

Minutes

Meeting: International Forestry and REDD+: Underpinning policy and development practice with knowledge, research and evidence

11th November 2011
DFID, No. 1 Palace Street, London, UK
2:00pm–5:00pm

Attendees: Penny Davies (Chair); Paul van Gardingen; Yvan Biot; Casey Ryan; Mike Dudley; Roger Coppock; Richard Howe; Neil Scotland; Daniel Nepstad (VC); Michael Way; Carlos Llerena (VC); Steve Cornelius; Robert Nasi (VC); Nicola Sale; Paddy Abbot; Kristy Graham; Kate Schreckenberg; Jon Heuch; Kirsti Thornber; Isilda Nhantumbo (VC); Oliver Springate-Baginski; Mike Riddell; Ruth Kelman; Chloe Onoufriou; Philippa Lincoln (phone); John Barrett (introduction only); Tim Wheeler (introduction only); Ruth Swanney (minute-taker)

Summary of Action Points:

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1	ESPA Directorate to share the ESPA Theory of Change document with all participants in the DFID-ESPA Forests meeting	Paul van Gardingen	01 March 2012	6
2	ESPA Director to investigate a DFID representative visiting the RCUK International Strategy Group in order to outline to them what DFID's evidence needs are in terms forest research	Paul van Gardingen	30 January 2012	9
3	Paul van Gardingen and Yvan Biot to meet to discuss what ESPA can bring to forest related work	Paul van Gardingen and Yvan Biot	31 January 2012	9
4	Submit comments to Ruth Swanney on what you think the next steps should be following the initial brainstorming forests meeting held in November 2011	All	31 January 2011	10

1 Brief introductions from DFID representatives

1.1 From Tim Wheeler

Linking knowledge, evidence and research to policy and practice is a key part of DFID's remit. There is a shift towards the more rigorous use of evidence in building business cases for programming across DFID. These key issues for DFID should be kept in mind by this group in their work on forest related issues.

1.2 From John Barrett

UK support for international development and climate related issues is in a relatively good place at this time. However, it's important that the people attending this meeting don't take public and political support for their work in forest related issues for granted. Forestry is a huge issue for DFID and the international community. It's crucial that the work carried out by DFID and DFID investments is underpinned by unquestionable science, solid evidence and data.

If we look at India and Pakistan as two examples, we'll see that lots of the problems that arise in forest related issues are essentially political ones. A lot of forest work revolves around governance

issues – e.g. forest law and environmental governance. It's therefore crucial that we have an awareness of the political issues which are likely to arise.

2 DFID Overview

2.1 *Introduction: International Forestry and Climate (Penny Davies)*

The purpose of this meeting is to examine links between research, knowledge uptake, policy, practice, and results on the ground. The aim is to facilitate regular and effective working relationships between research, policy and practice groups. Today's meeting is the first step in helping to establish the best ways of working together better internationally and bridging gaps between groups.

It's hoped that this meeting can address a request from colleagues outside of government for us to be able to communicate clearly what the UK Government's poverty narrative is, what the International Climate Fund (ICF) covers, and where we are in DFID in terms of programming in international forestry work and on REDD+. The purpose of this meeting is also to hear about Defra's work on forest related issues and about the Darwin Initiative.

It's important that the group meeting today seeks to identify emerging research and evidence challenges with the emphasis being on results and value for money. For the UK Government and DFID it is essential that UK finance can be linked clearly to outcomes.

After today's meeting, the aim must be more regular and formal discussions on research, policy and practice. It is hoped that together we can build a formal communication flow ensuring that developing country policy makers have access to the right information at the right time by ensuring that information gets to country level offices – e.g. through DECC, Defra, DFID, FCO offices and embassies.

There has in the past been good communication on key gaps in research between DFID and key research providers such as IIED, ICRAF and CIFOR, for example. It's now hoped that this communication can be revived and broadened.

This meeting should address the best ways to get existing knowledge out to the right people but also highlight opportunities to look at things differently and see where there are new things that we need to investigate – i.e. where gaps lie and where new knowledge is required.

Finally, this meeting should examine immediate priorities for the UK Government and what we can do over the next six months in order to gain momentum.

2.2 *The UK's International Climate Fund and DFID's work*

(Information provided through a presentation by Penny Davies)

The UK Government's International Climate Fund (ICF) runs to the value of £2.9 billion for four years (this is under review). Up to 20% of this fund is for forestry, REDD+ and climate related issues.

Three lines of work are taking place within DFID under the forestry and climate pillar of the ICF:

1. A new 10-year forest governance markets and climate programme supporting governance and market reforms that reduce the illegal use of forest resources and benefit poor people in 10 different countries around the world
2. Currently under design is a large global programme for the promotion of forestry and land-use investments for REDD+ (working closely with Defra)
3. Currently in the form of a proposal to the ICF board is a new programme to improve the uptake of knowledge and tools by policy makers and practitioners internationally

Below is a little more detail on these 3 lines of DFID's remit:

1) **Forest Governance, markets, climate programme**

- This programme aims to work in areas where governance is weak and illegality persistent – the programme works with the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)
- There is a focus in the programme's work on legality and law enforcement that reinforces sovereignty
- The programme aims to use the power of the market to change the dynamics of the debate and behaviour
- Demand and supply side measures are examined to help markets discriminate
- Multi-stakeholder processes are used to tackle deep rooted governance problems; coalitions of interest that sustain momentum
- The programme aims to build better evidence to support its work and to build awareness in a well-informed manner
- The programme's formal legal framework ensures integrity of measures

2.3 Global programme for the promotion of better forestry and land-use management

- In support of this programme a [PWC report](#) has been compiled. The programme will look at targeted complementary bilateral support (that involves the private sector) to complement multilateral actions
- The programme will aim to tap private sector potential
- There will be a focus on countries with potential to make progress on REDD+
- The programme will foster continued support for better forest governance
- The programme will look to invest in:
 - Agricultural drivers of deforestation
 - Degraded lands
 - Small and medium enterprises
- Matching the right capital to the right investment opportunities – modality

2.4 A new programme to improve knowledge uptake: gaps

- There is a plethora of and diversity of fragmented evidence and case studies which makes it difficult for forest law policies and procedures (FL P&Ps) to navigate. The new programme would aim to tackle this.
- There is a lack of aggregated and comparable evidence which has been systematically gathered. Again, this programme would aim to work towards better quality evidence gathering in order to tackle this.
- The programme will take into account the fact that the flow of international forestry project finance is increasingly tied to specific geographic footprints; dispersed smaller, shorter projects
- The programme will consider – is there limited finance to research and knowledge uptake at this time?
- The programme will consider links between hard/soft, embodied/disembodied technologies – the division of socioeconomic and governance work - and ecological (harder) work. The

programme will look at the possibility that REDD+ investments may not be working with the best possible knowledge.

2.5 Situation Analysis

DFID has recently carried out a situation analysis which highlighted the following key points:

- There is increasing pressure on forests
- There is convergence in land-use but also in food, fuel and fibre markets (i.e. commodities)
- There is progress in tackling illegal logging (in relation to trade)
- Clear and secure rights is a key requirement to reducing deforestation/degradation
- Emerging market investors are increasingly shaping land and resource use with opportunities for small forest enterprises to develop

2.6 Looking forward

At this time, the UK government is focussed on linking development goals addressing poverty, climate change and biodiversity.

Forest governance is a prerequisite for meeting these goals. Attention is needed in and beyond forests if the goals are to be met. Any current work must be expanded to other drivers, e.g. illegal logging and other agricultural commodities, if the goals are to be met.

Over the coming 4 years, the UK government will work to promote public-private investment in better land-use management and green growth, which is high on the agenda of the UK government as we approach Rio+20 in 2012.

A key factor for this group is that all forestry related work and approaches must be underpinned by robust evidence with better knowledge uptake.

2.7 DFID Research

Yvan Biot (DFID Research and Evidence Division) outlined how DFID's commissioned research contributed to DFID's own activities and those of its partners. It's critical that DFID commissions research that will provide an evidence base to DFID colleagues who are developing business cases that 1) provides information on the nature of a problem; 2) tests the effectiveness of policies and, 3) supports technical innovation.

A large part of DFID's remit is to invest in building research capacity in developing countries. As well as this, DFID must aim to look at investments in the long-term – i.e. looking at expectations of ministers 2–3 years down the line and to consider what they will want from DFID's investments at that time.

DFID's work involves both the hard and soft sciences and must continue to promote technical advances but also socio-economic and socio-political issues.

DFID is keen to do more ESPA calls and is eager to work with ESPA on defining the research questions for future calls. It's also important that DFID establishes what is not part of ESPA's domain.

It was reported that DFID has a new quality assurance division to assist colleagues who are developing business cases. The division is looking for evidence in two areas: 1) in terms of defining the nature of a problem and, 2) in terms of providing evidence that shows that the areas that DFID is investing in will work.

Paul van Gardingen outlined that ESPA is a research programme which brings together all the sciences to understand ecosystem services and poverty alleviation. The ESPA programme will deliver cutting-edge science which will inform policy and practice thinking.

Steve Cornelius outlined that DECC also has a research programme looking forest management projections, e.g. work related to REDD negotiations.

3 Research and Evidence Challenges

DFID has strong experience in defining problems, in business cases. It is lacking, however, in coming up with innovative solutions and providing evidence of what works in business cases. It is key, therefore, that we look at the evidence of good solutions in order to gain an understanding of what kind of evidence and research is needed to address problems that exist and to inform where DFID investments in forest related issues should be.

DFID requires research that inspires confidence that proposals for investments will have impact.

From experience, governance and climate change are two areas where there is not enough rigorous evidence.

Paul van Gardingen outlined that ESPA wants a relationship between its research and policy audience. It does not want ESPA research to be policy prescriptive, however.

The group went on to consider the following three areas and the research and evidence challenges that fall under each:

1. Gaps in knowledge of natural sciences
2. Gaps in knowledge of social sciences
3. Methods and approaches of research (e.g. research approaches that are most appropriate, integrative science and solid evidence based approaches)

Below is a list of the areas needing addressed which were raised in this meeting. This list represents the immediate priorities for the UK Government, and by extension DFID, and what we need to be concentrating on over the next six months in order to gain momentum with the forest debate.

3.1 Gaps in knowledge of natural sciences: areas and questions to be considered

- Seek better links between remote sensing predicting effectiveness of scaling up small initiatives; i.e. test the quality of remote sensing against ground based observations to ensure scaling up is both possible and successful. Consider the ground based observations that are required as well as any remote sensing initiatives.
- What is a forest's potential for c-sequestration if there is long term sustainable harvesting?
- Is REDD+ reducing or offsetting?
- Look at forests and water-catchments with a view of adaptation.
- Consider the hard facts surrounding a range of forests/tree products and productivity and market values.
- Examine potential across the full landscape and all of the elements – e.g. soil, biomass, etc. – not just the natural forest.
- In considering remote sensing and global carbon tracking (e.g. geo-chemical cycles), what ground based observations do we need?
- How much carbon are we sequestering?
- How do we define reference levels?

3.2 Gaps in knowledge of social sciences: areas and questions to be considered

- Does community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) work? In relation to REDD, we need to seek evidence in terms of the viability of the different options that communities can adopt.
- Consider the financial sustainability of all forest resources and services in comparison to a mono-culture scenario.

- The difference between REDD+ and other/previous forest initiatives is its financial approach. Investigate the effectiveness and impact of the financial aspects brought in through REDD+ in comparison with other initiatives.
- Consider how research can look at financing systems for rural developments.
- Examine the impact of REDD+ on forest management dynamics (e.g. between the rich and powerful and the poor).
- Examine the data needs for monitoring/evaluating livelihood changes. Apply this to evaluating CBNRM. Think about how much data we need to monitor in order to understand livelihood change? What is the minimum amount of evidence that we need? To seek evidence that convinces communities is essential. We need to ensure a participatory role in any assessment approach.
- Better define the economic productivity of forests by looking at the economy of managing forests for a range of benefits and value chains (e.g. examining brazil nuts and charcoal, active management of forests for carbon but also for water). Consider trade-offs between land for forests and land for non-timber products from forests.
- What are the benefits of demand-side interventions? What can we do from the demand side? Examine how we encourage the demand of sustainable products only.
- What are the most effective interventions to promote livelihood outcomes compared with those that are most effective for c-sequestrations (trade-offs)?
- What do we need in order to scale up REDD+?
- How do we define our reference levels?
- How do we measure co-benefits?
- Consider the evaluation of market chains.

3.3 *Methods and approaches of research: areas and questions to be considered*

- Ensure a broad scale of interdisciplinary research; get more/better cross ministerial buy-in and engagement at the policy level.
- Mine old/existing knowledge and make it available through effective communication.
- Establish long-term forest inventories.
- Consider the impact of REDD+ on landscape scale and on wider landscape dynamics (e.g. consider rich/poor divide, sustainable management, livelihoods).
- Consider new research vs. knowledge that is already in existence/available.
- Foster engagement of 'users' of knowledge in the knowledge/research generation process.
- Look at lessons from FLEGT to inform REDD+.
- Consider the measurement of the effectiveness of interventions – e.g. CBNRM.
- What does a long-term monitoring and evaluation framework look like to demonstrate impact? If we assume that future access to funding depends on demonstrating results, then it's important to describe the impact of what we do. To do this we need to know what a long-term monitoring and evaluation framework should look like and how we pull this up from projects to sub-national, national and international levels. The ESPA Theory of Change – currently under development – will give us an understanding of what a monitoring framework will look like. This will be shared with those participating in this meeting in due course.

Action Point

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| 1 | ESPA Directorate to share the ESPA Theory of Change document with all participants in the DFID-ESPA Forests meeting |
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- What are the data requirements for different users of information?
- How do we measure attribution? It's important that we can explain what our funding has resulted in and that we can attribute the research to changes made.
- What do we measure? We must be sure of what we're measuring before we start research and there must be clearly agreed and defined indicators of what we're tracking.
- Seek aggregated research of what works best, e.g. forest resources. Consider how we aggregate information that is already available – keep in mind that it's necessary in this to go back to square one to see what was being measured. There is an immediate need for better aggregated evidence and research in terms of what interventions work best and where. On some issues, we have lots of evidence but the challenge remains in interpreting it in different contexts.
- Consider the cost of monitoring – e.g. counting trees isn't a cheap process. Computing processes are improving which can make counting and monitoring easier and more cost effective. Remote sensing, for example, allows more cost effective ways of evaluation.
- Focus on monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of existing programmes – across a range of contexts.
- Seek to be clear about our definitions – e.g. CBNRM.
- Focus: forests or trees (e.g. trees within agriculture systems).
- Ensure that we all know who already does research and where. In this regard there is a need for a systematic methodology to bring long-term systems together and all the different studies taking place and their findings. During discussions it became apparent that NERC is already active in lots of the areas raised in this meeting. There is a need to look at improving communications so that people know about this. Programmes like ESPA can help make links in this regard.

3.4 Miscellaneous

- Consider alternative energy sources to biomass plus the strong characterisation of the demand for specific energy sources (both in urban and rural settings).
- Develop a good picture of drivers for deforestation – i.e. markets.
- Develop a solid evidence base for PES and consider how prospects have evolved over time with new technologies for transfer of payments. Think about what needs done to accompany financial transfers to get behavioural change. Where are the links between giving financial payments to people and the spatial information that we hold? What information do we have about how things are changing in the forest in real time? Consider major cutting-edge changes in technologies in payment transfer systems.
- Unpack REDD+ and FLEGT.
- Consider how we get access to forest justice, do governance for integrated forest management, and how we manage the forest agriculture interface – all in the long-term so that people aren't disadvantaged.
- It's crucial that we look at how best to target work towards achieving different objectives – e.g. addressing poverty at the local level and emissions projects at the national level. Different streams of work are needed to address the full range of issues in forest related issues. We need to consider the best types of activities for achieving poverty objectives and for emissions reduction objectives as they may be different. It's possible that win-win situations are possible but it's also likely that there will be trade-offs. It important that we make sure from the outset that objectives don't conflict with each other.

4 General comments for consideration

4.1 Communication issues and availability of information

It was felt that lots of research in the UK is not currently engaged in the forest debate. There is a pressing need for links to be made with these groups.

The results of forest research need to be made available in all formats. We have to find a way to translate research appropriately for different types of people in different countries as it's not possible to carry out the same research in each and every country.

It was discussed that there is a need to make research evidence available to international stakeholders and that this should include past and ongoing research findings.

In the UK, forest research spending on communication is around 25% of funding which helps to get the message out. However, there is concern about how the correct people can access the information required. In terms of data at a national level, gathering long-term data and monitoring it takes a great deal of time.

4.2 Developing policy ideas

In looking at developing policy ideas based on research findings and evaluating existing programmes on policies, we need a balanced approach. There was a suggestion that less new research is required and that instead more work is needed on evaluating existing programmes and coming up with successful measures for them. It's important that we communicate and share work already in hand or complete. It's important in this that we develop agreed methods for evaluating and reporting against policy.

It was suggested that it would be a worthwhile exercise to look at what countries might experience if policy interventions don't happen in the future. At the same time, it's important to consider what business-as-usual is in terms of what countries are doing at the moment in relation to forest related issues.

4.3 Markets

It's important to look at the spilt between forests and agriculture. Managing trees alone is not sufficient.

Producing a produce for one market is relatively easy. It becomes more difficult if there are lots of different products for different markets coming from the one place because each product needs to be produced in a big enough quantity to attract traders. In relation to this, it would be worth looking at the combination of products that will perform best in different contexts.

Also, it's important to examine yield levels and to consider the different yields of different products generated from forests. How best can we support high yield products with strong market demand?

Some work on looking at markets and domestic and international trade is needed. In the past 10 years trade flows have radically changed and they continue to change very quickly at this time. New, emerging products, the extinction of some products, the extinction of markets and new emerging markets are things we are faced with. Market monitoring is not rigorous and it is difficult to find good information on it. Not very many people are working in this area and this needs to be addressed.

4.4 Forest degradation

The people whose livelihoods depend on forests don't distinguish between forest and non-forest products. In terms of forest degradation, there are varying degrees of information about what it is specifically that is being degraded.

Currently, research is missing a lot of the small scale agriculture that comes from changing forests. There is therefore a need to look under the forest canopy for signs of what's happening in real terms, on the ground.

There is huge potential for research of already degraded land that deserves attention. The aim must be to restore degraded land for the benefit the wider community relying on the land.

Defra is currently carrying out work looking at where in Europe the UK is sourcing forest products – i.e. products that represent drivers of deforestation. The aim is to find where we are responsible as consumers for driving deforestation.

Are we reaching a tipping point for various forest systems where we need look at more stringent legislation in order to halt degradation?

5 Recommendations for going forward: next steps

Following on from this meeting some desirable next steps were discussed. These are detailed below.

- Groups should be established to look at research themes – e.g. monitoring and evaluation, knowledge gaps and communication. The groups should be comprised of a mix of representatives: policy makers, researchers and practitioners.
- Grouped into the agreed themed areas, representatives should work to identify critical issues within their themes that small groups can then look at in detail rather than dealing with it a higher level. DFID should mandate these groups to convene.
- DFID's key themes/work areas should be identified and shared with this group so that people can then focus on the gaps rather than on areas that are already being covered by DFID's work. Also DFID's work might help any new groups convened as a result of these discussions and avoid replicating of work.
- Knowledge uptake/working and exchange will require dedicated resourcing to work within and between groups.
- It has been proposed that a DFID representative should hold a session with RCUK International Strategy Group representatives in order to outline to them what DFID's evidence needs are.

Action Point

- 2 ESPA Director to investigate a DFID representative visiting the RCUK International Strategy Group in order to outline to them what DFID's evidence needs are in terms forest research
Paul van Gardingen *30 January 2012*

- DFID should consider what it could do in collaboration with other programmes – e.g. CDKN, or launching new programmes.
- Paul van Gardingen and Yvan Biot will meet to discuss the specifics of what ESPA can bring to forest related work and how ESPA can work with DFID and those in attendance at this meeting.

Action Point

- 3 Paul van Gardingen and Yvan Biot to meet to discuss what ESPA can bring to forest related work
Paul van Gardingen and Yvan Biot *31 January 2012*

- DFID's three lines of work (detailed above), under which hang various programmes, needs to have a standard monitoring and evaluation framework which is to be applied across the board to all programmes. This is to ensure the best possible level of reporting back on the programmes to the ICF in coming years.
- DFID will have an independent evaluation assessment looking at forestry research in 2013 and so there is a need to pull things together for then.

- At the time of this meeting, the UK hasn't considered how to feed excellent science into the Rio+20 conference in 2012. However, we can feed things like ESPA's impact stories into the event. This will allow us to use evidence that we already have and get it out there at Rio+20.
- DFID is keen that the focus is on the ground doing research rather than always on international level bodies and events such as Rio+20 and Durban.
- DFID will issue a formal mandate for ESPA, ESRC, DECC, FC, Defra and NERC to meet – along with a broader group including policy makers and practitioners. The mandate will be to meet twice a year so that research gaps can be examined and so that there can be a joined-up approach to communications. The meetings will feature feedback from the groups on policy processes and research. The agenda for these meetings could be thematic and focused or broader – whichever the groups feel would be most useful.
- Convene focus groups to identify organisations working on issues of relevance and then convene individual groups to look in depth at the organisation and their work and to feedback information to this group. We need to know where to go to get information. It is important to note that due to high staff turnover levels within DFID it leads to problems with poor institutional memory and so pulling together this type of information in a formal manner will be very beneficial.
- Convene a working group looking at outreach to countries – and not just to country offices. There are challenges currently in getting good information out fast to the right people in country. There is currently an overload of information and it is worth noting that only interesting work will be absorbed.
- Convene a working group looking at methods for monitoring impacts – to find out if a programme works and produces what it's supposed to produce.
- Methods and scale and looking at different approaches: it is important that trailing and testing and evaluation take place at the same time. Developing a framework to use in constructing sensible findings and information to present to government ministers would be desirable.
- On reading this meeting report, please submit comments on what you think we should next following this initial meeting. Submit your comments to Ruth Swanney at ESPA (admin@espac.ac.uk) so that she can pass them on to Penny Davis (DFID) and Paul van Gardingen (ESPA). They will then look at how we can, as a group, aim to deliver on the next steps identified.

Action Point

- 4 Submit comments to Ruth Swanney on what you think the next steps should be following the initial brainstorming forests meeting held in November 2011

All

31 January 2011

Author: Ruth Swanney
Date: 09 January 2012

Abbreviations List

Acronym	Definition
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CDKN	Climate and Development Knowledge Network
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
ESPA	Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
FC	Forestry Commission
FCO	Foreign Commonwealth Office
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FL P & Ps	Forest Law Policies and Procedures
ICF	International Climate Fund
ICRAF	The World Agroforestry Centre
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RCUK	Research Councils UK
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UK	United Kingdom
VC	Video conference
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreements