

## **Joint Position on Scope/Participation**

*24 November 2009*

**The scope of a REDD+<sup>1</sup> mechanism should be defined to include a range of activities that contribute to greenhouse gas mitigation in the forest sectors of developing countries. While it is important that the focus of a REDD+ mechanism in the near term remain on the forest sector, it should be designed such that a future transition to a mechanism based on the agriculture, forest, and other land use sectors (AFOLU) is possible.**

The precise definition of a REDD+ mechanism and the suite of sectors and activities it includes had yet to be decided as of the conclusion of the seventh session of the AWG-LCA. The Bali Action Plan addresses REDD+ as “issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks...”. The scope of REDD+ as presented in the BAP thus includes activities affecting carbon stocks and fluxes exclusively in the forest sector.

The current REDD+ text, however, includes an option to widen the scope of REDD+ to include mitigation actions in the agriculture and other land use sectors. The list of potential activities addressed under a REDD+ mechanism has expanded beyond reducing deforestation and forest degradation to include the following: ensuring the conservation or permanence of existing carbon stocks, undertaking afforestation and/or reforestation, enhancing removals, and promoting sustainable forest and land management. There is currently no consensus among Parties on which of the proposed sectors and activities should be included in a REDD+ mechanism.

It is our position that a REDD+ mechanism in the near term should include activities that reduce emissions, conserve existing carbon reservoirs, promote sustainable management of native forests, and enhance carbon stocks in the forest sector. Inclusion of additional forest sector activities beyond reducing deforestation and forest degradation ensures the broadest participation of developing tropical forest countries possible, and promotes an effective and efficient REDD+ mechanism at the global scale. Furthermore, conservation of existing carbon stocks and ecologically and environmentally appropriate application of afforestation/reforestation using native species further contribute to the preservation of highly biodiverse forest ecosystems and may provide additional co-benefits. The overall emphasis of a REDD+ mechanism, however, should remain on the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation, as this will provide the greatest mitigation value in the near term.

While we acknowledge the links between the forest and other sectors, particularly the agriculture sector, as well as the mitigation potential contained in some non-forest ecosystems, we do not support the inclusion of the agriculture or other land-based sectors in REDD+ in the near term. However, there are certain activities based in non-forest land uses that have the potential to contribute to emissions reductions and the enhancement of carbon stocks in the forest sector. These activities, which include afforestation of degraded agricultural land and changes in land-use practices that result in avoided deforestation, have straightforward connections to forest-based REDD+ and should be eligible for the mechanism in the near term.

---

<sup>1</sup> We support a mechanism that encompasses reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) as well as restoration, environmentally appropriate native afforestation and reforestation, sustainable management of native forests and conservation of carbon stocks of native forests from the start of the mechanism.

Conservation International ~ Environmental Defense Fund  
The Nature Conservancy ~ Woods Hole Research Center

The REDD+ mechanism defined in Copenhagen should contribute to long-term, sustainable land management regimes by laying the groundwork for a comprehensive land-based framework. This mechanism should be expanded in the future to include and incentivize appropriate mitigation opportunities in additional land use sectors as the necessary technical, institutional, and financial capacities develop.