

**Government of Costa Rica**  
**Submission on Guidance relating to forest reference level and forest  
reference emission level.**

## **Introduction**

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at its thirty-fourth session, held in Bonn from 6 to June 16, 2011, referring to agenda item 4 published the document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/L.14, corresponding to the draft conclusions proposed by the Working Group Chair of the SBSTA on REDD, entitled "Methodological guidance for activities related 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".

The SBSTA also invited Parties and accredited observers to submit to the Secretariat, by September 19, 2011, their views on the issues identified in these paragraph.

Costa Rica has prepared this proposal in order to provide elements that facilitate decision making during the next session of the SBSTA and COP in Durban.

## **Background**

The crediting of measurable emission reductions and removals under an REDD+ mechanism will depend on the establishment of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels in order to assess the impact of the measures implemented. As stated in decision 1/CP.16, developing country Parties aiming to participate in an international REDD+ mechanism are encouraged "in the context of the provision of adequate and predictable support, including financial resources and technical and technological support to developing country Parties, in accordance with national circumstances and respective capabilities to develop a "national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level, in accordance with national circumstances, and with provisions contained in decision 4/CP.15, and with any further elaboration of those provision adopted by the Conference of the parties".

## **Scope and purpose**

### **Scope**

- RL/REL will be need developed by those developing countries aiming to undertake REDD+ strategies, according to paragraph 70 of decision

1/CP.16, as deemed appropriate by each Party and flexible enough to accommodate different capabilities and national circumstances.

- According to national definitions of forests submitted by Parties.

## **Purpose**

Establish a scientifically sound basis for the estimation of emission reductions and enhancements of forest carbon stocks generated by the implementation of national and/or subnational policies and measures taking into account the ultimate goal of the convention and REDD+ activities, in the context of adequate and predictable finance.

## **Characteristics**

- Allow for the periodic review and update of RL and RELs as national circumstances change.
- Be scientifically robust and based on transparent, accurate, complete, comparable and consistent information while maintaining simplicity.
- Be consistent with the objective of environmental.
- It should allow countries to demonstrate early action and that the positive incentives provided have been able to increase forest cover and carbon removals have occurred.
- Avoid unnecessary barriers for countries participating in REDD+, including financial and technical implications of RL and REL requirements.

## **Guidance for its construction**

- Could be a projection based on historical tendency of the carbon stock or calculating the carbon stock at a reference year.
- Allow the construction of an increasingly robust data set supporting the RL and allow starting RLs, as an interim measure, for particular activities or

pools.

- Its construction should consider the best historical data available in the country.
- The RLs should be revised periodically using a MRV system.
- Financing for national capacity should be secured for the construction and update of REL/RLs
- Countries will be allowed to use a Development Adjust Factor to reflect national circumstances.

### **Process for communication**

- The REL and RL should be submitted to the COP, be subject to an independent assessment made by an expert review team equitably composed by Annex I and Non Annex I experts assisted by the UNFCCC secretariat and adopted by the COP.
- Further communications will be provided through national communications.

### **Others relevant issues**

It is important to emphasize that it is essential to guarantee the proper levels of financial, technical and technological support for developing countries in order to be able to develop national capacities for REDD+ implementation in general and for the definition of RL/REL in particular.