

New policy briefings help combat climate change by sharing real world lessons

December 1 2015, by Sarah Rakowski



View of the forest canopy, Vietnam. Credit: Sun Xiaodong/WildChina & FFI

As leaders gather in Paris for the 21st UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) over the next two weeks, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) is set to release five policy briefings that will help governments understand the role that REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) can play in climate change mitigation, and provide

guidance on best practice for designing REDD+ strategies and policies.

These guidance documents will be formally launched at a side event on 4 December, hosted by FFI, the Forestry Stewardship Council and OroVerde – Tropical Forest Foundation.

The policy briefings are based on a year-long review carried out by FFI on the successes and challenges of real world REDD+ projects – primarily in Vietnam, but with experiences drawn from FFI's global portfolio. Funding for the review was provided by the European Union REDD+ Facility, hosted by the European Forestry Institute.

They are designed to assist policy development and decision-making at COP21 and beyond, by ensuring that the lessons learned through years of REDD+ research and testing are incorporated into pivotal strategy documents and, eventually, laws. The briefings cover:

- [Sustainable landscapes and REDD+](#)
- [Scaling up and nesting REDD+ within national implementation](#)
- [Forest carbon accounting](#)
- [Free Prior and Informed Consent \(FPIC\) & community participation](#)
- [Forest land allocation, land tenure and community rights](#)

Speaking about COP21 and the release of the policy briefings, Josh Kempinski (REDD+ Projects Adviser at FFI) said, "As the world gears up for another round of climate negotiations, a major focus and area for optimism will again be forests.

"Previous COPs have, for the most part, been frustrating and largely disappointing with short-term economic imperatives leading to emissions reduction targets being delayed or watered down. But while global and binding emissions reductions have proven difficult, agreements on the

key role of forest-based emission reductions – and REDD+ in particular – have again and again proven to be the successes stories of [climate change](#) COP.



Karstscape, Cuc Phuong National Park, Vietnam. Credit: Jeremy Holden/FFI

"There seems little disagreement that conserving forests represents 'low hanging fruit' when compared with weaning the globe off fossil fuels, and it is a fruit that contains enormous co-benefits, like conserving wildlife, supporting the livelihoods of millions of forest-dependent and indigenous people, and maintaining a myriad of ecosystem services.

"Record-breaking rates of biodiversity loss and another miserable year of forest fires and haze in Indonesia and Malaysia attest to the

tremendous challenges that remain, but at least the world is awake to the reality of climate change, and the vital role that forest conservation has to play in our efforts to save ourselves."

What is REDD+?

REDD+ stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation – the 'plus' goes one step further to include additional benefits such as the conservation of carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

REDD+ offers financial incentives for tropical forest countries to reduce carbon emissions from forests by giving standing forests a dollar value according to the amount of carbon they contain (measured and verified in 'carbon credits'). This [carbon](#) would be released if the [forest](#) were destroyed.

Provided by Fauna & Flora International

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