

Submission by

Ghana

Views on robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems as referred to in paragraph 71c of decision 1/CP.16

29 February 2012

1. The SBSTA at its 35th session invited Parties to submit their views on issues identified in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 72 and appendix II, in particular on how to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and on robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems as referred to in its paragraph 71c1.

2. For this purpose the Coalition for Rainforest Nations and a number of like-minded developing countries met in London to consider issues related to paragraph 1 above. This submission has been prepared to reflect those discussions and expresses input from many other developing country Parties on the same issues.

3. The submission of views to SBSTA35 made on 19 September 2011 by [Belize, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Congo, Solomon Islands, Togo and Uganda on modalities for measuring, reporting and verifying anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes resulting from the implementation of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of decision 1/CP.16 included in document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/MISC.7 should be recalled.

4. Activities identified in paragraph 70 to decision 1/CP.16 (REDD+ activities) and nationally appropriate mitigation actions identified in paragraphs 48 and 49 to decision 1/CP.16 are two fundamental elements of developing country Parties mitigation actions. . Diverse mitigation actions may be undertaken by developing country Parties as communicated by them in accordance with paragraph 49 of 1/CP.16.

5. **Consistency between the MRV of REDD+ and NAMAs:** Modalities for measuring, reporting and verifying anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes resulting from the implementation of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of decision 1/CP.16, should be consistent with any guidance on measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV) nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing country Parties (NAMAs) as agreed by the COP, in accordance with paragraph 60 and Appendix II of 1/CP.16 and with the guidelines contained in Annex III to decision [-/CP.17], Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, and taking into account methodological guidance developed by the SBSTA in accordance with decision 4/CP.15.

6. **MRV Cannot be more burdensome for REDD+:** The consistency between the MRV of nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing country Parties (NAMAs) and the MRV of REDD+ activities recognized by decision 1/CP.16 shall be observed and Parties shall not permit the introduction of more burdensome requirements for the MRV of REDD+ activities.

7. **National Forest Monitoring Systems:** In accordance with Decision 4/CP.15 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 the national forest monitoring systems should:

- a. Be consistent with any guidance on measuring, reporting and verifying nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing country Parties taking into account methodological guidance developed by SBSTA in accordance with decision 4/CP.15;

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/L.25, paragraph 5.

- b. Be based on a combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches;
- c. Include all national forest areas, and may integrate subnational forest monitoring systems based on national circumstances.
- d. Maximize the frequency of monitoring and assessment subject to available funding and national capacities.
- e. Permit the use of a “tiered approach” in setting the national forest monitoring system, based upon national circumstances, in accordance with the IPCC Guidelines and Guidance as agreed by the Parties.
- f. Be developed through a step-wise approach that reflects the phased approach for REDD+ decided in paragraph 73 Decision of 1/CP.16. In particular, the National Forest Monitoring System for REDD+ Phase II should be used to demonstrate that the REDD+ demonstration activities are results based but should also be assessed through simplified parameters and criteria.

8. **Measuring:** Measurements should be consistent with data requirements for estimating emissions and removals based on IPCC guidance and guidelines within Decision 4/CP.15. Therefore, collected data should be representative of the full variability for forest types present in the country, their carbon stocks and related dynamics, be free of bias as far as can be judged and ensure spatial and temporal consistency of compiled databases.

9. **Reporting:** The consistency referred to in paragraph 5 above should be maintained, including:

- a. Additional flexibility given to least developed country Parties and small island developing states when considering enhanced reporting in national communications, including inventories from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.
- b. National communications submitted every four years including biennial update reports that include updates of:
 - i. National greenhouse gas inventories, including a national inventory report.
 - ii. Information on mitigation actions, needs and support received.
 - iii. Tables included in Annex 3A.2 to the Good Practice Guidance for Land Use Change and Forestry and Sectoral Report Tables annexed to Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.
 - iv. Consistent time series back to reported years in previous national communications.
 - v. Additional or supporting information, including sector specific information such as for REDD+, which may be supplied through a technical annex.

10. **Verification:** The consistency referred to in paragraph 5 above should be maintained. Therefore, subject to paragraph 63 of decision 1/CP.16 and Annex IV to decision 1/CP.17, Parties have agreed to conduct international consultations and analysis of the biennial reports under the SBI, in a manner that is non-intrusive, non-punitive, and respectful of national sovereignty and legislation, with the aim to improve transparency of mitigation actions and their effects. This process may be

undertaken through two step process of analysis by technical experts and sharing of views in consultation with the Party concerned:

- a. In consultation with the Party a technical analysis of the biennial update reports submitted by Parties, by a team of technical experts from the roster of experts organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat that will result in a Summary Report. The information considered will include, inter-alia, a National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report.
- b. A facilitative sharing of views, which will serve as input on the biennial update reports and summary report identified above.

11. **Capacity Building:** The Parties to the Convention should establish and support, both technically and financially, programs for specific capacity development in developing country Parties implementing REDD+ activities with the aim to:

- a. develop robust and transparent forest monitoring systems;
- b. fulfill the required forest sector reporting requirements within National Communications and Biennial Update Reports;
- c. support the process or international consultation and analysis of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports.

In addition, the Parties should establish a free resource for the most accurate existing and future satellite imaging data available globally given that the accuracy of the national forest monitoring systems may improve depending on the financial and technical support received in order to build the required national capacity to access and process available information and data.

12. **MRV of support:** Measurement, reporting and verification of the support provided by Annex I Parties to Parties not included in Annex I for activities referred to in this submission of views should be carried out by an expert review team equitably balanced between members of developed and developing countries selected from the roster of experts of the Convention and supported by the secretariat in consultation with relevant national authorities in accordance with countries national capacity and capabilities.