

**Submission by**

**Belize, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Congo, Solomon Islands, Togo, Uganda**

Views on modalities relating to forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of decision 1/CP.16

**19 September 2011**

1. Paragraph 71 (b) of decision 1/CP.16 requested developing country Parties aiming to undertake the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of that decision, 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<sup>1</sup> or, if appropriate, as an interim measure, subnational forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, in accordance with national circumstances, and with provisions contained in decision 4/CP.15, and with any further elaboration of those provisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties;

2. Appendix II to decision 1/CP.16 recognized that in the development of its work programme, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice is requested to:

(b) Develop modalities relating to paragraphs 71 (b) for consideration by the COP at its seventeenth session.

3. The SBSTA at its 34th session invited Parties and accredited observers to submit to the secretariat, by 19 September 2011, their views on the issues identified in paragraphs 28-30 of document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2<sup>2</sup>. It requested the secretariat to compile the submissions by Parties into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the SBSTA at its thirty-fifth session.

4. For this purpose the Coalition for Rainforest Nations and a number of like-minded developing countries met in Pretoria, South Africa from 2 to 4 September 2011 to consider issues related to forest reference emission levels (REL) and forest reference levels (RL) of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of decision 1/CP.16. This submission has been prepared in reflection of those discussions, following the general guidance for submissions provided in Annex II to document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2 and incorporates input from many other developing country Parties.

(a) Scope and/or purpose

5. The REL and RL is considered as a benchmark for assessing a country's performance in reducing total emissions and increasing removals associated with REDD+ activities implemented by the Party. The comparison is needed to assess whether and how policies and measures implemented for REDD+ have resulted in quantifiable mitigation actions, and is expected to be used to determine the appropriate REDD+ financing and incentives for a particular Party.

6. Modalities for the development by non-Annex I Parties of forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of decision 1/CP.16 should be flexible in order to reflect national circumstances and allow widest participation of countries, thus minimizing international displacement, implementing REDD+ activities for mitigating climate change.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with national circumstances, national forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels could be a combination of subnational forest reference emissions levels and/or forest reference levels.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the SBSTA on its thirty-fourth session, held in Bonn from 6 to 16 June 2011, document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, 3 August 2011.

(b) Characteristics, including elements listed in paragraph 1 of appendix I to decision 1/CP.16

7. Therefore, REL and RL should be the expected amount of emissions and removals that would have been occurred if REDD+ activities had not been implemented.

8. For each national or subnational unit as an interim measure for phase 1 and 2, or when totaled in sum reaching a national scale, Parties may set a reference emission levels including emissions from deforestation and/or forest degradation only or may set a reference level including all emissions and removals associated with all REDD+ activities, namely deforestation, forest degradation, forest conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

9. The REL and RL are valid for the whole duration of REDD+ activities and shall be recalculated periodically as agreed by the Parties, such as every five [5 years].

(c) Modalities for the construction

10. The RL and REL should be characterized by transparency, accuracy and participation.

11. Pursuant to the principle of flexibility and respect for national circumstances, Parties may opt to use a REL or a RL depending on national circumstances.

12. The REL should include emission reduction from deforestation and forest degradation.

13. The REL should be based on historical data only so assuming a constant impact on forest emissions of drivers that cause deforestation and forest degradation and that shall be addressed by the implementing policies and measures for REDD.

14. Historical data used REL and RL may refer to a period encompassing the most recent years for which data is available, but including at least 1990, 2000 and 2005.

15. The RL should take into account carbon stock losses and gains and other emissions occurring on forest land, including those associated with change of use from forest to any other land use.

16. In particular countries that have maintained high levels of Sustainable Management of Forests (SMF) and conservation of their forest stocks will be allowed to adjust their RLs so that these efforts will be adequately recognized.

17. RL, based on historical data, should take into consideration the impact of human induced variables that drive emissions and removals in forest land and their expected change in the period to which the reference level is applied, so that the historical data are adjusted by means of Development Adjustment Factors (DAF) in order to determine the RL.

18. The DAF should be built on national circumstances determined by the use of the most recent relevant information, for example, last years' carbon stock changes and other emissions from the forest sector, per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), local and international prices of forest and agricultural goods, etc.

19. To avoid inconsistencies in methods, carbon pools and lands reported for setting the REL and RL and those used for accounting during the commitment period, the REL and RL could be subject to technical corrections when and if needed.

20. Setting the REL and RL may start by estimating activity data utilizing the freely available Landsat satellite global data set for 1990, 2000 and 2005, provided by NASA, and estimating carbon stocks changes using IPCC default value tables.

(d) Process for communication;

21. 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.

(e) Other relevant issues.

22. REL and RL could be further modified to take into account the need to ensure that the total amount of net changes in emissions and removals accounted by mitigation activities implemented under the REDD+ mechanism account for a net reduction in emissions or enhancement of removals.