

What should REDD+ achieve? –Sustainable communities and good forest governance

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Sustainable communities and
good forest governance**

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I would like to speak my mind a little bit on this subject, focusing on the need to be moving towards sustainable communities, in particular, as well as good forest governance.

I present the basic argument that I want to make, why we focus on communities and governance, and then illustrate using Papua New Guinea. I have a short video as well that I would like to show you near the end of my presentation.

1. Basic argument/hypothesis

- REDD+ must be informed by a vision of communities that live in harmony with the natural environment and are able to meet their developmental aspirations,
- Without this vision, REDD+ policies could deny communities the opportunity to participate in SFM, leading to unsustainable conservation and development outcomes
- This will only happen through reform of forest governance to support more participatory forms of forest management and rural development

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The basic argument and hypothesis is whether we have REDD+ or we do not have REDD+, a development priority for all developing countries must surely be that they want to move towards sustainable rural communities. One way or another REDD+ is going to have to support this process. This is vision of communities that live in harmony with the natural environment and are able to meet their developmental aspirations. Of course, we know why we have the REDD+ safeguards. Without those REDD+ policies could deny communities the opportunity to participate in sustainable forest management leading to unsustainable conservation and development outcomes, taking us away from sustainable communities. This is only going to happen through reform of forest governance to support more participatory forms of forest management and rural development. We have seen these processes in developing countries of our region. We heard about it in Tanzania as well. Over the last 30 years or so, they move towards more participatory forms of

forest management, and REDD+ needs to support this process.

2. Why focus on communities?

- Forest important for local livelihoods and act as a safety net in times of hardship
 - Livelihoods for 1.6 billion people
 - Home for 60 million mostly indigenous people (UNFF 2009)
- Research shows communities can manage forests well when they can decide their own governance arrangements, and when benefits are greater than costs (Ostrom 1990; Dietz et al. 2003; Chhatre and Agrawal 2008; Ostrom 2009).

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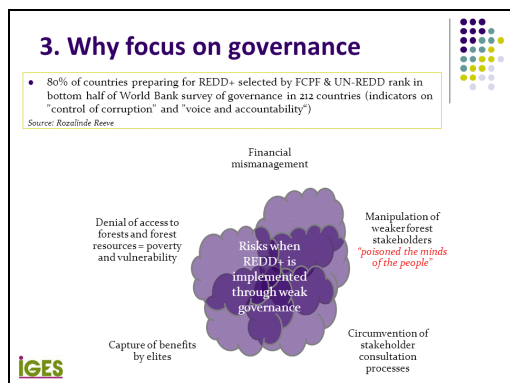
- Learning from past mistakes, many governments now support community-based forest management

	Cambodia	Indonesia	Philippines	Vietnam	India ¹	Nepal ²
Total forest land	10,500,000	135,900,000	15,880,000	19,000,000	77,470,000	5,500,000
Area under Community Forest Management	720,000	590,000	5,900,000	2,350,000	22,000,000 ³	1,653,000
	7%	0.43%	37%	12%	28%	30%
Community Forest Management programme	Community Forest Management (CFM)	Community Forest (Hutan Kemasyarakatan, HKM) Village Forest Management (Hutan Desa, HD)	Community Based Forest Management (CBFM)	Community Forest Management (CFM) pilot phase	Joint Forest Management (JFM)	Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs)

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Why focus on communities? We know forests are very important for the local livelihoods. About 1.6 billion people around the globe depending upon forest resource for their well-being. Many of these people are amongst the poorest in developing countries. We know about 60 million indigenous people are living within forests. We also have research that shows communities can be good forest managers. This is what governments are learning as well. When they have enough freedom to decide governance arrangements and when the benefits for them are greater than the costs.

Governments have learned from mistakes with forest management. Where forest management has been an exclusionary process, where rights have been given solely to concessioners or retained by the state for protected area management and so forth, the communities have been excluded from this. We saw the high rates of deforestation that emerged in the late 1960s, 1970s. We have seen a movement in countries, most countries not all countries in our region, to introduce laws to support community forestry, and to introduce national programs backing these up. You can see some example here. We heard Cambodia plans to put 2 million hectares under community-based forest management yesterday. Indonesia has a couple of models of community-based forest management. In 1995, in the Philippines, community-based forest management became the primary program for forest management replacing the concession systems. Vietnam now has laws in place that would support community-based forestry. India, I am sure we are all familiar with joint-forest management. In Nepal, with the community forestry user groups, and about 30% of forests now under their management. Of course, the outcomes are not always perfect. There are some problems and this program has to continue developing. The models need to evolve further.



Why focus on governance? Put simply, we know the countries with the highest rates of deforestation where REDD+ has greatest potential; other countries with the greatest challenges facing the governance in their forest sectors. Just to quote one figure, 80% of countries preparing for REDD+ selected by the FCPF¹⁶⁰ and UN-REDD rank in the bottom half of the World Bank Survey of Governance in 212 countries. This is using indicators on control of corruption, voice and accountability. I am just quoting from somebody else's work. But we realize this is a major issue. We understand why transparent governance is part of the safeguards. We see the risks if REDD+ is implemented in a state of weak governance. There risks of financial mismanagement, manipulation of weaker forest stakeholders.

If I can quote a senior official from the Forestry Authority in Papua New Guinea, he said, "One of the developers in our country is poisoning the minds of the people and making false promises and so forth, and it becomes very hard once that has happened for genuine developers to go and to work with local communities." Circumvention of stakeholder consultation processes could be a problem. We had seen the emergence of multi-stakeholder processes in the forest sector in a small way. We see it in terms of forest certification, development of the legality standard in Indonesia and so forth. We need to ensure that these processes are central to the development of REDD+ readiness and design. We can foresee other problems.

4. Papua New Guinea Case Study

- Communities in PNG
- Forest governance in PNG
- Dominant forestry paradigm and its consequences
- Weak governance + dominant forestry paradigm =
 - (1) Unsustainable logging
 - (2) Large-scale conversion for commercial agriculture
- How can REDD+ contribute to sustainable communities?

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Communities in PNG

- 97% of the land is held under systems of customary tenure, involving clans or kinship groups
- Customary rights recognised by the Constitution include rights to all natural resources, with the exception of minerals, petroleum, water and genetic resources
- Communities depend upon forests for their nutrition (especially protein), construction materials, fuel, materials for cultural activities, traditional medicines, and broader environmental services, such as drinking water


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Let me move onto PNG¹⁶¹. We heard 90% of the land is held under systems of customary tenure.

¹⁶⁰ Forest Carbon Partnership Facility: <http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/>

¹⁶¹ Papua New Guinea.

It is owned by the people, and that is protected by the constitution of the country. It means all the forest resources, nearly all, are owned by the people. We know that communities have a very intimate relationship with forest; 80% of the population is still living in something like villages. Forests are very important for the nutrition, construction materials, fuel, cultural activities and so forth. There are problems of governance in PNG. I do not want to dwell on this too much because this is well known and also there are efforts underway in PNG to overcome these issues. There are people working very hard within government, outside of government, and even within industry we see a movement amongst a few of the industry towards certification of the operations against international standards.



Problems of forest governance in PNG

- There is a problem with the compliance of the government itself with the laws of PNG when deciding to designate a forested area for logging purposes; negotiating the agreement with landowners; managing, monitoring and enforcing the agreement; and when extending current agreements.
- It is believed that the narrow focus of the PNGFA on exploitation of the forest resource for the primary financial benefit of the national government presents a conflict of interest which colors decisions made by the government at all levels.

Source: Achieving the ITTO Objective 2000 and Sustainable Forest Management in Papua New Guinea. Report of the Diagnostic Mission. ITTC, 2007

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But just to give a sense of the challenges that PNG faces. Let me quote from the ITTO Diagnostic Mission Report of 2007. There is a problem with the compliance of the government itself with the laws of PNG when deciding to designate a forest area for logging purposes; negotiating agreement with the landowners; landowners here means the indigenous people who own the land; enforcing agreements, extending the current agreements and so forth.



Dominant forestry development paradigm

- Development is something politicians and agencies bring to communities (exogenous); it is not something that communities do for themselves
- Government acquires the rights for development from communities and gives these to the “developers
- Communities receive benefits

No government support for local communities to manage their forests; no community-based forest management policy

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What is really striking as well in Papua New Guinea is the development paradigm. You see the evidence of this in the news. Development is something that comes from the outside. It is something that people elected to power bring back to the communities. It is an exogenous process. It is not endogenous. It is not coming from within the communities. It is not something that communities are doing for themselves. People get elected to power. They bring back development in the form of a logging project, in the form of a mining project, in the form of oil

palm project. That is how development takes place. Communities are to receive the benefits. The state has to acquire the rights from the communities to do those, and there are legal processes for this. As I mentioned, communities get benefits in terms of royalties and so forth. That is a kind of thinking about how development should take place. There is no government support for local communities to manage the forests. For me, that is something very striking. If we look at other countries, we look at Indonesia, we look at Nepal with this community forestry user groups, joint forest management in India, and what we have in Cambodia and elsewhere. In a country such as PNG, nearly all the forests are actually owned by the people. There is actually no effective implementation of policy to support and to manage the forests.

Weak governance + dominant development paradigm = (1) Unsustainable logging

- Few sustainable forestry projects;
- Poor logging practices with little compliance to the Logging Code of Practice;
- Widespread environmental damage; very few long-term benefits, causing social upheaval; corruption a persistent problem at all levels of the industry (McRae 2001).
- Few lasting benefits: Payments primarily used to purchase consumables by men and infrequently invested (LaFranchi 2004).



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= (2) Large-scale conversion for commercial agriculture (the "new global land grab")

- From 2003- 2011, ~5 million ha of customary land given to national and foreign companies as special purpose business leases (SABLS)
- Concerns that logging, not agriculture, is main objective
 - Project proposals seem unfeasible
 - Logging companies involved
 - Raw log exports permitted
- Possible governance failures
 - Vested interest of politicians
 - Failure to gain consent of all landowners
 - Failure of government departments to carry out their responsibilities



Source: Colin Filer, 2011

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What is the outcome of this weak governance and dominance paradigm? One is unsustainable logging. I mentioned there are initiatives to improve logging by some of the operators in PNG, so we need to have a balanced perspective here, but if we look at the reports we have, few sustainable forestry project, poor logging practices, few lasting benefits for the local communities.

Large-scale conversion for commercial agriculture has become a problem. This is part of what we call a new global land grab. In 2008, you may remember there was a spike in global food prices. Since that period, there has been a dramatic increase in foreign direct investment into Sub-Saharan Africa and other countries to acquire land to produce food and energy crops. Investment is coming from the EU, US, even the Middle-East, and Papua New Guinea has been caught up in this process as well. We see roughly 5 million hectares have now moved into the control of agricultural developers through what are known as special purpose business leases. This has been in a very short period of time. There are some concerns that the intention of the developers is to get this land for logging, not so much for agricultural development. Then, there are questions when a community gives over the rights to its land for 99 years under a lease what kind of benefits it might receive. There are some concerns with the governance of this whole process, but it is very hard for people who are researching this topic to get good data to come to some hard conclusions. But we can see concerns about sustainability, concerns about the governance.

Year	No.	Total area (ha.)
2003	1	11,800
2004	2	365
2005	3	44,094
2006	6	125,901
2007	16	475,618
2008	15	444,140
2009	10	1,154,842
2010	16	1,959,307
TOTAL	69	4,215,848

Source: PNG National Gazette.

Table 4: Status of applications for Forest Clearing Authorities by proponents of agricultural development projects, 2007-2010.

Status of application	No.	Area (ha.)
FCA granted after SABL granted	6	475,413
FCA granted before SABL granted	1	30,830
FCA granted without grant of SABL	6	141,771
Application pending after SABL granted	5	284,156
Application pending without grant of SABL	4	429,550
ALL APPLICATIONS	22	1,361,720

Source: PNG Forest Authority records, April 2010.

Just to give some figures in 2003, under these lease-leaseback arrangements only a 11,000 hectares in Papua New Guinea. Now, we are looking at just under 5 million hectares and that is a period of 7 years. If you are a developer, you have the rights under one of these leases. You then apply to the forestry authority to get clearance to clear any forest on that land. If you are granted an authority, you can go ahead and do that. There are applications now for clearance of forests, according to the figures we have of 1.3 million hectares. Again, we have to say is this going to take us towards sustainable communities.

How can we achieve climate change mitigation and sustainable communities in PNG through REDD+?

- Challenge the dominant forestry paradigm and strengthen governance through:
 - FPIC
 - Participatory land use planning
 - Roles and responsibilities for communities in REDD+, and REDD+ through Community-based Forest Management

How do we get to sustainable communities? How do we get to climate change? How does REDD+ make a contribution to this? I just present three ideas to you. Many things are needed obviously. I will talk about FPIC¹⁶², participatory land use mapping, and roles and responsibilities for communities in REDD+.

¹⁶² Free, Prior Informed Consent.

Implementation of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)

- Under dominant forestry paradigm, proper awareness and consultation to gain approval from communities for logging projects often not conducted properly
- FPIC guidelines currently being developed by Office of Climate Change and Development to ensure communities are fully aware of costs and benefits of any proposed REDD+ activities
- Field testing of FPIC guidelines at April Salumei demonstration project planned

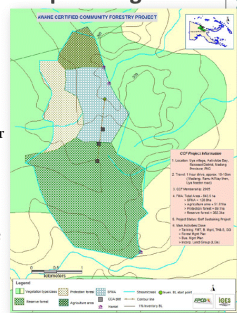
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FPIC is not mentioned explicitly in the REDD+ safeguards, but essentially we can consider it under the safeguards, which refers to international conventions, and we find this concept under those conventions. It is the idea that local communities should give the Free, Prior and Informed Consent to any development that impacts them. This would include REDD+ before that development takes place. Under the dominant forestry paradigm, that I have tried to describe in PNG, there is a process for gaining consent from the resource owners, the people, before they give over the rights to the state to log the forests. But there are major concerns with implementing this process properly.

What we have now is the development of FPIC Guidelines by the Office of Climate Change and Development in Papua New Guinea. They now want to field test these and they are going to be field tested, I understand, in the April Salumei demonstration project. The Forestry Authority, the top people there are telling us, they think these guidelines are going to be too tough, but it is an important process for Papua New Guinea to go through to improve consultation, awareness with the communities, and if we can get good FPIC for REDD+ that can have lot of benefits to other forms of conservation or development intervention.

Participatory land-use planning

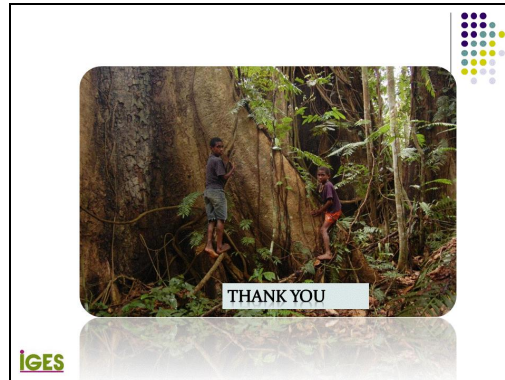
- PNG has no national land-use plan
- Under participatory land-use planning, communities
 - Place controls on their land use by zoning
 - Are responsible for enforcing their land-use plans
- Can be incorporated into district land-use plans and linked with private sector investment



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Participatory land use planning. We heard about this in Tanzania. In Papua New Guinea, there is no national land use plan, but we do have a small number of NGOs doing some groundbreaking work with communities, to have the communities put some controls on their own land use. They go through a process of participatory mapping where they demarcate the boundaries of their land, and they will assign some land for conservation of the forests, some of agriculture, for settlement and so forth. Then, you have a kind of cultural event to institutionalize this within the community.

In the case where the communities still have the rights for the forests, this could be the first step in any kind of REDD+ initiative. It needs more research. We need to know how effective this is, but it does show promise.



Roles and responsibilities of communities in REDD+; if REDD+ is to move us towards sustainable communities, do we want REDD+ to be simply paying communities for doing nothing, which is what we are getting with the logging projects, and which is what we will be getting with the agricultural development projects as well. When we have those, when there is no building of the capacity of communities, no institution building, no roles, responsibilities and no assignment of benefits for actually doing something, what we have in terms of the use of money that goes to the communities is spending by men on consumables, and very few sustainable benefits.

I just want to show you this video, just to give you the background to it. IGES has a project in five countries where we are working with our partners to engage local communities and establishing sample plots, testing an approach to build the capacity of those communities to measure the forests, so we can estimate timber volume and recovery of forests after harvesting as well as carbon stock. Very much a participatory approach that we feel could be incorporated into sub-national REDD+ implementation. This video was taken last week over 5 days. We went, myself, Fujisaki-san from IGES, and people from the Foundation for People and Community Development, the foresters who we are working with went to one community on the Ramu River. We spent 4 days with them and took them through this process.