

Definition of Forest-Related Terms for REDD+: an Unresolved Issue

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ABSTRACT

Debate over arrangements for REDD+ in a post-Kyoto climate policy framework has been ongoing in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations; however, no review of the applicability of the existing forest definition to future REDD+ implementation has been undertaken. This paper highlights the need to review the definition of forest, and reviews proposals to improve existing definitions. The impacts of current forestry definition are discussed with reference to Indonesia as a case study. It is concluded that careless definition of selected forest-related terms has had a negative impact on Indonesia's involvement in the implementation of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) afforestation and reforestation (A/R) projects. In the global context, this paper suggests that there should be clear definitions for definition of forest that are flexible enough to accommodate the various interests of UNFCCC parties. At the national level, each country should specify their forest definition carefully considering the guidance provided at the global level and its own forest characteristics and management. Failing to do so can limit the involvement of these nations in future REDD+ schemes and reduce their capacity to mitigate climate change impacts.