The Future of REDD+

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Outline

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Background

Montreal 2005; Bali 2007; Warsaw, 2013...

“The decisions (on REDD+ at Warsaw 2013) were a clear breakthrough for action on climate change” – UNFCCC, 2014

Paris Agreement 2015: Article 5:2

Source: UNFCCC REDD+ Web platform, 2017
Background

• “No other large source of potential emissions reductions has such a comprehensive, consensus-based record of policy, technical, social, and financial debates, reports and decisions”
  -- Tropical Forest Group, 2011

• “heroic, romantic effort to marry climate mitigation and economic growth”, one sustained mainly by market optimism (Descheneau and Paterson, 2012 p.78)

• Builds on market-based Kyoto Protocol; the largest case of a Payment for Ecosystem Services
Background

• About half (29) of African countries are involved in REDD+
• 18 Latin American, more than 20 countries in Asia-Pacific
• Different forms, approaches
  – projects, jurisdictions, bilateral arrangements, multi-lateral, carbon-centric, development-centric
• Three phases, entering result-based payment
Current state of REDD+ in general

- Significant disconnect between global policy optimism and local realities
- Significant trade-offs, not win-win
- Cost of REDD+ => much higher than anticipated
- Biodiversity conservation: benefit or risk
  - Funds, moratoria
- Governance decentralisation/ recentralisation?
  - Multiple rescaling, often upward
- Persistent challenges: leakage, permanence, monitoring
Current state of REDD+: Communities

- Growing awareness, knowledge of carbon forestry
- Some gains, part. in Latin America
- Participation sometimes tokenistic, instrumental
- Many cases of severe rights abuses, safeguards not withstanding
- Expectation => disillusion => ‘blowback’
- Colonial conservation stereotypes & legacies persist
- Fortress conservation, exclusion, violent surveillance & enforcement -- often counterproductive
Rights abuse allegations in the context of REDD+ readiness and implementation: A preliminary review and proposal for moving forward

Key messages

- This review reveals multiple allegations of abuses of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the context of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) readiness.
Current state of REDD+: forests

Global Tree Cover Loss, 2001 – 2016; 30Mha (Global Forest Watch)

- Unprecedented levels of fires
- (Revert to) business as usual – with a vengeance?
Current state of REDD+: forests

**Global Forest Watch, 2018; Similar trend in Ghana, Cameroun, Nigeria, Madagascar, Republic of Congo, Uganda, PNG etc**
Current state of REDD+: Governments

• Increased awareness and capacity, knowledge community
• Capacity far from sufficient
• ‘REDD+ bureaucracy’ not always inclusive, embedded
• Tension between old (timber forestry) and new (carbon forestry)
• Long-standing inter-ministerial tensions and territorial + budgetary competition
Current state of REDD+: Governments

• Some appearance of commitment e.g. Bans, complementary funds

• A cross-national study by CIFOR found that most more than 84% of their sampled subnational governments have spent more on REDD+ than they have received

• REDD+ Finance: expectation => disappointment

• Challenge competing with other land-based investments

• Indications of revert to business as usual
Current state of REDD+: Funds

- About $10b for a decade vs required $10-15b per year
- Highest Funders: Norway, UK, Germany and US
- Channels: FCPF, UNREDD, FIP, Biocarbon, Early Movers, CAFI, Amazon Fund, other bilaterals, UNFCCC’s Green Climate Fund
- A great deal on administrative costs, e.g. FCPF

![Graph showing financial breakdown over years]
Current state of REDD+: Funds?

- Public sector funds/grants constitute about 80-90%
- Rate of public funding commitment now declining
- The rise of private finance, PPPs and markets (e.g. IFC’s $152m bond for REDD+ in Kenya)
- Approved spend < pledges redeemed < pledges made
Current state of REDD+: Funds?

Significant spending on capacity building, aside from the Amazon Fund

Watson et al., 2016: Climate Finance Thematic Briefing: REDD+ Finance
Future of REDD+

• Is REDD+ dead? Is REDD+ another fleeting conservation fad?

• REDD+ is alive, but certainly not well

• Becoming more realistic, more streamlined
  – countries/jurisdictions with the institutions, capacity and stability
  – Consequent deforestation in countries ‘left behind’

• Carbon forestry logic will persist
Future of REDD+: Adjustments & Alignments

• Governments, international institutions and other stakeholders might seek to repurpose/reposition REDD+
  – NDC: new impetus, challenge of ownership, changing forests
  – SDGs: scope for synergies; private sector moving ahead
  – New York D on F: finance and making forests worth more standing

• Will reflect emergent political milieu – surging nationalism, ‘trumpism’, and trust deficit in GEG
Future of REDD+: Privatisation & Financialisation

• Rise of private finance
  – e.g. REDD+ Bonds, PPPs; REDD+ project control e.g. in DRC

• Industry Initiatives:
  – Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation
  – High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) of commercial plantation industry
  – The Prince’s Accounting for Sustainability (A4S) enrolling large corporations and firms

• More threats to communities as projects compete, private investments are protected, and community tenure/rights are left undefended
Future REDD+: The big challenges

• Existing problems: funds, leakage, permanence
• Tropical forests under changing climate e.g. fire, precipitation, drought – duration and intensity
• Adaptation and resilience at the forest frontiers
• The challenge of social justice + socio-ecological resilience
  – Beyond safeguards and FPIC
  – Facing issue of community rights head on
  – Morally right, reduces deforestation, improves livelihoods and resilience
A Research Proposal

• Rights-based approach => Justice?
• Accountability as mediating link?
• Examine in 4 SS-African countries
• Begin with REDD+, derive insights for natural resource governance broadly.

WA-BICC  ...and others
Thank you!