General comments on UN-REDD Strategy and some questions.

1. One of several purposes for drafting this strategy is that the UN-REDD Programme has gained considerable international and national recognition. It was born big, hence the high expectations to deliver. It is time to “institutionalize” the Programme due to the fast growth in funding and activities. (Insert a statement from the SG and others preferably countries commenting on UN-REDD). Elaborate on the uniqueness of this arrangement among 3 organizations and commitment to collaborate with all stakeholders. This is regarded as a pioneer form of collaboration and may serve to guide development of others arrangements.
2. In this regard, the partner organizations should start strategizing for the Partnership itself; how do they see its future? How to position the UN-REDD in the forest and climate change arena which is growing exponentially in terms of number of players and number of “free-riders”. Positioning the Partnership within the UN system is also an important strategic objective.
3. This strategy is practically a “statement” by the three partners at the request of the Policy Board (???) outlining the way they propose to proceed with REDD+ in the short and medium terms. This strategy is also meant to inform your constituency at large (all REDD+ stakeholders). If so, you need to state it in the introduction.
4. The 3 partner organizations started with the 2008 UN-REDD Framework document in which they outlined their preliminary intentions and modus operandi (see Part 2 – Rational for UN Collaboration programme. Is it published? Or does it have a UN-REDD number and an e-link?
5. You may wish to emphasise that the Framework Document (2008) outlined the programme for the first 1-2 years? And now is the time to develop a strategy.
6. Cite some achievements/successes (or failures) even it is too early.
7. Refer to the 2008 Framework document, and others outlining the structure and functions of the Secretariat.
8. Need to elaborate more on the links between national and global activities (sub-programmes) and why you chose this modality. Re-emphasise the complementarities between the two.
9. The Strategy commits the Programme to a substantial amount of work. While stating that each of the partner organization has committed needed human resources especially technical expertise for the programme, there is a need to indicate where is the Secretariat going, as the supporting arm ? ( i.e. Your vision for the future of the Secretariat). Part of the any Strategy is an indication of human resources needed to carry out the work in the short and medium terms.
10. Mention that the UN-REDD Secretariat is always invited to participate and deliver statements in major international and national conferences and workshops which attests to the success of the programme despite short period of operation. It is essential to have a strategy that can be shared with participants in such forums.
11. You may wish to mention the recent designation of UN-REDD secretariat (and FCPF) as ...??? for the Oslo process??? As an indication of trust in the (young) secretariat.
12. Sections 6 and 7 on the “how” are good, but they are promising a lot!! While there will be a “focal agency” for each of the proposed activities, the Secretariat will have the daunting task of coordination of action, compilation of results and dissemination of information among many other responsibilities. No indication in the draft strategy on the planned future size of the Secretariat.
13. Capacity building is “cutting across” all work phases (Chapter 6), rightfully so. However, it is not cost-effective and not efficient to undertake a separate capacity building activity for each component separately. A better strategy would be to combine capacity building as part of national REDD strategies which addresses all components in an integrated manner. In fact, this is the main advantage of UN-REDD Programme.
14. Some general questions helpful for readers who are not “inside” the process but may be interested to know about it (in no special order):
* Is there a strategy (guidance) for selecting countries for UN-REDD to operate in? What are the criteria? How much? For how long
* ? (Exit strategy?) Who decides? (It looks that it is “first come- first served). If there is a separate strategy for that, it should be mentioned as a reference.
* Any regional preference in the short and medium terms? Will UN-REDD programme work where other do? How do you foster complementarities?
* What’s your funding horizon? Unlimited? Will accept whatever comes your way? (Important for managing expectations and delivery).
* Would UN-REDD programme accept “sub-contracting” certain activities (for example MRV) from countries like Indonesia and Brazil who have received huge amounts of funds and may need help?
* Would UN-REDD subcontract some activities to research organizations? for example.
* How do you propose to reconcile/compliment the work you have started in countries like Indonesia with what they propose to do with the Norway grant? Are your “Readiness” activities so far useful to Indonesia? (These are just examples of what other countries (both donors and recipients / partners would be looking for to know if it is part of your strategy).