

UN REDD Zambia Programme 2nd and 3rd quarter progress report

1st September 2009

1. Background

REDD ("Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries") is a new environmental finance concept with the primary objective of providing financial incentives to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions (predominantly CO₂) from forest lands. In addition, if "well-designed", REDD frameworks can also have a positive effect on the management of forest lands; the conservation of associated biological diversity and ecosystem services; and the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities (income; other social benefits; improved forest governance).

Based on requests from countries, and encouragement from donors, FAO, UNDP and UNEP have developed a collaborative REDD programme with funding from the Government of Norway. Zambia has been selected as a pilot country for the UN-REDD Programme. Briefly explained, the aim of the UN-REDD is to generate the requisite transfer flow of resources to significantly reduce global emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The goal is to assess whether carefully structured payment structures and capacity support can create the incentives to ensure actual, lasting, achievable, reliable and measurable emission reductions while maintaining and improving the other ecosystem services that forests usually provide.

2. Management arrangements for REDD

The Forestry Department is currently leading the process of developing the national REDD strategy, with the support of other Departments of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, especially the Climate Change Facilitation Unit. Within the UN system the overall lead of the programme is with the UN Resident Coordinator's office, with actions divided between UNDP, FAO and UNEP. UNDP support has so far focused on the forestry policy review, facilitating stakeholder consultations and general coordination functions, while FAO is developing the methodology for assessing carbon stocks and emissions. UNEP, based in Nairobi, is taking on the support for the development of a communication plan.

A Readiness outline for Zambia REDD programme has been developed with the support from the international REDD mission that visited Zambia in May 2009. This document lays out the critical components and actions that are needed for the successful REDD programme. The outline will form the basis of the development of the National Joint Programme (NJP), which is expected to be submitted later this year. An international consultant will be recruited to support the government in formulation of the NJP, and extending the scope of work of the national forestry policy review consultant is also being considered. UNDP has also appointed a Regional Technical Advisor based in Pretoria to support UN-REDD development in Zambia and Tanzania.

Major components of the readiness include a suitable policy and legal framework, stakeholder involvement, Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system for monitoring emissions, and the development of the benefit sharing mechanism. Initial steps have been taken in most of these areas and lessons learnt in other programmes will be utilized to develop the REDD programme – for example, there are already experiences in benefit sharing systems in the wildlife sector.

The Government is committed to the implementation of the REDD programme and some activities are being implemented while the formulation for the NJP is in process.

3. Brief progress on initiatives that will culminate in the implementation of REDD Programme

3.1 Stakeholder consultations and awareness raising

The REDD concept is new and as such stakeholders need to internalise the process. Initial consultative meeting with stakeholders was organized on 20th February 2009 and another on 7th May 2009, in connection to the REDD mission to Zambia. The stakeholder meetings have provided recommendations on the arrangements for coordination and implementation, and many other insights such as institutional arrangements, policy/legal reviews that will be taken into account in the development of the programme. The next stakeholder consultation is expected to focus on building consensus on institutional arrangement and reviewing the current readiness outline to develop it into the NJP document.

While initial information on climate change and REDD is disseminated during the Forestry Policy review process, wider public awareness-raising will be conducted only when the communications plan has been developed as part of the NJP. Need for reliable public information is urgent as some voluntary forest carbon market activities by NGOs are already going on in parts of the country.

3.2 Enabling environment (Policy and legal framework)

Having an enabling environment is a requisite for successful implementation of the REDD programme in Zambia. The enabling environment should facilitate the participation of stakeholders, particularly the communities living in proximity of the resources, to be involved in the management of the resources and being compensated for this effort. However, this principle is absent in the current forest Act. It is in this regard that the processes to review the Forestry Policy of 1998 and the Act of 1999 are currently ongoing with the support from UNDP. Consultations are being organized in all 9 provinces and at the national level. A revised policy and relevant amendments of the Act are expected to be submitted by the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources to the Cabinet Office by the end of September/October 2009. The revised policy and act are expected to provide a more conducive environment for

implementing the REDD programme. As the Act of 1999 had never entered into force, the outdated act of 1973 has been a major hindrance for development of the sector – for instance the Act does not take into account the participatory forest resource management, or provide provision for benefit sharing.

3.3 Carbon stock assessment and MRV system

The establishing a credible system for carbon stock assessment that will minimize leakages is critical to the implementation of the REDD programme. The development of a creditable methodology is complex and takes a long time. The Government has commenced this process building on the Integrated Land Use Assessment (ILUA) process that has been supported by the Government of Finland. The first phase of the ILUA for Zambia has been completed as a collaborative effort by Forestry Department and FAO. A carbon stock assessment based on this and other available data sources is currently going on to establish a starting point for developing the elements of the MRV system required by REDD. However, as the historical forest cover data is scarcely available and not comparable, trend estimates are constrained and lack accuracy. The baseline for carbon stocks and emission levels varies significantly according to the data source and methodology chosen, and therefore further development of the assessment methodology is needed. A second phase of the ILUA is currently in the pipeline and will be adapted to the MRV requirements of REDD. It is hoped that the refined ILUA will be endorsed by the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), therefore avoiding duplication in this area of REDD readiness.

3.4 Other activities

As part of the support for capacity development Forestry Department staff have attended the United Nations Forum for Forests in May and UN REDD Policy Board meeting in June to prepare for the implementation of REDD.

4. Next steps

The timeline for major activities for the remaining part of 2009 is briefly outlined below

Outputs	Activities	Timeframe
Forestry Policy & legal framework revised	National Review of the draft policy Submission of the final draft policy to final review by MTENR Submission of the Forestry Policy and Amended Forests Act to the Cabinet	23 rd September 30 th September October
Carbon Assessment and MRV	Final report of the forest carbon assessment submitted to FD. ILUA phase II formulated and submitted for appraisal by Embassy of Finland	30 th September 10 th September
Programme development	Recruitment of consultants Stakeholder consultation on developing REDD program Drafting NJP Appraisal/national validation meeting for draft NJP Submission of NJP for approval	September Beginning of October October End of October November
Coordination activities	Preparation meeting for UNDP and FAO to prepare for the formulation mission. Briefing meeting with CPs in the sector	Mid-September Beginning of October