

# Proceedings of the workshop on 'Forest Based Carbon Financing' held on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2014

Prepared for  
Ministry of Environment and Forests





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# Proceedings of the workshop on 'Forest Based Carbon Financing'

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## Introduction to Forest-based Carbon Financing

Forests are the national resources of global concern. The forests particularly in developing countries are deforested and degraded with fast pace. There are inadequate financial resources for developing countries for the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). The developed countries are not contributing towards implementation of SFM in developing countries. The Global Community has shown other window of forest based carbon financing through Afforestation Reforestation Clean Development Mechanism (AR-CDM) and Reduced Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). The Kyoto Protocol was agreed during COP-3 in 1997 with a commitment of industrialized countries and countries in transition to the market economy to achieve emission reduction targets (Annex-1 countries). These countries agreed to reduce their overall emissions of six Green House Gases (GHGs) by an average of 5% below 1990 level in 2008-12 (First Commitment period) with specific targets varying from country to country. During COP-17 in 2011 in Durban second commitment period for Kyoto Protocol was agreed. The market based finance is available through AR-CDM mechanism. The purpose of the Clean Development Mechanism is defined in Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The CDM has a two-fold purpose: (a) to assist developing country Parties in achieving sustainable development, thereby contributing to the ultimate objective of the Convention, and (b) to assist developed country Parties in achieving compliance with part of their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments under Article 3.

Out of 40 registered projects worldwide, there are three small scale and four large scale projects in India are registered. The host country approval has been granted to five Uttar Pradesh Forest Department (UPFD) projects. Till now AR-CDM has not proved as a source of finance for the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management. The clean development mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol is designed not only to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) but also to contribute locally to sustainable development. As a market-based mechanism, CDM has the potential to channel private investments into development activities with economic, social, and environmental benefits. Unfortunately, investments have tended to flow where CDM activities provide higher returns with limited economic and political risks.

Another mechanism for forest based carbon finance was initiated in 2005 as RED. It was later agreed as REDD and REDD+. The following decisions have been taken during COP-19:

- Result-Based Finance to Developing Countries
- Provided all safeguards including drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and rights of forest dwelling communities are addressed
- Finance may come from Bilateral, Multilateral, Public and Private Source
- National Forest Monitoring System for monitoring and reporting of REDD+ activities guided by IPCC guidelines

- Institutional arrangement is limited to annual meeting of national focal points and Funding agencies
- It started with market based mechanism but now leaning towards fund based mechanism which require approximately 30 billion US\$ annually.

## About the Session

The special event on 'Forest based Carbon Financing' was organized by the Forestry and Biodiversity Group of TERI in association with Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and Iora Ecological Solutions at the India Habitat Centre on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014. This event has covered a presentation on "Potential of Compliance and Voluntary Market for forest based carbon financing" by Mr Swapan Mehra, CEO, IORA, followed by a technical session chaired by Dr Devendra Pandey, Former Director General, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun and Co- chaired by Mr M Lokeswara Rao, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Nagaland. In the technical sessions three case studies on carbon financing projects in different states were presented by Mr Suresh Chauhan, Fellow, TERI (Case study for Voluntary Market in the context of the North East Nagaland), Dr. Ashish Aggarwal, Fellow, TERI (Impacts of a Carbon Forestry Project from Haryana state) and Mr A.K Lal, Executive Director, HPMHWDP (Implementing HP CDM AR Project: Lessons Learned)

## Inaugural Session

The workshop began with a welcome address by **Mr Subhash Chandra**, Director, Deputy Inspector General of Forests (Forest Policy), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India. He said that the theme of this workshop is of great significance to the forestry sector. He highlighted the conference importance on learning and exploring carbon financing of forestry based project opportunities with case studies presented by developers and implementers across various states. In his remarks, he emphasized on the compliance and voluntary market. The compliance market, regulated by mandatory national, regional and international carbon reduction regime is used by the companies and governments that by law have to account for their GHGs emissions. In the voluntary market the trade of carbon credits is on a voluntary basis.

**Dr J V Sharma**, Senior Fellow, TERI introduce to the theme of the workshop by highlighting the key objectives behind organizing the special event on the sidelines of TERI's flagship event Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2014. He also outlined the expectations and outcomes from the workshop. He mentioned that forests are national resource of global concern. The forests particularly in developing countries are deforested and degraded with a rapid pace. Thus in-order to capture drivers of forest degradation, the global community has shown the window of forest based carbon financing through Afforestation Reforestation Clean Development Mechanism (AR-CDM) and Reduced Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). Dr. Sharma highlighted that a large number of issues under AR-CDM and REDD+ have not been addressed so far and it has some lacunas which the workshop aims to generate a platform to discuss those issues and try to pave a path towards overcoming these issues.

**Mr A K Srivastava**, Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India in his inaugural address highlighted that the forest loss and forest degradation has a huge cost on the economy and impacts lives of poor especially forest dependent rural communities. Globally, deforestation and forest

degradation accounts for nearly 17% of GHG emission. Therefore, in order to address climate change, arresting deforestation and forest degradation and ensuring sustainable management of forests becomes a high priority not only nationally but internationally. Mr Srivastava briefly explained about REDD+ readiness underlining the outcomes of COP-19 at Warsaw which has made significant progress on possibility of implementing REDD+ by developing countries. He suggested that this calls for adequate and predictable finance for REDD+ activities in a fair, transparent and equitable manner taking into account different policy approaches while expanding the number of recipient countries.

In his remarks, he emphasized upon the need for capacity building of the Forest Departments and communities in formulation of AR-CDM and REDD+ projects. Plus other hierarchies of Forest Departments need to be brought under the ambit of such programmes. He stated about the various initiatives taken up by the Government of India for conservation of forests including Green India Mission are supportive of REDD+ framework. He also highlighted about the progress of The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UN-REDD Programme. He said CAMPA funds could also be utilized by the States in organizing such programmes.

At the end he said that "he hope that the deliberations of this workshop be useful in pursuing REDD+ at the level of Central Government and State Forest Departments to take benefits from trading of the carbon market in enhancing livelihoods of the communities, biodiversity conservation, improving the quality of forests and enhancing the forest cover.

The inaugural session ended with a vote of thanks from Nirbhay Bhatnagar, Research Associate, TERI.

## Technical Session

The technical session was chaired by **Dr Devendra Pandey**, Former Director General, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun and Co- chaired by **Mr M Lokeswara Rao**, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Nagaland. It started with a presentation on "Potential of Compliance and Voluntary Market for forest based carbon financing" by Mr Swapan Mehra, CEO, IORA. In the technical sessions three case studies on carbon financing projects across different states were presented by Mr Suresh Chauhan, Fellow, TERI (Case study for Voluntary Market in the context of the North East Nagaland), Dr. Ashish Aggarwal, Fellow, TERI (Impacts of a Carbon Forestry Project from Haryana state) and Mr A.K Lal, Executive Director, HPMHWDP (Implementing HP AR-CDM Project: Lessons Learned).

The first presentation on "Potential of Compliance and Voluntary Market for forest based carbon financing" by **Swapan Mehra**, CEO, IORA, gave an in-depth analysis of compliance and voluntary markets of carbon financing. Regarding AR-CDM projects he highlighted issues on demand side of these projects plus its onerous baseline and project development methodologies. Precisely he gave a brief idea on Forest Carbon activities which includes Baseline Estimation, Implementation, Monitoring and Financing and then touched upon on the potential of voluntary markets like ARR- Afforestation, Reforestation and Revegetation, ALM- Agricultural Land Management, IFM- Improved Forest Management, REDD, ACoGS- Avoided Conversion of Grasslands and Shrublands and WRC- Wetlands Restoration and Conservation. He suggested analysis and upgradation of existing capacity and technology for pursuing carbon finance and need to develop forest management paradigms to promote enhancement of forest stock but also corresponding enhancement of biodiversity and community well-being.



**Mr Suresh Chauhan**, Fellow, TERI presented on "Fostering Community Forest Management in Nagaland, India. He briefly introduced about the project objectives, demography and methodological choices. He discussed about the restoration of degraded forest land and conservation of existing native forest area in the PKR Community Reserve region through institutional capacity building. The project sites comprise of drivers of deforestation which includes Jhum cultivation, Invasion by wild banana, lantana and various other invasive species, Wild hunting, Fuel wood collection and Timber harvesting. In this project each of these identified drivers of deforestation were addressed separately with promotion of animal husbandry/piggeries, cultivation of herbal and medicinal plants in the PKR community reserve, promotion of eco-tourism activities and a complete ban on hunting. These actions have resulted in greater canopy cover, enhanced biodiversity and reduced deforestation in these regions. Then he precisely explained about various stages of project development for voluntary markets under Plan Vivo methodology.

The next technical presentation titled "Offsetting carbon or livelihoods? Impacts of a carbon forestry project from Haryana, India" was presented by **Dr. Ashish Aggarwal**, Fellow, TERI. In this presentation, he presented a reality check of carbon forestry projects from Haryana ARCDM with respect to climate mitigation fund, bio-diversity and livelihood of local people. He gave an in depth analysis of impact of these projects on local livelihoods of people. He stated that the Net Present Value of this project was calculated to be negative and 50% of the project participants have changed the land use patterns while only 50% are continuing with this project. The major reason for withdrawal of communities from this AR-CDM project was found to be the opportunity cost of private owned lands plus the infusion of better irrigation facilities in the region. With this study, he raised questions over equity implications and win-win claims of climate mitigation measures.

The last technical presentation was presented by **Mr. A.K Lal**, Executive Director, HPMHWDP titled as "Implementing HP AR-CDM Project: Lessons Learned". The focus of this presentation was to share practical insights of developing, implementing and registering AR-CDM projects with UNFCCC. He stated that the guiding principles of this project were identifying native and local species, involve Communities in reforestation efforts, Value addition to ongoing watershed interventions, technical and financial support for reforestation by MHWDP (including capacity building) and Carbon Revenue to go to communities as incentive to protect Forests/ Watersheds. At the end he suggested the project planners to keep the following points while developing AR-CDM projects:

- Develop Project on Total Economic Beneficial plank: Highlight socio environmental outcomes
- Develop Carbon Project as a Sub Project of existing/ proposed Main Project
- Go for ERPA as soon as possible after Registration
- Keep Parameters Flexible to accommodate deviations
- Try to project the Project as a win-win work in any case

The technical session was concluded as very productive and knowledge sharing for all the participants. Various Queries on each of these presentations were raised and answered by presenter. At the end of this session, Chair and Co-chair of this session appreciated the enthusiasm and energy level of presenters and interest and interaction of participants in making the session productive.



## Panel Discussion

Immediately after technical session, the event moved to its last session of Panel discussion on "Post COP 19 scenario on forest based carbon finance". This session was chaired by **Dr Prodipto Ghosh**, Director Earth Science and Climate Change Division & Distinguished Fellow, TERI. The eminent panel members of this session were **Mr Irshad Khan**, IFS (Retd.), Former PCCF (J&K), **Dr Rekha Pai**, Inspector General of Forests (EAP), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, **Dr J V Sharma**, Senior Fellow, TERI and **Mr Varghese Paul**, Senior Forestry Advisor, USAID India.

**Dr. Prodipto Ghosh** highlighted the potential of Bio-energy projects in the present CDM markets. He stressed on CER (Certified Emission Reduction Units) Price Stabilizing Mechanism for compliance and regulatory markets. He expressed positive outlook for REDD+ mechanism and carbon based financing of forestry projects post COP19 at Warsaw. Though he emphasized that a large number of issues under REDD+ have to be addressed i.e. definitions, Measurement Reporting and Verification (MRV), Reference Levels, Benefit Sharing Mechanism etc. and learning from pilot studies in India has to be taken into account for REDD+ policy and implementation strategies. While answering to a question on complexities of CDM methodologies, he suggested that simplification of these methodologies is an ongoing process.

**Dr Rekha Pai**, Inspector General of Forests (EAP), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, gave insights about the relevance REDD+ framework in enhancing livelihood opportunities to the forest dwelling communities, learning of AR-CDM projects and pilot projects implemented by TERI and USAID. She stated that the Warsaw REDD+ framework has given clarity to strategize national level implementation of REDD+ in developing countries. With result based financing option and clearly defined rights of forest dependent communities, a REDD+ framework POST COP19 scenario looks encouraging and positive.

**Mr Irshad Khan**, IFS (Retd.), Former PCCF (J&K), discussed about the major decisions taken during COP19 at Warsaw while emphasizing over financing result based options. He further stated that "REDD+ has come to a stage from here to take off". He also talked about exploring and getting bilateral, multilateral and private sector financing or funding to REDD+ potential projects. Moreover, he said that with post COP19 developing countries would be required to provide status report to United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The major thrust of **Dr J V Sharma**, Senior Fellow, TERI was on highlighting key decisions of COP 19 and realization of scaling up REDD+ projects taking learning's from pilot projects conducted by TERI and USAID. He highlighted the need of scientific implementation of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification system (MRV) for better preparedness to REDD+ framework and national inventorization. He also emphasized on one of the main issue of latest negotiations at Warsaw that we have pledges not any commitment for funding of carbon sequestration or carbon emission reduction projects. To sum up, he stated that in the sake of national interest we have to look at national level emission targets and funding options and not just global funding.

**Mr Varghese Paul**, Senior Forestry Advisor, USAID India discuss about USAID readiness to REDD+ framework highlighting various tools and techniques for implementing REDD+ activities. He emphasized on the need of a separate window of REDD+ projects plus developing some mechanism for mitigating risks for forestry projects. He very briefly explained that REDD+ framework should not be counted as just carbon sequestration and

emission reduction rather it enhances biodiversity, tenure rights and safeguards for the forest dependent communities.

The panel discussion was concluded after taking questions on the post cop 19 REDD+ scenarios by **Dr Prodipto Ghosh**, Director Earth Science and Climate Change Division & Distinguished Fellow, TERI. He stated that the panelist were largely satisfied with 'Warsaw REDD+ framework' and expected that it will be much simpler and holistic as compared to CDM process.

Dr. Ashish Aggarwal, Fellow, TERI proposed the vote of thanks and concluded the event to be successful.

## Key messages from the workshop

On the basis of discussions held, the following actions are needed:

- There is a need to build capacity of state forest departments and JFMCs with respect to the concept of AR-CDM.
- Voluntary Carbon Market and REDD+ mechanism can be opted for forest based carbon financing. Further, funds are available in different forest related schemes such as CAMPA, GIM and External aided Projects.
- The Government of India should formulate National Policy on Forest based carbon financing including policy on REDD+.
- The Government of India should adopt the approach of small project for REDD+ at JFMC or village level which would facilitate the compensation to the community for their conservation efforts.
- The quantification of sustainable limit of Minor Forest Produce (MFPs) and carbon stock assessment should be part of the Working Plan document.
- The Management Plan should have the prescription for combating drivers of forest degradation.
- There is a need to have more pilots for REDD+ and Voluntary carbon market.

## Annexure 1: Agenda of the Workshop

### Forest Based Carbon Financing

DSDS 2014 – Special Event

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2014

Venue: Magnolia, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

#### Agenda

Time	
0930-1000	<b>Registration</b>
1000-1045	<b>Inaugural Session</b>
1000-1005	<b><i>Welcome Address</i></b> Mr Subhash Chandra, Deputy Inspector General of Forests (Forest Policy), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India
1005-1020	<b><i>Introduction to the Workshop Theme</i></b> Dr J V Sharma, Senior Fellow, TERI
1020-1040	<b>Opening Remarks</b> Mr A K Srivastava, Additional Director General of Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India
1040-1045	<b><i>Vote of Thanks</i></b> Mr Nirbhay Bhatnagar, Research Associate, TERI
<b>1045-1100</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>
1100-1300	<b>Technical Session</b> <b>Chair: Dr Devendra Pandey, Former Director General, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun</b> <b>Co-Chair: Mr M Lokeswara Rao, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Nagaland</b>
1100-1120	<b>Potential of Compliance and Voluntary Market for forest based carbon financing</b> Mr Swapan Mehra, CEO, IORA
1120-1140	<b>Case study for Voluntary Market in the context of the North East (Nagaland)</b> Mr Suresh Chauhan, Fellow, TERI

Time	
1140-1220	<p><b>Case Study of AR-CDM (Haryana and Himachal Pradesh)</b></p> <p>Dr Ashish Aggarwal, Fellow, TERI Mr A.K Lal, Executive Director, HPMHWDP</p>
1220-1300	<p><b>Panel discussion</b> (Post COP 19 scenario on forest based carbon finance)</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Director Earth Science and Climate Change Division &amp; Distinguished Fellow, TERI</p> <p><b>Panelist</b></p> <p>Mr Irshad Khan, IFS (Retd.), Former PCCF (J&amp;K) Dr Rekha Pai, Inspector General of Forests (EAP), Ministry of Environment &amp; Forests, Government of India Dr J V Sharma, Senior Fellow, TERI Mr Varghese Paul, Senior Forestry Advisor, USAID India</p>
1300-1330	<p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>
1330-1345	<p><b>Concluding Remarks</b></p> <p>Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Director Earth Science and Climate Change Division &amp; Distinguished Fellow, TERI</p>
1345-1350	<p><b>Vote of Thanks</b></p> <p>Dr Ashish Aggarwal, Fellow, TERI</p>
1350 onwards	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>

## Annexure 2: List of participants attended the workshop

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### Annexure 3: Photographs







