

FROM REDD TO GREEN

What a forest deal in Copenhagen must include

By Rainforest Foundation UK, December 2009

The outcome of negotiations on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be crucial for the future of tropical rainforests and forest-dependent peoples

1. If we lose the battle against climate change, we lose the battle against tropical deforestation.

- There should be no deal on REDD without a legally-binding agreement requiring emissions cuts from Annex 1 countries of at least 40% by 2020 on 1990 levels;
- REDD must not be used as an offset mechanism - emissions reductions from deforestation must be *in addition* to Annex 1 reductions;
- Climate change, and associated increases in temperature and decreases in soil water and precipitation, are projected to lead to gradual replacement of tropical forest by savannah in eastern Amazonia and other rainforests.

2. REDD must not lead to the violation of indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights to lands, territories and resources; alienation of communities from their lands, forced evictions, and the prevention of access to forests and forest resources.

- REDD actions must be carried out in accordance with human rights instruments, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- It must *ensure* (not just promote) the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in all phases of REDD including their right to free, prior and informed consent, and the rights of local communities;
- REDD should strengthen rights to lands, territories and resources of indigenous peoples and local communities, studies have shown that community-managed forests tend to increase carbon storage compared to state-owned forests;
- It must be recognised that shifting cultivation, and other traditional sustainable uses, are not major causes of deforestation and are in fact crucial components for effective adaptation.

3. REDD must maintain environmental integrity and be primarily focused on protecting intact natural forests.

- REDD must not be used to subsidise the logging industry through so-called 'Sustainable Forest Management'; businesses that contribute to deforestation and forest degradation should not benefit from REDD;
- It must include a strong safeguard against the conversion of natural forest to plantations;
- It must mandate SBSTA (Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice) to identify an appropriate definition for forests, current UNFCCC definitions are too weak and make no distinction between forests, plantations and 'temporarily unstocked' areas.

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- 4. An accessible, independent and transparent complaints and conflict resolution mechanism must be established under the auspices of the COP to provide timely redress for negative social and environmental impacts of REDD.**
 - 5. REDD needs a full three-phased approach to prepare the necessary monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems and to improve and clarify forest governance and land tenure.**
 - Phases must be consecutive, with clear thresholds for countries passing from one phase to the next; all countries should begin at phase 1 (planning);
 - Phase 2 (preparation) is a crucial REDD preparation phase and must be publicly funded;
 - Phase 3 (implementation) should not be market-based.
 - 6. Reduced or avoided deforestation must be real, additional and permanent; national and international leakage must be addressed.**
 - REDD must include a national accounting system, and not a sub-national or project-level approach; sub-national offsets for REDD do not constitute a legitimate climate mitigation practice and, in fact, could harm the global effort to reduce emissions.
 - ‘Accounting’ need not involve land-based accounting, but could instead use reliable proxies of deforestation, degradation or future destruction, such as the extent of logging roads;
 - It must include a global monitoring mechanism to address international leakage, and to ensure that REDD leads to an overall reduction of deforestation and not just its relocation.
 - 7. A REDD financing mechanism should ensure that benefits are equitably shared both among and within countries, reach those whose livelihoods depend on these forests, and fully respect the rights of local and indigenous peoples.**
 - 8. Industrialised countries must address the drivers of deforestation for which they are responsible in order to make REDD effective.**
 - 9. The UNFCCC is a climate convention not a carbon convention; the enormous benefits of forests for the global climate in addition to carbon storage should be recognised.**
 - Focus should be on reducing deforestation and degradation rather than emissions, subject to good forest definitions;
 - REDD mechanisms, including payment and MRV, must be ‘more than carbon’.

