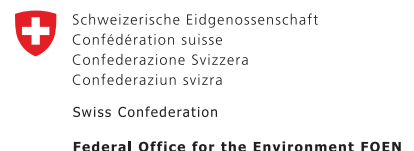




Workshop on forest governance, decentralisation and REDD+ in Latin America and the Caribbean

A country-led initiative in support of UNFF
by the governments of Mexico and Switzerland

Oaxaca, Mexico
31 August - 3 September 2010



Background

At the closing of UNFF 8 on the 1 May 2008, Mexico and Switzerland announced an international workshop focused on forest governance and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) in Latin America to be held in Oaxaca, Mexico from 31 August to 3 September 2010. The workshop will be organised as a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).

The Oaxaca Workshop is the fourth country-led initiative focusing on governance and decentralisation in forestry. In 2004, Switzerland and Indonesia jointly organised the Interlaken workshop on decentralisation in forestry as a country-led initiative in support of UNFF. The purpose of that workshop was to capture the global situation in the interplay between forest governance and decentralisation. The Interlaken workshop was followed by regional workshops on forest governance and decentralisation in Asia and the Pacific (Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2006) and Africa (Durban, South Africa, 2008).

Each workshop gives special attention to regional realities. Governance issues are of fundamental importance to sustainable forest management (SFM), the core objective of UNFF. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) as a new climate change mitigation measure has a strong potential to alleviate poverty, but its implementation needs to be better understood in the context of forest governance. Thus, the Oaxaca workshop aims to better our understanding of the linkages and synergies between decentralisation and broader forest governance reforms, SFM, the improvement of living conditions for people who depend on forests and the increasing role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The results from the Oaxaca workshop are expected to directly feed into the ninth session of UNFF, scheduled for early 2011 and dedicated to 'Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication'. The results will also contribute to the climate change process and inform UNFFCC COP 16 to be held in Mexico in November 2010.

Purpose and expected results

Several factors underscore the relevance of a discussion on the relationships among SFM, forest governance, REDD+ and livelihoods. Forests in Latin America are home to millions of people who depend directly on forest resources for their livelihoods. Current deforestation rates and their external drivers deprive these people of the primary resource they depend on. At the same time and in many places, deforestation and forest degradation is driven by poverty: poor communities change the land use to improve their lives. Forest policies and instruments can influence REDD+ outcomes and REDD+ projects' and schemes' ability to provide incentives for preservation of forests, while reducing poverty.

The workshop will:

- identify trends, facilitate the sharing of experience and distil lessons learnt on SFM, forest governance and decentralisation and REDD+ and identify opportunities and threats to livelihoods and poor people;
- contribute directly to the ninth session of UNFF;
- inform discussions during COP16 in Mexico and contribute to REDD+ design.

Workshop themes

The Workshop discussions will be organised round three main themes:

People, forest governance, and forests

Discussions will explore and draw lessons from forest policy reforms, decentralisation, emerging REDD+ strategies and plans, and other relevant policies to identify best practices, bottlenecks, contradictions and potential synergies as REDD+ programs evolve.

SFM, development, markets and forests

Discussions will focus on development pressures on forests and people and the adequacy of responses, drawing lessons and conclusions for policy-makers and development agencies. They will be organised in three sub-themes:

- Development and REDD+
- Trade-offs between sustainable forest management, conservation and REDD+
- People, forest finance and markets

Rights, livelihoods and forests

Discussions will examine policies and practices that affect or engage communities in their effort to reduce poverty and identify opportunities and lessons relevant for REDD+ design.

The workshop discussions will be supported by background papers and presentations. Shorter products by themes will be published as separate products to be disseminated during COP 16 and UNFF9. The workshop will also produce a report to UNFF9.

Sharing outcomes

The workshop will contribute to the development of a forest governance community of learning. It will produce a report to UNFF9, a CD of workshop presentations, and a wide range of accompanying shorter products for wider dissemination in Spanish and English.

To encourage discussions to continue beyond the duration of the event, a web platform, hosted by CIFOR, will incorporate collaborative learning tools and social networking activities for all relevant stakeholders. Outcomes of the discussions in Oaxaca will be captured using a variety of multimedia approaches. These will include podcasts, vodcasts, blogs, online wikis and other new media approaches.

Participants

Participants will include governments (both central and decentralised government units), development and environmental NGOs, local and indigenous peoples representatives, private sector representatives, regional organisations, and other relevant stakeholders from Latin America and other regions and global organisations such as UNFF, FAO, ITTO, UNFCCC.

About the conference organisers

Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR)

Comisión Nacional Forestal, or CONAFOR, is the government of Mexico's national agency for forest development. The commission is part of the Environmental and Natural Resources Secretariat of the federal government. CONAFOR was created in 2001. Today it serves as the national focal point for the International Timber Trade Organisation, REDD+ initiatives and the UN Convention on Desertification. With headquarters in Guadalajara City, the agency operates the ProÁrbol programme that supports sustainable forestry management in Mexico.

Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

The Federal Office for the Environment is the Swiss government's centre of the environmental expertise. It is responsible for forest issues and has been co-organising the UNFF Interlaken workshop on decentralisation in forestry (2004), the Yogyakarta workshop on forest governance and decentralisation in Asia and the Pacific (2006) and the Durban workshop on forest governance and decentralisation in Africa (2008).

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), headquartered in Bogor, Indonesia, is a leading international forestry research organisation established in 1993 in response to global concerns about social, environmental, and economic consequences of forest loss and degradation. One of the 15 members of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, CIFOR is dedicated to advancing human well-being, environmental conservation and equity by conducting research to inform policies and practices that affect forests in developing countries.

Intercooperation

Intercooperation is a leading Swiss Foundation engaged in development and international cooperation. Intercooperation is a resource and knowledge organisation, combining a professional approach with social commitments. Intercooperation's expertise, process competence and services are grouped around three principal working domains: natural resource management, rural economy, and local governance and civil society. Intercooperation supports partner organisations in more than twenty developing and transition countries.

United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

In October 2000, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) established the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), a subsidiary body with the main objective to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The UNFF is guided by a Bureau and serviced by a compact secretariat, which also serves as a secretariat for the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group

The IDB Group, the oldest and largest regional multilateral development bank, is the main source of multilateral financing for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The IDB Group loans and grants help finance development projects and support strategies in key areas such as poverty reduction; expanding growth; promotion of sustainable energy and mitigation of climate change impact; increased investment in water and sanitation, infrastructure and education; and private-sector development. The IDB is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and has Country Offices in all 26 of its member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in Paris and Tokyo.

Other conference sponsors

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