For inclusion, REDD+ projects must produce credible and verifiable forest-carbon products. But most developing countries currently lack the technology and capacity to do so. Confounding this is the absence of international consensus on how a forest is defined as well as the carbon accounting methodologies that will be used to establish emissions baselines and measure and monitor forest carbon stocks. There is also a high level of risk associated with monetizing forest-carbon credits. For example, unforeseen circumstances, like illegal logging and forest fires, may prevent the delivery of credits. Or, changes to existing and future cap and trade regimes may render forest-carbon credits uncompetitive. Reducing these risks is crucial to developing an efficient functioning market.

Lack of international coordination

A number of diverse stakeholders are currently involved in REDD+ activities. Among the most prominent are the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD), the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), and the REDD+ Partnership. While these initiatives are providing a valuable foundation for the advancement of REDD+ approaches, implementation that would quickly impact climate change on a global scale will require an official, international coordinating body. This body must be capable of synthesizing the financial, technical, monitoring, and project-specific aspects of REDD+ under one authoritative overarching structure. Individually, UN-REDD, the FCPF, and the REDD+ Partnership all possess strengths that would further benefit from a coordinating body under the UNFCCC. Once standards are

Existing REDD+ Stakeholders

UN-REDD

PROGRAMME Launched in 2008, UN-

REDD is an initiative jointly overseen by FAO, UNDP and UNEP. It seeks to provide capacity building to nations interested in implementing REDD+ strategies. Currently 12 countries receive financial support for REDD+ programs and an additional 17 receive partner status. UN-REDD also researches guidelines pertaining to measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of carbon emissions and reductions and works to engage indigenous communities in all stages of REDD+ strategies.

FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY

Launched in 2008 and sponsored by the World Bank, the FCPF provides

performance-based payments to tropical and subtropical forest countries for REDD+ related emission reductions. The FCPF offers capacity building and has created a REDD+ readiness framework to help countries prepare for future systems of financial incentives. Participating countries are expected to develop emissions reference scenarios and design a monitoring system to determine its particular readiness.

REDD+ Partnership

Established by 50 countries in

2010, the main purpose of the REDD+ Partnership is to allow for immediate action while aiming to improve the effectiveness and coordination of REDD+ initiatives and finance, facilitate knowledge transfer, and build capacity. It was created as an interim platform that will be replaced by, or incorporated with, an overarching UNFCCC REDD+ mechanism established by the Conference of Parties.

chosen by the international community at the COP, the Green Climate Fund will begin to fund projects based on these standards. A UNFCCC coordinating body is essential for quick and fluid efforts to scale up REDD+ projects, especially in terms of the funding application process.

Specifically, the expertise of UN-REDD lies mainly within the realm of capacity building. With 9 pilot projects currently underway, UN-REDD's experience makes it a useful program that could continue to provide the resources necessary to help potential REDD+ projects build capacity to become "ready" for a REDD+ mechanism. The FCPF primarily places its focus on the financial aspects of REDD+, and would most likely prove useful in matters related to funding within project applications. As for the REDD+ Partnership, its current platform for sharing knowledge, which includes a vast database, would prove invaluable to future efforts to coordinate efforts under the UNFCCC. In fact, the REDD+ Partnership was designed with the specific intent of acting as an interim framework until a UNFCCC mechanism was developed (REDD+ Partnership 2010).

Governance, sovereignty and indigenous rights issues

A concern for many developing countries is the loss of sovereignty over their forests, making them reluctant to sign a REDD+ agreement. Additionally, a challenge in attracting capital, whether donor-based, carbon-market generated or the result of private or multilateral investment, is government corruption in developing countries. Indonesia, for example, has a long track record of political corruption. In the 1990s, more than 5 billion USD was embezzled from a national reforestation fund ("Better REDD than Dead" 9). Though REDD+ is built on a performance-based strategy, corruption remains a concern because it is likely that efforts to manipulate the system will continue. To combat this, developed nations—the target investors—will demand accountability in the form of strict monitoring and verification standards. Negotiations of the terms of these standards will likely be contentious as they represent another potential threat to sovereignty.

Another contentious issue is the impact of REDD+ projects on the rights of indigenous peoples. Typically, most indigenous forest dwellers lack any legal title to their forests, which encourages land rights abuses. In Kenya, for example, Ogiek hunter-gatherers claim that they were expelled from their Mau forest following the launch of a UN-REDD project there ("Better REDD than Dead" 11). Though UN-REDD has recently made it a project condition to secure "free, prior and informed consent" of the affected indigenous people, skepticism remains as to how effective this policy will be, which may present a problem in finalizing a formal international agreement.

5.1 Program Design

A successful, comprehensive REDD+ program hinges on the financial mechanism that will support it. A phased implementation design, that transitions from donor-based funding to inclusion in markets, provides the most realistic option.

Ultimately, the long-term success of an international REDD+ strategy hinges on the financial mechanism that will support it. The Copenhagen Accord laid the groundwork for this mechanism by obtaining financial commitments from developed nations, mandating the creation of the GCF to facilitate the flow of financial resources from the developed to the developing world and by setting a goal of pursuing various cost-effective financial methods, including markets to support climate actions long term. In February 2010, the High-Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing was created to investigate potential financial mechanisms to assist developed nations meet their commitment of mobilizing 100 billion USD by 2020. In November 2010, they released their findings, concluding that meeting this goal would be “challenging, but feasible” (Friedman <http://www.NYTimes.com>). Their key recommendations include the achievement of a carbon price in the range of 20-25 USD per ton by 2020, the development of new public instruments including the auctioning of emissions allowances, carbon taxes, redeployment of fossil fuel subsidies and emissions pricing of international transport, and increased private investment flows for climate actions (“High Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing” www.un.org). These findings emphasize the importance of a future global carbon market and underscore the presence of a significant funding gap between the short and long term. Selecting a program design that will both ensure adequate initial public funding and facilitate the development of a long-term sustainable

Table 1: Phased Implementation of REDD+

Timeframe	Strategy	Role of Public Investment	Role of Private Investment
Initiation	Donor & public funding jump starts REDD+ projects	Critical	Minimal
Transition	Increase forest nation access to carbon markets	Important, but diminishing over time	Increasing importance
Full-scale	Achieve full inclusion in a global carbon market	Minimal	Complete

Source: adapted from Eliasch 126

Note: the timeframe is relative and depends on the speed at which capacity building measures occur and at which demand for certified emissions reductions credits grows.

market-based system is thus crucial. A phased implementation program design provides the most realistic option for fulfilling these objectives.

Using this program design, the implementation of an international REDD+ strategy will occur in three phases: initiation, transition and full scale, as illustrated in Table 1. The *initiation phase* will be financed primarily by donor and public funding (e.g. a portion of the 30 billion USD committed in the Copenhagen Accord) and will focus on coordinating existing activities within an international REDD+ framework, building country capacity to facilitate the development of credible forest-carbon products, and financing eligible REDD+ projects. This phase will evolve into a *transition phase*, which focuses on increasing forest nation access to carbon markets. Public funding will continue to play an important role, but private market-based investments will also begin to formally interact with the global REDD+ structure. Finally, the *full-scale phase* will see developed and developing nations as well as private investors interact in a global carbon market. However, the financing of this phase will not rely entirely on a global carbon market; complimentary markets aimed at sustainable forest products will also be exploited. This will allow hedging against the potential that a robust carbon market fails to emerge and ensure that the climate mitigation goals of REDD+ are met in the long term.

5.2 Assumptions

In order for REDD+ to be effective, a legally binding agreement must be reached.

The successful implementation of the proposed program rests squarely on the assumption that a legally binding international agreement, establishing the creation of a UNFCCC mechanism that will act to regulate and coordinate REDD+ efforts internationally, is achieved at the 16th Conference of Parties (COP 16) in Mexico. In order to ensure acceptance and credibility among the international community, the COP must define a standardized carbon accounting methodology, set criteria for and establish a performance monitoring and verification mechanism, make the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund operational, and allocate money from this fund for REDD+ projects. Further, this UNFCCC mechanism is intended to replace the REDD+ Partnership, which was created specifically as an interim program, and pick up where it left off. Finally, we assume that this agreement will mandate the implementation of this UNFCCC mechanism beginning January 1, 2011.

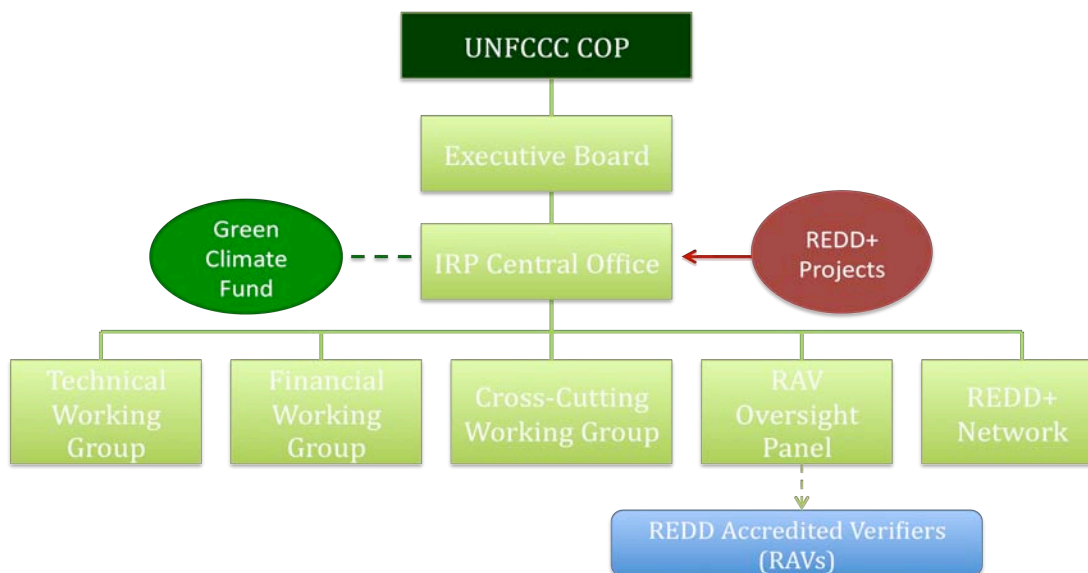
5.3 The International REDD+ Program

The International REDD+ Program is proposed as the mechanism that will regulate & coordinate REDD+ efforts globally.

Assuming these standards are already in place through a future COP decision, we have proposed the creation of a UNFCCC umbrella organization called the International REDD+ Program (IRP). The IRP will be responsible for regulating and coordinating REDD+ efforts on a global level, and will be governed by the decisions taken by the COP. Creating the IRP under the UNFCCC ensures the best chance of its success, as it will carry the authority of the Convention and provide a direct line to GCF funding. The IRP will also benefit from UNFCCC support, especially in the areas of human resources, administration and information technology. The overall purpose of the IRP will be to assess and select REDD+ project candidates for GCF funding and to facilitate REDD+ capacity building activities. In order to best carry out these

functions, the IRP will be composed of an Executive Board (EB), an IRP Central Office, three Working Groups, a REDD+ Accredited Verifier (RAV) Oversight Panel, and a REDD+ Network, as seen in Figure 3 (*Note: see Appendix 7.1 for a complete organizational overview*).

Figure 3: Organizational structure of the proposed International REDD+ Program (IRP)



Executive Board

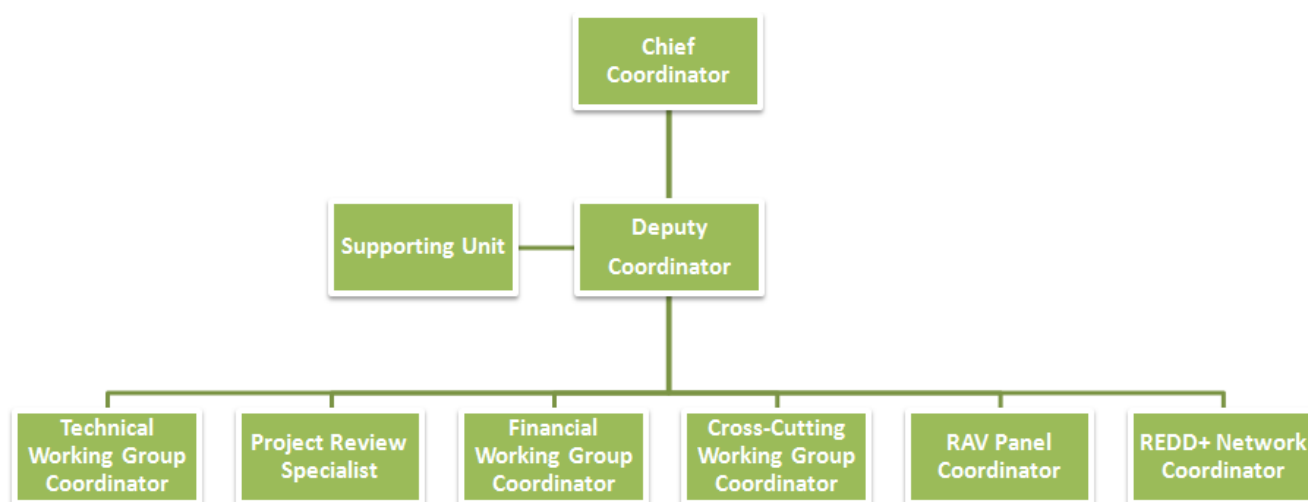
The Executive Board (EB) will provide a direct link to the UNFCCC and will execute decisions taken at the COP. Its main activities will be to execute COP decisions throughout the IRP and provide final approval of REDD+ projects for GCF funding and guidance to all IRP working groups. The COP will appoint fourteen EB members and hold them accountable for ensuring the IRP meets its objectives. The EB will be comprised of two co-chairs, one from a forested developing nation and one from an Annex 1 developed nation. The remaining 12 members (6 from developing countries and 6 from developed countries) will be government delegates appointed by the COP. Once the EB is elected, its members will choose the two co-chairs; these positions will rotate each year.

The EB will meet three times per year to discuss IRP Central Office achievements, review whether the IRP is working according to UNFCCC guidelines, and ensure that the criteria used to select and approve projects is up-to-date.

IRP Central Office

The IRP Central Office will coordinate all activities of the Working Groups, RAV Oversight Panel, and REDD+ Network. This office will also act as the initial filter of all REDD+ project applications, and will determine whether each proposal meets the general requirements established by the Executive Board. Once the Central Office approves an application, it will be submitted to each of the Working Groups for approval. The IRP Central Office will be composed of 10 members, two of which will form the Supporting Unit. This unit will contain a legal advisor and a financial advisor who will provide legal and financial expertise relating to internal and external affairs.

Figure 4: Organizational structure of the IRP Central Office



The IRP Central Office will coordinate a meeting with all IRP offices three times a year to address internal issues, specifically those related to performance management. These meetings will serve as a checkpoint to assess whether the budget is being allocated correctly, personnel are meeting their objectives and tasks are being distributed efficiently, etc. It will also serve to establish a time throughout the year when these issues might be resolved. Additionally, the application criteria and process will be reviewed, taking external issues regarding REDD+ Projects into account.

Working Groups

To support REDD+ projects at the national and sub-national levels, three working groups will be established: the Technical Working Group, the Financial Working Group, and the Cross-Cutting Working Group. Each working group will consist of two co-chairs and six vice-chairs, appointed by the COP. Each selected country will delegate a representative to take a position within the working group. In addition, one coordinator and one administrative staff, appointed by the UNFCCC, will be placed in each working group to ensure that the activities and decisions of working group members are efficiently coordinated. REDD+ project proposals must be approved by each working group, who will review the sections of the proposal specific to their area of expertise. If the proposal meets all established criteria, it will be sent back to the IRP Central Office for distribution to the EB.

The *Technical Working Group* will ensure that applications follow official methodologies for carbon accounting as well as standard criteria for monitoring and verification. Additionally, it will keep the IRP up-to-date on new developments involving technologies that may be relevant to REDD+, as well as continue to research best practices for carbon accounting, monitoring and verification activities. Technical Working Group staff will be required to possess an expertise in the areas of carbon accounting and monitoring as well as forest ecology. They will meet twice a year to discuss current issues and research related to new techniques of carbon accounting and new REDD+ development technologies, among other technical topics.

The *Financial Working Group* will manage the flow of funds received from the GCF for national and sub-national REDD+ projects and will provide financial guidance when

necessary. It will also review the budget design of all project proposals and ensure that project accounting practices are robust and transparent. To facilitate the transition of the IRP to a market-based system in the long term, this group will also be responsible for establishing a transition strategy that allows REDD+ participate in future carbon and sustainable forest product markets. Financial Working Group staff must possess an expertise in budgeting, cost-analysis, carbon credits and carbon markets. Twice a year, this group will meet to discuss new financial mechanisms and will assess current research progress regarding the creation of a financial strategy that will prepare IRP for the future.

The *Cross-Cutting Working Group* will identify and address emerging and current issues affecting REDD+ projects, including the rights of indigenous people, poverty alleviation, land tenure, biodiversity, gender equality and empowerment. During their bi-annual meetings, they will discuss arising problems, current trends within each region, and ways that REDD+ could positively contribute to and/or work towards alleviating other issues surrounding deforestation.

RAV Oversight Panel

For the purpose of transparency, monitoring, and quality control, the RAV Oversight panel will train and oversee two types of REDD+ Accredited Verifiers (RAV): Regional RAVs and Local RAVs. Regional RAVs will ensure that the details outlined in all project proposals match the existing conditions on the ground (e.g. extent of forest cover and species diversity). Local RAVs will, as their name suggests, be hired from the local community, and will continually verify on-the-ground progress and carbon emissions reductions on-site. They will be selected and trained based on IRP-established criteria and will be assigned to individual projects permanently. Further, to avoid potential conflicts of interest and corruption, Local RAVs will be employed by the UNFCCC and will act independently with respect to REDD+ projects. Initially, every REDD+ project will be assigned one Local RAV; however, as the IRP grows, it is expected that each RAV will be responsible for reviewing more than one REDD+ project.

REDD+ Network

The REDD+ Network will harmonize REDD+ activities by developing and coordinating a network of all stakeholders involved in REDD+ initiatives. Its primary role will be to facilitate cooperation among these stakeholders and to provide knowledge-sharing. It will also conduct periodic evaluations of on-going REDD+ projects in order to identify knowledge gaps for future application criteria and training purposes. Existing REDD+ databases will be combined and managed by this group as well as program publications and reports. The REDD+ Network will be comprised of one coordinator and four administrative staff members. Additionally, if a project proposal is not approved at any point in the process, the application will be sent to the REDD+ Network, which will then evaluate the current issues and identify capacity building strategies that will facilitate their future readiness and thus IRP application qualification.

Qualified applicants

Any REDD+ project, whether potential or existing, that deems itself ready for implementation is encouraged to apply to IRP. Applicants can range from a small forest community to a country, state, or region.

Case Study: Juma Reserve Project, Brazil

At the moment, developing countries and forest communities around the world are faced with a choice: if they cut down their trees for logging or use of the land afterwards for agriculture, cattle farming, or palm oil plantations, they will receive a clearly defined amount of money. However, if they leave the trees standing, a clear economic benefit does not exist for doing so. Currently, the choice is pretty heavily weighted in favor of deforestation, as is the situation in the Amazon Rainforest. Today, 17% of the Amazon's original forest cover has already been destroyed, and 3.7% of this has occurred between the years of 2000 and 2007 alone (<http://www.fas-amazonas.org/>).

As a result, the State of Amazonas in Brazil implemented a program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation in 2003. Created in response to earlier international discussions regarding REDD+ and well before Copenhagen, the Juma Reserve Project currently works

Juma Reserve Amazonas, Brazil

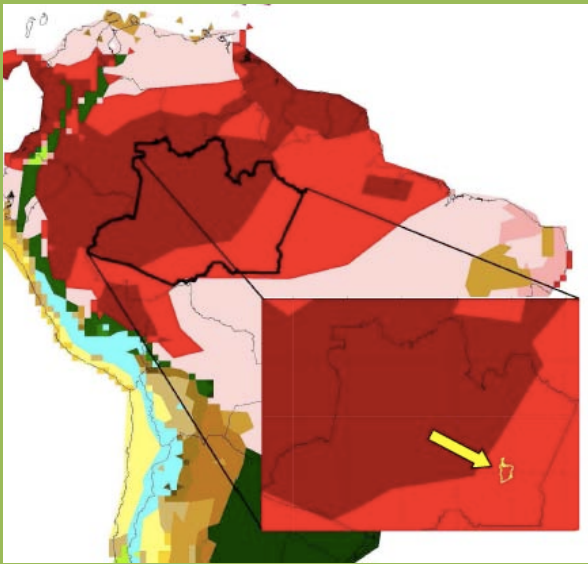


Image Credit: <http://www.fas-amazonas.org/pt/secao/parceiros>

towards mitigating climate change through the preservation of forests and their carbon stocks. Marriott International financed the project for its first four years, and Bradesco Bank, along with the state government and a number of sponsors including Coca Cola and Samsung, currently donate to a permanent fund set aside for its implementation. This funding allows the local NGO, Fundação Amazonas Sustentável (FAS), to carry out all necessary measures to control and monitor deforestation inside the Juma Reserve and surrounding areas. This project has been largely successful thus far, especially given that much of the money is transferred directly to the community, improving their quality of life by providing jobs, such as forest monitoring, and funding for schools and other community programs. The goal of the project is to stop deforestation until 2050. If this target is met, the Juma Project alone will prevent an estimated 3.6 billion tons of CO₂ from escaping into the atmosphere (<http://www.fas-amazonas.org/>).

A project like this, in terms of sustainability of funding and community involvement, is an excellent model for REDD+. IRP, along with a project's particular stakeholders, could provide an additional source of support to existing projects like this one. Even if the formation of IRP takes place, thriving REDD+ projects independent from the UN will most likely still exist and will not be required to become an IRP-funded project. However, existing projects will be encouraged to apply to IRP if they see fit. Those in charge of managing the Juma Project, for example, could apply to IRP if they were in need of more funding, or if they sought to operate under the harmonized IRP standards in order to more easily transition into a carbon market.

5.4 Performance Management

A successful performance management is essential the effective operation of the International REDD+ program, with the ultimate aim of mitigating climate change.

The IRP will design, implement, and maintain a program-wide quality management and control system to ensure that it achieves its goals. Internal performance will be measured by the IRP Executive Board against the measurements defined by this system. This assessment will be used to inform the annual work plans and budget. Results will be synthesized and presented annually to the UNFCCC, GCF and COP. However, the overall success of the IRP will be measured by the success of REDD+ projects. Therefore, performance management will concentrate primarily on the application, funding, and verification aspects of REDD+ projects, as outlined below. Accurate reporting is also essential to ensure that the IRP has sufficient support from the UNFCCC and adequate funding from the GCF to finance all eligible REDD+ projects.

REDD+ project applications and funding

The IRP Central Office will measure the number of projects approved against the number of project applications received in order to identify potential administrative bottlenecks (e.g. insufficient staff to process applications), application design flaws (e.g. unclear guidelines and requirement definitions), or eligibility issues (e.g. applicants not meeting the funding criteria). This information will be used to provide feedback that will be used by the IRP to remedy the aforementioned problems (e.g. hire additional staff or provide training on REDD+ project criteria to project applicants).

REDD+ project verification

After a REDD+ project receives initial funding, a Local RAV will be assigned to it for its complete duration. The Local RAV will verify the project's actual carbon emissions against its projected carbon emissions reductions. These results will be used to develop future emissions reductions milestones, which will be incorporated into each project's performance measurement criteria. The RAV Oversight Panel will conduct targeted audits of both Regional and Local RAVs to identify and troubleshoot potential problems with the verification process. In the event that the results of the audit find an RAV deficient, the employment contract will either be terminated or additional training will be provided, at the discretion of the RAV Oversight Panel.

2011 goals

The major IRP goals for 2011 center on securing all staff (permanent and contract) and appointees, developing project review and approval criteria for REDD+ projects, training RAVs, and ultimately proposing potential REDD+ project candidates to the GCF for funding. Hiring for all departments will be completed within the first two months of program initiation. Regional RAVs will be contracted by the end of April, and will begin training in May.

Simultaneous to the Regional RAV hiring process, the remaining IRP departments will establish project application criteria; beginning in June the IRP will begin reviewing applications, so that by the end of the year projects have been submitted to the GCF to receive funding.

Local RAVs will not be trained until the end of the year, in anticipation of projects receiving funding.

5.5 International REDD+ Program Budget

The proposed IRP budget is heavily dependent upon the availability of funds from the Green Climate Fund

It is assumed that the GCF will receive 50%, or 15 billion USD, of the total 30 billion USD international commitment for climate adaptation and mitigation for the period 2010-2012. As per the Copenhagen Accord, funding will be allocated equally between mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. It is further assumed that 17% of the total mitigation budget, or 637,500,000 USD, will be allocated to the IRP for the period 2011. Of this, 6,607,880 USD will be used during the first year for administrative expenses associated with executive meetings, training, personnel (including benefits), travel, general operating expenses, supplies and materials, furniture and equipment and miscellaneous costs. The remaining funds, 630,033,096 USD, will be allocated to REDD+ projects and future IRP activities, as seen in Figure 5. During year two, the IRP expects to fund 28 projects: 19 small-sized, 6 medium-sized and 1 large-sized. However, should mitigation activities receive increased funding through the GCF, the IRP will be able to finance more projects. A more detailed description of the budget can be found in Appendix 7.2.

Figure 5: International REDD+ Program Budget

■ Administrative Expenses ■ Project funding

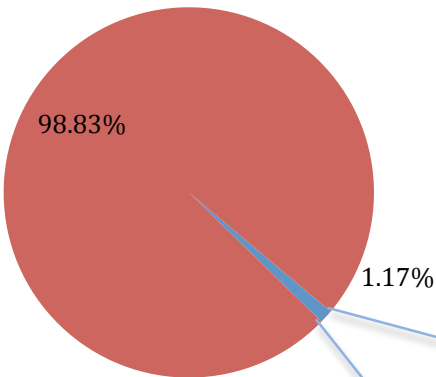
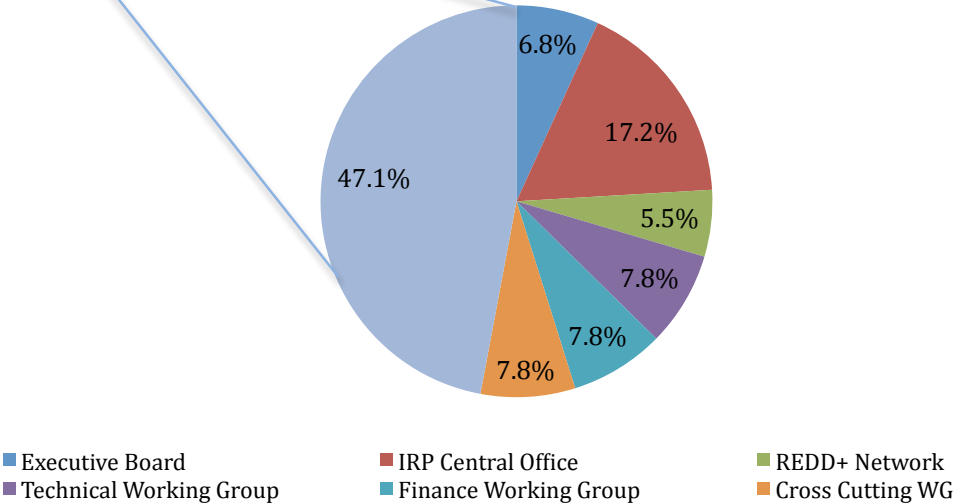


Figure 6: IRP Budget Allocations by Department



6. Conclusion

At the writing of this paper, the UNFCCC's Conference of Parties (COP) is convened in Cancún, Mexico at their 16th meeting, where REDD+ is one of the many items on the agenda as the international community seeks to address the threats of global climate change. It remains to be seen if a legal successor to the Kyoto Protocol will be adopted, and if decisions will be made to further REDD+. While it is encouraging that voluntary commitments and initiatives have already begun to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation worldwide, if catastrophic climate change is to be avoided, it is critical that deforestation and degradation are addressed and a global binding mechanism to guarantee it is established. REDD+ is a crucial part of the solution to this. The International REDD+ Program is our proposal to address issues that, until now, have been disregarded from institutional agreements.

It is important to reiterate that the proposed IRP is heavily dependent upon a set of assumptions that have yet to be realized. Chief among these assumptions are the international agreement to be taken under the framework of the COP, monetary commitments made to the Green Climate Fund, and what percentage of these funds will be allocated to REDD+ activities. Other assumptions include standard definitions and carbon accounting methodologies. It is critical that the uncertainties highlighted in this report be resolved in a legally binding agreement so that REDD+ can move forward.

REDD+ provides a promising strategy that not only has the potential to significantly cut CO₂ emissions, but also to protect ecosystems and compensate the developing country for the economical losses they face in keeping their trees standing. Furthermore, it offers a solution that is more cost-effective than other mitigation options.

It is obvious that the loss of forests will be devastating to the millions of people and many more millions of terrestrial species that depend on them. However, it must also be recognized that, due to their significant role in climate change mitigation, the loss of forests will be disastrous to the entire Earth and all its inhabitants. If the international community is not able to come to an agreement soon, it may be too late.

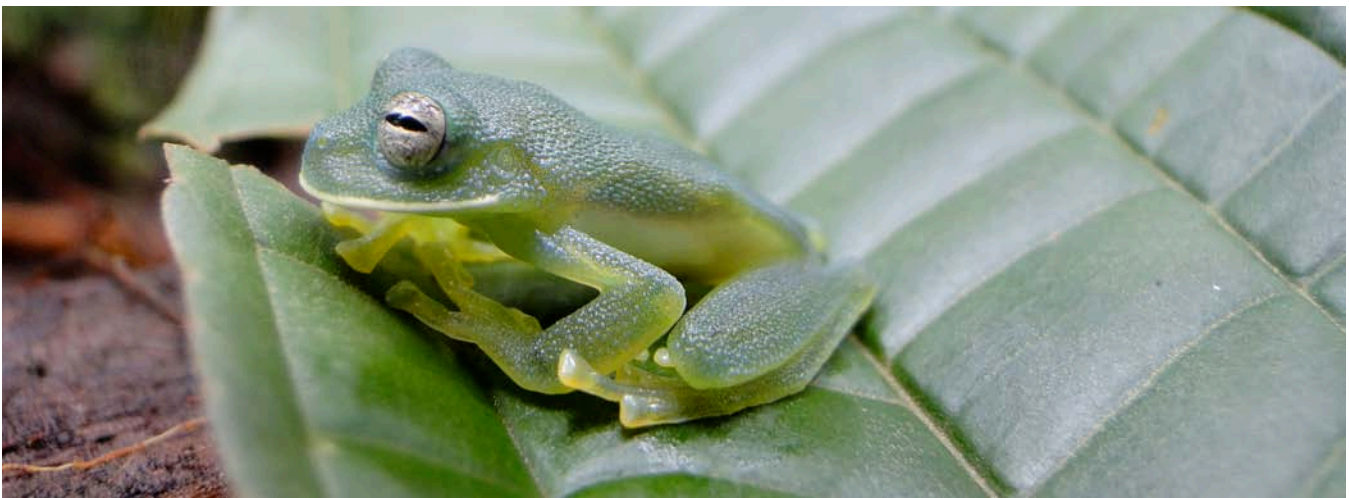


Photo credit: Rebecca Brunner

7. Appendices

7.1 IRP Organizational Structure

DEPARTMENT	STAFF		FUNCTION	APPOINTED BY	NUMBER OF STAFF
Executive Board (EB)	Government representatives		Oversee the implementation of IRP. The EB is where the main decisions about the IRP program are made and where REDD+ project proposals are approved.	COP	14
	Co-chairs		The co-chairs are the "heads" of the EB and they ensure that IRP criteria match UNFCCC requirements and mandate.		2
IRP Central Office	Chief Coordinator		Head of entire organization. Liaison between EB and IRP.	EB	1
	Deputy Coordinator		Assist Chief Coordinator by ensuring IRP criteria are implemented by different groups. Makes sure that the criteria used to review projects is updated.		1
	Review Project Specialists		Study and analyze each of the project proposals that are sent to IRP. Ensure that they fulfill basic criteria determined by the UNFCCC and IRP.		3
	Administrative Staff		In charge of general services and logistics of the office.		2
	Supporting Unit	Chief Coordinator	Ensure that REDD+ projects comply with all legal issues regarding national and international legislation. Additionally, in the case of conflict or legal controversies, the Chief Coordinator will be in charge of solving such problems, according to legal requirements.		1
		Administrative Staff	In charge of internal budget and making the liaison between IRP and GCF. Review expenses by department to ensure internal money is spent correctly.		1
Working Groups	Coordinator		Ensure that the activities and decisions of Working Group members are efficiently coordinated. REDD+ project proposals must be approved by each Working Group, who will review the sections of the proposal specific to their area of expertise.	UNFCCC	1
	Administrative Staff		In charge of general services and logistics of the office.	Coordinator	1
RAV Oversight Panel	Coordinator		Coordinate Regional RAVs and Local RAVs; ensure that they have the knowledge needed to accredit REDD+ projects; ensure training is consistent with IRP criteria.	EB	1
	Administrative Staff		In charge of general services and logistics of the office.	Coordinator	1
	Regional RAVs (Contractors)		Ensure that specifications in project proposals match the existing conditions on the ground (e.g. extent of forest cover and species diversity). They will be selected and trained based on IRP-established criteria and assigned to every project	UNFCCC	5
	Local RAVs		Verify on-the-ground progress and carbon emissions reductions.	Coordinator	28
REDD+ Network	Coordinator		Ensure that liaison between REDD+ Projects and various organizations is productive; identify new organizations able to help achieve REDD+ readiness; link governments	EB	1
	Administrative Staff		There will be one administrative staff for every region and they will be in charge of connecting REDD+ projects that are not ready with the different organizations that will help them achieve REDD+ readiness. They will also design workshops for the community and create forums to discuss REDD+ issues in order to foster REDD+ readiness.	Coordinator	4

7.2 IRP Budget

Executive Board	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum (USD)
Executive Board Meetings	139,562.50	3			418,687.50
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000.00
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total Executive Board					428,687.50

IRP Central Office	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Chief Coordinator (D-1)	116,545	1	1.25	1	145,681
UNFCCC Deputy Coordinator (P-5)	101,530	1	1.25	1	126,913
Project Review Specialists (P-4 x 3)	88,660	3	1.25	1	332,475
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS x2)	44,330	2	1.25	1	110,825
UNFCCC Chief Coordinator (D-1)	116,545	1	1.25	1	145,681
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	1	1.25	1	55,413
Office Training Workshop	122,500	1			122,500
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total IRP Central Office					1,049,488

REDD+ Network	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Coordinator (P-3)	75,075	1	1.25	1	93,844
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	4	1.25	1	221,650
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total Network Secretariat					325,494

Technical Working Group	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Coordinator (P-3)	75,075	1	1.25	1	93,844
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	1	1.25	1	55,413
Technical Working Group Meeting	111,500	3			334,500
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total Technical WG					493,756

Finance Working Group	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Coordinator (P-3)	75,075	1	1.25	1	93,844
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	1	1.25	1	55,413
Finance Working Group Meeting	111,500	3			334,500
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total Financial WG Costs					493,756

Cross Cutting WG	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Coordinator (P-3)	75,075	1	1.25	1	93,844
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	1	1.25	1	55,413
Cross Cutting Working Group Meeting	111,500	3			334,500
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
Total Cross Cutting WG					493,756

RAV Oversight Panel	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	25% Benefits	% of Year	Sum
UNFCCC Coordinator (P-3)	75,075	1	1.25	1	93,844
UNFCCC Administrative Staff (GS)	44,330	1	1.25	1	55,413
RAV (P-3) (Contractors)	75,075	0	1.25	0.5	-
Verification Budget	-	28			-
Training (Project-Dedicated RAVs)		28		0.083333333	-
Accreditation Panel Meeting	111,500	3			334,500
Travel					-
General Operating Expenses					-
Supplies and Materials					-
Furniture & Equipment					-
Miscellaneous Costs					10,000
UNFCCC Shared Service/Overhead					-
				RAV Oversight Panel	493,756

Administrative Expense Subtotals	6,607,880
13% Overhead	859,024
Administrative Expenses Grand	7,466,904
Total GCF Budget	637,500,000
Project Funding	630,033,096

8. Glossary

Adaptation: in regards to climate change, adaptation refers to strategies that assume effects of climate change will occur, and thus prepares for the consequences accordingly.

Afforestation: the establishment of forest plantations on land that was not classified as forest for 50 years prior.

Annex I: nations that signed the Kyoto Protocol that are required to cap their emissions of greenhouse gases and are committed to emissions reduction targets. These are the 36 countries that the UNFCCC identified for emissions reductions.

Annex II: nations that are members of the UNFCCC as well as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. These nations have agreed to help developing nations combat climate change through technological and financial assistance.

Baseline: a baseline is the trend of carbon emissions based on a “business-as-usual” scenario. Baselines provide a framework for emissions reductions and a basis to assess the success of a REDD+ program. They can be based on historical or projected data.

Business-as-usual: a projected carbon emissions growth trend based on the assumption that there will be no reduction measures.

Biomass: biological material from living or once-living organisms that stores carbon. It can be burned as a source of energy.

Carbon credit: a generic term reflecting a value assigned to the reduction or offset of greenhouse gas emissions. One carbon credit is equal to one ton of carbon dioxide.

Carbon price: the economic value of an amount of greenhouse gas emissions from anthropogenic causes.

Carbon reservoir/sink: a feature (natural or manmade) that absorbs atmospheric carbon dioxide (e.g. oceans, forests).

Carbon sequestration: the process by which natural systems store carbon in different chemical forms.

Copenhagen Accord: non-binding document signed at the 15th Conference of the Parties where signatories agreed to maintain global temperature rises below 2 degrees Celsius and sets up REDD+ as an effort to mitigate climate change through emissions reductions.

Conference of the Parties (COP): the signatories of the UNFCCC; the COP meets annually to discuss progress with issues dealing with climate change.

Deforestation: the conversion of forested land to non-forested land through human activity.

Degradation: human-induced long-term loss of forest, characterized by the reduction of tree crown cover, but not yet considered as complete deforestation.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): specialized agency of the United Nations that leads efforts to overcome world hunger. It acts as a central forum and serves both developing and developed nations.

Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF): global partnership focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, forest carbon stock conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Green Climate Fund (GCF): operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention, to support projects, programs and policies related to mitigation including REDD-plus, adaptation,

capacity-building, technology development and transfer.

Greenhouse gases (GHG): gases in the atmosphere that absorb and re-emit radiation in the Earth's atmosphere, causing the warming of the Earth's atmospheric temperature that is known as the greenhouse effect. The primary greenhouse gases are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.

Group of 8: forum formed by Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, The United Kingdom and The United States. It meets every year to discuss issues related to economy, development and growth.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): scientific panel of the UNFCCC that provides the UN with information on climate change.

International REDD+ Program (IRP): hypothetical UNFCCC umbrella organization that replaces the REDD+ Partnership and picks up where it left off.

Leakage: when efforts to reduce emissions in one area lead to an increase in carbon emissions in another area.

Mitigation: in regards to climate change, mitigation implies efforts to make the effects of climate change less severe through preventative actions, such as REDD+.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD): an initiative to cut carbon emissions by including "avoided deforestation" as part of an eventual carbon market mechanism. Through REDD, countries are incentivized to avoid deforestation.

REDD+ Accredited Verifier (RAV): a component of the proposed IRP. **Regional RAVs** will ensure that the details outlined in all project proposals match the existing conditions on the ground. **Local RAVs** will continually verify on-the-ground progress and carbon emissions reductions on-site.

REDD-plus (REDD+): an addition to REDD (see above) that includes sustainable forest management, the enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and incentivizes reforestation and afforestation in developing countries.

The REDD+ Partnership: global platform that enables effective transparent and coordinated fast action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.

Reforestation: replanting or replenishing a previously forested area or a degraded forest area.

United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD): a UN program created to assist developing countries prepare and implement national REDD+ strategies, and builds on the convening power and expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): the UN's global development network assisting nations on their solutions to global and national development challenges.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): an international environmental treaty originally signed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (informally known as the Earth Summit) in 1992 that agrees to stabilize atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic contributions to climate change. The UNFCCC currently has 192 signatories.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): coordinates UN environmental activities, assisting developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices.

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