

Technical Exchange on Estimating Emissions and Removals from Forest Degradation

Hybrid Event: In person meeting with the option for virtual connection

Link for virtual participation:

<https://fao.zoom.us/j/92313940239>

Location: German Room, C269, FAO HQ, Rome, Italy

Date: May 3-5, 2023 (before GFOI plenary meetings)

Introduction

Accurately monitoring and reporting regional land use change, and particularly forest change, is a goal shared by many countries. Forest change is frequently broken down into deforestation (complete loss of forest cover) and forest degradation. Forest degradation reduces the capacity of forests to act as a carbon sink, becoming instead a source of greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of forest degradation events include fuel wood collection, grazing, small-scale timber harvesting, and subcanopy fires. Many countries are drafting and adopting their own national definitions of forest degradation, yet these definitions may not be compatible with the tools used to quantify them. For example, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines forest degradation as the “reduction of the capacity of a forest to provide goods and services”. This definition can be hard to measure with affordable field or remote sensing based tools. For a forest assessment to be useful, the definition of forest degradation should be explicitly stated and linked with the tools used to measure it.

Another hurdle faced by countries is accurately measuring and assessing the uncertainty of their forest degradation estimates. As many countries implement result-based payments under the REDD+ mechanism, forest-related emissions from both deforestation and forest degradation need to be measured within a reasonable degree of uncertainty. In addition, these programs also have reporting thresholds for forest degradation. For example, countries participating in the World Bank’s Carbon Fund must establish a measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) system to regularly report estimates of changes in forest emissions. If degradation accounts for more than 10% of these emissions, it must be included in the country’s reporting.

While significant improvements in estimating emissions from deforestation have been made globally, monitoring forest degradation remains a challenge for many tropical forested countries. This workshop will bring together a number of different countries to engage in conversations with peers and technical supporting agencies.

Objectives

- Discuss operational forest degradation monitoring, including currently available tools and methodologies.
- Provide an **opportunity for co-learning** in support of countries’ efforts to measure reduced emissions, often in a context of result-based payments.
- Learn about emerging methods and data.

Workshop Agenda

May 3, Day 1: Overview of Monitoring and Reporting on Forest Degradation Emissions and Removals

Facilitator: Till Neeff, FAO

Time (UTC +2)	Topic	Presenters
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome to FAO and opening remarks	Julian Fox, FAO
8:45 - 9:00	Overview of three day agenda	Till Neeff, FAO
9:00 - 10:00	Introductions and ice breaker	Jennifer Smith, SilvaCarbon
10:00 - 10:30	Coffee break	
10:30 - 11:00	Findings from CAFE/FAO investigation of drivers of degradation across the Congo Basin	Tatiana Nana, SilvaCarbon
11:00 - 12:00	Overview of country experience on estimating emissions and removals from forest degradation - launch of new FAO publication	Till Neeff, FAO
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch	FAO Cafeteria
1:30 - 2:30	Open discussion: Forest degradation operational definitions	Discussion with all participants, moderated by Chip Scott and Marieke Sandker, FAO
2:30 - 3:30	Small groups: Forest degradation and monitoring	Jennifer Smith, Sylvia Wilson, and Sebastian Wesselman, SilvaCarbon
3:30- 3:45	Coffee break	
3:45 - 4:15	Methods and advances in remote sensing technologies to assist with forest monitoring	Erik Lindquist, FAO
4:15 - 4:45	Outlook on emerging data, methodologies, and support and how to choose your approach (resources for next steps)	Sylvia Wilson, SilvaCarbon
4:45 - 5:00	Daily wrap up	Facilitator

May 4, Day 2: Improving Forest Degradation Monitoring

Facilitator: Jennifer Smith and Sebastian Wesselman, SilvaCarbon

Time (UTC +2)	Topic	Presenters
8:30 - 8:45	Review of Day 1	SilvaCarbon Facilitators
8:45 - 9:15	Overview of Requirements for Carbon Standards on Forest Degradation	Marieke Sandker, FAO
9:15 - 10:15	Challenges, lessons learned and next steps for continued improvement of assessing forest degradation for carbon standards: perspectives from countries in Asia	Presentations: Jeremy Ferrand and Raja Ram Aryal (virtual), Amul Kumar Acharya, Nepal; Pham Ngoc Hai, Vietnam with SilvaCarbon facilitators
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break	
10:30 - 11:30	Challenges, lessons learned and next steps for continued improvement of assessing forest degradation for carbon standards: perspectives from countries in Africa	Presentations: Yakubu Mohammed, Ghana; Heiru Sebrala Ahmed and/or Bizuayehu Alemu Yimer, Ethiopia; Isaac Nyaneyon and/or Saah A. David, Jr., Liberia; brief reflections from Faith Mukabi, Kenya; and Dabney Matoko, RoC with SilvaCarbon facilitators
11:30 - 12:30	Challenges, lessons learned and next steps for continued improvement of assessing forest degradation for carbon standards: perspectives from countries in Latin America, Caribbean, and South America	Presentations: Gustavo Galindo, Colombia; Patricia Insfran, Paraguay; Nadir Pallqui, Peru with SilvaCarbon facilitators
12:30 - 2:00	Lunch	FAO Cafeteria
2:00 - 2:30	Country presentations on estimating emissions and removals from forest degradation using logging statistics	Lars Schmidt, RoC (TBC); Cindy Kasanpawiro, Suriname (TBC, virtual)
2:30 - 3:30	Calculating emission and removal factors for forest degradation	Chip Scott, SilvaCarbon
3:30 - 3:45	Coffee break	
3:45 - 4:45	Introduction to error analysis, propagating uncertainties, and implications for carbon standards and fund requirements	German Obando-Vargas (World Bank, virtual)
4:45 - 5:00	Daily wrap up	Facilitators

May 5, Day 3: Reporting Requirements and Road Mapping*Facilitator: Naikoa Amuchastegui, World Bank*

Time (UTC +2)	Topic	Presenters
8:30 - 8:45	Review of Day 2	Naikoa Amuchastegui, World Bank
8:45 - 9:45	Panel discussion: Emissions factors and issues that can occur when combining activity data with emissions factors	Pham Ngoc Hai, Vietnam; Anna Tosiani, Indonesia; Heiru Sebrala Ahmed, Ethiopia; Victor Chiiba, Zambia; Franck Mukendi, DRC; moderated by Chip Scott, SilvaCarbon
9:45 - 10:00	Coffee break	
10:00 - 11:30	Small groups: Practical lessons to reporting on error analysis or propagating uncertainties, and implications for carbon standard requirements	Facilitated by Javier García, FAO, Chip Scott, Sylvia Wilson (TBD)
11:30 - 1:00	Lunch	FAO Cafeteria
1:00 - 2:00	Challenges, lessons learned and recommendations to navigating reporting requirements	Marco van der Linden and Naikoa Amuchastegui
2:00 - 3:00	Reflection from countries	One speaker per country; Jennifer Smith facilitating
3:00 - 3:15	Coffee break	
3:15 - 4:45	Small groups: Reflect on experience with reporting requirements and discuss ideas on proceedings approach to document what we've learned (e.g., brief aimed at policy makers)	Jennifer Smith, SilvaCarbon
4:45 - 5:00	Closing remarks	SilvaCarbon and FAO

Partners

SilvaCarbon

SilvaCarbon is an interagency technical cooperation program of the US Government to enhance the capacity of tropical forested countries to monitor, measure and report forest and terrestrial carbon.

SIG-NAL

The Spatial Informatics Group - Natural Assets Laboratory (SIG-NAL) is a nonprofit organization established in 2012 that uses science to connect economic and environmental interests by accounting for the full value of natural assets. SIG-NAL integrates the science of natural assets with tools, policies and management decision-making for public benefit. SIG-NAL makes science accessible to decision makers and the marketplace.

FAO

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization hosts this south-south exchange and works hand in hand with the other partners for its organization. For its contribution to the event the FAO counts with financial support from the United Kingdom's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Engagement of Country Participants

Participating countries will be encouraged to give brief presentations on the status of their degradation reporting. If the country has completed some level of analysis, as opposed to being in the investigative stages, they will have the opportunity to present on more detailed topics such as:

- Definition development,
- Field methodologies,
- Map methodologies,
- Reference data collection methodologies,
- Unbiased area estimation,
- Calculation of uncertainty,
- Calculation of emissions from degradation,
- Methods for reducing uncertainty,
- Obstacles encountered regarding forest degradation, and
- Lessons learned through initial analyses

Country participants will also:

- hear presentations from workshop organizers and partners on degradation reporting requirements and best practices,
- participate in collaborative discussions with other country participants, and
- have time to ask questions and share experiences on the topic.

Names of Participating Countries

Participants invited include representatives from the following countries:

- Cambodia
- Vietnam
- Liberia
- Lao PDR
- Nepal
- Philippines
- Chile

- Cameroon
- Gabon
- Indonesia
- Fiji
- RoC
- DRC
- Ghana

- Kenya
- Ecuador
- Colombia
- Paraguay
- Zambia
- Ethiopia