

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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Report of the Fifth Executive Board Meeting

UN-REDD PROGRAMME FIFTH
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING (EB-5)
SESSION 2

6 September 2021

Virtual meeting

Table of Contents

Introduction

Opening

Agenda Item 1: The Food Systems Summit, forest positive agriculture and deforestation-free supply chains

Agenda Item 2: UN-REDD and deforestation-free supply chains

Closing

Annex 1: Final List of Participants

Introduction

1. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme) held the second session of its Fifth Executive Board Meeting on September 6th through virtual means (Zoom platform).
2. The meeting was chaired by Mette Wilkie, Director of FAO's Forestry Division. The meeting was attended by 33 participants (see Annex I). All documents and presentations are available on the UN-REDD Programme [workspace](#).

Opening

3. The Chair provided welcoming remarks highlighting the importance of the UN-REDD partnership and of opportunities to learn about each other's progress and developments, especially in the context of the upcoming Food Systems Summit.
4. The Chair introduced the strategic dialogue as the second in a series of three Executive Board sessions over three consecutive weeks, with a third and final session to be held as a strategic dialogue on emerging climate finance on 16 September. She encouraged, for this specific session, inputs and recommendations from EB members on the role UN-REDD should play in the critical reform of the global food system, deforestation-free supply chains and forest positive agriculture.
5. The Chair announced that the dialogue will aim to present the latest developments to the Food System Summit's proposed solutions and coalitions, along with the FACT Dialogues; and link these to new developments and innovations such as the OECD and FAO's Practical Business Tool on Deforestation, Forest Degradation and Due Diligence in Agricultural Supply Chains, and a number of existing voluntary and emerging regulatory approaches on deforestation-free supply chains.
6. The Chair introduced the distinguished speakers presenting in the first and second part of the session.
7. The Chair announced the death of Alexandra Saénz from Costa Rica, the first director of the REDD+ Strategy at the Fondo Nacional de Financiamiento Forestal and invited a colleague to read out commemorative reflections. The Board kept a moment of silence in Alexandra's honour.

Agenda Item 1: The UN Food Systems Summit, forest positive agriculture and deforestation-free supply chains

8. The Deputy Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit introduced the Food Systems Summit (FSS) that will take place on September 23rd and provided an overview of the steps taken since the beginning of the FSS preparations in June. He highlighted the area of convergence called by the Secretary General’s Statement of Action (People, Planet and Prosperity), the “four plus one” Action Areas,¹ the multi-stakeholder initiatives and constituency commitments. He stressed the critical mass of events, dialogues and outreach at global and national levels, organized independently. He also emphasized the 54 Solutions Cluster supported by multi-stakeholder working groups and forming a repository of 2000+ ideas, knowledge and tools. He noted an increase in the development of national pathways and the engagement of 147 countries in national dialogues. He expressed a bold new vision of food systems as a driver for all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing that unsustainable food systems can perpetuate inequality and drive environmental degradation, and that solutions must come both from the bottom-up and at the national level. Finally, he noted that the FSS does not represent the endpoint of the process, but the start-up of a process and actions envisioned to continue throughout the decade. After the FSS it will be important to engage in follow-up and review work to ensure prolonged public engagement, and to continue to support national commitments for global food systems transformations.

9. The Executive Director of the Tropical Forest Alliance and Co-Director of Nature Based Solutions at the World Economic Forum discussed the recent remarkable media coverage on forests and the current political attention to forests as nature-based solutions for climate change, also reflecting on how to best leverage future climate action summits in which deforestation features prominently — in particular the FACT dialogues (Forest, Agriculture, and Commodity Trade) — to advance global food systems transformations. Commodities, especially commercial agricultural products, are recognized key drivers of deforestation – there is however, a growing pressure for action from regulators (with special reference to the upcoming EU due diligence regulation), investors, downstream companies and campaigners on reducing deforestation and promoting more sustainable value chains and forest positive commodities. The Executive Director further emphasized that deforestation is not an environmental issue with a single solution, but rather, it requires a nuanced social agenda in view of jobs and livelihoods links especially with agriculture.

¹ Action areas: Nourish all people; Boost nature-based solutions of production; advance equitable livelihoods, decent work and empowered communities; build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses; support means of implementation

He offered the following recommendations: 1) tackling deforestation from a food systems approach; 2) bringing social aspects, livelihoods and the needs of local communities and IP into the conversation; 3) tailoring solutions to their unique commodity/geography; 3) promoting innovative finance and policy; and 4) boosting enhanced synergies and integration across actors at scale and sectors to work collectively. Private and corporate actions are key but need aligned inter-ministerial actions and enabling environment.

Feedback from the Board

10. In a response to a question from the civil society representative regarding the timing on upcoming demand-side regulatory frameworks to minimize the risk of having products associated with deforestation or forest degradation placed in markets, the Chair confirmed that current information on the EU due diligence legislation indicates this will be submitted to the EU Parliament in December 2021. The Executive Director the Tropical Forest Alliance also referenced the EU Green Deal and the passing of due diligence primary legislation in the UK. US discussions are also running but timeline remains unclear for the time being. The civil society representative welcomed the ongoing development for such regulations.
11. The representative from indigenous peoples voiced her concern that the knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples are not fully included in international actors' broader agendas and are actually absent in the Food Systems Summit process. She further stressed the importance of taking into account the rights of indigenous communities and the value of traditional knowledge in shaping sustainable food systems. The Executive Director of the Tropical Forest Alliance responded that currently, they are discussing the dominant economic system—or large-scale industrial agricultural systems—but that such systems are vulnerable and, unlike indigenous systems, lack biodiversity. He also acknowledged that institutions do not dedicate sufficient efforts to mainstreaming indigenous knowledge, and that this has been a point of tension leading up to the FSS. The Deputy Special Envoy to the FSS also commented that the FSS is working to integrate the voices of all stakeholders, especially those who have been historically neglected, through efforts such as the national convened dialogues. In this context, indigenous peoples requested to have their own specific Coalitions. It is the view of the Deputy Special Envoy though that it was envisaged not to work in silos and to bring that traditional knowledge and the voices of the indigenous peoples (also) into the main streams.
12. Nepal raised the question of effectively linking forest and food systems in the context of REDD+ in developing countries, followed by a question from Switzerland regarding how UN-REDD and deforestation can feature most prominently at the FSS. In response to both questions, the

Executive Director the Tropical Forest Alliance emphasized that deforestation cannot be siloed and is interconnected with issues of sustainable food systems, development, and indigenous marginalization. The Deputy Special Envoy to the FSS agreed that the issue of deforestation is an important link to the environment and development agenda and is detailed in Action Track 3 “Boost Nature-Based Solutions of Production”.

13. The Chair thanked the Board for their commitment and appreciation of the value of the UN-REDD platform, and their insightful contributions.

Agenda Item 2. UN-REDD and deforestation-free supply chains

14. The Chair noted a shift in the second part of the discussion towards country-level, practical experience, to support deforestation-free supply chains and forest restoration, including UN-REDD’s involvement at both the policy and technical levels.
15. From Ecuador, the Vice-Minister for Agriculture presented the national deforestation-free production and trade scheme, which represents a flagship forest-agriculture coalition for the forthcoming UN Food Summit. He detailed how Ecuador’s Premium and Sustainable scheme, which stems from past UN-REDD support, has a global scope; namely: Aligning local production with international environmental agreements (NYDF, Paris Agreement, the Amsterdam Declarations), market trends, and the national policies of importing countries (e.g., EU Green Deal, Belgium, France, US). He also emphasized that the initiative aims to strengthen the productive chain for the commercialization of high-quality sustainable products with full the participation of producers at the local level and private companies at national and international level.
16. The CEO of Green Invest Africa presented Cote d’Ivoire’s and Ghana’s experience with deforestation-free cocoa production. He highlighted the key word “momentum”, as sustainable cocoa production in Africa has reached a crossroads of challenges and solutions. His presentation highlighted the main approaches and lessons, including how the cocoa farming and production systems have, in both Cote d’Ivoire and Ghana, driven major deforestation but may now drive integrated agro-forestry systems and forest restoration, as well as the need to mobilise a wide range of concerned stakeholders to succeed. He emphasized that UN-REDD has shown tremendous commitment by helping their countries engage stakeholders in analyzing drivers of deforestation, developing national REDD+ strategies and securing private sector financing. Finally, he added that future efforts must aim at breaking down silos, engaging local communities, and

that innovative financing, such as REDD+ results-based payments, represents a valuable incentive for private sector engagement.

17. The civil society representative to the UN-REDD board described lessons learned by local communities resisting land use change in Michoacán, Mexico. He highlighted three cases in which communities have been successful in resisting land-use change: 1) local communities with a good market price for forest products such as resin and timber; 2) indigenous communities receiving multi-year subsidies for restoration; and 3) indigenous communities receiving payments for environmental services. Finally, he proposed the following recommendations for supporting local communities in the future: 1) increasing federal and state budgets for the forestry sector; 2) balancing the policy of support for forests and agriculture and livestock activities, and 3) strengthening policies that promote the consumption of deforestation free commodities.
18. The FAO UN-REDD Management Group member (REDD+/NFM Coordinator) presented the joint OECD FAO efforts to develop a Practical Business Tool for businesses to identify and address deforestation and forest degradation risks. The Tool aims at providing a common framework to help agri-businesses and investors to include identified risks in responsible business conduct policies, notably when implementing the five-step approach for due diligence. The OECD-FAO guidance for responsible agriculture supply chains was adopted by more than 40 countries. It will additionally draw on existing global/regional standards, multi-stakeholder and industry initiatives, data, indicators, other approaches and tools. The development of the tool was announced at the Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct (June 2021) and the final release is expected for the fourth quarter of 2022. The Coordinator closed with a call for EB members and their constituencies to participate and contribute their knowledge and perspectives in the consultation processes in 2022.

Feedback from the Board

19. Ghana confirmed that the topic of removing deforestation from agricultural value chains is of utmost importance for Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and others. Sufficient time and space should be dedicated to further discussions on how UN-REDD in its next phase could support interested countries advancing this agenda. She suggested that, to build upon the session's useful discussion and richness of the exchange, it would be helpful to organize the key opportunities into a "dashboard" of potential entry points for UN-REDD to support countries in identifying how to best take advantage of the various opportunities (financial or technical). She indicated that in the Africa constituency, preparatory discussions to the EB questions on the type and nature of UN-REDD

support in the future phase were put on the table. Such dashboard would be a critical tool to maintain further internal discussions and plan future UN-REDD support.

20. The CEO of Green Invest Africa added that deforestation-production-trade synergies and efforts should be embedded in NDC policies and commitments to reduce deforestation
21. The representative for indigenous peoples reminded the Board that indigenous knowledge is a key tool for the objectives and coalitions aimed at the UN Food Systems Summit. She further added that the Paris Agreement paragraph 135 is an important entry point to link knowledge and practices through a bottom-up approach.
22. Switzerland underlined that existing policies of due diligence and responsible business practices are very valuable but remain voluntary and not unlike specifications in trade agreements. Switzerland asked the Board how UN-REDD can engage in the international policy fora to bolster due diligence approaches and ensure greater buy-in to responsible business policies.

Closing

23. Summing up key feedback and guidance from the Board, the Secretariat responded positively to the suggestion to sketch a dashboard of UN-REDD work on the forest-commodities linkages, and potential opportunities, options and entry points, so to further the scope for future work. The dashboard will be shared with the EB members for feedback either via email or in a future strategic dialogue.
24. The Secretariat noted the support to UN-REDD's approach for the future and the need to further scale up UN-REDD's work, as well as to ensure enhanced support in the domain of indigenous peoples in local communities.
25. The Secretariat invited any further feedback or clarification questions and, hearing no question, closed the virtual EB meeting, thanking the Board members and all attendees.

Final List of Participants

		Name	Country/Agency/Constituency	Designation
1	Ms.	Gabriela Soto Nilo	Chile	Alternate LAC
2	Ms.	Constanza Troppa Tapia	Chile	Alternate LAC
3	Ms.	Yaisa Lorena Bejarano	Colombia	Member LAC
4	Ms.	Roselyn Fosuah Adjei	Ghana	Alternate Africa
5	Ms.	Lovakanto Ravelomanana	Madagascar	Member Africa
6	Mr.	Rijatahiana Haingomanantsoa	Madagascar	Member Africa
7	Ms.	Ibu Laksmi Dhewanthi	Indonesia	Alternate AP
8	Mr.	Shankar Adhikari	Nepal	Member AP
9	Mr.	Leif John Fosse	Norway	Member
10	Ms.	Vania Dietrichson	Norway	Member
11	Mr.	Keith Anderson	Switzerland	Member
12	Mr.	Pierre-André Cordey	Switzerland	Member
13	Mr.	Takayuki Ishikawa	Japan	Member
14	Mr.	Gustavo Sanchez Valle	Civil Society Organization (CSO) /Local Communities (LC)	Permanent Observer
15	Mr.	David Ganz	Civil Society Organization (CSO)	Alternate Observer
16	Ms.	Dolores 'Lola' Cabnal	Indigenous Peoples Organization	Permanent Observer
17	Ms.	Mette Wilkie	FAO (Chair)	Member
18	Ms.	Astrid Agostini	FAO	Member
19	Mr.	José Carlos Fernandez	FAO	Member
20	Ms.	Serena Fortuna	FAO	(Observer)
21	Mr.	Josep Garí	UNDP	Alternate
22	Mr.	Jose Arturo Santos	UNDP	(Observer)
23	Mr.	Gabriel Labbate	UNEP	Alternate
24	Mr.	Steven Swan	UNEP	Alternate
25	Mr.	Mario Boccucci	UN-REDD Secretariat	Secretariat
26	Ms.	Mihaela Secrieru	UN-REDD Secretariat	Secretariat
27	Ms.	Frances Lim	UN-REDD Secretariat	Secretariat

Speakers/Resource persons

		Name	Title / Designation
28	Mr.	Martin Frick	Dep Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit
29	Mr.	Justin Adams	Co-Director, Nature-based Solutions, World Economic Forum
30	Mr.	Ney Barrionuevo	Vice Minister of Productive Agricultural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador
31	Mr.	Victor Hugo Viteri	Director for International Cooperation, Ecuador
32	Ms.	Patricia Serrano	Gerente PROAmazonía
33	Mr.	Marc Daubrey	CEO Green Investment Africa; and Chairman, Green Development Momentum