

Report - Market place of ideas No: 4

Adaptation and Mitigation

*Conference on anchoring the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)
on the theme “Opportunities and Challenges: Climate and land use in the Congo Basin”
8 to 9 October 2014, Brazzaville, Congo*

Insights market on:

“Opportunities and Challenges for emerging themes on climate change in Central Africa”

8 October 2014, 17.30 to 21.00

Preparation: Denis J. Sonwa & Anne Marie Tiani (CIFOR)



Session organiser: CIFOR

Responsible: Denis J Sonwa

Rapporteurs: Eugene L Chia (CIFOR), Jason Ko (USFS)

Rational and objectives

The response to climate change recently dominated by the REDD+ mechanism is an additional challenge for forest management in Central Africa especially in the humid forest areas, which are facing other threats such as agriculture expansion, logging and mining. In Central Africa, other ecosystems such as mangroves, lowlands, arid and semi-arid areas are not well captured in the national and regional climate change response initiatives. It is important for future declarations,

positions and arguments submitted to the UNFCCC to take into account ecosystem and sectoral diversity of the Central Africa region.

This market place of ideas will provide opportunities for researchers and practitioners to present preliminary findings, initiate brainstorming and start discussions that can provide inputs relevant for the climate process to go beyond what is being done in REDD+ in relation to various land use and forest types in the region.

Part one: presentations

Moderator: Lisetta Trebbi (Norad)

1) Timber production and REDD+ in Central Africa (Richard Eba'a Atyi, CIFOR)

The presenter through different case studies demonstrated the challenges and opportunities for existing forest management systems such as logging concessions to engage and benefit from REDD+ by presenting the surface area occupied by industrial wood production in the region, the economic feasibility of REDD+ in logging concessions and the impacts of forest exploitation on carbon stocks in Central Africa. Industrial wood production in Central Africa occupies the greater share of land use in the region, comprising about 49 174 876 ha. This indicates that this sector is important for the REDD+ process. However, based on the current market price of carbon, the case study from Cameroon indicates that REDD+ appears less interesting economically and financially for a FSC certified logging company. Forest management plans of the different forest management entities such as Forest Management Units (UFA), community and communal forest are relevant to keep carbon stocks in trees and in the soils.

2) Synergies between adaptation and mitigation in Central Africa : Realities from community forest and pilot projects. (Eugene Chia & Alba Saray Perez Teran, CIFOR)

Presenters through experiences from community forest carbon conservation projects and synergy pilot projects across five landscapes in the Congo Basin demonstrated that there can be potential trade-offs between global ecosystem services such as carbon conservation and sequestration and local ecosystem services relevant for the livelihoods of communities. Mitigation interest

(keeping carbon in the trees and soil) competes with adaptation interest (e.g., increasing farm sizes for better income) in the same activity area, though carbon off-set activities such as sustainable agriculture practices, conservation, alternative livelihood sources etc. provides co-benefits for community adaptation. However, there is need to move from just achieving co-benefits to careful planning of both adaptation and mitigation together at the beginning of projects by seriously looking at the location, activities, costs, beneficiaries, etc. to minimize trade-offs. It also came out that adaptation and mitigation can both share the same financial, human and material resources to achieve their goals, in addition to reducing transaction cost. Furthermore the agriculture sector was highlighted as an entry point to link adaptation and mitigation in synergy

3) Agriculture and climate change responses in Central Africa (Rachid Hanna, IITA)

The presenter gave an overview of the potential impacts of climate change on African agriculture in general and the Central Africa region in particular with indications that it is going to be severe if measures are not taken to prepare. However, there is need for caution with generalizations, as the region presents many particularities throughout. Crop pests and diseases (e.g. white flies and virus diseases) are expected to rise targeting staple crops like cassava and beans. Research is ongoing in the region to develop realistic risk models for crops and their pests and diseases, assessing climate change perception and adaptations by farmers, and developing climate-smart crop production practices. . On the mitigation side, projects are ongoing in the region to improve sustainable cocoa and coffee production with the intentions to reduce pressure on forests and their resources. With sustainable agriculture intensification we can both achieve mitigation and adaptation.

4) Mangrove and lowlands in the face of climate change in Central Africa (Jason Ko, USFS)

The presenter gave an overview of the role of mangroves and peatlands in adaptation and mitigation, by highlighting impacts of climate change on mangroves and on how mangroves degradation can increase the vulnerability of coastal communities. On the other hand, mangroves can be potential sources for carbon emissions, thus conserving them is very important. He demonstrated this through case studies from Indonesia on carbon measurement in mangroves and

peatlands. This is a research idea which is going to be extended to central Africa in 2015, and offer great opportunities for mangrove management in CA. However, institutional issues need to be clarified for mangrove management in CA.

Mangrove restoration holds good potential for combining mitigation and adaptation and more research is required to develop strong and viable methodologies to accompany the process.

5) MRV in arid and semi-arid areas of Central Africa (Cleto Ndikumagenge & Herve Maidou, FAO & Banque Mondiale)

The presenter gave an overview of MRV advances in all COMIFAC countries and a summary of the regional FAO MRV project. He presented the progress of non humid forest countries in the REDD+ process such as Burundi and Chad showing a marked progress in their RPP process. It is important to note that adaptation is gaining significance as it has been included in the RPP of countries like Burundi, Chad and Cameroon.

He stressed that non-humid countries need more support from the regional REDD+ framework process which is currently very strong in humid forest countries. Arid and semi- arid countries have potentials for REDD+ which must be exploited, thus the MRV process especially on developing allometric equations should take into account dry forests.

Part two: Discussion Panel

Panelist for discussion

Martin Tadoum - COMIFAC

Junichiro Matsumoto, - JICA

Gervais Ludovic - Point Focaux UNFCCC Congo Brazaville

Dancilla Mukakamari,- Société Civil, ARECO- Rwanda

Phillip Guizol – CIRAD

Moderator : Denis Sonwa - CIFOR

Overall key messages from panel discussions and session

- Risky to develop stand- alone carbon projects; adaptation is a priority for communities. Potentials to link mitigation and adaptation in synergy with emphasis on early planning to minimize trade-offs
- Countries in Central Africa need to move fast in developing their national adaptation strategies with strong indicators to determine cost of adaptation
- COMIFAC can also provide inputs by elaborating a regional approach to accompany individual countries in designing adaptation strategies and plans
- Empowering subnational and local economic development is important to achieve both adaptation and mitigation. Providing enabling environment for local economic activities and improve local governance is important for this approach
- Sustainable agriculture intensification was identified as relevant for both adaptation and mitigation for the Congo basin countries as it has potentials to reduce pressure on forest cover and provide for the livelihoods of forest dependent communities. However, more research, technology transfer and capacity building is required to accompany the idea
- Research which was highlighted as limited in the region was underscored as key to provide information and knowledge regarding (i) climate change vulnerability and adaptation options (ii) strong methodologies to understand adaptation and mitigation in the context of different land uses and different ecosystems – humid forest, arid and semi-arid and mangroves
- Adequate funding for research is required for the region