

Launch of Sourcebook for Integrating REDD+ into Academic Programmes

Conference Room 10, UN Complex, Gigiri
20 August 2014



Background

- ***Forests in a Changing Climate: A Sourcebook for Integrating REDD+ into Academic Programmes*** is a comprehensive syllabus for the academic study of forests and climate change issues, under the overarching and evolving REDD+ narrative. It is designed to facilitate the integration of this new knowledge domain into multidisciplinary university programmes.
- The REDD+ Sourcebook was developed by the UN-REDD Programme and UNEP's Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU), in partnership with Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. It comprises of 12 modules, which touch upon the historical processes, causes and effects of climate change, the emergence of REDD, engaging with the REDD essentials, expanded opportunities for REDD+, and a transformational shift towards a Green Economy. The Sourcebook can be used in the design and delivery of academic programmes related to REDD+;
- The launch was attended by over 50 participants from academia, policy makers and members of public in Kenya, and also included a webinar and webcast for a global audience.

Launch

- **Ms. Mette L. Wilkie, Director, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, welcomed participants to the launch. She emphasized that the sourcebook, which is part of UNEP's contribution in promoting environmental education, would facilitate the integration of REDD+ concepts and approaches, not only into multidisciplinary university programmes, but also broader audiences interested in building capacity, knowledge and awareness on REDD+ and related issues. She affirmed that UNEP, through the Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES), would actively engage universities as strategic partners in REDD+ education, research and outreach. This global partnership seeks to promote the integration of education for sustainable development in academic institutions based on principles that inspire economic, societal and environmental sustainability;
- **David Mbugua, Director, Kenya Forest Service (KFS)**, highlighted that forests conservation is vital to Kenya's National Development blueprint (Vision 2030) as it contributes to sustainable development, climate change response, and low carbon strategies, environmental and social stability. He challenged universities to drive policy and science by integrating REDD+ into their curricula, as this would offer innovative approaches to forest conservation, policy and governance;
- **Ben Cashore, Professor, Environmental Governance and Political Science, Yale University**, (via webinar), reiterated that the interdisciplinary sourcebook would provide guidance in REDD+ curriculum development and integration; provide relevant methods and concepts for REDD+ post-graduate programmes; facilitate access to REDD+ materials; and engage university networks as strategic platforms in platforms for mainstreaming REDD+ education and research. He called upon academia to adopt the sourcebook and make it relevant to national, regional and international real-life/real time analysis.



Panel Discussion

- **Tim Christophersen, Team Leader, UN-REDD Programme**, provided an overview of the UN-REDD Programme. He stressed that the REDD+ Sourcebook is relevant for multidisciplinary graduate courses (development planning, land-use, spatial planning, land-tenure, agriculture, energy, transport, and mining among others); and can be used as a resource, reference manual to build course materials. It could also offer complementary support to national REDD+ actions through analyses, methodologies, tools, data and best practices developed through the UN-REDD Programme;
- **Kiama Gitahi, Director, Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies**, stressed the urgent need to mainstream the sourcebook into curricula and governance (inform policy and debate), as it contributes to closing the '*No Do Gap*', a gap between academia and action on the ground;
- **Rose Akombo, Assistant Director, Kenya Forest Service**, reiterated that the REDD+ Sourcebook's contribution to Kenya's Climate Change Response Strategy; and in the building of capacity in forestry enforcement, governance, awareness and advocacy in Kenya;
- **Gitile Naituli, Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA) and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Multi-Media University**, said the Sourcebook will support policy development (International Training Programmes [ITP] Change Projects), HEI teaching and research;
- **Mahesh Pradhan, Chief, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP**, reiterated the importance of universities in building environmental capacity and leadership. He highlighted the need for linkages between practitioners and universities, which the GUPES network could facilitate.

Interactive Discussion

- The Sourcebook is a timely resource for academia as it offers vital training material, module development and reference for academia;
- The Sourcebook is relevant to the *Adopt-A-Forest Initiative* in collaboration with university management to pilot mandatory 10% forest cover within their respective universities.
- The Sourcebook will enhance performance indicators for universities and complement the Kenya Green University Network (KGUN), a network that is being championed by UNEP-EETU;
- Call for universities to promote climate-smart agriculture (Module 4) as a resilience strategy in climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Call for a mandatory environmental course in academia to enhance environmental literacy, including the cascading of environmental studies in primary and secondary education levels and enhanced collaboration with UNEP and academia partners as a corporate social responsibility (CSR);
- Modules 10, 11 and 12 of the Sourcebook useful in the mainstreaming of green accounting concepts/statistics for REDD+ national capital programmes, and advising business enterprises.

Follow-up

- Convene three capacity building initiatives for in Africa, Asia and Latin America through the REDD+ Academy. The first REDD+ Academy is scheduled to take place in Jakarta (October, 2014);
- Disseminate the REDD+ sourcebook at the upcoming World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in Nagoya (November, 2014);
- Development of a REDD+ Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to reach out to a larger audience;
- REDD+ Academy to make education materials (presentations, group exercises) available online in English, French and Spanish.

REDD+ curriculum sourcebook available online at:

http://unep.org/Training/docs/Forest_in_a_Changing_Climate.pdf
http://www.unredd.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=13205&Itemid=53