



The Norrköping Protocol for REDD+

Background

These recommendations are based on the result of a workshop that was held in Norrköping on 21st March 2011. The workshop's aim was to discuss suggestions for how Sweden (both Sida and other Swedish development assistance) can approach REDD+¹ in the future – both strategically and practically. The thirty participants represented the Swedish Forest Agency, Sida, the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, the academic research community and various NGOs and consulting companies.

Sweden's signature to the REDD+ agreements developed in Cancún means that increased investments are expected from Sweden in activities that prevent deforestation or degradation of vegetation, or support afforestation, in developing countries in the period up to 2020.

REDD+ is a term within international climate policy, which applies to activities that have the aim of maintaining carbon in standing forests (particularly tropical forests which are especially subject to deforestation and degradation) as a way of improving the global carbon balance and thereby mitigating climate change. A number of activities have been implemented under the REDD+ banner in recent years, but for the time being there is no new climate agreement to apply beyond 2012 and internationally accepted rules have yet to be developed. There are a number of uncertainties with REDD+ as a mechanism within international climate policy. The following difficulties have been discussed:

- a) Permanence. The climate benefits of any measures that are implemented may only be temporary (forest can, for example, burn down or be blown down at a later stage).
- b) Leakage. Avoided deforestation in one region or country can lead to an increase in deforestation in other regions or countries.
- c) Verification. It is difficult to measure with any certainty how much increased carbon storage or reduced deforestation has been achieved as a result of different measures.

Another issue being identified with increasing frequency is the risk that storing carbon in standing forests will compete directly with other activities which generate more long-term economic development. Finally, carbon storage might compete directly with another climate intervention, namely the production of fast-growing energy crops.

Recommendations

The underlying goal for climate driven land use policy globally, where Sweden has a role as both a donor and a party in the climate negotiations, should be that every country shall reach a position where it achieves sustainable land use comprising:

¹ Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation. The plus stands for activities aiming at carbon enhancement, conservation and sustainable management of forests.

1. A distribution of land uses between forest, croplands and grazing lands which is allowed to vary over time in accordance with demand for products (such as fuel and land) and changing technologies.
2. Protection of biodiversity in accordance with international norms or, preferably, in accordance with local political will embodying higher demands and supported by a willingness to pay from international actors.

Against the background of the above problems it is suggested that Swedish development assistance should have the following approach to REDD+ (the points are not presented in priority order):

- Swedish REDD+ investments should be developed in accordance with the demand for harmonization within the Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGU) so that there is no risk of competition with poverty reduction or long-term economic development.
- Swedish REDD+ efforts should mainly be oriented towards measures, which contribute to reduced poverty and improved management of natural resources.
- Sweden should focus on bilateral initiatives with a high degree of transparency in countries where Swedish support has the potential to make a difference
- Sweden should conduct activities in countries where there does exist cooperation and a good understanding of the situation in the recipient country, thereby ensuring good conditions for effective interventions.
- Sweden should not favor financing existing REDD+ pilot programmes (for example UN-REDD, FCPF or FIP) nor contribute to special purpose REDD+ funds.
- Sweden should focus on the so-called phase one within REDD+ (capacity and competence building, improved systems for land rights, forest monitoring and sustainable land use)
- Sweden should avoid situations where payments are made directly for carbon storage in the form of tons of carbon per hectare. It is better to focus afforestation and protection efforts on other forest benefits (for example biodiversity, protection of water sources, production of wood, fruit and wildlife) and to see carbon storage as a positive side-effect.
- Sweden's initiatives should focus on measures in which we have high competence relative to other development donors. We suggest that Sweden has comparative advantages in relation to capacity/competence building; goal-oriented public sector reform; enabling conditions for industry and well-functioning markets; development of systems for clear land rights (for example within community forestry and forest people's rights), forest and environmental monitoring as well as all that is implied in the + in REDD+, such as rehabilitation of degraded lands, natural resource management, sustainable production of ecosystem services, sustainable forest management and landscape perspectives.

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