

REDD



and its implications



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NEW METHODS OF WORK AND FOREST ASSESSMENT TO BENEFIT CLIMATE, COMMUNITIES AND BIODIVERSITY.

5.1 Payment for environmental services

5.1.1 What are ecosystems and environmental services?

An ecosystem is a group of plants, animals and microorganisms that live together in a specific place and that depends on the environment for survival, the environment is characterized by everything surrounding it.

Ecosystems are complex systems like a forest, a river or lake, formed by the integration of physical elements (the biotope or water, soil, rocks) and biological (biocenosis or community of organisms)

“An ecosystem is a level of organization of nature which is of interest to ecology. In nature atoms are organized in molecules and these in cells. Cells form tissues and these organs that gather

¹ Curso de Biología, tomado de: http://www.unad.edu.co/curso_biologia/ecologiaecosistemas.html



in systems, such as the digestive or circulatory systems. A living organism is composed by various anatomic-physiological systems closely linked to each other.”

“Organisms live in populations which are structure in communities. The concept of ecosystem is even broader that that of community because it includes, in addition to the community, the nonliving environment, with all the features of climate, temperature, chemical substances present, geological conditions, etc.” .

Environmental services are those services that ecosystems provide to humanity, those that serve of benefit for men and women for example. The services we receive from nature are food, water, wood and textile fibers, on the other hand we have the climate and illness control services and water purification, furthermore, it is necessary to include the cultural services which are the source of our beliefs, traditions and recreation. (Stone et al, 2010).

5.1.2 What are payments for environmental services?

Payment for environmental services is a mechanism of financial compensation (payments) through which the beneficiaries or users of a service (water, fresh air, etc.) make a payment to the providers or guardians of that service (forest dwellers). Those involve environmental services could be very specific such as a permanent flow of fresh water or a predictable supply of wood. In other cases environmental services could be more abstract or

refer more to a global level: carbon capture or a scenic view like a beautiful waterfall, a native forest .

A payment for environmental services is a project or activity that search for ways so people or governments reach an agreement to conserve natural resources and receive benefits as a compensation for their efforts to care for ecosystems.

The cornerstone of a scheme of environmental services payment is to develop a market in which the service providers (the inhabitants of the forest, for example) receive a compensation by the user of the service, ie a payment given by the people that receive the water, wood, or fresh air as a result of maintaining the forest. The payment received must serve the provider to adopt management practices aim to increase or at least maintain the quality of the environmental service .

Governments and policy makers at International level are working in and developing strategies that will allow obtaining resources to help, those who live and manage forests, to maintain

² Curso de Biología: tomado de: http://www.unad.edu.co/curso_biologia/ecologiaecosistemas.html

³ Pagos por servicios ambientales: http://www.wwfperu.org.pe/que_hacemos/psa/index.htm

⁴ En algunos casos, el pago sirve para compensar el costo de oportunidad de una actividad productiva o extractiva que pondría en riesgo el servicio ambiental, en decir serviría para evitar que se lleven a cabo actividades extractivas como la minería y el petróleo.



nature's delicate balance. One way is by providing funding and technology to help developing countries and forest dwellers to use them in a sustainable and adequate way, to reforest and restore areas or land that have been overexploited. Another way is by providing payments (funds) that compensate governments and forest dwellers to conserve ecosystems, in other words, leave areas in their natural state to continue providing environmental services (Stone et al., 2010).

5.2 Kyoto Protocol

After the Kyoto Protocol entered into force on February of 2005, its main objective was to set up specific targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

The targets of CO₂ emissions reduction must be achieved through public policies and laws that limit the release of this pollutant gas, or to develop incentives to improve efficiency of the energy, industrial and transport sectors, promoting the use of renewable sources of energy, furthermore developed countries (industrialized) could reduce part of their emissions targets through sinks such as forest.

In addition to actions at the national level, countries of "Annex I" could achieve part of their emissions targets through three mechanisms established in the Kyoto Protocol and which include:

- a. Trade of Right of Emissions, or Carbon Market
- b. Joint implementation between developed countries
- c. Clean Development Mechanisms

5.2.1 The trade of Rights of Emissions or Carbon Market

Article 17 of the Kyoto Protocol establishes a limit on the CO₂ emissions for the signing countries of the Protocol and especially for those who for their high level of emissions have greater responsibility on climate change (industrialized countries).

Countries that have not fulfilled this commitment and have exceeded the CO₂ emissions limit, have the possibility of buying CO₂ emission rights through the carbon market, in other words, could buy the leftovers from other countries that met and exceeded their greenhouse gas reduction targets.



Carbon bonds are sold and bought by countries (1 Carbon bond is equivalent to 1 ton of CO₂), companies and individuals in the stock exchanges in London, New York, Chicago and through the United Nations.

The Positive and Negative

There are different positions towards the meaning and effects of carbon trading, which are attempt to summarize bellow confronting the positive and negative points of view. These views must determined whether a country or community accept or not market mechanisms and its possible consequences

Positive	Negative
Allows obtaining resources for the less industrialized countries	Bonds become permits to contaminate rather than industrialized countries reducing their emissions
It shows real commitment from industrialized countries	Converts the atmosphere in a private commodity and privatize air
Facilitates compliance with the Kyoto Protocol	

From the positions which are critical the indigenous network of Mexico, for example will point out:

This green market based on carbon trading and clean development” has had an effect contrary to the objectives set at first sight, therefore, we Nature, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, continue being those who internalized the costs that have to do with both our collective rights and the continuous lost of biodiversity, and the widening of a gap where green business are privileged and the intrinsic value of biodiversity and a deep understanding of our relationship with Mother Earth are pushed aside.”

Existing carbon markets are of two types:

- “regulated markets” which is trading emissions according to norms and legislations that allow specific actors, mainly industrial companies, to have their own targets for reducing greenhouse gases emissions; and
- “voluntary markets”, where industries are not subject to a legal obligation but decide to take action either by understanding their social responsibility, for the purpose

⁵ Red Indígena de México (2009). Los Pueblos Indígenas frente al cambio climático y las políticas de mitigación. <http://reducayali.blogspot.com/2009/12/los-pueblos-indigenas-frente-al-cambio.html>.

⁶ Cambio Climático: <http://www.cambio-climatico.com/protocolo-de-kyoto/aplicacion-conjunta>



of advertising or for other reasons. Reforestation projects fit mainly in these types of markets.

5.2.2 Joint Implementation among developed countries

“The “Joint Implementation” is a program under the Kyoto Protocol that allows industrialized countries to meet part of their obligations to cut back greenhouse gases emissions paying for projects that will reduce emissions in other industrialized countries. In practice, this will probably means construction of facilities in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union countries –“economies in transition”- paid by countries from Western Europe and North America” .

“Projects must meet the additionality clause: only counts emissions reductions that are additional to those that have been met without the projects, whether in the framework of Joint Implementation Initiatives (countries of Annex I, zero-sum) or of Clean Development Mechanisms (between countries of Annex I, which are awarded avoided emission, and countries which aren't, normally from the developing world without any commitment to curb their emissions)” .

5.2.3 Clean Development Mechanism

Clean development Mechanism is another measure established under the Kyoto Protocol by which is intended to offset pollution from industrialized countries through programs and projects

developed in developing countries (not included in Annex I of the Kyoto Protocol)

In 2008 under the Kyoto protocol more than 4000 MDL projects have already been established. Among these are included renewable energy projects, cleaner fuels, methane reduction activities in the agricultural process, among others.

There are opposing views on the implementation of CDM projects. In particular, many Indigenous Peoples are concerned about the positive or negative impacts of the CDM projects that would relate to activities conducted in their territories and areas of life.

In theory, CDM projects should support projects which reduce greenhouse gases emissions in developing countries, particularly in the energy, transport and forestry sectors.

Such emissions reductions must be additional to other reductions that occur naturally without the implementation of the new project activities, it must also offer real benefits and be measurable. This is known as the “principle of additionality”,

⁷ Miliarium.com: <http://www.miliarium.com/monografias/Kioto/MecanismosFlexibles.htm#JI1>



which is to demonstrate that more carbon will be captured than what was being done before the project (Pedro, et al., 2008).

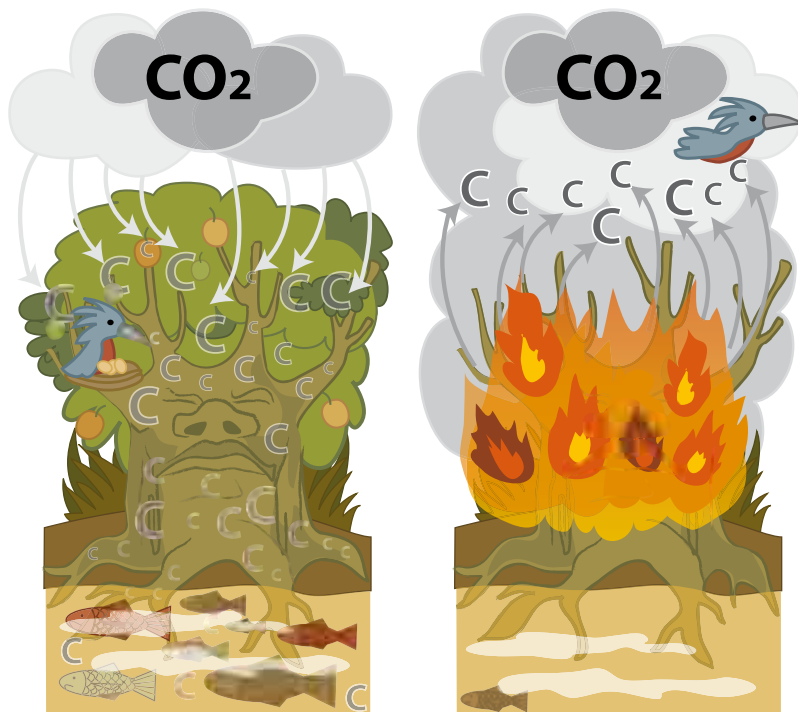
It is a search for afforestation and reforestation projects which are required to demonstrate that there will be a removal of additional carbon to the current and ensure the permanence of that carbon sequestered in trees.

There are serious limitations to the temporary nature of the credits valid only during the commitment period, it is difficult the verification of the project additionality compared to a baseline (a determined point in time), low prices of the forest carbon credits in the market if they are compared with the high profits of the energy sector, the high degree of uncertainty (positive and negative impacts are not known), the high costs of implementation and monitoring (Pedro, et al., 2008).

There are diverging views on the subject:

In favor	Against
It allows the commitment of private companies	There is not consensus on reducing the use of fossil fuels
Reduce the costs of those that decrease GHG emissions	It also allows industrialized countries to buy the right to pollute
Establishes measures to avoid the slippage in the use of funds.	It has a high cost in the transaction process and projects implementation
	Many projects consist of hydroelectric dams that flood ecosystems.





A NEW METHOD OF VALUING THE ROLE OF
FORESTS TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE.

6.1 Deforestation and CO2 emissions

When there is a change in land use, that is, when a forest is destroyed and burned to make way to pastures or agricultural frontier expansion or natural resources exploitation (mining, oil), these activities release large amounts of CO₂ into the atmosphere, which contributes to global warming. A study by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that since 1990 until the year 2000 were released into the atmosphere 1.6 billion tons of CO₂ due to deforestation.



“Over the past 300 years, about 10 million Km² of forest were clean to give rise to other kind of land use (agriculture, livestock) that can cause large alterations in hydric balance (water), turning climate dryer and warmer” (Pedro et al., 2008).

A tree captures CO₂ from the atmosphere and processes it. Through this processing, the tree keeps the carbon and stores it in its branches and trunk. This carbon is part of the energy or food that helps it grow and survive. While sequestering the carbon (C) the tree, release the oxygen which later is emitted into space.

When trees are felled and burned, the carbon stored in its trunk, roots, branches and leaves, is converted into carbon dioxide (CO₂) which in large amounts becomes a pollutant and is one of the greenhouse gases that accelerates climate change. Furthermore, the destruction of forests reduces the planet's capacity to absorbed CO₂ from the atmosphere. According to the experts, tropical forests capture close to 15% of the CO₂ that we produce.

Plantations of oil Plant in Barranquita – Loreto/Peru (courtesy: Radio Televisión Oriente)

The main causes of deforestation in the tropics are the expansion of land for livestock and for commercial agriculture, for example, soybean fields or palm plantations to produce oil.

Also influence lumbering, human settlement through urban development and road infrastructure, among others.

6.2 REDD, REDD+ and REDD++

6.2.1 WHAT IS REDD

It means: Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation or Degradation, in other words, is a mechanism that seeks to reduce emissions that result from deforestation or forest degradation when burning and converting them into soils for agriculture, livestock breeding, natural resources exploitations (mines, oil, etc., etc.), colonization, urbanization, etc.

It is a policy or negotiation mechanism to achieve conservation of tropical forests and other carbon sinks and nail down financial resource commitments that industrialized countries could contribute to it.

According to what is in the concept of REDD adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, this mechanism should offer incentives to developing countries to assume one or more of the following actions to mitigate the effects of climate change:





- a. Reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;
- b. Increase in forest carbon stocks (afforestation and reforestation)
- c. Sustainable forest management (best practices)
- d. Forest conservation

6.2.2 REDD BACKGROUND

Its main background, is what comes from the global concern about climate change that later began taking shape in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

At the COP 11 (Conference of the Parties) in Montreal, 2005, the Coalition for Rainforest Nations (CfRN), led by Costa Rica and Papua New Guinea, presented a formal request to the United Nations in which was introduced the idea of compensate developing countries through financial support (Carbon Bonds) to reduce national rates of deforestation, this support mechanism was call RED or Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation.

If developing countries could reduce deforestation rates in a credible way and the CO₂ emissions associated with these practices, those countries should get paid (...) Since almost 20% of greenhouse gases emissions come from tropical lands due to change in land use (Markus Sommerauer).

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), during its meeting held in Bali – Indonesia (COP 13) in December 2007, acknowledged that forest degradation had to be analyzed as a source of emissions and that it is required to seek solutions to this problem as well, in this way was born the mechanism of Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation or REDD, as a climate change mitigation mechanism for the scheme after the date on which the Kyoto Protocol would lose its validity, that is after 2012.

The institutionalization of REDD is being agreed among the nations parties to the UNFCCC. Nevertheless, there is the need of having as soon as possible clear and workable norms and procedures governing the concept of REDD.

In December 2009 was held the COP 15 in Copenhagen, Denmark, where it was discussed that REDD projects should also take into account environmental services that forests provide to conservation and to carbon storage, in this way REDD became REDD+, or the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation and (+) forest services that contribute to mitigate or

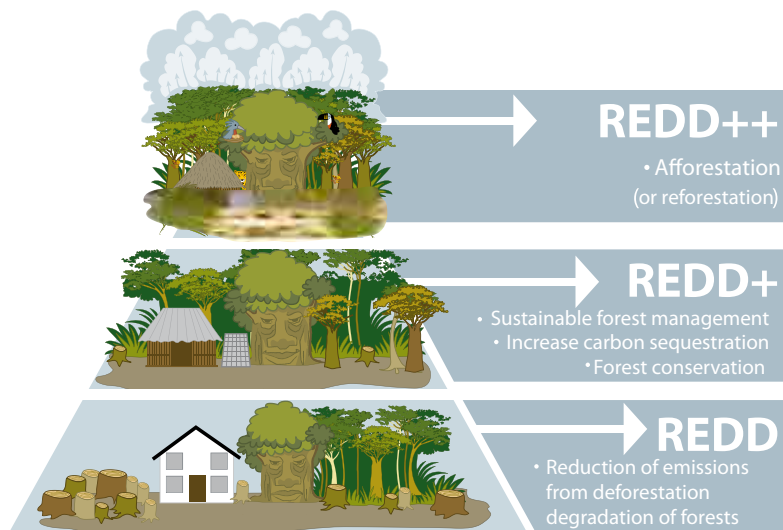
reduce problems generated by climate change (Stone et al., 2010).

REDD is currently being considered also in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forest. In September 2008, the General Secretary of the United Nations announced the launching of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD Programme), which aims at international consistency and support to developing countries in capacity building for the design and implementation of REDD measures.

Finally, today people are talking about REDD++ (or REDD plus plus), which also includes the purpose of afforestation, in other words, to know whether the reason for reforestation is a temporary matter to later cut the timber or if it is a forestry project that will last long term and will benefit future generations.

⁸ En la COP 13 realizada en la ciudad de Bali, Indonesia, en diciembre de 2007 se planteó, como parte del plan de acción, considerar el análisis de redes para fortalecer la acción de los países en desarrollo. También adoptaron una decisión específica sobre red en cuyo preámbulo los países parte reconocen la necesidad de considerar a los Pueblos Indígenas y sus intereses cuando se apliquen proyectos REDD. Esta decisión señaló que el órgano subsidiario de asesoramiento científico y tecnológico (OSACT / SBSTA) tendría la responsabilidad de proponer los aspectos metodológicos y políticas necesarias.





6.2.3 How could REDD+ work?

As has been noted, REDD is a type of payment for environmental services that would benefit developing countries, the funds raised for these initiatives come from developed or industrialized countries, private companies, international organizations, etc. In countries where it is possible to find large quantities of pristine forests, like in the Amazon countries, it is possible to receive those financial benefits to keep these ecosystems intact, to continue capturing CO₂ from the atmosphere and releasing oxygen to breathe a cleaner air.

In countries where the scale of deforestation is very high (logging or cutting many trees per year) these financial benefits could help stop logging, to reforest and restore degraded forests.

The REDD+ activities that are being carried out are in an initial phase or in the process of planning, the outcomes from these experiences will contribute with the necessary inputs (technical and financial) for the UNFCCC member countries to make decisions and to agree about



how REDD+ should operate in the future (Stone, et al., 2010).

According to Susan Stone (2010), there are two main REDD + activities

1) Preparation Activities: these activities help countries to prepare and be ready for the REDD+ mechanisms, this includes the strengthening and capacity building, scientific studies and national development strategies on REDD+, there are also processes of preparation in processes that are currently being implemented in several countries, which are supported by international organizations, in order to prepare proposals for how REDD+ should help mitigate Climate Change.

2) Demonstration Activities: through these activities REDD+ seeks to demonstrate how forests can capture emissions and store CO₂ through the reduction of deforestation and degradation and at the same time of how REDD+ could benefit developing countries, forest dwellers and communities.

6.2.4 What activities are being develop at this moment?

In the last few years, REDD has become a key element in the negotiations on the new agreement on climate change.

According to the World Resources Institute (WRI), a think tank on environmental issues located in Washington, during the 90's, Indonesia, and Brazil were responsible of about half of the world's emissions of CO₂ linked to deforestation and that the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the important emitters.

It has been estimated that 20% of the annual emissions of greenhouse gases come from deforestation. REDD as one of the climate change mitigation policies is important as far as a good strategy applied to its development could contribute in the conservation of billion of hectares of tropical forests, furthermore, could provide political support to strengthen Indigenous Peoples territorial spaces, develop its local governance and ensure the management of natural resources with greater legitimacy .

Some observers, including Nick Stern (a prestigious British economist) affirm that the REDD projects are one of the best present opportunities to reduce greenhouse gases emissions immediately and profitably. They added that other options of a more technological character, as carbon capture and storage with support form nanotechnology among others, will take several years to be implemented at a big scale and will be more expensive.

Costa Rica was a pioneer in the attempt to avoid deforestation through various projects, in 1996 imposed a "carbon tax" of 3.5% on fossil fuels. Much of the collected money has been used to pay landowners up to 65 dollars per hectare in exchange for protecting the environment,

⁹ Las emisiones de dióxido de carbono se aceleran rápidamente: <http://www.terra.org/articulos/art02072.html>

prevent logging and encourage planting of new trees.

This program has been a key factor in the turnaround of the deforestation rate tendency in Costa Rica. Since 1997, this Central American country has also set up projects, known as payments for environmental services that, according to reports, have helped protect 600,000 hectares of privately owned forests .

Bolivia, meanwhile, began in 1996 its first pilot program for the reduction of deforestation with financing from major energy companies working in collaboration with environmentalists groups such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

What they did was to buy four logging concessions adjacent to the Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, in the northeast of the country. Thus, they seized an area in which it was permissible the felling of trees, but instead of destroying the forest they protected it, and this initiative helps companies to offset their own carbon emissions .

According to The Nature Conservancy, the strategy helped saving over 800,000 hectares of tropical forests and prevented that a million tons of carbon dioxide ended up in the atmosphere. Nevertheless, Greenpeace challenged the data and project benefits.

For its part, Guyana was one of the first countries to offer the protection of its tropical forests in exchange of international money. In November 2009, its government announced a pact under which Norway will give it \$250 million until 2015 to help prevent deforestation.

Also in Brazil, families from the Juma reserve receive a debit card

and, if they prove they are not cutting down trees, receive \$30 per month .

Also in Ecuador exists a national conservation program called Socio Bosque (Forest Partner), which is a payment mechanism for environmental services which will be connected to the REDD+ fund, this is an Ecuadorian Government initiative that seeks to protect close to 4 million hectares of natural forests and to improve poor people's standard of living. The Forest Partner program provides an annual financial benefit per hectare of conserved forest to individuals or indigenous communities, who voluntarily decide to protect the native forest that belongs to them, annual verification is to follow up the agreements and to check if these are still standing .

6.2.5 How can REDD work in the future?

There are many different proposals about how REDD might work and how they might be funded. But broadly they fall into three categories:

Market mechanisms: countries that reduce deforestation would gain credits for reducing their carbon emissions, which would then be sold on international carbon markets.

¹⁰ Proyecto Forestal Centroamericano: <http://www.grupochoarvi.org/php/doc/documentos/forestal.pdf>
¹¹ BBC de Londres, REDD... ¿Qué es y con qué se come?: http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ciencia_tecnologia/2009/12/091203_cambio_clima_redd_pea.shtml
¹² BBC de Londres, REDD... ¿Qué es y con qué se come?: http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ciencia_tecnologia/2009/12/091203_cambio_clima_redd_pea.shtml



Government funds: a large pot of international funding would be set up and play a similar role to the official development aid that flows from rich to poor countries. An example of this is Brazil's Amazon Fund to which Norway has pledged US\$1bn

A combination of the two.

There is also a large debate about if the REDD projects should be managed and funded at a national or sub-national levels.

6.2.6 Main problems of REDD

According to James Painter, an analyst with the BBC of London, the most important are :

a. Market mechanisms: Critics say carbon-offset schemes give companies or governments in the rich world a chance to meet international obligations without cutting their own emissions. That is, industrialized countries which are the main emitters of polluting gases product of fossil fuel burning, could continue polluting the environment even in a larger proportion, if they just pay a compensation for this contamination to the countries that have forests (the paragraph in *italics* is an independent argument) Greenpeace argues that allowing a forestry credit scheme would flood the market with cheap offsets, lower the carbon price and reduce incentives for industrial countries and companies to cut their emissions.

b. Monitoring compliance - How can you measure whether a country is really reducing deforestation? Halting it one area might drive loggers or farmers into another (known as "leakage").

c. Measuring carbon - How do you know how much carbon is stored in a forest, and so much carbon emissions are being

avoided by preserving it?

d. Embezzlement - Some forest countries are also some of the most corrupt in the world. How can you be sure the money gets to the communities who depend on the forests, rather than agribusiness companies or local politicians? Many indigenous forest communities are worried they will not see the benefits.

e. Land tenure - Putting a value on forests may cause land-grabs, particularly when property rights in many parts of the world are poorly-defined and hotly-contested. These could block the process of consolidation of indigenous territories, and might even encourage that some governments suspend land titling and expansions of land and territories that indigenous people are requesting.

6.3 Is REDD Essential or not for Indigenous Peoples as a policy for conservation of tropical forests?

For Indigenous Peoples, protecting the forest and avoiding soil degradation is a millenary practice, with REDD or without REDD, Indigenous Peoples are protecting the forests and biological diversity of the Amazon.

¹² Socio Bosque: http://www.ambiente.gov.ec/paginas_espanol/sitio/inicio_es.html

¹³ BBC de Londres, REDD... ¿Qué es y con qué se come?: http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ciencia_tecnologia/2009/12/091203_cambio_clima_redd_pea.shtml

¹⁴ BBC de Londres, REDD... ¿Qué es y con qué se come?: http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ciencia_tecnologia/2009/12/091203_cambio_clima_redd_pea.shtml



What worries the indigenous organizations is that in the name of REDD, states violate the Indigenous Peoples Collective Rights, is of much concern that not a proper space is given to them in the decision making process on establishing the REDD mechanism and in its policy of implementation.

These concerns are reinforced by the difficulties experienced by indigenous peoples in accessing international climate change debates, even though many REDD projects will take place within indigenous territories. In the Poznan-Poland also known as COP 14 held in December 2008, "indigenous peoples were shocked to see the final version of the draft conclusions on 'REDD'. This Document removed any references to the rights of indigenous peoples and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples". Indigenous peoples and civil society representatives responded by declaring: "This is totally unacceptable (...) as the forests which are being targeted for REDD are those which indigenous peoples have sustained and protected for thousands of years".

6.4 WHY IT IS IMPORTANT THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN THE DEBATES ON REDD?

As owners of this valuable forest and a wonderful tropical soil, the benefit should be for Indigenous Peoples, the form of recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the majority of States is fractured and weak. The ownership law does not recognizes in an

integral way the spaces occupied by indigenous people. Natural resources that exist inside of indigenous territories, among which is the Forest, are of the State.

Indigenous people only have access rights to those resources for purposes of subsistence; in the context of REDD it could mean that tropical forests are the whole negotiation package of the states to obtain the benefits for carbon emissions reduction. In those global negotiations Indigenous Peoples are in disadvantage because do not participate in a direct way in the decision making process. It is therefore important that indigenous people are included in those spaces to assert their rights in the political debates on the mechanisms for the definitive implementation of REDD.

If are not included terms under which Indigenous Peoples are to be direct beneficiaries for reducing carbon emissions from forests that are on their territories, the implementation of REDD in the Amazon could bring problems for the Indigenous Peoples and that could become another funnel restricting the indigenous project of territorial consolidation. It could even



create hurdles for the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Rights and the ILO Convention 169.

An ambiguous negotiation on the implementation of REDD by the Amazonian States could generate a proliferation of intermediaries that would like to take advantage of this as a business opportunity with forests that are in the land titling of the communities, indigenous reserves (RI for its initials in Spanish), community lands of origin (TCOs for its initials in Spanish), etc., etc.

For example – in Peru – logging companies invest money to manage the forest exploitation permits in the name of a community and implement a form of slavery when keeping the community members indebted through methods of enganche (hooking) with a final benefit of zero. Something similar could happen with the carbon business, if the autonomy of the Indigenous People is restricted from the direct use of the financial benefits coming from the carbon emissions reduction of their forests.

The question that rises immediately is: HOW ARE THE GOVERNMENTS PLANNING TO BENEFIT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS FROM THEIR FORESTS?

Until now indigenous leaders or representatives of indigenous organizations only participate as observers sponsored by social and environmental NGOs but their concerns and proposals are

not treated in the different instances where the decisions are made.

6.5 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF REDD FOR THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

A. Advantages:

- REDD could provide political and technical support to Indigenous Peoples, provided that governments decide that local forestry practices contribute to carbon sequestration. That would mean that if the reduction of deforestation is instituted in a consistent manner with indigenous interests, this could help protect the biodiversity of plants and animals, guarantying protection of the land and indigenous people's means of subsistence, being at the services of Indigenous Peoples cultures and communities and of other peoples that inhabit forests.

- REDD could contribute to the strengthening and formalization of the international forestry regime (management and control of forests properly and by consensus of all stakeholders), this could represent from

¹⁵ Climate Frontlines, REDD – Un Tema Caliente para el Cambio Climático: <http://www.climatefrontlines.org/es/node/170>



the indigenous people point of view an opportunity to push to obtain political and legal reforms on forests and Indigenous Peoples Rights.

- Opportunity to share their traditional (ancestral) knowledge and their experiences to make important contributions to the REDD process and to other Climate Change mitigation programmes.
- There is the possibility of receiving direct benefits from the forest conservation activities, which can improve the welfare of the indigenous communities in general.
- Ability to learn new tools, improve the knowledge on Climate Change, adaptation and forestry conservation initiatives besides are generated spaces to learn new reforestation and agro-forestry methods.
- The creation of indigenous experts/technicians who could contribute to the monitoring and observation of deforestation, creating new job opportunities and alternative income.
- This initiative encourages and support forests and wetlands conservation to preserve water resources in the region.
- A method of asserting community control over land.

B. Disadvantages

- Representatives of Indigenous Peoples and other organizations involved in the issue of Climate Change have also expressed their concerns regarding the potential negative

impacts. For example, if forests are attributed a monetary valued under a REDD scheme, many fear that – in places where land ownership rights are unclear and the decision making takes place in an authoritarian manner – many conflicts will arise between indigenous communities and local communities, as well as between them and the State.

- It also worries that the REDD system is being deliberately designed to exclude the rights of Indigenous Peoples. For now nothing indicates in a clear and explicit way that Indigenous Peoples or communities will be benefited. In addition Indigenous Peoples and other groups, like women's organizations or peasant movements, have been almost entirely excluded from the development of the system. If this trend continues, such groups will not have any opportunity to have influence in the agreements neither to participate in equal conditions in the REDD projects.

- Possible capture and hoarding of International financial resources available for the execution of the REDD mechanism, by big companies and local and national elites,

¹⁶ <http://www.cepes.org.pe/debate/debate42/01-bedoya.pdf>

excluding the Indigenous Peoples and local communities from its central role, that should have if the final objective is to achieve in a successful way the end of deforestation

6.6 PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES TO CONSIDER AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES:

To take into account the above concerns, the processes to be followed as a minimum in the implementation of REDD, must take into account the following principles:

- Indigenous territories constitute our collective property and our cultural patrimony that sustains our culture, identity and livelihood as peoples.
- It must recognize and respect the collective rights of the Indigenous Peoples and of the local communities to their lands, territories, resources and to the traditional use of their forests.
- REDD should not be used as a legal excuse to allow Industrialized States to continue polluting. It must be accompanied by more ambitious emissions reduction commitments than the current.
- To ensure that the States that participate in the implementation of REDD should have signed, ratified and executed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, as well as other relevant international instruments as the ILO-Convention 169, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Human Rights, etc., etc.)

- Companies which contribute to deforestation and forest degradation should NOT benefit from REDD mechanisms. REDD mechanisms should not be the opportunity for big companies to take advantage of tropical nations participating in this scheme.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities should be involved in all the stages of decision making about REDD, from the design to its implementation. If their territories are used, REDD implementation should ensure the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), as well as a significant participation of them.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities should benefit for their conservation efforts.
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities should be the main and direct beneficiaries of the mechanisms of REDD share financing. There must be a minimum set of standards on benefit distribution that guide the development of national mechanisms and this should be created with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- Policies on forests and climate should respect and protect our fundamental rights of



freedom to enjoy our livelihood and to continue our way of life, including the right to practice our traditional system of shifting cultivation and other economic and ceremonial traditional activities.

It must be recalled the Bali Action Plan which contains a series of options for the policies and initiatives on forests, mitigation and adaptation to climate change – goes far beyond the REDD policy – that ensures respect for human and collective rights of Indigenous Peoples.



CONCLUSIONS

To be specific few are the achievements reached to date in regard to mitigation and adaptation to Climate Change. While there are instruments created to further this goal, little or nothing has been met, although it is noted the evolution of the European Union in its commitment of controlling carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) through reconversion of their industrial technologies compared to China, United States, India and other industrialized countries that while remaining the world's largest pollutants, resist to join a serious commitment.

Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon have been, are and will be the best example of local conservation that could be found in the world, have lived for many centuries in the forests, our culture, beliefs and living conditions are linked to land, air plants and animals.

Global warming must be an opportunity for the Amazonian Indigenous Peoples and of the world, to consolidate their territories, strengthen local governance rights in the context of self-determination as established by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Only working together, hand in hand with respect to the rights of Indigenous Peoples and nature, can help combat the problems of climate change resulting from the consumerism and the western style of life that are currently affecting the planet and that have never taken as an example their ancestral knowledge. Indigenous Peoples as inhabitants of the forests are open to cooperate and seek for joint solutions in the daily work, from their territories and on the tables of dialogue and negotiation about the future of the planet.

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