



## **Ambassador Hans Brattskar<sup>1</sup> explains Norway's international climate and forest initiative**

<sup>1</sup> Director, Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative, Norwegian Ministry of the Environment

As deforestation and forest degradation in countries with tropical forests account for nearly 20% of annual anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) is a very important and appropriate mitigation option, according to the IPCC, the British Stern Review and others.

It was against this background that Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg launched Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative during the climate change negotiations at Bali in December 2007, and announced that Norway is prepared to allocate up to US\$ 500 million a year to REDD activities in tropical forest countries. The initiative also aims at providing positive impacts on poverty reduction, biodiversity and other environmental services, as well as improvements in sustainable forest governance.

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While the Kyoto protocol contains measures to promote afforestation and reforestation, REDD activities are currently excluded. Norway will assist to demonstrate progress in developing REDD projects and solutions so that these emissions can be included in the global post-2012 climate regime negotiations taking place in December 2009 in Copenhagen. Norway wants to assist in establishing a robust, effective and flexible international architecture for a REDD system according to the principles established by the IPCC.

If REDD efforts are to succeed, more countries and other actors will have to become involved. Norway's contribution is to work towards the establishment of an international architecture

that will allow REDD initiatives to commence and encourage other countries to take part. In ITTO terms, producer countries need to develop national REDD strategies and consumer countries need to provide funding.

Norway's policy for ensuring a coherent international response seems to be making progress. The UN has established its UN-REDD program, under which UNEP, UNDP and FAO are cooperating on activities in the field of REDD. This program will be a main channel for Norwegian funding. The UN, in agreement with Norway on the need for coordination of international efforts, will coordinate their work with the

World Bank. Steps are also being taken to ensure the active involvement of other actors, such as tropical forest countries and other bilateral donors, international organizations, research organizations, NGOs, representatives of indigenous peoples, and extractive industries that have a major influence on deforestation and forest degradation.

The main idea is that UN-REDD should assist tropical forest producer countries in developing and implementing national REDD strategies through an international support program headed by the appropriate international organization selected by the recipient country. This may involve contributions from other international organizations, donor countries, NGOs, research institutions and others.

There also needs to be a support structure at the international level for quality assurance of monitoring systems and reporting of emission levels as well as other responsibilities like information management, systematic communication of information about tested methodologies, and capacity building within REDD-relevant fields. The principle of ownership and preparation of strategies at the national level will be of crucial importance for the success of REDD initiatives.

The following are elements that need to be considered in or established through national REDD strategies:

- A national coordinating unit for each forest country, preferably at government level, responsible for developing and coordinating strategies, overseeing implementation and liaising with the international UN-REDD support;



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- A system for monitoring forest cover, biomass and collecting data on forest carbon volumes, and for establishing baselines and reporting on emission levels from deforestation and forest degradation;
- The incorporation of sustainable development concerns, including opportunities for economic and social development for the local population, conservation of biodiversity and local and indigenous people's rights;
- Systems and national plans to prevent carbon leakage and ensure lasting results;
- Thorough analyses of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and the best ways of dealing with them;
- Provisions for institutional strengthening and capacity building for national and local authorities, including anti-corruption measures and measures to increase transparency in forest and land use management;
- Mechanisms for compensation for ecosystem services; and
- The necessary legal, administrative and economic framework for sustainable forest and land use management, and arrangements to ensure compliance and cost effectiveness of measures taken.

ITTO is an organization where producers and consumers work together, and a number of the elements required in a national REDD strategy are within the scope of the current ITTO biennial work program as well as the ITTA 2006. ITTO arranged an expert meeting on climate change and tropical forests in April 2008 and is now following this up through its work programme. Norway is observing this with interest as we believe that ITTO could support and possibly act in synergy with the UN-REDD.

The first phase of UN-REDD is now established and involves "Quick Start" actions, with the objectives of developing and ensuring national ownership of national strategies, establishing systems for monitoring forest cover and biomass and reporting on emission levels and general administrative capacity building in selected pilot countries. The present partners in this quick-start program are Bolivia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zambia. Norway has decided to provide full funding to ensure success of the "Quick Start" program, with US\$35 million pledged so far. If the results of this first phase are satisfactory, Norway will channel substantially more funds through UN-REDD and hopes that other donors will also provide significant support.

The World Bank has established the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to assist developing countries in their REDD efforts, to which Norway has contributed US\$ 5 million. The World Bank is also developing a Forest Investment Program (FIP) to mobilize funds for REDD efforts. Norway has pledged US\$ 50 million to the fund while stressing the need to complement the UN efforts so that their outcomes are coordinated and mutually reinforced.

In addition to this Norway has also committed 50 million British pounds to the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF) for the period 2008–2010. The UK, which took the initiative for the establishment of this fund, has made a similar commitment. The CBFF will coordinate its work with that of the UN and the World Bank.

Norway also has two bilateral commitments for REDD-related initiatives, with Brazil in Amazonas for the payment of approximately US\$ 17 million in 2008 and approximately US\$ 100 million in 2009, and with Tanzania for the payment of approximately US\$ 80 million for the period 2008 to 2012. But the use of bilateral channels will be limited, with multi-lateral, multi-donor approaches preferred where possible.

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Norway's initiative acts as a catalyst for contributions from other countries, and real results will only be achieved if others provide substantial additional resources. I hope for the support of ITTO, both in its own capacity and in backing the UN-REDD, to secure confidence between producers and consumers to have this new climate and forest concept as part of the on-going climate change negotiations and hopefully to be included in a post Kyoto regime.



**Brazilian bounty:** Natural forests like this one will benefit from Norway's initiative. *Photo: J. Leigh*