

UN-REDD PROGRAMME



On the International Day of Forests

Annual Investment of US\$30 Billion in Tropical Forest Conservation Can Support Green and Sustainable Economic Growth

New International Resource Panel Report Provides Routes to Integrating REDD+ into Green Economy Approaches

Geneva/Jakarta, 21 March 2014 – An investment of US \$30 billion per year — under seven per cent of the US \$480 billion paid in annual global fossil fuel subsidies — in the REDD+ forest conservation initiative can accelerate the global transition to green and sustainable growth and ensure the long-term wellbeing of tens of millions in developing countries, a new report released today said.

Building Natural Capital: How REDD+ Can Support a Green Economy, a report by the International Resource Panel (IRP) and the UN-REDD Programme, outlines how integrating REDD+ programmes into a Green Economy approach can conserve and even boost the economic and social benefits forests provide to human society.

The IRP report lays out recommendations to deliver the new integrated REDD+ and Green Economy approach, including better coordination, stronger private sector engagement, changes in fiscal incentive frameworks, greater focus on assisting policymakers to understand the role forests play in propping up economies, and equitable benefit sharing. The report stresses in particular the needs for a rights-based approach to ensure that benefits flow to the rural poor.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) is the approach to cut greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation—estimated at up to 20 per cent of the global total—through payments for services. REDD+ is an expanded approach that includes the conservation and sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Forests support the livelihoods of 1.6 billion people, with the value of ecosystem services from tropical forests estimated at an average of US \$6,120 per hectare each year. Despite these economic gains, forest loss averaged 13 million hectares per year between 2000 and 2010, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This market and policy failure will undermine sustainable development by destroying the natural capital that supports so many economies.

The report argues that integration of REDD+ into all economic planning processes is essential, as deforestation and forest degradation are driven by consumption patterns in virtually every sector of the economy. Green Economy innovations resulting from REDD+ have the potential to increase the resource efficiency of many of these sectors.

REDD+ is so far backed by a total of US \$6.27 billion. However, an estimated US \$30 billion is projected to be needed each year from 2020. The IRP report seeks to encourage delivery of this funding by demonstrating that REDD+ approaches can support economic development and increase long-term returns on investments.

The report shows how activities supported by REDD+ can be designed to increase income by boosting output on land under cultivation, developing new green industries, encouraging forest-based ecotourism, and increasing sustainable production of commodities for which demand is increasing. For example, a stimulus package in the sustainable management of forests could provide up to 16 million additional jobs globally. At the same time, restoring just 15 per cent of degraded forest can double household income in rural areas in developing countries, as an example from Tanzania cited in the report shows.

It also points out that an increasing number of countries have Green Economy growth plans that clearly define the role of protecting forests and other natural capital.

The United Nations Collaborative Initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (the UN-REDD Programme)—jointly implemented by the FAO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNEP—supports REDD+ readiness efforts in 49 partner countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

Quotes

- *Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), said: "The true value of forests comes to life when national and local decision making processes are directed towards natural capital investment, supporting livelihoods and achieving sustainable economic growth. The ecosystem services provided by tropical forests are estimated at around US \$6,120 per hectare per year. Despite this clear macroeconomic case, the total yearly forest loss averages 13 million hectares per year – equivalent to the surface of a football field being destroyed every three seconds."*

"REDD+ is a bold project that offers an opportunity for countries to pursue a more sustainable development pathway through the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests. We need to create the enabling conditions required for REDD+ to succeed from good governance and sustainable financial policies to equitable distribution of benefits. These enabling conditions are themselves the building blocks for an inclusive Green Economy," he added.

- H.E. Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Head of the President's Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight, Republic of Indonesia, said, "REDD is an entry point to empower citizens as stewards for a more sustainable, equitable, and economically viable Indonesia...through partnership, consultation, and collaboration, [we are] empowering Indonesia and Indonesians as owners and implementers."

For more information, please contact

Shereen Zorba, Head of News and Media, Tel. +254 788 526000 Email: Shereen.Zorba@unep.org

Michael Logan, UNEP Public Information Officer, +254 20 762 5211 / +254 725 939 620, michael.logan@unep.org

Notes to Editors

To download the report, please visit: <http://www.un-redd.org/IRPReport/tabid/132330/Default.aspx#infographics>

To download info-graphics visit: <http://www.un-redd.org/IRPReport/tabid/132330/Default.aspx#infographics>

The report's recommendations, and additional facts and figures, are available as an annex to the press release.

About UNEP

Created in 1972, UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. Visit: <http://www.unep.org>

About the UN-REDD Programme

Launched in 2008, the UN-REDD Programme is the United Nations collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries. It builds on the convening role and technical expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Programme supports national REDD+ readiness efforts in 49 partner countries, spanning Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. Visit: www.un-redd.org

About the International Resource Panel

The International Resource Panel was established in 2007 to provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments on the sustainable use of natural resources and the environmental impacts of resource use over the full life cycle. By providing up-to-date information and the best science available, the International Resource Panel contributes to a better understanding of how to decouple human development and economic growth from environmental degradation. UNEP hosts the secretariat for the panel. <http://www.unep.org/resourcepanel/>