

# Tropical forests and climate change

Are we on the right track..... beyond Copenhagen?

24 June 2009

## *Seminar Report*

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By:  
**Cathrien de Pater**  
**Herman Savenije**  
**Charlotte Benneker**  
**Bernd Sleszazek**

## 1. Background, objectives and programme of the seminar

This report summarizes the main highlights of the presentations and discussions of the seminar “**Tropical forests and climate change - Are we on the right track..... beyond Copenhagen?**”, that took place at June 24, 2009 in Ede, the Netherlands.

Prof. Dr. René Boot of Tropenbos International chaired the meeting.

### *Objectives*

The aims of this seminar were to:

1. Present and discuss recent scientific insights into the role of tropical forest in climate change mitigation and adaptation, with special attention to forest degradation, new natural forests, agroforests, and forest plantations.
2. Present an integrated view on sustainable forest management, what is needed to make it happen, and how climate instruments can contribute.
3. Discuss the policy and management implications emerging from our new insights on forests and climate, including priorities for further work.

This seminar was the third in a series of annual events on **Sustainable forest management in the tropics. Are we on the right track?** It is jointly organized by Utrecht University (Prince Bernhard Chair), Wageningen University Forestry Groups, Tropenbos International, Dutch Association of Tropical Forests (VTB) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (Department of Knowledge).

### *Audience*

The seminar convened a broad audience of 130+ professionals working in relation to tropical forest management and climate: policy, conservation, industry, trade, science, advisory, and students.

### *Background*

It is increasingly understood and acknowledged that forests have to play a larger role in a post 2012 international climate regime. So far forestry and land use have had a limited role as mitigation options under the Kyoto protocol and its flexible mechanisms (CDM and Joint Implementation). Decisions at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties – 13 in Bali opened the possibility for REDD to become part of the post 2012 regime and to widen the scope of forests both in climate adaptation and mitigation. At COP 15 in Copenhagen an international architecture for a REDD-mechanism is likely to be agreed, to include arrangements on the objectives and scope (REDD or REDD+), policies and positive incentives, methodological guidance for example on measurement, reporting and verification, means of implementation and finance (fund and or market-based approaches), technology and capacity building support. The recent Climate Change talks in Bonn (1-12 June) indicate that – while negotiations are still ongoing – the likely scope of the REDD architecture will be wide to include “deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries”.

Along with the international negotiations to culminate in Copenhagen, several international and national initiatives have emerged and funds have been allocated to assist countries to participate in a future regime for REDD, for example UN REDD Programme by FAO, UNEP and UNDP, the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the Forest Investment Programme, Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative, the Prince of Wales Rainforest Project, the US Avoided Deforestation Partners Unity Agreement, to mention a few. In addition, on initiative of national governments, the private sector, NGOs and the science community – often in partnerships - a lot of piloting and demonstration activities have come off the ground. These initiatives all together indicate that regardless the outcome of the upcoming climate conference in Copenhagen, the role of forests in achieving climate objectives will be significant, putting a big challenge on how best to implement REDD beyond 2012.

The seminar particularly focused on contributing to an agenda for further work after Copenhagen; this was guided by the following questions:

- How can (agro)forests and their sustainable management contribute effectively, equitably and credibly to climate change adaptation and mitigation?
- How can forest related climate finance strategies, mechanisms and instruments be effectively and credibly integrated in strategies for SFM and sustainable land management?

### Programme

The seminar consisted of a series of plenary introductions in which the relevance, roles and possible contributions of a number of “forest types” in reaching climate change objectives were addressed: degraded forest, new natural forests, plantations and agroforestry (see chapter 2). The presentations were followed by a panel discussion (for highlights, see chapter 3) and the chair concluded the seminar, presenting some lessons from the meeting.

Time	Subject	Speaker
12.30 – 13.30 hrs	Registration and coffee	
13.30 – 13.45 hrs	Welcome Introduction to Objectives and Programme	Chair Prof. Dr. René Boot Tropenbos International
13.45 – 14.10 hrs	The significance of forest degradation: incentives for improved management	Dr. Pieter Zuidema Utrecht University
14.10– 14.35 hrs	Overlooked forests: the important role of the new natural forests	Prof. Dr. Frans Bongers Wageningen UR
14.35 – 15.00 hrs	Man-made forests: friends or foes?	Dr. Mulugeta Lemenih Elerohi University of Hawassa, Ethiopia
15.00 – 15.25 hrs	Agroforestry falling through the cracks of the UNFCCC forest definition in REDD?	Dr. Meine van Noordwijk World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
15.25 – 15.50 hrs	Coffee break	
15.50 – 16.50 hrs	Forum and plenary discussion: <b>The Agenda beyond Copenhagen</b>  Introduced and moderated by the Chair	<b>Panel:</b> Ir. Bas Clabbers Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality  Prof. Dr. Francis E. “Jack” Putz University of Florida /Prince Bernhard Chair for International Nature Conservation, Utrecht University  Ir. Ytha Kempkes IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands
16.50 – 17.00 hrs	Conclusion	Chair Prof. Dr. René Boot
17.00 – 18.00 hrs	Drinks	

## 2. Highlights of the presentations

### 2.1. The significance of forest degradation: incentives for improved management

*dr. Pieter Zuidema*

*Prince Bernhard Chair for International Nature Conservation, Utrecht University, Netherlands*

The main objective of Pieter's presentation was to demonstrate that through the application of improved forest management practices, the emission of carbon from forest areas can be reduced significantly. Pieter started by explaining that the idea to reduce carbon emission from forest areas expanded over the years from measures to *reduce* - (1) deforestation (RED), (2) deforestation in developing countries (REDD), (3) deforestation and degradation (REDD) to (4) measures to *enhance* forests (REDD+). He proceeded by clarifying the importance of the definition of 'forest' for the application of REDD. In the Marrakech convention, a forest was defined as an area with a crown cover of at least 10-30%. This means that forests that have higher potential crown covers can be degraded to a crown cover of 10% before (according to the definition) deforestation is considered to take place. In these cases, the contribution of forest degradation to carbon emissions is considerable. When a different definition of forest is used the portion of carbon lost through deforestation and/or degradation changes.

Pieter showed that >5% of the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are likely to originate from the degradation of forests in which selective logging takes place. He compared this figure with the ~10% of GHG emitted through the burning and drainage of peat lands and 1-3% of total GHG emitted through forest fires. He therefore considered it worthwhile to pay attention to forest degradation. In forests managed for timber production, carbon emissions can be substantially reduced through the application of reduced impact logging (RIL). RIL reduces the collateral damage to trees in the forest and allows for a faster recovery of carbon stocks in a selectively logged forest, compared to conventional logging practices. Recent studies showed that it is even possible to implement CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral selective logging, if RIL is applied. He concludes that despite the lack of studies on the effects of RIL on carbon emissions and their widely varying results, the application of RIL reduces damage to the forest, stimulates forest recovery and therefore is good to keep more carbon in forests. Monitoring forest degradation is complex, though. Existing certification schemes may be practical tools to implement monitoring of reduced forest degradation in managed forests.

### 2.2. Overlooked forests: the important role of the new natural forests

*Prof. Dr. Frans Bongers*

*Wageningen University and Research Centre, Netherlands*

Frans called for attention to secondary, or, in his terms, 'new natural' forests. He argued that 35% of all tropical forests (if not more) are secondary forests and that they appear on abandoned agricultural lands, clear cuts, and in forest areas affected by natural disasters such as fires. Whereas worldwide the area under new forests is growing, good quality data are scarce; these forest areas are typically dynamic systems, which are difficult to be assessed. Their - at times - ephemeral nature and location near urban areas also make monitoring of these forests complicated. New grown forests, however, form a large part of the world's forest and they contain a lot of carbon. Their potential to store carbon depends on the type of forest and the time these forests need to restore their potential carbon stock. Potential carbon stocks are moreover affected by climate change itself as dry forests contain less carbon than humid forests.

The development of forests should be analysed in relation to their surroundings. The development of new forests, for example, depends on the landscape matrix, as only in areas where trees exist regeneration is likely to occur. Connectivity among forest patches and with old-growth forest is crucial. Also the occurrence of fires in adjacent areas can affect the re-growth of forests. The analysis of landscape matrixes will be important in the future! New forests offer much more than carbon. Most biodiversity, for example, can be found both in old and new forests and many of the new forests products are used by local people. Frans urges us to start acting: measurements have to be taken to protect and enhance forest cover, and to improve forest quality (for instance by enrichment planting and selective weeding) Activities that are already undertaken by local people should be higher valued. Bringing 'new things' not always

improves forest quality or extension. Through active intervention useful forest can be promoted that fulfill people's needs. Education of all involved stakeholders, including ourselves, is necessary to achieve this.

Most countries go through a phase of initial decline and later recovery of forest areas. REDD activities should consider the stage where countries find themselves in and focus on both the protection of old forest where they still exist and the enhancement of new forest where forest areas have declined.

### **2.3. Man-Made forests: Foes or friends?**

***Dr. Mulugeta Lemenih Elerohi***  
***Hawassa University, Ethiopia***

Man-made (plantation) forests provide diverse socio-economic and environmental benefits including climate change mitigation. First the potential of plantations in supporting the sustainable use of natural resources are clarified, thereafter challenges and foes are mentioned.

Plantation forests contribute to climate change mitigation in a number of ways. As deforestation is a cause for carbon-emission, reforestation and afforestation are means for fixing and storing carbon. If well managed, plantations can fix and store as much or even greater amounts of carbon than natural forests, and usually in a shorter time span. Next to carbon storing, plantations can provide an alternative source for timber, fuel wood other forest products. Plantation as an alternative source of wood and non-wood forest products is a necessity not an option in a world in which on the one hand the demands for timber and forest products grow as population and average incomes are increasing, and on the other hand natural forests that produce forest products are decreasing due to deforestation and increased protection. By providing alternative source of wood, plantations help to preserve natural forests and their carbon stocks, and thus facilitate REDD. Today, covering only 5% of global forest estate, planted forests are providing 35-40% of industrial wood supply. This contribution will continue rising. Plantations are more than carbon and timber. In some countries plantations are mainly for industrial wood supply and in others they offer protection to watersheds, combating desertification and other environmental services. Globally there are 48 M ha (26% of all planted forests) established solely for non-industrial but mostly for environmental purposes, and these are also expanding at a high rate. Plantations established on degraded lands can also catalyze and restore indigenous biodiversity (flora and fauna), soil carbon and also provide social benefits (e.g. employment) and non-timber forest products on which local people depend for their livelihoods. In many countries plantation silviculture and policy have changed to be socially responsible as well as to favour biodiversity restoration/ conservation at stand and landscape levels.

Despite the multiple benefits and services from planted forests many also consider them as foes. Critics blame plantations for their negative biodiversity, soil-water and social impacts. Plantations can be foes when improperly established and managed such as when replacing bio-diverse natural forests or badly managed. But when established with adequate planning and within effective institutional set-ups they are good friends; be it socially, economically or environmentally.

In fact, whatever concern is raised on planted forests, there are management options capable of correcting the undesirable consequences to make them friends not foes. Indeed, plantations - just like natural forests - deserve appropriate and balanced attention in the impending REDD discussion in Copenhagen.

## **2.4. Agroforestry falling through the cracks of the UNFCCC forest definition in REDD?**

*Dr. Meine van Noordwijk*

*World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Bogor, Indonesia*

In this presentation Meine van Noordwijk first addressed the importance of definitions, an issue clearly illustrated by the role that agroforestry systems could fulfil within the context of avoided deforestation and forest degradation. The potential of agroforestry systems to be part of efforts to reduce C emissions are best served by mechanisms that provide incentives to reduce carbon emissions from landscapes encompassing a mix of different land uses, and not by separate rules for forests and agriculture.

The term 'forest', as defined for the UNFCCC Kyoto protocol, can cover many types of land cover and use, not all of which are forests in the public eye (e.g. oil palm plantations or grasslands). This UNFCCC definition has two parts: one that refers to tree cover, and as such covers tree crop plantations, home gardens, and many lands that are normally outside of the 'forest institutional' domain, and one that refers to 'temporarily unstocked' lands that are normally considered to be part of (institutional) forest, but can currently be a grassland or other vegetation without trees. If the institutional delineation of 'forest lands' dominates, as in the second part of the definition, substantial C stocks in agroforests and 'trees outside of forest' are left out of the consideration. In that case emission reduction within the forest might be accompanied by increase of emissions elsewhere. If a more comprehensive approach to terrestrial C stocks and trees is followed (the first part of the definition), the 'forest institutions' don't have mandate to be the primary interface between local agents and the global stakeholders. Thinking outside the 'forest box' may be needed to find solutions that work for forests as well as all other land uses with trees.

Tree cover transitions are not a law of nature, but a recurrent pattern of human response to shifting options and relevance of different levels and types of tree cover. Forest and non-forest land cover are closely linked at 'driver' level, and cross-sectoral shifts in emission patterns ('leakage') needs to be accounted for in any emission reduction claim. Intensification of agriculture, despite its emissions can, under circumstances that are predictable, be a contributor to national emission reduction through its interaction with area expansion

National accounting systems of changes in aboveground and belowground carbon stocks across all land use types, plus emission estimates for methane and nitrous oxides are at the heart of a total anthropogenic emission estimate; this is independent of the forest terminology. NAMA's (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions), as expression of diversity of situations and national sovereignty in choosing cleaner development pathways refer to total emission levels. Rural development, economic transformation ('out of agriculture') and the sourcing of renewable (and bio) energy lead to shifts in emission profiles and carbon footprints.

A first reaction from the audience thanked the speaker for addressing the gaps he sees within the REDD discussion; it makes much more sense to approach reduced emissions on landscape level. Another comment from the audience addressed the issue of defining 'forests'. Among other remarks it was stated that no better definitions than the controversial UNFCCC definition has been mentioned so far. In response, Van Noordwijk underlined the importance to look at land use in general and not focus on one concept, which is hard to define.

### **3. The Agenda beyond Copenhagen. Forum and plenary discussion**

The aim of the forum and plenary discussion – which was moderated by the chair -was to reflect on the insights presented above and to draw lessons or key messages for the agenda of further work after Copenhagen. The forum consisted of Bas Clabbers (LNV), Ytha Kempkes (IUCN-NL, and Jack Putz (Universities of Florida and Utrecht) and the four introductory speakers.

#### **3.1. Reflection by Bas Clabbers**

##### ***Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands***

Bas Clabbers is the representative of the Netherlands Government in the international negotiations on climate change and REDD. He reported the results of the last meeting in Bonn (April 2009), which prepared the way for 'Copenhagen'. Although progress was made, there were still considerable misunderstandings in the discussions. The problem of definitions came up here, too. He pointed out that no definition of forests has been agreed upon in the REDD mechanism as yet. It is likely that the Kyoto Protocol forest definition will be incorporated in REDD, but that still has to be agreed. If so, agroforestry will be covered to a large extent, since that definition applies a minimum crown cover of 10%. Commenting on this seminar, he welcomed the sharing of information and urged everyone to coordinate actions. However, we should realise that the climate negotiations address a much broader field than just forests; they cover all aspects of the economy including other land uses, wood as substitution of less energy efficient material, and so on. The international discussion is more about what developing countries can do without financial aid, while this seminar seems to focus on what the experts can do for or in developing countries.

The positive thing about REDD+ is that it considers forest as a whole which may prevent forest areas to be reduced to a minimum 'turning point' as Frans discussed. We even need to go a bit further to 'REDD+ +' to consider full carbon accounting of all land use activities and all agricultural lands, an issue which is actively pushed by the African countries.

As for 'fairness vs. efficiency', REDD should be both fair and efficient. The UN system directing the negotiations works emphatically with the 'fairness' principle (giving equal voice to all countries), which might slightly disfavour efficiency but at least promotes fairness.

#### **3.2. Reflection by Ir. Ytha Kempkes**

##### ***IUCN- NL***

Ytha Kempkes is NGO lobbyist for climate change and other issues. IUCN became involved in the discussion on climate change since forests were included in the Bali agreement. They still welcome the inclusion of forests in the Bali agreement, but they emphasize that the debate should not be exclusively directed to forests as a carbon stock; forest biodiversity and other functions should equally be addressed. IUCN therefore agrees with the development from REDD to REDD++. IUCN's opinion on plantations is less positive than the view of prof. Mulugeta but more positive than that of many other NGOs at Bonn. The latter reject REDD throughout fearing that it would become a potential subsidy instrument for the logging industry. IUCN still supports REDD+ as an opportunity to do something by giving a price to the forests. However, REDD should emphasize SFM including enhancement of native species and rights of indigenous people, and reject non-native species such as eucalyptus.

IUCN criticizes the REDD pilots of the World Bank, the first results of which were presented at Bonn. The NL are an important donor of these pilots. Whereas indigenous people in Bolivia were satisfied with their participation in the process, those in Panama were only consulted during a one afternoon seminar. These pilots suffer from donor pressure to obtain quick results and in most cases indigenous people are not sufficiently consulted. In IUCN's opinion, the basis for these schemes should be good, for if not, the whole structure will fall apart in the end. If that happens, NGOs will seize the opportunity to criticize REDD even more.

### **3.3. Reflection by prof. dr. Jack Putz** *Universities of Florida and Utrecht*

Jack Putz states he had already pointed to forest carbon storage long before Kyoto and welcomes the resurrection of the debate and the potential extra financing of standing forests. Policymakers should be aware of the following: The Copenhagen agreement will necessarily be simple and void of technical detail. Yet “the devil is in the detail”: it is precisely the details, which will determine whether the agreement works in practice or not for the non-carbon goals such as social welfare and biodiversity. How do you control a process if it is complicated with those goals? As for social welfare, there is the risk that the people that should benefit in the first place are likely to be left out: small isolated communities that live in poverty and have always protected their forest and saved the carbon stocks. He trusts that the UN will see to social welfare aspects in the implementation of the climate programme.

But what about biodiversity? Maximizing carbon storage is in his view essentially the same as maximizing sustained timber yield (high trees and density), but what are the trade-offs for biodiversity? In the right place, under the right conditions with the right social actors plantations can contribute to the goal, as is likely to happen with REDD. However, all those important details will likely not be regulated in the agreement, but left for implementation by the countries. Based on his experience, prof. Putz has little confidence that governments will do the right thing. In his opinion, here is a task for FSC – hitherto conspicuously and undesirably absent from the debate. We should ensure that the FSC criteria are applied to ensure that REDD interventions do not damage the environment and society.

### **3.4. Plenary discussion**

#### *REDD vs. earlier attention for forests*

What is the difference between this debate with the debate on plantations for CDM credits in the 1990s? It was feared at the time that CDM credits would flood into the market but this did not happen.

However, this time the debate is different since:

1. The driving force for implementation in the 1990s was projects, now it is the carbon market at the national or sub-national level. The problems associated with projects are not similar to those at the national level.
2. Unlike before, the item was put on the agenda by developing countries that are actively engaged. The regional / subnational levels are also engaged to exert more control than before, with different results.

The panel is divided about the beneficial effects of REDD. Experience in the Amazon of Peru does not inspire confidence on putting the burden on national or regional governments. In Indonesia, though, the government after long negotiations has given out the first certificate to a local community establishing local forest ownership. Here, the prospective REDD agreement therefore appears to stimulate positive developments even before it is signed.

#### *Methodologies, standards and baselines*

Referring to Bas Clabbers' statement that the focus beyond Copenhagen should be on the application of scientific knowledge, the discussion unfolded on what scientific insights could be applied and which methodological issues should be tackled to make REDD work. It was agreed in Bonn that we should start applying and learning from the methods that already exist rather than go on developing improved methods. We are now assisting developing countries to come up with emission data from forests. Issues that require scientific input are reference levels, the establishment of a credible baseline, and monitoring. Now is the challenge to do that in practice and we have to deal with it the next 1.5 to 2.5 years.

Deficiencies in current baseline development need to be resolved which will be a major task both for researchers and policy makers. The liberal way of defining and describing baselines currently applied in the negotiations are worrisome since the talks are influenced by issues of sovereignty, personal interests, future payments, capacities etc. Strong and strict international checks on the establishment of baselines and the monitoring of emission reductions are required. This should not be left to the countries themselves as the consequence of the calculations is directly related to huge payments. The FAO Forest Resource



Assessments are no good model for this, since there the data, though valuable, are provided by the member countries. Remote sensing is the only workable cross-country mechanism in place.

#### *The 'turning point' and urgency to preserve forests*

In the areas where there is still a lot of forest (f.e. in Peru) people do not feel the need to protect it. In other areas where the turning point in deforestation is approaching, people make efforts to reforest and protect the forest, as is the case in Ethiopia. In his opinion, intensive education at all levels can make a big difference. In many countries the situation is already improving.

Mulugeta rejects the idea that developing countries would not feel responsible for conserving their forests. They do and they also call for very strict rules. Yet the transaction costs for a project to be approved under REDD are still prohibitively high. Simple rules and low transaction costs are therefore needed; otherwise there will be no significant outcome.

#### *Funding for REDD*

It was pointed out that since REDD came into existence in 2007, there were enough funds available for mitigation and adaptation activities. Since then, funds declined by the effect of the economic crisis and the lowering of donor countries' GDP. This effect should not be underestimated. However, the EU and the Dutch ministers have assured that they were willing to pay their share and make sure money comes available for mitigation and adaptation. By the way, some Southern countries are even preparing claims to demand compensation from developed countries for damages due to climate change caused by the latter. The idea should be abandoned that emission reduction through REDD comes cheap, considering the effort put in making community forestry activities work. The costs are underestimated, but the cost of doing nothing is even higher.

#### *Mitigation, adaptation or both?*

It was stated that climate change as an irreversible process in which we are beyond the point of no return. Mitigation will not do the job anymore. It therefore makes more sense to invest in meeting carbon requirements but also in biodiversity and rural development; in other words, in adaptation. Are mitigation and adaptation separated and should they be treated as such? Agroforestry is in the interface between mitigation and adaptation and that activities are complementary. In the international debate these issues are treated separately; however, there are also links as the agreements are based on 5 pillars: (1) shared vision, (2) mitigation (REDD), (3) adaptation, (4) finance, (5) technology. Funding, too, is suggested both for mitigation and adaptation. Several proposals were made in Bonn: one from Mexico arguing that all countries should contribute to a system where all countries contribute to payments for both mitigation and adaptation; and another from Norway intending to auction allowances or emission rights. Both are part of one picture.

#### *REDD and social welfare (and biodiversity)*

The discussion then turned to the effect of REDD on social welfare. Is the glass half full or half empty? Whereas some NGOs take a sceptical stance, other NGOs, e.g. from Cameroon, were positive as REDD would create opportunities. They all believe that REDD is an opportunity but they have low or moderate expectations that it will be implemented in the right way. They want to make sure that the REDD building blocks for implementation guarantee attention to social welfare from the early ('readiness') stages onwards. Scientists, like Jack Putz express a similar caution and fear that aiming for maximum carbon sequestration and, hence, reduction of transaction costs and going for a market approach is not well compatible with dealing with many small communities that are not likely to reduce much carbon. However, a survey on the voluntary carbon market shows that several schemes do focus on social welfare and avoid dealing with industrial plantations. If the mechanism is a fund, there will be an urge to reach the carbon goals even at the cost of social welfare. In the ensuing discussion a number of uncertainties and questions about such schemes were raised. It was observed that there is a lack of empirical evaluation of similar schemes in the past. The possibility of including industrial plantations in a REDD scheme is questioned by several participants, but it would go too far to obstruct the scheme for that reason. Enterprises can establish plantations with REDD subsidy. However, not all credits should be under the climate treaty. Skepticism about REDD was also fed by disappointing results from community forestry as a poverty alleviation mechanism in Africa: this was a promising approach but successful communities were

eventually denied access to the larger market and thus to further prosperity. Finally, there was a general concern about the lack of baseline information and the transparency of the REDD payments to local people. It was stated that perverse incentives should be avoided but building in positive incentives to fix poverty and biodiversity is a different debate.

#### *REDD and carbon emission reduction*

The question was raised how a clear mechanism for measuring GHG reduction by REDD – its core business - is designed and whether absolute carbon loss is measured or net loss. For instance, if the rainforest is cut for oil palm, is the carbon stored in oil palm reduced from the loss of carbon in the rainforest, resulting in a lower net loss? It was explained that the Bonn meeting had agreed on measurements, monitoring and reporting. The recent IPCC Guidelines were accepted as a base. Ground measurements as well as air-based measurements were both accepted. There is detailed information on what to measure. It includes everything, also oil palm. So the 'what' is clear, and some of the 'how'. The final outcome, though, will depend on the definition on forest and deforestation.

### **3.5 Post-seminar reflections by participants**

After the seminar the participants were invited to provide their afterthoughts and remaining questions on the content of the event. Thirty-plus persons responded. Besides some issues that were not (adequately) addressed during the seminar, participants also made some observations and suggestions, and expressed concerns and dilemmas on the topic. The results of the feedback are summarized in annex 1.

## **4. Some conclusions for a post-Copenhagen agenda**

1. Good management of timber production forests, especially measures avoiding damage to the forest contributes substantially to the reduction of global carbon emissions.
2. New natural forests, a.k.a. secondary forests, cover extensive areas and contain important stocks of carbon. Their management may contribute significantly to carbon sequestration and storage, improved livelihoods and biodiversity.
3. If well-managed, man-made or plantation forests can play an important role in reaching climate and development goals.
4. The delineation/definition of 'forests' and other land uses are a major challenge to the development and implementation of rules for REDD that would not apply across the whole landscape. Reducing Emissions from Any Land Use (REALU) therefore should be preferred over current separate proposals for forests, peatlands and agriculture.
5. A too exclusive focus on carbon sequestration and storage may have negative effects on the role of forests for livelihoods and biodiversity. What is good for carbon may not necessarily be good for people and biodiversity.
6. Developing a credible REDD scheme involves a trade-off between Efficiency and Fairness. Striking the right balance between them is an important goal for the current negotiations of a new climate treaty.

## **Further information**

The seminar booklet and other information on the seminar can be found at the website of the Dutch Association of Tropical Forests (VTB): [www.tropischebossen.nl](http://www.tropischebossen.nl)

For specific information on the seminar, please contact any of the organizers: Frans Bongers (WUR Forestry Groups, [frans.bongers@wur.nl](mailto:frans.bongers@wur.nl)), René Boot (Tropenbos International, [rene.boot@tropenbos.org](mailto:rene.boot@tropenbos.org)), Pieter Zuidema (Utrecht University, [p.a.zuidema@uu.nl](mailto:p.a.zuidema@uu.nl)) or Herman Savenije (Ministry of LNV, [h.j.f.savenije@minlnv.nl](mailto:h.j.f.savenije@minlnv.nl)).

## Annex 1: Participant's responses on the substance of the seminar

Question: Are there any points you would like to add on the substance of the seminar?

### A) Topics missed or lacking sufficient attention

- I missed **a brief introduction on REDD** and the way the seminar would deal with it.
- I missed the topic of **payments for avoided deforestation**.
- I missed in (nearly) all presentations a reference on the **multifunctionality of forests**. Focus was too limited to C-sequestration (IMHO logical, but too narrow) and biodiversity. For a sustainable development of the forests, especially regarding the developing countries, this should be focussed on (environmental services in general etc.). This would allow a more differentiated look on forest and forestry development
- There was nothing mentioned about the **soil carbon stocks** under forests, their importance and how to monitor or quantify these stocks.
- It seems to me that the seminar provided useful information on the different views on the issue of REDD. With regard to the issues raised it might be useful to deal more in depth with some aspects of the views, e.g.:
  1. the role of governments, UN (including potential and limitations of relevant conventions) and NGO's
  2. do "we" have the same understanding of the word "forest" and do we share a common view on forest functions?
  3. a more in depth and focussed discussion on the pro's and con's of different REDD options.But of course, these are remarks with hindsight, and as such no comment on the value of the seminar.
- I missed attention to **indigenous people** and forest carbon payment systems.
- I missed **how REDD can be applied more practically** and structurally in the future; which countries will contribute to this financial mechanism underlying REDD and which countries will actually perform the implications and applications of REDD?
- I missed very much the **gender issues** in the seminar and the previous one I have attended as well. It is difficult to get a full insight of environmental degradation in developing countries without addressing the gender issues. Though, women remain close to natural resources regarding their gender and domestic tasks of food production, fetching water and firewood etc... their marginalization in the process impacts somehow on the relevance of environmental policies.
- I would have liked a bit more attention on **how REDD could benefit local communities**, what are requirements to make it work for them and what are the pitfalls. IUCN said a little bit about it but not much methodological details.
- Very interesting seminar! Perhaps a bit too academic? It would have been great if **some pilots in the field** were highlighted.
- The actual implementation of REDD, and a discussion on **how to construct a baseline** were not really mentioned, while they are I think quite essential to REDD. Now the discussion focussed too much on the definition of forests, and the possible implications of choosing the right definition.
- **Forest governance** aspect in relation to financial mechanisms could have been stronger.
- I think more attention needs to be paid on the **cost and benefit sharing arrangements** and principles which should be discussed, agreed and be part of REDD agreements and the treaty. Who is

sacrificing what for reduced emission and degradation? And hence who should receive the benefits for it? Similarly it is crucial to acknowledge who should be the signatories to REDD agreements: now it looks like the governments alone. Is this right and justified?

## B) Observations, suggestions, concerns and dilemma's on the topic

- The concept of **new natural forests** as a new concept in science, particularly in the context of REDD, is confusing. The discussion around this topic could benefit from the traditional usage of concepts like forest, secondary forest, plantation, which are of general use both by scientists and decision makers.
- What is the **relation of REDD to the CDM** mechanism and projects? For CDM, the relation with/addition to local development goals must be made clear. Does REDD fall under CDM or not at all (intentionally)? That may provide some more insight in the subject of including vs excluding a broad sustainability scope on REDD-projects.
- Many **keys points** which are necessary **for improvement** of REDD still need consistent attention: - How do we calculate the baseline globally and at the level of countries? - How can we use the REDD to enhance the development of indigenous people who contribute to forest protection? - There is still a lot of corruption in many tropical countries and the leakage is likely to happen. In contrast, evaluation of projects led by many international NGOs shows that indigenous population don't have direct benefit. Financial mechanism of REDD still needs considerable attention.
- I will like to add that for the development of **proper monitoring systems using remote sensing (RS)** to support mechanisms as REDD, the definitions of forest, deforestation, clear cutting and secondary forest, are essential. I will suggest making a **revision of these definitions** on the frame of the RS system and observation capabilities. if we can not detect differences how can we monitor them and moreover how can we guaranty accuracy and transparency?
- Role of **natural regeneration versus** 'active' management and **plantation forestry**. Do we need MORE plantations in order to meet the needs of MORE humans, or do we need to become MORE effective and efficient in what we are doing? The world of MORE has brought us into several crises already... Climate change was somehow lost in the presentation part of the seminar.
- How do forests contribute to **climate** goal while contributing to the **welfare of rural people** in developing countries?
- We need more scientific information on potential climate change impacts on forest ecosystems in developing countries and how this is informing management and policy decisions on climate change adaptations in these countries.
- We **MUST make REDD work**...easy to criticize, hard to find a good way forward.
- **Co-benefits and local people**. Transaction costs can get too high when the REDD procedure gets too complicated. Copenhagen is a climate agreement, not an agreement about biodiversity and/or poverty reduction. But then I would like to come with a scenario: what if the there are local people inhabiting the forest. They use the forest (NTFPs or logging) to raise an income. Then their own government forbids this because of the REDD procedures, whilst not compensating the people for this. At the same time this government can fill its pockets with money because it only needs to throw the people out of the area.
  1. How realistic would a scenario like this be?
  2. Would the Dutch government control countries with which they have a REDD agreement on topics like human rights violations (and or biodiversity degradation)?
  3. Is the Dutch government going to try to get co-benefits in the Copenhagen agreement or not? This with the note that some people fear that if co-benefits are not addressed, 'things can get worse'. Other people fear that the co-benefits discussion might dominate the negotiations and lead to a failed conference or that the transaction costs may get too high.

- How does **REDD** tie in with the **reporting obligations of countries** under the UNFCCC. Countries have obligations to report periodically about their activities and progress in their National Communications. Many developing countries have written their Initial National Communication and are now in the process of writing their second or even third communication. REDD should become a part of this NC cyclus and I would like to know how it will be included. Another matter, the development of **National Action Plans on Adaptation** is something to be aware off. Most countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have been given the opportunity under the GEF to develop their adaptation action plans, in which they plan out their strategy and activities to make their country climate change proof. What would be interesting is to see how REDD can apply a similar action planning initiative, counterbalancing the NAPAs on issues of mitigation.
- It is my concern about money. These huge transfers of money towards the governments how is it assured that is being used for the purpose. Of course **corruption** is not a forestry subject, but it has to be taken to account to. Where is the **capacity building** issue? I know Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador; the forestry departments do not have resources.
- Countries need to guarantee legality. The reality of tropical forestry has official and unofficial practices. After a legally or even certified logging plot is left behind sometimes illegal loggers come in to take out remaining trees left behind as part of sustainable management and sometimes fire is set to cleanup overgrown former logging roads causing forest fires. Illegal logging is sometimes so widespread that the competition becomes too strong for legal and certified practitioners. Under these conditions the truth about the sustainability of supposed 'well managed' forests becomes incredible and even cause danger of collision of the legal and certified forest management systems. Illegal logging becomes possible if there is large scale (multilayer) corruption or interests, if the government doesn't get their priorities right in terms of control and protection systems and capacity, and if there are shortcomings in forest legislation and regulation. The effects of corruption worldwide are dead serious and can compete with human rights issues about the level of impact on the quality of peoples lives (in this case we can add the ecological damage to this negative impact). Therefore I believe it is reasonable and does not insult the sovereignty of states at the global level to demand from nations to commit themselves to **fight illegality and corruption** in a convincing manner. In this case it should probably include a condition to be able to apply for REDD related funding.
- The **definition of forest degradation** in distinction of deforestation was **unclear**. What is forest degradation and deforestation and which proportion these human activities contribute to global carbon emission and probably per country will likely enhance the discussions and research.
- In line with earlier VTB meetings we should have had an update of the climate 'state of affairs'. Especially prof van Riemsdijk (remember seminar VTB 2005) and prof Oerlemans (*vide* symposium KNAW) published articles which give reason to assume that that **human impact** (through CO<sub>2</sub>) **on climate is less 'harmful' than often is claimed**. During the Wednesday seminar mr. Putz expressed ideas ('doing nothing is more harmful than trying unproven tactics') which bring us further away from our VTB goals. A second point of attention is the failure of our extended sustainability criteria. Meanwhile forests, which were not threatened, have been certified...but the rest of our forest areas are even more threatened. Our CO<sub>2</sub> policies, biofuels, etc. bring no solution to the dwindling forestland. Hence VTB missed the opportunity to present ideas based on solid knowledge concerning forest management in a fluctuating climate in which CO<sub>2</sub> follows the temperature changes.... (and not the reverse).