BRIEFING NOTE

Unpacking the UNFCCC Framework for REDD+

The requirements for implementing REDD+ under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

June 2015
Introduction

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) has been a central issue in the global climate negotiations since 2007. REDD+ recognizes five activities that developing countries can do to earn compensation from developed countries, including: Reducing emissions from deforestation; Reducing emissions from forest degradation; Sustainable management of forests; Conservation of forest carbon stocks; and Enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Although the concept of providing financial incentives to avoid and reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation may seem straightforward in theory, many issues needed to be worked out to turn the idea of into a tangible mechanism under the UNFCCC.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s (UNFCCC) 19th Conference of the Parties (COP19) took place in Warsaw, Poland from 11-22nd November 2013. One of the most important outcomes from the meeting was the adoption of the ‘Warsaw Framework for REDD+’, which consolidated previous UNFCCC requirements and guidance on REDD+. This was hailed as one of the major successes of COP 19 and represented a significant step towards making REDD+ a reality, enabling countries to move forward with the implementation of REDD+ activities with a clear methodological framework.

However, the adoption of the Warsaw Framework did not mean the end of all UNFCCC discussions on REDD+, as number of methodological issues still remained unresolved. The UNFCCC framework of requirements and guidance on REDD+ was not considered finally complete until June 2015, where the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its 42nd meeting in Bonn, Germany from 1-11th June 2015, agreed on a series of draft decisions to address these outstanding agenda items.

The complete UNFCCC methodological framework for REDD+ is therefore comprised of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, supplemented by the draft decisions adopted in June 2015. This methodological framework builds on, and consolidates previous relevant decisions adopted at COP13, COP15, COP16, COP17, and COP18.

The objective of this Briefing Note is to unpack the UNFCCC framework for REDD+ and consequently the relevant decisions adopted by previous COPs, to provide clarity regarding the:

1 Namely: the need for further guidance on safeguards (decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 6), ways to incentivize non-carbon benefits (decision 1/CP.18 paragraph 29(b)), and consideration of how non market-based approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests could be developed to support the implementation of REDD+ (decision 1/CP.18 paragraph 39 recalling decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 67)
2 CAVEAT: While the substance of the discussions on REDD+ has now been agreed, the proposed draft decisions still need to be adopted by the COP at its 21st meeting in Paris in November 2015
• ‘requirements’ developing country Parties must fulfil when implementing REDD+; and
• guidance, support, and/or relevant institutional arrangements available for countries when implementing REDD+.

This Briefing Note is divided into nine sections, corresponding with the nine decision areas that comprise the UNFCCC framework for REDD+:

1. Measurement, reporting and verification,
2. Forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels,
3. National forest monitoring systems,
4. Safeguards,
5. Drivers of deforestation,
6. Finance and results based payments,
7. Institutional arrangements,
8. Non Carbon benefits
9. Alternative Policy Approaches

1. Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV)

The Warsaw Framework for REDD+ confirmed that REDD+ activities should be implemented in three phases. It also confirms that countries reach phase III of REDD+ through the implementation of results-based actions that fully measured, reported and verified (MRV).

What does MRV mean?
Measurement is the process of estimating anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks; forest carbon stocks; and changes in forest carbon stocks and forest area resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities. Countries must then report these estimates to the UNFCCC Secretariat, whereby they are subsequently verified by a team of independent technical experts.

What are the requirements for developing country Parties in relation to MRV?

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3 Those listed in Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 70: (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation; (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation; (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks; (d) Sustainable management of forests; (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks
4 Decision 1/CP. 16 paragraph 73: Phase I involves the development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and capacity-building; Phase II is the implementation of these plans, policies and measures with phase III being results-based actions. Note that in practice the distinction between these phases is not always clear and the measures within each phase sometimes overlap
5 Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 73
6 As detailed in Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 70
For developing countries to obtain results-based funding for REDD+ they must fully measure, report and verify “anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes [resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities].” Developing country Parties must also monitor and report on emissions displacement at the national level.

How to MRV REDD+?
Developing country Parties are expected to:

• Use data that is transparent, and consistent over time and with the established forest reference emission level and/or forest reference levels (REL/RL) to estimate emissions, removals and forest-area change in relation to REDD+ activities.
• Undertake MRV as part of the National Forest Monitoring System (see section 3 below).
• Express the results of the implementation of REDD+ activities, as measured against the forest REL/RL in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.
• Use data that is consistent with established or updated forest REL/RL.
• Apply to REDD+ activities any MRV guidance developed on the measurement, reporting and verification of Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs).
• Utilize the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) guidance and guidelines as a basis for estimating forest related emissions, removals, forest carbon stocks and forest area changes.

How should MRV data be submitted?
• The MRV data and information requested by the COP should be provided through Parties' biennial update reports, taking into consideration the additional flexibility given to least developed countries and Small Island developing States.
• In addition to the MRV data, country Parties should also supply a technical annex on a voluntary basis in line with previous guidance and in the context of results based payments.

What is the Verification Process?

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7 Decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 64, Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 3
8 Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71 (c)
9 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 3
10 Ibid
11 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 4
12 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 5
13 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 6 the guidance on NAMAs is contained in Decision 2/CP.17 Annex III
14 Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 1(c)
15 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 6
16 Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 7
17 Guidance is contained in Decision 4/CP.15 and 2/CP.17 Annex III
The UNFCCC framework for REDD+ clarifies that, in order to receive payments, the submitted data must be verified by a team of technical experts, including two land use, land-use change and forestry experts, one each from a developing country and a developed country party.\textsuperscript{18}

The technical experts will verify: \textsuperscript{19}

- The accuracy of the results,
- The consistency in methodologies, definitions, comprehensiveness, and information between the assessed reference level and the results of the implementation of the REDD+ activities,
- The consistency of the data and information provided in the technical annex with the guidelines provided by UNFCCC,
- The extent to which this information is transparent, consistent, complete\textsuperscript{20} and accurate.

The UNFCCC framework for REDD+ further establishes that this technical analysis should result in a report published on the REDD+ information hub of the UNFCCC website.\textsuperscript{21}

\section*{2. Forest Reference Emission Levels (REL) and Forest Reference Levels (RL)}

\textbf{What are forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels?}

REL/RLs are benchmarks against which each country’s performance in implementing REDD+ activities (greenhouse gas emissions reductions and removals) will be assessed (through measurement reporting and verification).\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{What are the requirements for developing country Parties in relation to REL/RLs?}

Developing country Parties aiming to undertake REDD+ activities need to develop a national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level.\textsuperscript{23} This is a requirement to access results based payments (see section 6).

\textbf{How should REL/RLs be developed?}

- The national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level is to be established in a manner that

\textsuperscript{18} Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 10
\textsuperscript{19} Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 11
\textsuperscript{20} Complete means the provision of information that allows for the reconstruction of the results
\textsuperscript{21} Decision 14/CP.19 paragraph 14
\textsuperscript{22} Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 7
\textsuperscript{23} Or, as an interim measure subnational forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, Decision 1/CP.6 paragraph 71(b)
maintains consistency with the anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks contained in each country’s greenhouse gas inventories.24

- National forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels are to be established “transparently”, “taking into account historic data”25 and be updated periodically.26
- A step-wise approach to developing REL/RLs “may be useful” to consider, in terms of enabling Parties to improve them by incorporating better data, improved methodologies and, where appropriate, additional pools.27
- Sub-national forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels may be elaborated as an interim measure.28

How should data on REL/RLs be submitted?
Developing country Parties are invited to submit proposed forest REL/RLs on a voluntary basis,29 as well as information and rationale on the development of their forest REL/RLs and provide details of national circumstances and how these were considered. The information provided should follow the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change guidance and guidelines30 and the guidelines adopted by COP17.31

Do REL/RLs undergo verification?
Forest REL/RLs that are submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat will be subject to a technical assessment that will seek to assess the information submitted against the guidelines provided, and offer a technical exchange of information with a view to supporting developing countries in the construction and improvement of their REL/RL.32

The Warsaw Framework for REDD+ details the scope and procedures for the technical assessments.33


What is a National Forest Monitoring System?
The National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) is the tool used for gathering greenhouse gas emissions and removals data34 that will be measured, reported and verified (MRV)35 as a pre-requisite for receiving results-based payments.36 The NFMS is therefore the physical and technical system that is relied upon to detect and quantify the
emissions, removals and changes in these caused by the implementation of REDD+ activities.\textsuperscript{37}

What are the requirements for developing country Parties in relation to NFMS?

- Developing country Parties need to develop a NFMS,\textsuperscript{38} with the purpose of monitoring and reporting of REDD+ activities.\textsuperscript{39}
- The NFMS is to be robust and should provide data and information that are transparent, consistent over time, and are suitable for measuring, reporting and verifying “anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes [resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities]”.\textsuperscript{40}
- The NFMS should be consistent with guidance on measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV) nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) by developing country Parties.\textsuperscript{41}
- Sub-national forest monitoring systems should seek to include monitoring and reporting of emission displacement at the national level.\textsuperscript{42}

Key characteristics of the NFMS:

a) Should build upon existing systems,\textsuperscript{43}

b) Should enable the assessment of different types of forest in the country, including natural forest, as defined by the country\textsuperscript{44}

c) Be flexible and allow for improvements,\textsuperscript{45}

d) Reflect the phased approach to REDD+.\textsuperscript{46}

Additional methodological guidance on the NFMS

- The NFMSs should use a combination of remote sensing and ground-based carbon inventory approaches for estimating emissions, removals and forest area change.\textsuperscript{47}
- Development of NFMS must ‘take into account’ the guidance provided in decision 4/CP.15 and ‘be guided by’ the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change guidance and guidelines.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{37} Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(c)
\textsuperscript{38} Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(c)
\textsuperscript{39} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 2
\textsuperscript{40} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 3
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid
\textsuperscript{42} Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(c) footnote 7
\textsuperscript{43} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 4(a)
\textsuperscript{44} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 4(b)
\textsuperscript{45} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 4(c)
\textsuperscript{46} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 4(d) based on Decision 1/CP. 16 paragraph 73: Phase I involves the development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and capacity-building; Phase II is the implementation of these plans, policies and measures with phase III being results-based actions
\textsuperscript{47} Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 1(d)(i), (ii) and (iii)
\textsuperscript{48} Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 2
There is also a clear acknowledgement that NFMS may provide relevant information for the systems designed to demonstrate how safeguards are being addressed and respected. This acknowledgement seeks to encourage countries to explore synergies and efficiencies between these systems.

### 4. Safeguards

**What are the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards?**

The UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards were adopted at COP 16 as part of the Cancun agreement and constitute the set of safeguards that all REDD+ activities are to be consistent with. The Cancun agreement, as well as subsequent decisions make it clear that safeguards are a central part of the REDD+ mechanism, with reporting requirements that are linked to the prospect of obtaining results-based-finance.

**What are the requirements for developing country Parties in relation to safeguards?**

- REDD+ activities are to be implemented ‘in accordance with’ the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards, which in addition are to be ‘promoted and supported.’ Furthermore, COP 17 clarifies that regardless of the source and type of funding for REDD+ activities, all REDD+ activities should be consistent with the UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards.

- Developing country Parties aiming to undertake REDD+ activities are required to develop a system for providing information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected (a Safeguards Information System or SIS). In order to obtain and receive results-based finance Parties should have their SIS in place (see section 6 below).

- Developing country Parties are also required to provide a summary of information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the REDD+ activities. This constitutes a

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49 Decision 11/CP.19 paragraph 5

50 Decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 2: "When undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported (a) That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements; (b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty; (c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; (d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision; (e) That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits; (f) Actions to address the risks of reversals; (g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.”

51 Those activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 70

52 Decision 1/CP. 16 paragraph 69

53 UNFCCC decision 2/CP. 17 paragraph 63

54 Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71(d),Decision 9/CP. 19 paragraph 3

55 Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 3 recalling decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 71 (d)

56 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 3
requirement to access results-based payments (See section 6 below). The procedures for the reporting on safeguards are elaborated below.

**Key characteristics of the SIS**

The SIS should:

- Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis;
- Be transparent and flexible and allow for improvements over time;
- Be country-driven and implemented at the national level; and
- Build upon existing systems

**What needs to be reported?**

- A summary of information should provide information on how all of the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected.
- Developing country Parties should provide information on which REDD+ activity or activities they are including in their summary of information (what specific REDD+ activities in the country are subject to the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards)
- Parties are 'strongly encouraged' to include the following elements in their summaries:
  - Information on national circumstances relevant to addressing and respecting the safeguards;
  - A description of each safeguard in accordance with national circumstances;
  - A description of existing systems and processes relevant to addressing and respecting safeguards, including the SIS; and
  - Information on how each of the safeguards has been addressed and respected
- Developing country Parties are 'encouraged' to provide any other relevant information on the safeguards.

**How must it be reported?**

- Information on how all the safeguards are being addressed and respected should be provided in a way that ensures transparency, consistency comprehensiveness and effectiveness.

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57 Decision 9/CP.19 Paragraph 4
58 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 2(b)
59 Ibid
60 Ibid
61 Ibid
62 Decision 12/CP.19 paragraph 1
63 Draft decision -CP.21 paragraph 4 Further guidance on ensuring transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected
64 Draft decision -CP.21 paragraph 5 Further guidance on ensuring transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected
65 Ibid paragraph 6
66 Draft decision -CP.21 paragraph 3 Further guidance on ensuring transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected
The summary of information on how safeguards are being addressed and respected should be provided periodically and be included in national communications, consistent with relevant COP decisions relating to national communications. As developing country Parties will be using national communications to submit their summary of information, the frequency for reporting on safeguards should be consistent with their submission of national communications (average of 4 years).

An additional and voluntary way of reporting is by providing the summary of information via the newly established REDD+ information hub on the UNFCCC website.

When must reporting begin?

Developing country Parties need to start providing the summary of information after the start of the implementation of REDD+ activities.

5. Drivers of Deforestation

At COP 13 in Bali, Indonesia (2007) the issue of drivers of deforestation was raised and Parties were encouraged to explore options and undertake efforts to address the drivers of deforestation with a view to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and enhancing forest carbon stocks due to sustainable management of their forests. This encouragement was reiterated in Copenhagen and Cancun where the COP mandated the SBSTA to identify land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) activities that are linked to the drivers of deforestation.

Although the UNFCCC framework for REDD+ recognizes the importance of addressing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the context of REDD+, it does not set out any requirements for countries.

The Warsaw Framework for REDD+ simply encourages country Parties, multilateral, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector to take action to reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to share the results of their work on this matter on the UNFCCC’s REDD+ web platform.

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67 Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 4, Decision 12/CP.19 paragraph 2
68 Decision 12/CP.19 paragraph 3
69 Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 9 and Decision 12/CP.19 paragraph 5. To see the official website of the REDD+ information hub go to http://unfccc.int/redd
70 Decision 12/CP.19 paragraph 4
71 UNFCCC decision 2/CP. 13 paragraph 3
72 Decision 4/CP.15 paragraph 1(a)
73 Decision 1/CP.16 paragraphs 68 and 72
74 Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix II
75 Decision 15/CP.19 paragraph 1
76 Decision 15/CP.19 paragraph 3
77 Decision 15/CP.19 paragraph 4
6. Finance and results-based payments

The discussions on how to finance REDD+ have been on-going since COP 13 and progress on clarifying the source and channels of funding for REDD+ has been slow. The UNFCCC Framework for REDD+ clarifies a few important issues linked to results-based finance, but with some major gaps (i.e. such as how to address the need to scale up finance for REDD+). The UNFCCC Framework for REDD+ recognizes:

- The need to scale up and improve the effectiveness of finance for REDD+ activities (an acknowledgment that funds to implement REDD+ at a global scale are currently insufficient).
- That finance for REDD+ can come from different sources, including public and private, bilateral and multilateral, without creating any specific commitments.
- That adequate and predictable financial and technological support for all phases of REDD+ is necessary.
- That finance for REDD+ activities will be channelled to developing countries through funding agencies such as the Green Climate Fund.
- That existing and potential REDD+ funding agencies should coordinate their support better and ensure that it aligns with established UNFCCC rules.
- That an 'information hub' should be established on the UNFCCC website. The information hub will feature information on REDD+ activities, including results-based payments, technical reports that describe how greenhouse gas emissions savings are calculated, national forest strategy and action plans, information on how safeguards are addressed and respected, and more.

What are the requirements for developing country Parties to receive results-based finance for REDD+?

For developing country Parties to receive results-based finance for REDD+ they must:

1. Ensure that the anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities are fully measured, reported and verified (MRV), in accordance with UNFCCC guidance. (see section 1).
2. Provide the most recent summary of information on how all UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards have been addressed and respected (during the implementation of REDD+ activities) before receiving payments. (see section 5).
3. Have in place:

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78 UNFCCC decision 2/CP.13 paragraph 7
79 UNFCCC Decision 9/CP. 19 preamble and paragraph 1
80 Public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources, as referred to in decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 65
81 Decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 65
82 Decision 9/CP. 19 paragraph 2
83 According to Decision 1/CP. 16 paragraph 73: Phase I involves the development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and capacity-building; Phase II is the implementation of these plans, policies and measures with Phase III being results-based actions
84 Decision 9/CP.19 paragraphs 5 and 6
85 Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 3
86 Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 4
• a national strategy or action plan,
• a national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level, or if appropriate, as an interim measure, subnational forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels,
• a robust and transparent national forest monitoring system for the monitoring and reporting of REDD+ activities, and
• a system for providing information on how safeguards are being addressed and respected.

7. Institutional arrangements for REDD+

Taking into account the need for further coordination of support, the UNFCCC framework for REDD+ sets out certain institutional arrangements that are expected to be implemented at the country level:

• Countries are encouraged to set up a national REDD+ entity or designate a focal point to serve as a liaison with the Secretariat and the relevant bodies under the UNFCCC for REDD+ related matters.\(^{88}\)
• The national REDD+ entity or focal point can nominate their entities to obtain and receive results-based payments, so long as the nominated entities comply with the requirements of the entities providing the payments.\(^{89}\)
• National REDD+ entities or focal points, countries and relevant financing entities are encouraged to meet regularly and share information and experiences, as well as cooperatively identify gaps, needs, and good practices on REDD+ activities and financing arrangements.\(^{90}\) The UNFCCC Secretariat is to facilitate the organisation of these meetings.\(^{91}\)

The UNFCCC framework does not include additional requirements and/or guidance on institutional arrangements for the management and implementation of REDD+, beyond the specific technical areas already covered (NFMS and safeguards). There is also no decision on international institutional arrangements for REDD+. This issue has been a source of much debate and disagreement during recent negotiations. COP 18 in Doha mandated the SBSTA and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to examine existing institutional arrangements and consider potential governance alternatives including the possibility of establishing a ‘body, board or committee’ at the international level to improve the coordination of support for the implementation of REDD+ activities.\(^{92}\) However, this matter was not resolved in Warsaw, with the COP merely requesting that the SBI review the meetings of the national entities that are to take place in the next three years and continue to consider institutional arrangements with a view to providing the COP with recommendations in 2017 (COP 23).\(^{93}\)

\(^{87}\) Decision 9/CP.19 paragraph 3
\(^{88}\) Decision 10/CP.19 paragraph 1
\(^{89}\) Decision 10/CP.19 paragraph 2
\(^{90}\) Decision 10/CP.19 paragraphs 3 and 4
\(^{91}\) Decision 10/CP.19 paragraph 5
\(^{92}\) Decision 1/CP.18 paragraphs 34 and 35
\(^{93}\) Decision 10/CP.19 paragraph 9
8. Non Carbon Benefits

What are Non Carbon Benefits (NCBs)?

Sometimes referred to as ‘co-benefits’ or ‘multiple benefits,’ the term ‘non-carbon benefits’ is used in the context of UNFCCC discussions on REDD+ as a framing term that encompasses a wide range of social, environmental and governance outcomes resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities, in addition to avoided carbon dioxide emissions and/or carbon sequestration (carbon benefits).

How are NCBs dealt with in the REDD+ context?

- The importance of incentivizing non-carbon benefits for the long-term sustainability of the implementation of REDD+ activities was “reaffirmed.”
- Reporting on NCBs is voluntary and does not constitute an additional requirement for receiving support for REDD+ or results based payments.
- NCBs are acknowledged as being “unique to countries national circumstances.”
- Developing countries seeking support for the integration of non-carbon benefits into their REDD+ activities “may provide information” with regard to “the nature, scale and importance of the non-carbon benefits.”

No further detail regarding this information is provided, nor is there a clear indication as to whether or how this information should be a factor in deciding on the allocation of funding.

How should countries provide information on NCBs?

- Developing countries are encouraged to share this information on the REDD+ web platform on the UNFCCC website.
- Interested developing country Parties are also invited to communicate the information “for consideration by interested Parties and relevant financing entities.”

9. Alternative Policy Approaches

What are alternative policy approaches?

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94 Draft decision -/CP.21 paragraph 1 Methodological issues related to non-carbon benefits resulting from the implementation of the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70 Preamble
95 Ibid paragraph 5
96 Draft decision -/CP.21 paragraph 1 Methodological issues related to non-carbon benefits resulting from the implementation of the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70
97 Ibid paragraph 2
98 Ibid paragraph 3
99 Ibid paragraph 4
The term “alternative policy approaches” in the context of REDD+ discussions refers to a proposal by Bolivia entitled “alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation for the integral and sustainable management of forests”\(^{100}\) (JMA). Initially titled non market-based approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests,\(^{101}\) JMA was acknowledged by the UNFCCC COP in 2011 in Durban as a type of approach that “could be developed”. The Bolivian JMA proposal\(^{102}\) is intended to provide an alternative to REDD+ as a mechanism that incentivizes both mitigation and adaptation and one that provides ex-ante finance for adaptation rather than being focused on mitigation and ex-post (results based) payments.\(^{103}\)

**How is JMA linked to REDD+?**

The draft decision on non market-based approaches confirms that the implementation of alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation is ‘one’ alternative to results based payments\(^{104}\) and importantly, encourages financing entities such as the GCF to provide financial resources for JMA.\(^{105}\)

**What UNFCCC requirements/guidance apply to JMA?**

- The implementation of JMA approaches are subject to the methodological guidance contained in previous COP decisions, including on safeguards.\(^{106}\)
- Developing country Parties seeking to receive support for the design and implementation of JMA approaches may consider:\(^{107}\)
  - Developing national strategies or action plans to implement REDD+ activities in order to support the integral and sustainable management of forests;
  - The identification of support needs, including financial resources and technical and technological support; and
  - Developing proposals demonstrating how JMA approaches are contributing to REDD+ activities.

**How should this information be provided?**

Developing countries are encouraged to share information via the web platform on the UNFCCC website.\(^{108}\)

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\(^{100}\) SBSTA (2015) Methodological guidance for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries – 42\(^{nd}\) session Bonn 1-11 June, Draft conclusions paras 7-8

\(^{101}\) Decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 67


\(^{103}\) [http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39_97_130566389085107524-SUBMISSION%20JMA%2026.09.2014.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39_97_130566389085107524-SUBMISSION%20JMA%2026.09.2014.pdf) and [http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/88_138_130776284506075605-BOLIVIAN%20PROPOSAL%20SBSTA%2042%20%2029.05.2015.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/88_138_130776284506075605-BOLIVIAN%20PROPOSAL%20SBSTA%2042%20%2029.05.2015.pdf)

\(^{104}\) Draft decision -/CP.21 paragraph 4 Alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests

\(^{105}\) Ibid paragraph 6

\(^{106}\) Ibid paragraph 3

\(^{107}\) Ibid paragraph 5

\(^{108}\) Ibid paragraph 7
Concluding remarks

The Warsaw Framework for REDD+, complemented by the draft decisions agreed on at SBSTA 42 (due to be adopted at COP 21) set out a ‘REDD+ Rulebook’ comprised of a set of requirements and methodological modalities and guidance, which enables countries to move forward with the implementation of REDD+ under the UNFCCC.

The finalisation of the ‘REDD+ Rulebook’ is also meant to ensure that a consistent set of rules are applied and followed, levelling the playing field for countries which to date have faced different rules depending on which multilateral agencies and donor countries they are working with. It is important to note that the ‘REDD+ Rulebook’ is linked to accessing results based finance,\textsuperscript{109} which means that developing country Parties are required to implement the rules before they can access such finance, while existing and potential REDD+ funding agencies and donors are expected to ensure the REDD+ rulebook is applied when supporting the implementation of REDD+ activities.

The completion of the negotiations on REDD+ at SBSTA 42 in Bonn marks the end of over 10 years of discussions and the finalisation of the UNFCCC methodological framework for REDD+. Despite this, a number of issues linked to the provision of finance for REDD+ still remain unresolved, in particular:

- How REDD+ finance will be scaled up to a level that is predictable and adequate
- How the Green Climate Fund (and other financing entities) will assess the extent to which the Cancun safeguards have been addressed and respected in REDD+ implementation

These issues will need to be addressed within the broader UNFCCC discussions relating to the new climate agreement between now and 2020 when the agreement is due to come into force. The issue of safeguards assessment will need to be resolved by the financing entities themselves as they refine their procedures and requirements for distributing REDD+ finance.

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\textsuperscript{109} Decision 9/CP.19 paragraphs 5 and 6