



MEDIA RESOURCE FOR REPORTING ON THE UN-REDD PROGRAMME AND REDD+

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



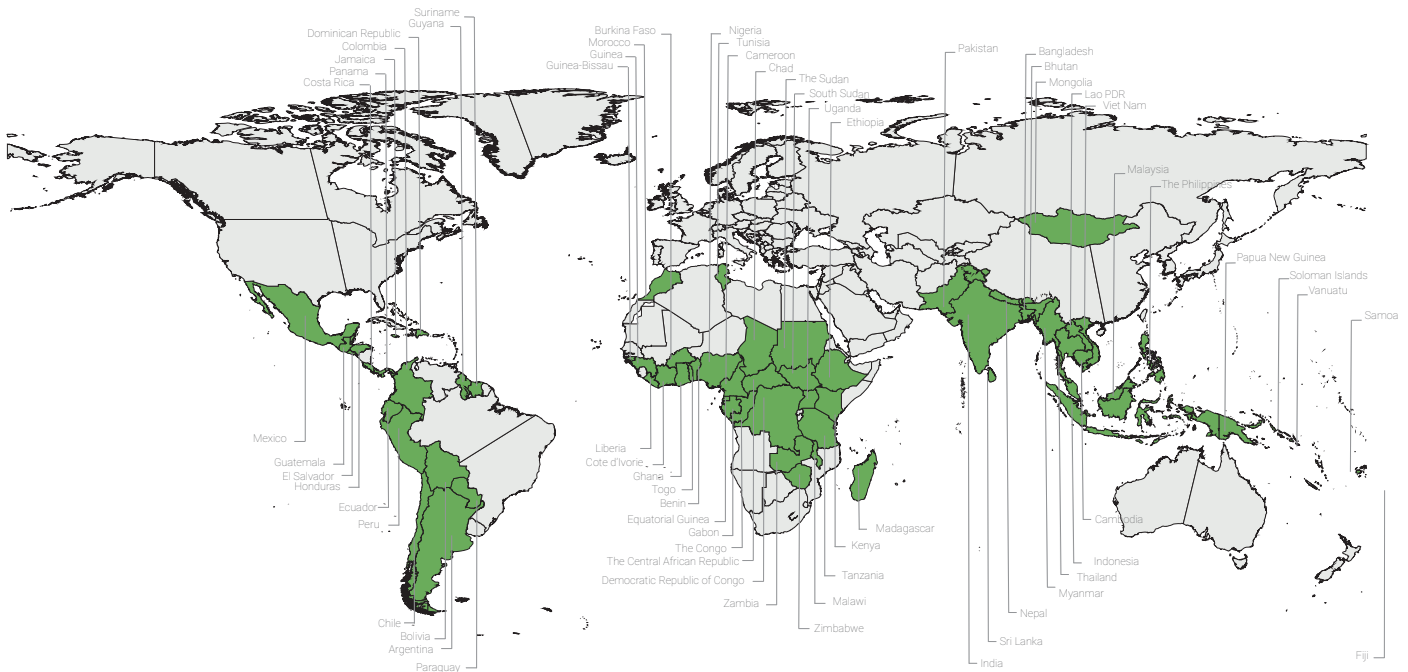
Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



UN
environment

ABOUT UN-REDD PROGRAMME

Partner Countries of the UN-REDD Programme



In addition, support to Cook Islands, Gambia, Kribati, Marshall Islands, Niger, Palau, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tongo and Tuvalu.

Today, deforestation and forest degradation – through agricultural expansion, conversion to pastureland, charcoal production, destructive logging and forest fires, among others – account for approximately 12 per cent of total global greenhouse gas emissions. This is more than the entire global transportation sector.

Without massively reducing emissions from the forest and land-use sector, stabilizing the increase in the global average temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius will not be achieved. Forests offer the most immediate and cost-effective solution to curb climate change at scale, since halting and reversing deforestation could deliver 30 per cent of the climate solution.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is an international mechanism established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It aims to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests by offering results-based payment incentives for developing countries to protect their forests.

Launched in 2008, the UN-REDD Programme supports partner countries with technical assistance, capacity-building and policy advice to help them access REDD+ financing. It is the first joint global initiative of the United Nations on climate change and builds on the convening role and technical expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment).

Working with 64 partner countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, the UN-REDD Programme has shown that it is possible to improve livelihoods and increase agricultural productivity and food security, while halting and even reversing deforestation. Through its work, it has given previously marginalized populations a voice in relevant decision-making and is guiding countries to engage in policy reforms and increase transparency.

FAQ

Why are forests relevant in the fight against climate change?

Forests cover over 31 per cent of the world's land surface and play a crucial role in mitigating climate change by acting as a carbon sink, absorbing and storing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere that contribute to global warming. Forests absorb roughly two billion tons of carbon dioxide every year, which is more than the emissions produced by the United States' entire transportation sector. When destroyed, trees release this stored carbon dioxide back into the atmosphere.

In addition to mitigating climate change, forests contribute to important ecosystem services, including water regulation, soil conservation and biodiversity preservation. Forests are also home to 80 per cent of the world's terrestrial biodiversity and 1.6 billion people worldwide depend on them for their livelihoods.

It is therefore crucial that forests are conserved and REDD+ offers a broad range of social, environmental and economic benefits to developing countries and forest communities for such efforts. Article 5 of the Paris Agreement formally recognizes the integral role of forests as part of the climate solution, which includes several REDD+ elements.

How dramatic is deforestation?

Although the rate of deforestation has slowed down in recent years and efforts are under way to plant new forests and restore degraded lands, the net loss of forest lands is still over three million hectares each year. This is more than eight football fields every minute. Between 1990 and 2015, approximately 129 million hectares of forest were lost, which is roughly the size of South Africa. Most loss occurs in tropical forests with high carbon stock, largely due to cattle, soy, palm oil and charcoal production.



What is the difference between REDD+, REDD+ projects and the UN-REDD Programme?

REDD+ is a mechanism developed by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The UN-REDD Programme is a joint United Nations initiative that helps countries develop the capacities needed to meet the UNFCCC's REDD+ requirements. Other public actors, such as the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), work towards the same goal.

Private REDD+ carbon projects are not affiliated with or supervised by the UN-REDD Programme in any way, nor are their operations frameworks set by the Programme.

How does the UN-REDD Programme ensure community engagement?

Approximately 70 million indigenous people depend on forests for their livelihoods and another 350 million rural people reside in or near them. However, they are often disproportionately impacted by ecosystem degradation and, despite being rights holders, often lack political power and a voice.

In line with its human-rights based approach and to increase the success rate of REDD+ activities, the UN-REDD Programme ensures the participation of all stakeholders in decision-making at the local, national and international levels.

Stakeholder engagement is not just a matter of integrating the views of the different actors affected by REDD+ – it also involves building partnerships, consensus and inclusive policies and processes that will make REDD+ long-lasting.

What does the '+' mean?

REDD+ was created through a series of international negotiations under the UNFCCC. REDD became REDD+ when negotiators expanded the list of activities that could qualify for incentives to include:

- conservation of existing forest carbon stocks
- sustainable forest management
- enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

What are the REDD+ requirements?

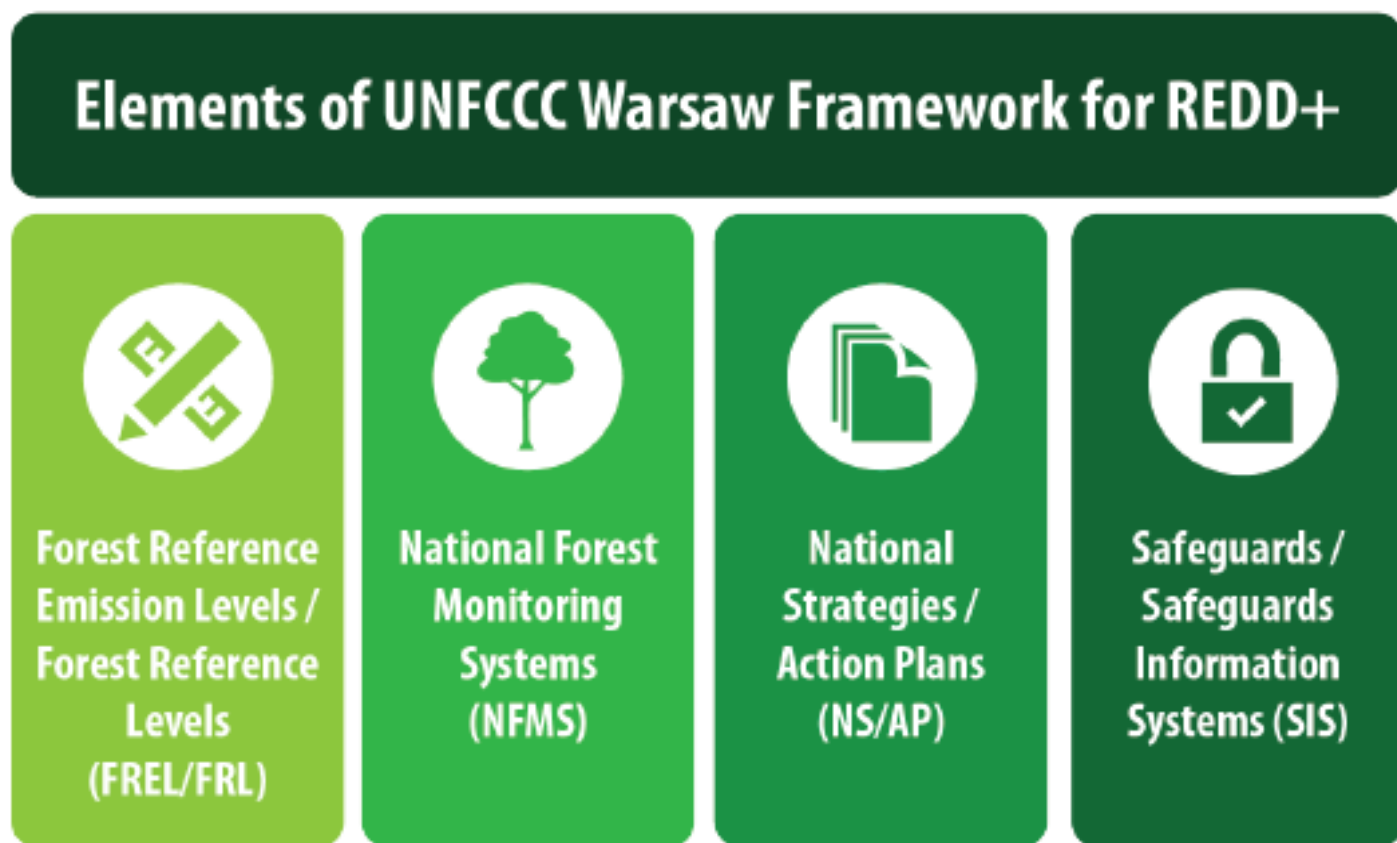
In 2013, Parties to the UNFCCC agreed to the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, which provides a clear set of rules that enable countries to implement REDD+ and receive results-based payments.

REDD+ has four elements – known as the Warsaw Pillars – which countries must meet to receive results-based payments (see Figure 1). These do not have to be achieved in any particular order, but all must be in place for a country to qualify.

1. National strategy or action plan: A road map developed by the country, detailing how they will reduce carbon emissions related to deforestation and forest degradation. The road map can be amended if necessary.
2. National forest monitoring system: A system established by the country to monitor their forests using remote sensing and/or ground-based approaches to monitor REDD+ activities and estimate forest carbon stocks, forest-related greenhouse gas emissions and changes in forest area.
3. Forest reference emission level or forest reference level: These are the baseline levels of forest sector greenhouse gas emissions against which a country's REDD+ performance will be assessed. These must be established and then submitted to and approved by the UNFCCC.
4. Safeguards information system: A system established by the country to ensure that REDD+ risks are mitigated. There are seven safeguards that must be addressed as guided by the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements.

FIGURE 1

The Four REDD+ Warsaw Pillars



Source: UN-REDD Programme

What are the different phases of REDD+?

Countries implement REDD+ through a phased approach, which can take several years to complete. Most of the work takes place between the initial readiness and implementation phases.

The phases defined by the UNFCCC are:

Phase 1: Readiness

Countries design national strategies and action plans with relevant stakeholders, build the capacity to implement REDD+, work on policies and measures related to REDD+ and design demonstration activities.

Phase 2: Demonstration

National strategies, policies and action plans proposed in Phase 1 are demonstrated and tested. This may include results-based demonstration activities and may require additional capacity-building and technology development and transfer. In this phase countries need to develop a credible system for measuring, reporting and verifying the effects of REDD+ activities on forest carbon. This system provides the basis for results-based payments.

Phase 3: Implementation

Results-based actions are implemented at the national level and results are fully measured, reported and verified. Countries can access results-based payments when they have completed the reporting, assessment and analysis processes under the UNFCCC.



What are some key achievements?

- Ecuador became the second country in the world, after Brazil, to complete all requirements under the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. Since 2012, the country has reported emission reductions of over 28 million metric tons of carbon dioxide (MMT CO₂) and in 2017 became the first country to receive Green Climate Fund co-financing to implement REDD+ policies and measures.
- Mexico launched the world's first fully operational safeguards information system to mitigate biodiversity and social risks. The system is online and staff operating the system at the national and state levels have been trained in its use.
- Mongolia is the first non-tropical country to implement REDD+. Its National REDD+ Programme will help the country to implement its renewed policy on forest resources, including its ambitious plans to increase forest cover and promote sustainable use and protection of forest resources.
- Sri Lanka made a major step towards implementing REDD+ by launching an online geoportal in February 2017 that compiles and disseminates forest-related data and analysis to help reduce threats to the country's forests and contribute to their preservation.

Why does REDD+ seem to be taking so long?

Establishing solid foundations for monitoring, measuring and safeguards, which are cornerstones of REDD+, is a time intensive activity, especially in countries where these systems have not existed previously. However, to date, a number of countries have already reported a total 6.3 gigatons of REDD+ emission reductions under the UNFCCC and REDD+ continues to hold tremendous potential for mitigating climate change and improving livelihoods.



David Riaño Cortés on Pexels

How are REDD+ payments being calculated?

To measure the carbon benefits of a REDD+ project, the amount of carbon stored in a particular forest must first be calculated, with a prediction then made on how much carbon could be saved by halting or slowing deforestation. This calculation is made by setting a forest reference level or baseline, which is usually based on historical rates of carbon emissions from deforestation.

However, carbon monitoring, reporting and verification present many technical and organizational challenges. Historical forest data are often unreliable or non-existent. Though new technologies, such as satellite imagery and computer modelling, have proven to be quick and accurate methods to measure carbon stocks, ground measurements with traditional forest inventory methods are still needed. Building the technology and capacity that developing countries require to carry out effective monitoring and accounting, as well as determining who will be responsible for checking and verifying measurements, are two key processes still under way in many UN-REDD Programme partner countries.

Does the UN-REDD Programme finance REDD+?

The Programme supports countries in designing and implementing their national REDD+ strategies, policies and action plans through technical assistance and capacity-building. Countries can receive up to US\$4 million from the UN-REDD Programme to support national programmes that aim to develop the four REDD+ Warsaw Pillars in the country.

The Parties to the UNFCCC agreed that results-based REDD+ payments to developing countries would come from a wide variety of sources, both public and private, and bilateral and multilateral. Among such sources are global financing entities, such as the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility.

CASE STUDY

Nigeria

Nigeria has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world, with less than 10 per cent of the country forested. Since 2010, the UN-REDD Programme has provided support to the country for its forest conservation, climate change mitigation and community development efforts.

A Community-Based REDD+ Programme (CBR+) has been developed for Cross River – a State with more than 50 per cent of Nigeria's remaining tropical high forests – which promotes forest management and biodiversity conservation, rural livelihoods improvement using climate smart approaches, capacity-building for participation in climate change programmes including REDD+, and sustainable energy alternatives. To date, more than 300 households across 21 communities have benefited from the CBR+ Programme, which targets women, men and young people. The outcomes and experiences from the programme feed into Nigeria's national REDD+ process.

Working with civil society groups, the Cross River State CBR+ Programme aims to redefine participatory and local-level forest management and conservation and improve rural livelihoods. Through this programme, villagers have improved the sustainable management of their community forest and lands through developing management plans and carrying out reforestation activities and enrichment planting of indigenous timber species and non-timber forest products. One example is bush mango, which can yield up to roughly US\$10,000/hectare annually from sales of mature fruits. Improved processing of cassava and the sustainable cultivation of cocoa are also enhancing productivity, resulting in increases to household income by at least 10 per cent in some target communities.

"The CBR+ Programme provides a platform to encourage dialogue among different groups and to ensure community experiences are fed into the CRS REDD+ Strategy", says Tony Atah, the stakeholder engagement specialist with the UN-REDD Programme in Nigeria. "Local communities have designed and implemented community-based initiatives to improve livelihoods, skills and land and forest management, providing insight on how REDD+ can appropriately respond to local circumstances to reduce carbon emission".

"The Programme is helping us rehabilitate our mangrove forest and think carefully about sustaining its productivity", says Chief Bassey Ekeng from Esierebum. "Our dependency on fishing and fuelwood from the mangroves means we need this forest standing if we are to survive, and through REDD+ activities we have developed a land and forest management plan, including practical steps to regenerate over five hectares of mangrove forest."

"With CBR+, we now have semi-mechanized equipment for the very first time in our community. This allows the women to produce cassava flour at home, doing in two days what used to take a week. We are now able to sell our produce and make money for our families", says Martina Afor from Bokalum. "The women are also included with men in training for improved cocoa production and sustainable harvesting of non-timber forest products like bush mango, and we have taken an active part in reviewing our community forest management plan. We feel involved and empowered, and our community is now giving us more recognition and support".

In the Cross River village of Edondon, the CBR+ project has brought together a divided community for the first time. "We have learned that successful forest management will be better enforced when there is social cohesion, political will and productive livelihoods", says Chief Barry Inyang. "With support from CBR+ and DEVCON, a local NGO that worked with us, we have developed a community forest management plan with bylaws, and we have started to regenerate degraded forest sites, improve livelihoods for women and also improve the value chain for cocoa, the major driver of forest loss".

UN-REDD Programme

Website:

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www.unredd.net

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