

Submission of views on methodological guidance for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

September 19, 2011

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at its thirty-fourth session, considered views on methodological guidance for activities relating to REDD+, taking into account issues identified in appendix II to decision 1/CP.16 and relevant issues. Further, SBSTA invited parties to submit to the secretariat, by 19 September 2011, their views on these issues for consideration by the SBSTA at its thirty-fifth session.
2. This submission is made to the SBSTA of the UNFCCC by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), which is a research for development programme of the CGIAR and the Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP). CCAFS thanks SBSTA for the opportunity to make this submission.
3. The success of REDD+ will depend on how effectively agricultural drivers of deforestation are addressed. The FAO predicts a 70% increase in food demand by 2050. While yield increases can satisfy some of this demand, the pressure for expansion of agriculture into forest areas is inevitable. Recent studies demonstrate that agricultural production for domestic urban growth and agricultural exports are the primary drivers of tropical deforestation. Over 80% of new agricultural land comes from intact and disturbed forests, rather than previously cleared land. This trend is expected to continue in the absence of clear mechanisms and incentives for addressing agricultural drivers.

Ultimately the perspectives of REDD+ and food security need to be viewed together to strengthen the synergies and manage the trade-offs across these closely linked goals.

Two relevant CCAFS reports containing policy recommendations related to agricultural drivers of deforestation, [Linking forests and food in the REDD+ context](#) and [Actions needed to halt deforestation and promote climate-smart agriculture](#) are provided to SBSTA as part of this submission.

4. Paragraph 71 of decision 1/CP.16 requests developing country parties to develop specific elements as part of national mitigation actions in the forest sector. This submission offers input on the following elements:
 - a. *A national strategy or action plan*

- i. **Countries pursuing REDD+ will increase their success in meeting their REDD+ mitigation targets by directly addressing agricultural drivers of deforestation** in national strategies and action plans. Development of policy, governance, MRV mechanisms, benefit sharing and safeguards will be necessary **to reduce agriculture's role in deforestation**. Currently, REDD+ strategies and actions (as reflected in FCPF and UN-REDD submissions) generally fail to address agricultural drivers of deforestation.
 - ii. **Closer alignment of forestry and agriculture plans and policies should be encouraged in national REDD+ strategies to promote climate mitigation and food security outcomes**. Cross-sectoral REDD+ arrangements should include provisions for increasing agricultural productivity and developing sustainable, intensified agriculture. Agricultural development policies will need to be aligned with REDD+ and national climate change action plans. Mechanisms for reconciling conflicting national policies also will be needed.
- b. *A robust and transparent national forest monitoring system*
- i. **SBSTA can play a critical role in helping countries identify the necessary data and methods to track agricultural land use and emissions in the design of a landscape-based approach to MRV systems for REDD+**. This can help address information gaps that the majority of countries face in adequately assessing agricultural land use in forest areas and be used as a tool for assessing the potential for shifting agriculture to rehabilitated degraded lands.
 - ii. **SBSTA can offer guidance as to how national-level MRV systems must properly account for agriculture-related leakage in MRV systems, as well as international-level tracking and accounting of leakage affects**. Accounting for the leakage effects of agriculture-driven deforestation resulting in displacement to other areas (including sub-regional, national and international leakage, particularly in the context of commodity crops serving export markets) is necessary if mitigation goals are to be reached.
 - iii. **SBSTA could consider how IPCC's accounting rules for Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) might apply in the REDD+ context**. The AFOLU framework includes all land uses and related emissions, and can enable assessment of leakage and shifts in emissions to non- forestland. Simple, cost effective accounting rules will ensure wider use among both developing and developed countries. This could provide much-needed consistency of information and guidelines currently lacking in many countries seeking to assess agricultural drivers of forest conversion and related emissions. Tracking agricultural emissions will be needed for medium- to long-term mitigation strategies.

5. Paragraph 71 of decision 1/CP.16 requests the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention to *explore financing options for the full implementation of the results-based actions* (including MRV) referred to in paragraph 73 (including national strategies and action plans and results-based actions).
 - a. **The critical role of agriculture as a driver of forest clearing needs to be considered as part of financing for readiness stage development and as a performance standard in future results-based actions.** Three quarters of the countries evaluated in the CCAFS' report, [Linking forests and food in the REDD+ context](#), lacked the specificity necessary to define the impacts of agricultural drivers of deforestation. Documenting agricultural land use and expansion (in hectares and emissions) is needed to indicate drivers of deforestation. Current REDD+ strategies and actions also generally fail to address agricultural drivers, pointing to the need to increase investment and performance standards in this area.
 - b. SBSTA could **provide technical guidance to the AWG-LCA on how to promote national-level evaluation of deforestation drivers, harmonize conflicting national policies, increase cross-sectoral commitments and commodity-market related issues that might benefit from being addressed via financing** for REDD+ to succeed.
 - c. SBSTA could also play an important role in **signaling to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UN-REDD Programme the importance of including agricultural considerations in REDD+ readiness and results-based actions** as part of qualitative evaluation criteria for funding.

6. Lastly, it is noted that Appendix II of decision 1/CP.16, section (a) requests SBSTA to, "*Identify land use, land-use change and forestry activities in developing countries, in particular those that are linked to the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, identify the associated methodological issues to estimate emissions and removals resulting from these activities, and assess the potential contribution of these activities to the mitigation of climate change, and report on the findings and outcomes of this work to the Conference of the Parties (COP) at its eighteenth session on the outcomes of the work referred to in this paragraph.*"
 - a. CCAFS, in accordance with any eventual decisions taken by SBSTA in this regard, would welcome the opportunity to provide further input as SBSTA defines its workplan on this topic.
 - b. In this context, CCAFS would like to underline the importance of policies and measures that better integrate REDD+ and sustainable agricultural development, including the identification and implementation of incentives for 'climate-smart' agriculture to maximize synergies and minimize trade-offs in addressing food security, development and climate change adaptation/mitigation challenges.

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