Key Messages from
International Seminar
"REDD+ Implementation and Sustainable Forest Management"
at
U Thant International Conference Hall, United Nations University, Tokyo
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Organized by
Forestry and Forestry Products Research Institute (FFPRI) and
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Objectives of the International Seminar

- The main objective of the international seminar was to review and discuss the current Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) approaches and activities at all scales and forest types, exploring the linkages and synergies with REDD+, with the aim of turning SFM into a means and an opportunity for REDD+, specifically through:
- Facilitating the exchange of experiences, tools, and inspiring cases of SFM implementation that can contribute to five REDD+ activities: reducing deforestation, reducing forest degradation, sustainable management of forests, conservation, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- Discussing challenges encountered in scaling up implementation, and exploring challenges caused by scaling-up from projects/demonstration activities to national and sub-national scales.
- Facilitating reflections on the role of SFM in the context of REDD+ demonstration projects and full implementation.

Key messages

- Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) does not have a single definition, but it is a well-established concept in the forestry sector. The UN Forum on Forests (2007) had defined SFM as "a dynamic and evolving concept that aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations"
- REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, conservation of carbon stocks, sustainable management of forest, and enhancement of carbon stocks) has a shorter history relative to SFM and some aspects are still being negotiated and elaborated by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). REDD+ activities are expected by many to result in substantial contributions to climate change mitigation while providing a wide range of co-benefits.
- Strong synergies exist between SFM and REDD+ activities under the UNFCCC. Practices and experiences from SFM can contribute to the design of effective REDD+ strategies and implementation approaches, while REDD+ architecture, actions and lessons can contribute to achieving the objectives of SFM that have been slowly progressed in the tropics. SFM and REDD+ objectives can be achieved more effectively and efficiently by fully exploiting these synergies.
- Science has an important role to play in both SFM and REDD+, particularly in improving understanding of ecosystems and the environment in a changing economic and social context. Both SFM and REDD+ require better knowledge of how forests can be managed in ways that maintain ecosystem functions and avoid ecological tipping points.
- REDD+ strategies will only be successful when they are built on a sound understanding of local realities, especially of how local communities view the world, their livelihoods and their aspirations. Analysis of local societies and livelihoods, common resources and participatory forest management provide knowledge on how REDD+ activities can be better designed and more successfully implemented at local levels. Local people should be viewed as key partners for SFM and REDD+, not as culprits responsible for deforestation. How REDD+ can be decentralised and how roles, responsibilities and incentives can be assigned to local levels needs to be considered in each country.
- International financial and technical support for REDD+ must be tailored to assist governments in achieving their broader SFM goals and to reflect national and local realities. For example, investments in national forest monitoring systems should not just build the capacity of countries to measure carbon

stocks and monitor safeguards, they should contribute to monitoring other forest values and ecosystem services that countries have deemed important in their national forest plans, e.g. timber stocks, biodiversity, etc.

- A phased approach to developing national forest monitoring systems is recommended. Countries should build on existing systems and begin with simple approaches, while being aware of uncertainty and accuracy, and strengthen their approaches over time by incorporating new knowledge and techniques. This will enable them to gain early experience with and build their capacity for REDD+. The data/information needs and requirements, including the required level of accuracy, will vary by purposes and users.
- Participatory forest monitoring could be a promising approach in some cases. But well-designed training programmes and on-going support to communities are required, how best contribute to the National Forest Monitoring Systems and cost-effectiveness must also be considered.
- National REDD+ readiness will be a long process in many countries and should proceed at a pace appropriate for each country if sustainability, long term impacts and integration in national development plans is foreseen. SFM and REDD+ require major transformations in the forestry sectors of some countries, to enable engagement of stakeholders at all levels, from governments to communities. Governments are key to creating and maintaining enabling environments for REDD+ (policies, regulations, governance, institutional and legal framework), while other stakeholders are essential for materialising actions.
- Increasing political will to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, and to promote SFM within a wider national development agenda through supporting policies and measures will be vital to the achievement of REDD+ and sustainable development.
- Successful REDD+ requires space for stakeholders to participate at multiple levels in design and implementation. Careful planning and preparation will reduce the risk of conflict.
- The recent increase in REDD+ projects presents challenges but also provides learning opportunities. REDD+ projects are moving quickly and are providing valuable lessons on strategies, methodologies and benefit distribution, and providing modest revenues in the mid-term. It is important that REDD+ projects be guided by governments to maximise their potential for capacity building and as demonstrations of how REDD+ can be implemented. Integrating projects will be a challenge because of their different methodologies and the risk of over complexity at smaller scales, but new jurisdictional and nested approaches can help with integration and scaling up.
- SFM and REDD+ cannot be realised through actions in the forestry sector alone, as many of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation lie outside

this sector, e.g. in agriculture, energy and mining. Good governance and land-use planning under the well-designed coordination between the different land-use sectors are keys to landscape approaches that provide a framework for analysis and planning to tackle these drivers.
