

Transparency in forest monitoring

Building **Trust** and **Consensus** around Greenhouse Gas Data for Increased **Accountability** of Mitigation in the Land Use Sector

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The context and problem

The Paris Agreement poses manifold challenges to monitoring, reporting and verification (Figure 1)
 Implementing key principles for improved transparency in monitoring can contribute to alleviate these challenges

In order to build mutual trust and confidence and to promote effective implementation, an enhanced transparency framework for action and support, with built-in flexibility which takes into account Parties' different capacities and builds upon collective experience is hereby established.

(Paris Agreement, Article 13)

The question

- How legitimate and useful is independently gathered information for various stakeholders?
- How to increase awareness and capacities to use these data?
- How to increase user trust and confidence?

Key principles for improved transparency

- increased **accuracy** and improved documentation of **uncertainty**
- **consistency** and **completeness** of data and the appropriate scale
- **comparability, complementarity** and **interoperability** of different datasets
 - **reproducibility** and **adaptability** of methods
- **improved access** to data and tools for increased participation

Applying these principles can improve stakeholder engagement in monitoring, increase confidence, stimulate action and lay the foundations for **greater responsibility and accountability**

Transparent monitoring enables countries to develop NDCs that are **specific, quantifiable, linked to high-quality reporting, and that can be assessed independently**. Better information builds trust with donors and the general public

What data users can do

Users of land use information can engage in and benefit from independent monitoring approaches. A number of actions can support users of independent data:

- **Develop guiding principles for assessing uncertainties associated with monitoring approaches and how to reduce them**
- **Advance IPCC guidance regarding the inclusion of independent data and contributing to improved emission factors**
- **Better tailor models and other tools towards reporting requirements and make them more consistent with current IPCC guidelines and country GHG reporting**

What data providers can do

Data providers can contribute to increased transparency in monitoring by the following actions:

- **Include the original data sources, clearly describe definitions, methodologies and assumptions to facilitate replication and assessment, and include accuracy assessments and uncertainties**
- **Make methods for data production publicly available and preferably published in peer-reviewed papers**
- **Provide regular updates of data and consistent estimates over time**
- **Guarantee that data generation and access to the data are sustained for a long period**
- **Display the institutional background of the data producer**
- **Use European assets such as Copernicus services and the evolution of the ESA BIOMASS mission to deliver key free and open data to various stakeholders**

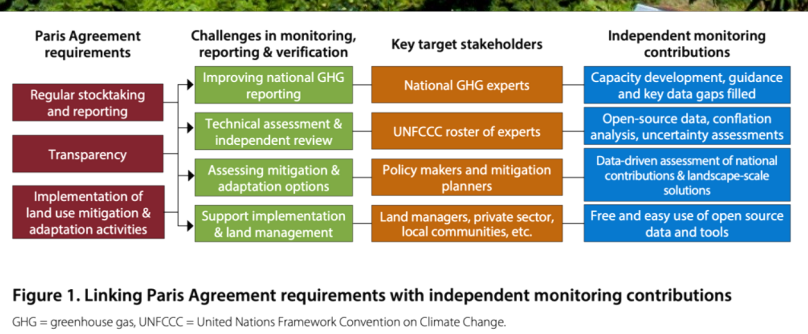


Figure 1. Linking Paris Agreement requirements with independent monitoring contributions

GHG = greenhouse gas, UNFCCC = United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Read more:

Stakeholder needs assessment: [cifor.org/library/6875/](https://doi.org/10.2834/513344)

Transparency brief: [cifor.org/library/6256/](https://doi.org/10.2834/513344)

European Commission Report: <https://doi.org/10.2834/513344>



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