**Rights & Resources Initiative and Chatham House Dialogue on**

**Forests, Governance & Climate Change**

Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, London SW1

Friday 22 January 2010

**Summary Report –Estelle Fach \***

The UN-REDD Programme participated in the third Rights & Resources Initiative and Chatham House Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change on 22 January in London, England. The convening chairs, Duncan Brack of Chatham House and Arvind Khare of Rights & Resources Initiative, made opening remarks about the opportunity to discuss the implications of the progress and risks encountered in 2009, as well as what has – or has not – been agreed at the Copenhagen climate conference in December 2009. The first annual report of RRI, [“The end of the hinterlands”](http://www.rightsandresources.org/publication_details.php?publicationID=1400), takes stock of the current status of forest rights and tenure globally, assesses the key issues and trends of 2009, and identifies key questions and challenges that will be faced in 2010.

The Dialogue was organized under four thematic areas:

* Perspectives on Copenhagen: what was agreed, and what does it mean?
* Learning from the ground: addressing tenure and governance to fight deforestation and promote restoration.
* How can REDD promote better forest governance?
* What happens next? A question and answer session with a panel of experts.

**Perspectives on Copenhagen: what was agreed, and what does it mean?**

The discussion was chaired by Jon Hudson from DFID, with presentations from John Lanchberry , Herman Rosa Chavez from El Salvador Ministry of the Environment, Christian from Carbon Markets Investor Association and Kate Horner of Friends of the Earth

Mr. Linchberry emphasized that despite the inconsistencies on what was agreed upon in Copenhagen, the REDD LCA text was the most developed of all negotiated texts, making reference to the fact that MRV was not agreed upon in the REDD text although it was in the overall Accord. He also noted what he considered positive outcomes, i.e. the space given to conservation of biodiversity and reduction of the conversion of natural forests, and the less encouraging, i.e. the disappearance of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in the text and the remaining uncertainties concerning national v.s. sub national approaches, noting Colombia’s objection to the former.

Environment Minister Chavez presented his perspective on a poorly organized –even flawed - process and vast waste of political critical mass. He raised the question of whether the REDD process could feed into the global process, noting that REDD can be linked to mitigation more than adaptation and making reference to the lack of coordination of the respective working groups. He expressed the widely shared view that the political process undermined the technical process and that linkages between the two should be stronger. He finally emphasized that progress will depend upon a strong governance scheme and the shared responsibility of all in the lead up to Mexico’s COP-16.

From the private sector perspective, Mr. Christian expressed the need to push for project integrity, early demonstration activities and nested approaches, noting that sub-national approaches allow for immediate flow of funds. He noted the private sector’s preference for phased approaches and hypothetical baseline, citing Ghana and Costa Rica. He regretted the last minute removal from the negotiation text of the benchmark of reducing deforestation by 50% by 2020 and of the 15 to 20 billion financing figure, noting that the private sector is committed to making sure that financing REDD will not cause a repeat of COP-15 in Mexico.

Kate Horner remarked that the UN process was dangerously approaching this of the WTO, explaining a perceived move towards a request based –rather than multilateral – mechanism, and a green room style decision process. She also pointed that despite oft heard claims that the UN process had failed, parties themselves bore a lot of the responsibilities. She emphasized article 7.3 c of the UNFCCC that requests smaller groups of parties to implement some actions. She noted that the financial commitments would not match developing countries’ needs, in particular since they were aspirational goals (with no clarity of whether they would come from public or private funds) and often repackaged aid through existing financing. She finally highlighted the weaknesses in the text on safeguards, the lack of threshold for entry or which activity is to be financed, and the weak references to Indigenous Peoples.

Following the presentations, John Hudson moderated a discussion on **the significance of the Copenhagen Accord for REDD and governance**. Questions were raised about the relative and wished for importance given to avoided deforestation over “the plus” in REDD, the appropriateness of the scale of financing if it only compensates for opportunity lost rather than on capacity building, and to what extent NGOs had been deliberately excluded towards the end of the conference . Looking ahead, it was generally agreed that the LCA text was not likely to be changed, and that it would be particularly important COP-16 in Mexico to establish transparent, consistent rules of procedure.

**Learning on the ground: addressing tenure and governance to fight deforestation and promote restoration.**

The discussion saw presentations from Phil Shearman from the University of Papua new Guinea , Luis Joels from Servicios Florestal Brasileiro in Brazil, Roger Muchumba from the Groupe de Travail Climate REDD in the DRC and Tom Griffiths from Forest Peoples Programme.

Phil Shearman opened the discussion with a presentation on tackling the drivers of deforestation, emphasizing the synergies in drivers of deforestation. In Papua New Guinea, whose forested areas contribute 40 % of greenhouse gas emissions, reduced logging would be the most realistic way to reduce emissions, but the industry considers it off limits. Papua New Guinea, he added, has focused its activities on carbon trading and credit allocation. In Liberia, he mentioned the offer that had been made to the government to implement a “REDD-funded moratorium on forest clearance” which was eventually turned down by the government. He concluded that while REDD could be a path to low carbon economies, a renewed focus was necessary to avoid placing the burden on local people instead of logging operations.

Luis Joels provided [an overview](http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/Joels220110.pdf) of the results achieved with the Amazon Fund, a system where “one reduces deforestation first, and asks for payment later”. After detailing methodological issues on baseline calculation, he commented on the axes of action, i.e. land use planning, enforcement and sustainable use. Using data across the three regions of Acre, Amazonas and Marahas, he pointed the direct correlations between avoided deforestation and governance. He concluded with a call for more capacity building, local intervention level, and cooperation with NGOs.

Roger Muchumba ([presentation here](http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/Muchuba220110.pdf)) then described the situation of implementation of Indigenous Peoples rights in the Congo Basin, stressing the difference between community forestry and community-based forestry and noting the overall positive and effective engagement of civil society in REDD in the DRC.

Tom Griffiths finally referred to the information blockage experienced at the country level and the overall low degree of awareness (presentation [here](http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/Griffiths220110.pdf)). He specifically pointed to the activities of the FCPF and the UN-REDD Programme in countries in which RPP or national programmes have been approved, lamenting the lack of resource provided to clarify tenure, rights and tackle the underlying drivers of deforestation. On UN-REDD in particular, he noted:

* + No practical measure yet to implement free prior and informed consent, citing Viet Nam and the DRC
  + The issue of representation of Indigenous Peoples in Panama and relying on umbrella organization (COONAPIP)
  + The appropriately slow process in Paraguay
  + The late discussions with rights holders in Indonesia, acknowledging that UN-REDD programme has initiated work to clarify FPIC

Following the presentations, the discussion centered on carbon rights and carbon tenure. In Brazil for example, it will be necessary to keep local governments involved despite the fact that they do not hold any land and that carbon rights will be held by the state or Indigenous Peoples. In Papua New Guinea there is an inherent assumption that carbon ownership will belong to land owners, although the legislation and regulation are not in place, leading to capitalized speculation. Carbon rights, it was finally argued, are not sufficiently discussed in the FCPF R-PPs, although it was pointed that there is a new working document on due diligence and safeguards.

**How can REDD promote better forest governance?**

The discussion was chaired by Duncan Brack (Chatham House), with presentations from Florence Daviet (World Resource Institute), Roz Reeve (Global Witness) and Peter Holmgren (FAO), Ruth Nussbaum (Pro Forest) and Phil Franks (CARE International)

In her presentation, Florence Daviet examined how the UNFCCC, FCPF, US legislation and Amazon Fund leverage governance, focusing on the elements of eligibility, financing and safeguards. Peter Holmgren and Roz Reeve ‘s [joint presentation](http://www.illegal-logging.info/item_single.php?it_id=430&it=presentation) examined the differences between monitoring (MRV) and implementing in country, noting however that the nature of illegality changes due to monitoring itself. They highlighted the need to avoid fragmentation in governance monitoring and for this the necessity to have some convergence and standards, as well as its integration within an overall MRV system. . Ruth Naussbam then focused on how can [FLEGT be used to achieve REDD objectives](http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/Nussbaum220110.pdf), first detailing the phases for FLEGT, and noting that many of the approaches being used for legality-related monitoring should be very useful for REDD monitoring. She also stressed that REDD should build on existing governance programs such as FLEGT. Phil Franks, finally, gave [an overview](http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/Franks220110.pdf) of the principles, criteria and indicators developed by the Social and Environmental Standards for REDD. The framework, he noted, is designed to report performance but not to assess conformance. He also emphasized the voluntary nature of adopting the standards and their upcoming interpretation at the country level, citing a “race to the top” approach.

In the ensuing discussion questions were raised about the in country ownership of the assessment methods and willingness of countries to use different assessment instruments. The response was varied: in the case of the Social and Environmental Standards, which are voluntary, willing countries believe they have high standards and are willing to undertake these assessments, as is the case for Ecuador. The Governance of Forest Initiative, while working mostly with civil society groups, conceded that the uptake of the tool will depend on the engagement of civil society groups with their governments. On monitoring of governance, it was noted that the reporting aspect of MRV was more controversial than its measurement.

**Question and answer session with a panel of experts**

In a free flowing and heated Q&A session, moderated by Roger Harrabin from the BBC, a panel consisting of Christina Voigt (Norway), Kyeretwie Opoku (Civic Response), Nalin Kishor (World Bank) and Herman Rosa Chavez (government of El Salvador) responded to questions from an engaged audience on :

* Bilateral/Multilateral programmes
  + There seemed to be some skepticism about the appetite for bilateral programmes, which would generate no net gain
* Policy coherence at the global level
* Pace of readiness proposals and WB safeguards
  + The World Bank’s FCPF came under heavy criticism for approving R-PPs in countries with weak safeguards, and suspicion as to whether the Bank will abide by its own standards.
  + The right amount of time to delay approval of funds was debated, some arguing for unlimited time as long as “fake” plans are avoided, and respondents pointing that step-wise processes allow to correct errors in later phases (invoking the case of the Ghana R-PP)
* It was highlighted that while engagement of stakeholders has focused on Indigenous Peoples, engagement of forest industry will be key, especially considering that private capital may be discouraged by the outcomes of COP-15 in Copenhagen
* Lessons learned from past avoided deforestation efforts are that rights and tenure and political economy of forests are pivotal and that failure to address them will render technical solutions useless.

The consensus around the room, Duncan Brack concluded, was that the slowed down REDD process resulting from COP-15 would buy more time to set up and implement the proper safeguards.

This dialogue is the third in a series.