

USAID LEAF Policy Support - Papua New Guinea

Overview

With a national forest area of around 28.5 million hectares, forests in PNG's have significant potential both as carbon sinks and carbon sources. In recent years, agricultural expansion, unsustainable logging, and infrastructure development from mining and gas have played a leading role in deforestation and degradation. With a 1.4% annual deforestation rate, forest carbon emissions now account for an estimated 95% of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions. Despite Papua New Guinea's pivotal role in international REDD+ negotiations, REDD+ readiness in the country is still relatively unadvanced and few project-level activities are in progress. However, a \$6.4 million UN-REDD project to develop an MRV system began in 2013 and national level draft FPIC guidelines are being developed while an increased number of project level activities are beginning. The country is also in the process of finalizing its national climate change policy.



Drivers of Deforestation and Degradation

Direct:

- Commercial logging; • Smallholder/subsistence agriculture;
- Plantations/large-scale agriculture; • Fire; • Mining

Underlying:

- National development goals and natural resource reliance;
- Population growth and low socio-economic development

REDD+ activities are being coordinated by OCCD, while PNGFA takes the lead role for REDD+ activities in areas under forest management agreements. A consulting company engaged by OCCD estimated that reduced impact logging and sustainable forest management alone could account for up to 60% of REDD+ emissions reduction potential

in PNG. PNG stands out from most REDD+ countries with its distinctive land tenure system which gives communities ownership rights to 97% of the country's land and allows trees to be purchased separately from land. To address the implications of this unique tenure system on REDD+, the PNGFA conducted a study on REDD+ and Forest Carbon Rights with support from GIZ.

National REDD Institutions

The Office of Climate Change and Development (OCCD) - Established in in March 2010 by the National Executive Council (NEC), the OCCD serves as the coordinating entity for all climate change policy in PNG; it is the Designated National Authority under the Kyoto Protocol and the Implementing Partner under the UN-REDD process.

Papua New Guinea Forest Authority (PNGFA) - The agency responsible for the management of PNG's forests and for monitoring and surveillance of forest areas. The PNGFA has been active in REDD+ readiness activities.

Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) - is tasked with the administration and implementation of the Environment Act 2000 which defines responsibilities for protected areas, biodiversity maintenance and the provision of environmental services.

USAID LEAF Policy Assistance

USAID LEAF adopts a regional approach in strengthening capacities across six target countries - Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Viet Nam - to produce sustainable reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the forestry and land use sector.

PNG is making significant advances in developing REDD+ related policy and legislation, with LEAF providing support in several areas as below.

Provincial level	1. Supporting a process to identify and address drivers of deforestation and degradation in Madang province to contribute to participatory land use planning and program REDD+ investment in the LEAF priority landscape in the Adelbert Range.
	2. Providing support to integrate forestry based climate change mitigation into the Madang Provincial Forest Plan and Madang Environment and Conservation Policy in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC).
National level	3. Reviewing current forestry sector law and policy and developing potential legislative and regulatory amendments through multi-stakeholder engagement.
	4. Supporting consultation and providing technical assistance to OCCD in finalizing a National Climate Change Policy.
	5. Providing technical assistance to the Department of Environment and Conservation in developing a Protected Areas Policy.
Regional level	6. Supporting civil society and government policy experts to attend the regional FAO Executive Forest Policy Course in May 2014.
	7. Connecting national-level policy makers with regional platforms including the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on Forestry and Climate Change (ARKN-FCC).

USAID LEAF strives to ensure coordination between different levels and as such, policy and planning activities at the provincial, national and regional level inform and are informed by one another. For examples, key policy experts involved in national level reforms will participate in the FAO Executive Forest Policy Course and ARKN-FCC events while the process to identify and address drivers of deforestation in Madang will provide field level input to the forestry sector law and policy review.

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