The Paris Agreement, the Climate, and Forest Agencies

An Overview of Implications and Opportunities

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The Paris Agreement - 4 Takeaways

1. Historic, inadequate, but mechanisms to “ratchet-up” commitments
   - Unprecedented political support, attended by 150 leaders, endorsed by 195 countries, major business, NGO, community/indigenous leaders
   - Numerous side-agreements, voluntary declarations

2. Forests play a key role: protection and restoration
   - Article 5: Should take action conserve / enhance sinks; encouraged to implement / finance REDD+ & alternative approaches (joint mitigation and adaptation, and non-carbon benefits);
   - Only referenced economic sector - raised political profile of forestry
   - Featured in many INDCs: Land-based emission reductions identified in 80; REDD+ strategies mentioned in 66; but support to IP/LCs in 2
3. **Included major social commitments**

   - **Preamble** – “all CC efforts should respect, promote human rights, rights to health, rights of indigenous peoples, communities, development, gender equity... “
   - **Article 4.1**: “...removals by sinks...on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty...”

4. **Accompanied by major, unprecedented, commitments (and collaboration) by corporates, cities, communities**

   - a plethora of new initiatives, inspiring momentum
   - Political / economic mainstreaming to “de-carbonize” the economy
Many Side Agreements on Forests

- **Launch of AFR100**
  - Restore 100 million hectares of degraded forest lands before 2030;

- **Leaders’ Statement on Forests and Climate Change**
  - Intensify forest protection, restore degraded forest, peat and agricultural lands, promote REDD+ and low carbon rural development / land-uses
  - Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, DRC, Ethiopia, France, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Liberia, Mexico, Norway, Peru, UK & USA

- **Lima-Paris Action Agenda on Forests**
  - Financing from Germany, Norway & UK ($5bn for 2015-2020 ); Commitments from Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, DRC & Liberia

- **Year of commitments**
  - NY Declaration, Bonn Challenge, new private sector commitments, Zero-deforestation pledges - 42 major companies & Consumer Goods Forum
The Climate (and Forests) Context

1. **Climate change continuing, accelerating?** Paris far from adequate: calls for 1.5°C max, INDCs sum to 2.7°C, indications that it’s getting worse

2. **Forests – from sink to source?** Tremendous variability and uncertainty, exposing thresholds, tipping points.

3. **Forest management likely to be more costly** (to deal with fires, pests, restoration, monitoring, reporting), and “payments” concept – but many budgets stable or declining, global slowdown, need for low-cost options that build resilience and flexibility

4. **Many other (powerful) sectors now interested**, and engaged, in forest management – crashing the party

5. **Tensions between new demands** and competing uses (e.g. bio-energy, sinks, recreation, food security, diversity vs productivity, local vs national vs global etc., etc.)
What institutions will enable you to achieve this?
Opportunities for Forest Agencies

1. Mandate to expand global forest domain
2. Market/political support for bio-energy
3. Lots of people/organizations/sectors now have an interest in forests – great potential to muster and channel this great power and innovate
4. Strong support (in global arrangements) for community-based initiatives, IP rights, forestry for sustainable development (which offers more flexibility, responsiveness, resilience, tailoring management - through subsidiarity)

Carpe diem!
Article 5 – Parties

• 5.1 Should take action to conserve / enhance C sinks and reservoirs, including forests.
• 5.2 Are encouraged to implement and support...policy approaches and positive incentives (including results-based payments) to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) and/or pursue joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, while incentivizing non-carbon benefits associated with such approaches.