



DRAFT- UN-REDD Programme Information Disclosure Policy

UN-REDD PROGRAMME 5TH POLICY BOARD
MEETING

4-5 November 2010
Washington D.C., USA



In accordance with the decision of the Policy Board this document is printed in limited numbers to minimize the environmental impact of the UN-REDD Programme processes and contribute to climate neutrality. Participants are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings. Most of the UN-REDD Programmes meeting documents are available on the internet at: www.unredd.net.

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Contents

1. The Policy.....	5
2. Information disclosed to the public	6
2.1. Operational and Administrative Information.....	6
2.2. Global Programme Information.....	7
2.3. National Programme Information.....	7
2.4. Communications Information.....	7
2.5. Financial Information	7
3. Current Practice and Principles of Confidentiality.....	7
4. Information under Review.....	8

Acronyms

[FAO](#) – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

HACT – Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers

The HACT shifts the management of cash transfers from a system of rigid controls to a risk management approach. The approach uses macro and micro assessments, conducted with implementing partners during programme preparation, to determine levels of risk, approaches to manage risk and capacity gaps to be addressed.

[MDTF](#) – Multi-Donor Trust Fund

A UN Development Group Multi-Donor Trust Fund is a multi-agency funding mechanism which is designed to receive contributions from more than one donor that are held in trust by the appointed Administrative Agent. Donor resources are co-mingled to fund programmes/projects implemented by UNCT members in a specific country in support of the achievement of nationally owned and determined priorities. An MDTF consists of four key elements; a Governance/Decision-Making Body, a Fund Administrator, Participating Organizations and Donors.¹

MoU- Memorandum of Understanding

Participating UN Organizations – UN Organizations participating in the UN-REDD Programme, namely FAO, UNDP and UNEP

REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation.

REDD is all the elements mentioned in the Bali Action Plan, Section 1 (b) (iii), which calls for “*policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.*” This set of activities is also officially referred to as “REDD+”.

TOR- Terms of Reference

[UN](#) – United Nations

[UNDP](#) – United Nations Development Programme

[UNDG](#) – United Nations Development Group

[UNEP](#) – United Nations Environment Programme

¹ Source: UNDG Guidance Note on the Establishing Multi Donor Trust Funds

1. The Policy

The Participating UN Organizations of the UN-REDD Programme are committed to making information about the Programme and its operations available to the public in the interest of transparency. Access to information is fundamental to the effective participation of all stakeholders, including the public, in the advancement of REDD+ efforts around the world. Further, information sharing promotes transparency and accountability and enables public participation in REDD+ activities.

The UN-REDD Programme's Information Disclosure Policy (hereinafter referred to as the "Policy") is intended to ensure that information concerning the activities and operations of the UN-REDD Programme is available to the public to the fullest extent possible, with the exception of that deemed confidential as set out in this Policy. The UN-REDD Programme Policy Board provides overall leadership to the UN-REDD Programme. The UN-REDD Programme therefore facilitates the accountability of donor and partner REDD+ countries, through Policy Board members, to parliaments, taxpayers, and the public. Public access to comprehensive and timely information held or generated by the UN-REDD Programme will continue to facilitate the transparency, accountability and national ownership of the UN-REDD Programme's activities and operations. To the extent that much of the UN-REDD Programme information is already available to the public through various means, including through the [UN-REDD Programme website](#) and/or the [UN-REDD workspace](#), as well as on the [Multi Donor Trust Fund Office Gateway](#) this Policy codifies existing principles, practices and procedures.

For the purposes of this Policy, information is defined as printed or electronic materials that provide knowledge about UN-REDD Programme activities, including, but not limited to, programmes and operations.

This Policy shall be administered by the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat, in collaboration with the Participating UN Organizations, the MDTF office and other relevant parties. This Policy is available on the UN-REDD Programme website.

Guiding Principles:

1. In the interest of transparency and accountability, this Policy represents a commitment to disclose as much information as possible.
2. The UN-REDD Programme Secretariat will respond to written requests for documentation or information within 30 calendar days of receiving the request. If access to information is denied, an explanation will be provided.
3. If access to information has been denied for reasons that appear inconsistent with the spirit of this Policy, the requesting party may appeal to the co-chairs of the Policy Board in writing to have the decision reconsidered. The UN-REDD Programme Secretariat will field such requests and forward them onto the co-chairs for a decision.²
4. This Policy is designed to be cost-neutral in its implementation.
5. Participating UN Organizations and the MDTF Office will interpret the Policy in accordance with the rules and procedures of their management or governing bodies. The Policy will also follow the United Nation's Data and Information Retention and Disclosure Policy.

The Policy is effective as of _____.

2. Information disclosed to the public

The UN-REDD Programme will endeavour to proactively make as much of the information listed below available on its website, workspace and/or the MDTF Office Gateway. If the information listed below is not available on

² See Section 2 for contact information of the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat.

any one of these sites, it can be requested by writing to the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat (by mail or email). As mentioned in the guiding principles of this Policy, the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat will respond to written requests for documentation or information within 30 calendar days of receiving the request.

UN-REDD Programme Secretariat
International Environment House
11-13 Chemin des Anémones,
CH-1219 Chatelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Email: un-redd@un-redd.org

The information enumerated in this section is available in the language the documents were prepared. The Secretariat will endeavour to provide Policy Board meeting documentation in English, French and Spanish.

2.1 Operational and Administrative Information: This includes framework documents, rules of procedure and operational guidance, Secretariat terms of reference, policy and Programme strategy documents, Quick start Actions document, staff lists, vacancy postings and Policy Board documentation and reports.

The Secretariat shall upload on the workspace all draft documentation for decision and alert via email the Policy Board membership and invited participants 10 working days prior to the meeting. The Secretariat will endeavor to provide the meeting documentation in English, French and Spanish.

After Policy Board meetings, the Secretariat will ensure a formal report of the meeting is available electronically no later than one month after the meeting has occurred. Between Policy Board meetings, the Programme also generates progress updates which are made available on the workspace once they have been emailed out.

Decisions of the Policy Board may also be made between meetings (referred to as “Inter-Sessional” decision-making). In such cases, the membership (including full members, alternate members, ex-officio members and observers) will be informed electronically of the date at least 15 working days in advance. The relevant documents will be made available electronically at least 10 working days before the decision date.

2.2 Global Programme Information: This includes the Global Programme document with workplan, Global Programme submission forms to the Policy Board and TORs of consultants (task descriptions only). This also includes requests to participate on the UN-REDD Programme, letters of acceptance to the Programme, workshop documents and reports, mission reports, presentations, studies produced by the UN-REDD Programme, and meeting documents and reports.

2.3 National Programme Information: This includes final National Programme documents, independent technical review reports, validation meeting minutes TORs of consultants (task descriptions only), and submissions to the Policy Board. This also includes mission reports, stakeholders meeting reports (where available), inception reports, a list of public and private institutions that are involved in program design, implementation, administration and monitoring as it develops, work plans, studies produced by the UN-REDD Programme, workshop documents and reports, meeting documents and reports.

2.4 Communications Information: This includes e-newsletters, press releases, promotional leaflets, brochures, media packs, the UN-REDD Programme Year in Review, and promotional videos.

2.5 Financial Information: This includes the MoU for the MDTF, annual reports, progress reports as provided by the joint programme teams and funding status reports. All of this information is available on the [MDTF Office GATEWAY](#).

3. Current Practice and Principles of Confidentiality

While the Participating UN Organizations are committed to having an open and transparent disclosure system in place for the UN-REDD Programme, there are legal, operational and practical considerations that may be necessary to prevent harm to individuals, organizations, their staff and partners. The Participating UN Organizations of the UN-REDD Programme recognize that in some circumstances, the organizations have to keep sensitive information relative to certain political/economic contexts confidential.

The exceptions below are in line with those adopted by the Participating UN Organizations, the UN Secretariat, many UN Member States and international organizations, and are limited to what is necessary to protecting legitimate public and/or private needs for non-disclosure. Information under the following categories is deemed confidential and will not be made available to the public:

- (a) Information received from or sent to third parties, under an expectation of confidentiality.
- (b) Information whose disclosure is likely to endanger the safety or security of any individual, violate his or her rights, or invade his or her privacy;
- (c) Information whose disclosure is likely to endanger the security of Member States or prejudice the security or proper conduct of any operation or activity of the UN-REDD Programme;
- (d) Information covered by legal privilege or related to access to internal and external audit reports;
- (e) Internal inter-office or intra-office documents, including e-mails, memos and draft documents;
- (f) Commercial information where disclosure would harm the financial interests of either Participating UN Organizations or of other parties involved;
- (g) Information which, if disclosed, in the Participating UN Organizations' view would seriously undermine the policy dialogue with Member States or implementing partners.

Abusive, excessive or vexatious requests may be denied.

4. Information under Review

This Policy recognizes that, from time to time, there will be information that falls into a third category: information on which a determination needs to be made as to whether it is to remain confidential or be disclosed. In these cases, the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat will be responsible for ensuring this determination is made in a timely and transparent fashion.