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Protecting the Climate by Saving Forests

REDD Methodology Modules for the Voluntary Carbon Standard

REDD Methodology Modules Project - Summary

Avoided Deforestation Partners is sponsoring the first coordinated effort to develop a set of "methodology modules" to estimate emission reductions from projects that Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD projects). The modules are being developed under the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS). They will be the most comprehensive REDD methodology under the VCS and support the development of a wide range of REDD project activities.

The REDD Methodology Modules project is an effort to streamline methodology development for investors and project developers. Rather than developing unique and expensive methodologies on a project-by-project basis, under the modular approach each aspect of the project from baseline setting to measurement, and monitoring to leakage estimates is treated in a discrete and independent module. Individual modules that are applicable to a specific project's circumstances can then be selected and applied under a framework module to generate a project specific methodology. This clears a major barrier for the development of REDD projects and promises to:

- *Ensure environmental integrity and robustness of VCS REDD projects*
- *Prevent certification of poorly designed REDD demonstration activities*
- *Avoid a repetition of the fragmented development of project specific methodologies without general applicability as under the CDM Afforestation/Reforestation process.*
- *Accelerate the reduction of emissions from deforestation while international and domestic REDD frameworks continue to be developed*

Why are the modules needed?

Tropical deforestation and forest degradation produces up to 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This makes efforts in REDD essential to mitigating climate change.

The momentum behind REDD in international climate negotiations has been growing: the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP 13) in Bali adopted a decision in late 2008 that encouraged the development and testing of various mechanisms, approaches, methodologies and tools for REDD. Yet while the Bali Action Plan contains rough guidance for demonstration activities, detailed methodological rules for REDD under an international regime are not expected for several years.

It is essential that credible REDD methodologies are available for the voluntary market to ensure effective and credible projects take place, and to inform the emerging international REDD policies. The private sector is already beginning to invest in projects in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa, with more REDD activities and programs planned globally. However, experience with forest carbon projects in CDM and the voluntary carbon market have demonstrated that great financial and technical hurdles deter project proponents and developers

from investing in projects. Designing widely-applicable, credible REDD methodologies will help reduce some of the technical hurdles of developing REDD projects, promote environmental integrity in project-level REDD accounting, reduce transaction costs, and provide implementation experience that will help inform the ongoing UNFCCC process.

What do the modules cover?

The Project was initially conceived in May 2008 and drafting began in September 2008. The drafting team consists of experts from Winrock International (Sandra Brown and Tim Pearson), Carbon Decisions (Lucio Pedroni), Silvestrum (Igino Emmer), and TerraCarbon (David Shoch). Climate Focus serves as secretariat and facilitator of the Project. The fist drafts of the modules were officially launched in 2008 at the second Forest Day organized by CIFOR in Poznan, Poland during the 14th session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 14).

The modules developed under this initiative cover a wide range of project scenarios: planned deforestation, unplanned deforestation, and degradation through removal of fuel wood/charcoal. However, the modules are not exhaustive and do not cover all conceivable REDD projects. They should not be considered a finite or definitive list. The modules will be public documents and additional modules can be developed and added to the system by anyone interested in doing so. Any such additions or modifications will need to go through the VCS approval procedure, but do not need the consent or approval of the module's original authors. As such, the modular approach will constitute a living set of tools that will continue to evolve and expand over time. As new modules are developed and approved by the VCS they will be able to be added to the set of available modules project developers can access and use for their own specific project.

The set of modules are tied together by a framework module that sets out how the individual modules work together and will produce a project specific methodology when applied. The framework module therefore incorporates all the modules developed to date and other relevant tools needed to estimate emission reductions. The current set of modules consists of the following:

Framework Module:

REDD-MF "REDD Methodology framework"

Carbon Pool Modules:

CP-AB "Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the above- and below-ground biomass carbon pools"

CP-D "Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the dead-wood carbon pool"

CP-L "Estimation of carbon stocks in the litter carbon pool"

CP-S "Estimation of carbon stocks in the soil organic carbon pool"

CP-W "Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the wood products carbon pool"

Baseline Modules:

BL-PL "Estimation of baseline carbon stock changes and greenhouse gas emissions from planned deforestation"

BL-UP "Estimation of baseline carbon stock changes and greenhouse gas emissions from unplanned deforestation"

BL-DFW "Estimation of baseline emissions from forest degradation caused by extraction of wood for fuel"

Leakage Modules:

LK-ASP "Estimation of emissions from activity shifting for avoided planned deforestation"

LK-ASU "Estimation of emissions from activity shifting for avoided unplanned deforestation"

LK-ME "Estimation of emissions from market-effects leakage"

LK-DFW "Estimation of emissions from displacement of fuel wood extraction"

Emissions Modules (applicable to baseline, project scenario and leakage);

E–BB "Estimation of non-CO_2 emissions from biomass burning"

E-FFC "Estimation of emissions from fossil fuel combustion"

Monitoring Module:

M-EXP "Monitoring for ex-post monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions and removals"

Miscellaneous Modules:

X -STR "Methods for stratifying the project area of REDD project activities"

X-UNC "Estimation of uncertainty for REDD project activities"

Tools:

T-SIG "Determination of the significance of emissions sources and changes in carbon stocks in REDD project activities"

T-ADD "Tool for the Demonstration and Assessment of Additionality in REDD Project Activities"

Drafts of these modules can be download on the websites of Avoided Deforestation Partners www.adpartners.org and Climate Focus www.climatefocus.com, the party coordinating and managing the module development project.[1]

[1] For more information or questions regarding the modules please contact Robert O'Sullivan of Climate Focus at R.O'Sullivan [at] climatefocus.com.