**Management Group (MG) of the UN-REDD Programme**

**Meeting 12-13 June, Geneva**

**Summary report**

**Attendance:**

MG members and alternates

FAO: Tiina Vahanen, Margo BuszkoBriggs

UNDP: Tim Clairs, Josep Gari (and Elspeth Halverson for part of the discussions; and Elizabeth Eggerts for Gender marker discussion)

UN Environment: Dianna Kopansky, Gabriel Labbate (and Florian Eisele for UN-REDD 10-yr anniversary event discussion)

Secretariat: Mario Boccucci, Mihaela Secrieru (and Marlene Grundstrom for discussion on Future of the Partnership)

1. **2019 Programming: TA/2019 Work plan and Output-based Budget**

*Decisions and Actions*

* 1. Approach / guiding elements:
     1. Multiyear 2018-2020 workplan and budget – as approved by the Board – represents the guiding framework, for which the 2019 budget is the operationalising element;
     2. Respective budget allocations per agency remain the same as agreed for 2019 by EB-1;
     3. The ratio country/KM budget allocations remains the same as in 2018;
     4. Small budget adjustments are OK and can be explained as reflecting demand at country and global levels;
     5. No changes envisaged to the 2018-20 Results Framework (RF): indicative activities will be formulated (but are not part of the RF); outcomes, intermediate outcomes, indicators, outputs remain unchanged, including no refining of the wording.
  2. Adjustments:
     1. No additional stand-alone countries will be added. UNDP to provide narrative for supporting Ghana as part of the TA to Côte d’Ivoire (milestone on South-South cooperation) and the KM component on REDD+ financing;
     2. Changes for individual countries and KM components:
     + Zambia and potentially Indonesia: Some budget adjustments envisaged between outputs.
     + Vietnam: No changes to the outputs in the RF.
     + KM components: No changes to overall KM budget or to the ratio country/KM allocations.
     1. Changes to budget by region can be acceptable especially as the increase to Africa will help rebalance the regional budget distribution.
  3. Documentation & Timeline:
     1. **Output-based budget with indicative activities**:
        1. FAO and UNEP to provide their input to the Secretariat – by 13 June
        2. Secretariat to consolidate draft 2019 budget and share back with the MG – by 4 July
        3. 14 June – 20 July: Window for consultations by LAs at country level:
           + MG members to share the budget with LAs and instruct them to start consultations at country level immediately, engaging government focal points, CSOs, IPs and Norway and EU embassies
           + Secretariat to provide the main talking points as agreed (explain the “reversed engineering” approach i.e. LA not to start from the budget figure, but to discuss country needs and match these with UN-REDD TA amounting to the available budget for the specific country; LAs to highlight the continuity with last year stressing what the Programme is offering is the same nature and level of support) for MG member to use in coaching LAs on how to go about the consultation process – by 19 June
           + By 20 July consultations to be completed and agencies to submit to the Secretariat (i) the narrative describing the process, as well as (ii) evidence of the consultations (see below for (i) and (ii))
        4. 23 July – 6 Aug: Preview window for Norway: Draft budget shared with Norway by 20 July

In parallel, the Secretariat consults with EB members (with support from UNDP for IP/CSO representatives) for a heads-up that the budget will be forthcoming by 8th August

* + - 1. Draft budget shared with the EB (includes output-based budget, indicative activities and the summary of consultations – for the latter see below) – by 8 August
      2. 8 Aug – 24 Sept: Window for consultations with the EB and fine-tuning before the official budget submission. This follows the standard process: the Secretariat consults with donors, forest countries (with support from agencies and LAs), IP/CSO (with UNDP support) and the MPTF.
      3. Official budget submission to EB – by 24 Sept
    1. **Narrative**: MG members to submit to the Secretariat – by 20 July a succinct narrative (max. 1 page) for each country and KM component, which provides context, rationale, more detailed tentative activities/deliverables (aligned to the indicative activities outlined in the output-based budget), stakeholder engagement process, and next steps. The following elements are required for each narrative:
       1. A statement that the activities fit within the current Results Framework.
       2. For countries, the narrative must also include (i) a summary of consultations explaining how the TA activities were consulted and TA costs informed at country level all throughout the consultation window until 20 July and (ii) evidence of consultations.
       3. For the KM components, the narrative should be more about the “story” demonstrating demand/relevance, than about actual “consultations”.
    2. **Evidence of consultations**: LAs to gather evidence during the consultation process (minutes, emails, letters, etc.) and MG members to submit it to Secretariat – by 20 July. The Secretariat will keep the evidence in its records and have it ready in the eventuality that the EB requests it.
  1. Meeting with Norway on the margins of the Oslo Tropical Forest Forum:
     1. MG members to provide 2019 highlights for every country and KM components to the Secretariat – by 15 June
     2. Secretariat to consolidate into a Background Note on the 2019 budget by adding a chapeau explaining budget content, adjustments/improvements. Secretariat to share with MG – by 19 June and with Norway on 21 June.
  2. Review of key issues at country level:
     1. Many countries prefer cash instead of TA (e.g. Colombia, Zambia, etc.) and/or request hiring national consultants instead of UN-REDD staff time. In these cases, funds could be mobilised from other sources (in line with the selection criteria for the TA countries)
     2. Political challenges (upcoming elections in Mexico, Colombia; political turmoil in Peru). In these cases, a solution may be undertaking prospective planning, to be subsequently endorsed by the government counterparts once the political situation settles.
     3. Need to enhance interaction with donors based at country level.

1. **Future of the Partnership**

*Decisions and Actions:*

* 1. The MG strongly confirmed the need for a continued Partnership beyond 2020, aligned with the Paris Agreement, 2030 Agenda and UN Reform, adopting new, innovative ways of working and delivering results together.
  2. The MG agreed that the 10-year anniversary (Sept 2018) and SG Climate Summit (Sept 2019) pose strategic opportunities to mobilize support for the Partnership beyond 2020.
  3. The MG agreed on the following specific follow-up actions:
     1. Secretariat will prepare a set of key messages on the future of the partnership, to be shared with Norway on 26 June, and to inform talking points for UNSG for UN-REDD 10-year anniversary in September. Key messages should include that a new UN-REDD would be aligned with UN Reform, 2030 Agenda, Paris Agreement, and give a hint that something new and innovative is emerging.
     2. Secretariat will prepare a short concept note on an a potential UN-REDD innovation workshop, bringing together stakeholders and identifying innovative best practices in terms of policy, technology, and operations – by August.
  4. In the planned review of UN-REDD evaluations and assessments, to be undertaken by the Secretariat ahead of EB2 in October 2018, particular attention should be paid to calls for innovation.

*Additional elements of the discussion*

The purpose of the discussion was to have an initial discussion on the future of the Partnership and harvest ideas from the MG, taking stock of 10 years of UN-REDD and starting to discuss challenges and opportunities for a continuation beyond 2020.

The discussion focused on the following key elements of the Future of the Partnership: 1) The Context and ‘Why’: The reasons for a continued strong role of the UN on forests and climate beyond 2020 2) The ‘What’: The potential focus of the Partnership beyond 2020 3) The ‘How’: The modalities of the Partnership beyond 2020 4) The ‘Process’: 2018-2020 plan for a new/continued Partnership.

* 1. On the context ‘Why’, the MG noted the following developments:
     1. There is a high degree of uncertainty in the wider political context affecting international cooperation beyond 2020. The global security and economic agendas, the current US administration, and the emergence of a more multipolar world, may impact prospects for climate change cooperation.
     2. The global forest agenda is likely to continue to attract global political attention as the climate situation becomes more urgent. Norway’s continuation of NICFI to 2030 provides a strong signal that the forest sector requires continued long-term investment. However forests do still not attract as much attention as energy, transport or other sources of emissions. Few people outside the community of practice grasp the political importance of the forest agenda.
     3. There is currently pressure to demonstrate REDD+ results. There is a risk that political appetite and funding may fade. There needs to be an understanding that progress on REDD+ will take longer than 10 years to achieve. It will be necessary to ‘fight’ for continued and increased focus on forests, and demonstrate that REDD+ works, including through results-based payments.
     4. Among past global efforts to protect forests, only a few have succeeded, including the creation of protected areas in the 1970s/80s.
     5. There has been an evolution in focus over the past decade, from forests as a standalone issue, to a wider land use perspective, incorporating agriculture, water, migration, food security, nutrition and drivers of deforestation. This strengthened link to SDGs could open up new opportunities to mobilize wider support for forests; however the challenge still remains to deliver real emission reductions.
     6. The UNFCCC process is still unfolding (especially Art 6), making REDD+ future planning challenging. However the benefits of pegging UN-REDD to Article 5 of the Paris Agreement still remain, providing a clear mandate and platform.
     7. Partnerships with the private sector will grow in importance, while understanding of sustainability varies widely among actors and companies, and engagement with private sector carries some risks.
     8. NDCs pose an opportunity for countries to integrate forests and climate in their national development planning, aligning with SDGs. This is an opportunity for REDD+ and the wider forest agenda. However, this process will take time.
     9. The Paris Agreement, SDGs, UN Reform agenda, increasing ODA for forests/climate, GCF and GEF funding, and signals from private sector all provide great momentum for forests, and the opportunity has never been greater to step up action and deliver transformative change.
     10. On the continued potential demand for the UN in the forest/climate space, many funding partners do not see the UN as a catalyst to get impact, although the UN Reform Agenda is trying to address this. Multiple donors prefer working with the private sector or through bilateral deals, and see the UN as inefficient. There is however a continued strong demand from developing countries, who have an understanding of the UN’s role as a neutral broker. The private sector is unsure of the UN’s potential added value, while IPs and CSOs appreciate the UN’s contributions on human rights-based approaches and participation.
  2. On the ‘What’, the following elements were discussed:
     1. A precise niche for a partnership and a ‘compelling narrative for moving forward’ is required, demonstrating how the Partnership has evolved.
     2. The current scope of UN-REDD – such as knowledge management, readiness, stakeholder engagement, support to Paris Agreement, support to policy reform and safeguards – is still relevant. It is important to keep doing and strengthen what the Programme is good at doing.
     3. In addition, other options for the future focus of the Partnership were discussed, emphasizing consolidation, convening and streamlining, including:
        1. The Partnership could be a ‘clearing house’ or ‘platform’ to consolidate what other stakeholders are doing. Countries and constituents are looking for such a function by the UN. It should consolidate and bring people together in an effective way, integrate information technology, and be a one-stop shop for stakeholders seeking support on climate and forests. The Partnership should work with existing networks such as the NDC Partnership, C40, private sector networks, etc. and define its added value.
        2. The UN can support private sector to work with governments, facilitating dialogue between them for a greener productive sector.
        3. The Partnership, rather than undertaking most of the outreach, should be a space that people ‘reach in’ to and request the services of. The Partnership should provide a set of limited (3-4) innovative service lines and be known as an incubator, offering clear deliverables, i.e. helping to make NDCs forest-compliant, delivering zero deforestation supply chains, developing NDCs for CEOs and mayors, and helping key actors reach forest deals.
        4. The Partnership should adopt more standardized, cost-effective approaches, including a replicable safeguard system, to be rolled out at scale in a shorter period of time.
        5. There is a need for more innovation. A workshop or ‘innovation incubator’ with UN-REDD and other players could explore how innovation can help achieve transformative change. Useful to also engage with the UN Innovation Network. UN-REDD has already been a policy incubator and should ‘sell’ these innovations and intellectual/normative leadership in a more strategic way, for example sharing how UN-REDD helped develop the global safeguards system and ensure a catalytic transfer of knowledge to other actors such as GEF, GCF etc, and advocating for others i.e. the Belt & Road Initiative to adopt similar approaches.
        6. Other areas the Partnership could engage in include a stronger focus on transparency.
  3. On the ‘How’, the discussion covered the following:
     1. The future Partnership needs to deliver the required service and support effectively, efficiently, rapidly and responsively, and with best policy and IT expertise, with form following function. There is a need to change the Partnership business model, better provide support and build capacity at country level, contribute to meeting UNFCCC obligations, be more relevant and lead global knowledge management, noting that ‘Whatever we do, we need to do it differently’.
     2. Discussions focused on how the new Partnership should embrace UN Reform Agenda, with the below points being raised by individual or several MG Members:
        1. The Partnership should be an open space (as opposed to an inward-looking partnership), building on the 3 UN-REDD agencies but not being closed to others.
        2. Aligning operations with the UNSG’s vision for the UN could help achieve the original goals of UN-REDD. It is important to review how the agencies relate to UN-REDD institutionally, and that they give sufficient space for a future Partnership to act in a truly collaborative, innovative, and integrated way, beyond agency politics and competition. Coherence and alignment in the climate/forest space within the UN will be important.
        3. The future Partnership could build on the new DOCO to allow it to be a coordinating platform.
        4. The Partnership will need to strengthen a joint model of operation at country level, inserted in the UNSG’s vision of the RC System. The Partnership could invest in harnessing knowledge and scaling up best practices by strengthening and embedding it in the delivery of UNCTs, who could count on the Partnership’s global expertise and tools, and use bilateral funds to access the Partnership’s services.
        5. On specific agency roles, it was noted that the current model has not given adequate access to the RC System and UN Country Teams, and that UN Environment’s experiences from operating remotely, contributing expertise and innovation, can be learned from.
     3. Further, recognizing external opportunities, uncertainty and constraints, it will be important for a future Partnership to:
        1. Demonstrate effectiveness and value for money. This could include operating in a more entrepreneurial way and becoming a service provider, marketing and selling core services. A service-based model could provide a steady stream of financing, including from private sector. Virtual teams, new forms of country teams and other aspects of the operating modalities are all areas where prospects for innovation are high.
        2. Adapt and diversify its Partnerships approach. The future UN-REDD needs to explore new partnerships including with innovators, investors, forward thinkers, local governments, CEOs, and influencers in the global climate and biosphere conversations.
        3. Mitigate emerging risks and not be afraid to face risks.
        4. Simplify operations. Implementation arrangements need to be reviewed. The MPTF has lacked flexibility and efficiency. There is a need for a strengthened common administrative platform, and/or simplified procedures for exchanging services and transfers between agencies.
        5. Adapt to political realities. It is important to engage in dialogue with donors regarding the need for more flexibility. Political fluctuations in partner countries will always be a reality.
        6. Target messaging and communications to different audiences/partners.
* The future Partnership should aim for an acronym-free name, recognizing that the world doesn’t understand when the UN talks about ‘UN-REDD’ or ‘REDD+’. Technical jargon on programme modalities (national programs, TS, TA, etc.) should be avoided as these are not clear to partners.
* In future communication strategies, it will be key to stress the urgency of reducing emissions from forests, and zoom out from individual countries to a stronger focus on forests as a global good and global treasure. The Partnership needs to emphasize not only financial incentives but also the moral imperative, learning from the strong 1980s narrative on the Amazon.
  + 1. The Secretariat can play a role in further reviewing how operations could be improved to promote a more effective approach.
  1. On the ‘Process’, the MG discussed the following steps:
     1. The UN-REDD 10-year anniversary is a strategic opportunity to promote the future of the Partnership, and the UNSG can help convey key messages.
     2. The CEB meeting in November will provide another opportunity for the UN-REDD principals to meet with the UNSG.
     3. The UNSG Climate Summit 2019 is a key opportunity for nature-based solutions. Details on UN-REDD’s potential contribution and role will be determined in the coming months. The Summit could be used as a platform for the UNSG to announce the new Partnership. It is also an opportunity for the Partnership to help consolidate and ramp up progress among stakeholders, within and outside UN.
     4. The core/non-core areas of the future Partnership need to be further defined.
     5. The Strategy Group has asked for an option analysis paper from the Secretariat by the end of June, including main questions and emerging thoughts. This will help the Strategy Group also consider further engagement of the Heads of Agencies and UNSG.
     6. The Secretariat will send a draft of key messages for the MG’s conversations with Norway and for the UNSG at the 10-year anniversary, for MG review.

1. **Other issues**
   1. **UN-REDD 10-year Anniversary Event**

*Decisions and Actions*

* + 1. MG members expressed support to and called on Comms/KM working group to move into action to organise two events: 1) UN-REDD flagship event during UNGA-73 in NYC, and 2) event during UNFCCC COP-24 (possibly jointly with other forest-related initiatives celebrating 10yrs - IKI, NICFI, FCPF)
    2. UN Environment to finalise ASAP: estimated budget, work plan including logistic next steps, and list of inputs needed from the MG for their action
    3. Mario to reach out to NY SGEO on SG/DSG availability
    4. Additionally, a six-month media campaign to celebrate the Programme
  1. **UN-REDD Gender Marker Rating system**

*Decisions and Actions*

* + 1. MG agreed that the Concept Note on the UN-REDD Gender Marker Rating system prepared by the UN-REDD Gender Specialist, in collaboration with the UN-REDD gender focal points from UN Environment and FAO, be shared with the UN-REDD Team, with the main aim of raising awareness on the existence of this tool, and providing an opportunity for Programme-wide feedback
    2. Next steps include revising the system and related baselines, per comments received from colleagues in the Programme, with a view of presenting this work at EB-2 as information note
    3. UNDP to prepare message for Secretariat to send to larger UN-REDD Team (same as done for Methodological Brief on Gender)
    4. UN-REDD Gender Specialist will work with the Secretariat to integrate the system into the reporting guidelines to help collect gender data, with the aim to assign gender marker ratings to each of the outputs during annual reporting periods

*Additional elements of the discussion*

* + 1. UN Environment noted the need for further testing and suggested sharing the concept note also with gender focal points within UN country teams, requesting them to share any resources so that there is minimal duplication in developing « new » resources specific for UN-REDD when not needed. UN Environment will send comments on the concept note.
    2. Presenting the UN-REDD Gender Marker Rating system at the EB would not entail a formal endorsement by the Board, but constitutes an opportunity to showcase the Programme’s good practices and innovation on gender, and get recognition for the leadership of the Programme in this area
  1. **Update on Lower Mekong opportunity**

*Decisions and Actions*

* + 1. FAO to share revised concept note by 17 June for MG comments
    2. MG to discuss this item at next MG call on 20 or 21st June.