



Workshop session

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYNERGIES IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REDD+ AND FLEGT IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL FOREST POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Lessons, options and approaches for further action

Background and rationale

Over the years, there have been increasing rates of forest degradation and loss, as a result of unsustainable forest management and other land use practices, including illegal logging. Forest loss has serious consequences for biodiversity, livelihoods and climate change. In response to these phenomena, there has been a number of international policy initiatives to stem the tide. Key among these have been the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade, FLEGT (with the Voluntary Partnership Agreement being an action plan), and the REDD+ initiative.

The EU FLEGT Action plan seeks to address illegal logging and associated trade and improve general forest governance. The REDD+ initiative on the other hand, seeks to mitigate climate change by putting in place measures that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and ensure sustainable forest management and enhancement of carbon stocks. REDD+ thus offers opportunities for addressing deforestation and improving the livelihood of forest-dependent communities while simultaneously improving forest governance. Although FLEGT and REDD+ have a different focus there are also clear overlaps with regard to objectives, approaches and actor participation.

The need for better integration of the FLEGT and REDD+ processes into the national planning processes has been advocated to ensure that national stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the process, activities contribute to the good forest governance in a coherent manner and these processes will build synergies within country and avoid overlaps or duplication of activities.

National Forest Programmes have been agreed by countries in the UN context as a comprehensive forest policy framework to enhance forest governance and improve sustainable forest management, to provide a platform for enhanced multi-sector and multi-actor participation, including the enhancement of coordination and consistency of different (inter)national initiatives addressing forests – in this case on REDD and FLEGT.

Various countries in West and Central Africa are now engaged in both the EU FLEGT/VPA and the REDD+ initiatives. They are at different stages of preparation and implementation. Whereas the context, experiences and advances in each country are different it is relevant to take stock of these and examine

how the planning and implementation of REDD+ and FLEGT initiatives are coordinated with each other and how they are coordinated and linked to the national forest programme processes.

Taking stock of the current status and experiences of FLEGT and REDD+ implementation and coordination can help to identify practical links and needs, barriers and possibilities for strengthening coordination between REDD+ and FLEGT, as well as between REDD+, FLEGT and the existing policies/strategies, structures and processes that aim to develop and guide the forest sector in countries. Examining the initiatives in the context of existing structures can strengthen the coordination among actors in the forest sector and their joint contribution to the improvement of forest governance in the country.

Set-up of the session

It is against this background that the FAO and Tropenbos International are co-hosting this workshop session as part of a 3- day Regional Workshop jointly organized by the ACP FLEGT Support Programme, the Ghana Forestry Commission and the European Forestry Institute, with funding from the ACP FLEGT Programme and the UN-REDD. To facilitate the discussion of the synergies in the preparation and implementation of REDD+ and FLEGT in the context of national forest policy frameworks, country studies have been carried out in Liberia and Ghana, complemented by country studies in Cameroon and the Central African Republic. Findings from the two case studies in West Africa will be presented and discussed against the experiences and insights from other countries of the region. There will then be a group session to further discuss practical approaches and actions to strengthen the synergies between the two initiatives in the context of the NFPs.

Objectives of the session

The objectives of the session are therefore as follows:

- Raise awareness on the REDD+, FLEGT, NFP linkages and present first results from country studies in Ghana, Liberia, Cameroon and the Central African Republic.
- Support exchange of experiences between countries and encourage the identification of possible activities on national level that would strengthen coordination and synergies between these processes
- Develop concrete recommendations that can be considered by all countries on how to enhance coherence and coordination between REDD+, FLEGT processes and overall forest governance framework.

Working Groups

The participants will be divided into two groups to share experiences guided by the discussion questions below.

- The **aims** of the group session are as follows:
 - i. elaborate possible activities in countries that would strengthen coordination and synergies between these processes and
 - ii. propose general recommendations to countries that would enhance coherence and coordination between REDD+, FLEGT processes and overall forest governance framework.
- Presentations of working group results and consolidation of the possible activities and recommendations suggested
- Summary and closing

Questions for the working group discussions:

- What is the current level of coordination and cooperation between REDD+ and FLEGT in implementing the two initiatives?
- How are the REDD+ and FLEGT initiatives currently coordinated with the existing structures and processes for forest policy, planning and implementation that exist at national and sub-national levels (e.g. NFPs)?
- What opportunities exist for strengthening synergies in the planning and implementation of REDD+ and FLEGT actions?
- What opportunities exist for strengthening the overall forest policy framework (e.g. national forest programme) by better co-ordinating REDD+, FLEGT and other forest policy implementation actions?

Follow-up

- Country-specific collaboration with interested countries to support activities/roadmaps on REDD+, FLEGT, NFP linkages.

Agenda

THEME: OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYNERGIES IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REDD+ AND FLEGT IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL FOREST POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA				
Time	Activity	Thematic area	Moderator, Presenter, or Facilitator	Comment(s)
9:30- 9:40	Introductions		Tropenbos	
9:40-9:45	Opening remarks by facilitator		Moderator	
9:45-10:45	Presentations: experiences from countries			
9:45- 9:55	Presentation 1	Liberia case study	Mr. David Saah	
09:55- 10:05	Presentation 2	Ghana case study	Dr. Emmanuel Marfo (FORIG)	
10:05-10:15	Presentation 3	Experiences from Central Africa	Mr. Moussa Nguemadji	
10:15 -10:45	Clarification Questions			
10:45- 12:15	Sub-group discussions on strengthening synergies between REDD+ and FLEGT – Sharing of country experiences guided by the discussion questions and country case studies to be presented			
12:15-12:30	Group 1	Report from discussions + questions	Dr. Attah Alhassan	1. What is the current level of coordination and cooperation between REDD+ and FLEGT in implementing the two initiatives? 2. What opportunities exist for strengthening synergies in the planning and implementation of REDD+ and FLEGT actions?
12:30-12:45	Group 2	Report from discussions + questions	Dr. Kyereh Boateng	1. How are the REDD+ and FLEGT initiatives currently coordinated with the existing structures and processes for forest policy, planning and implementation that exist at national and sub-national levels (e.g. NFPs)? 2. What opportunities exist for strengthening the overall forest policy framework (e.g. national forest programme) by better co-ordinating REDD+, FLEGT and other forest policy implementation actions?
12:45- 13:00	Conclusions	Result of decisions and mapping way forward.	Moderator/ Facilitator	