Simple Method for the Local Stakeholders to Evaluate and Select National REDD-plus Program: A Case Study of Indonesia

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Abstract

In order not to hinder the trend of promoting participatory forest management under the REDD-plus mechanism, we propose a simple method to support local stakeholders evaluating and selecting promising national programs as REDD-plus activities prior to the launch of activities. Program evaluation is done from the viewpoint of expectations for achieving (1) 'triple-benefit' consisting of emission reduction from mitigating deforestation and forest degradation, biodiversity conservation, and poverty alleviation, and (2) 'feasibility' when the programs would be practiced on the ground. The method is applicable for other countries.

Key Words: emission reduction, biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation, triple-benefit, Indonesia

Introduction

UNFCCC COP16 at Cancun in December 2010 referred to the safeguards in its Annex I, such as transparent and effective national forest governance, respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, and consistency with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity. In the decision, however, safeguards are not to be "ensured" but "promoted" and "supported" when undertaking REDD-plus activities. It is also unclear how those provisions will be effectively operationalized (Parker 2011).

COP 17 at Durban in November-December 2011 reached an agreement on the guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected. Although provision of transparent and consistent

information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis as well as transparent and flexible system to allow for improvements over time are appreciated among the decisions, it is not articulated how such information and the results of its evaluation will be feedback to improve the situation. As required by COP 17, Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) is expected to consider the need for further guidance to ensure transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness.

Since early 1980's, forest governance in developing countries has gradually been changing from a centralized top-down mode, in which local people are marginalized, to a decentralized bottom-up mode, in which they regained a certain degree of autonomy. The FAO (2010) reported that 80% of the world's forests were publicly owned, but ownership and management of forests by communities, in-

Received: June 13, 2012. Revised: August 13, 2012. Accepted: August 13, 2012.

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dividuals and private companies was on the rise.

The introduction of the REDD-plus mechanism should not discourage the trends that have prevailed over the last few decades. It is clear that a role of governance is essential for REDD's success (Bofin et al. 2011). Governance is defined as the setting, application, and enforcement of the rules of the game, and such rules need to be legitimated if they are to be stable (Kjaer 2004). Implementation of REDD-plus is expected to potentially enhance the legitimacy of national forest policy by improving forest governance, in which the rights and participation of local people, including indigenous people, are ensured (Inoue 2010). If governance issues are not addressed, however, it could fail to reduce emissions and even create perverse incentives to increase emissions and threaten the rights and livelihoods of forest-dependent communities (Bond et al. 2009). As such, REDD-plus appraisals should ensure the legitimacy of governance; we should introduce the perspectives of not only 'efficiency' in terms of economic aspects, but also 'effectiveness' in conserving forests and reducing emissions (environmental aspects), and 'equity' for empowering local people and alleviating poverty (social aspects), in accordance with three criteria of 'efficiency', 'effectiveness', and 'equity' (Angelsen 2008; Angelsen 2009).

This paper focuses only the 'effectiveness' and 'equity' of the REDD-plus national programs in Indonesia to improve and ensure the legitimacy of governance, because data is insufficient to tackle the issue of 'efficiency' including opportunity cost to conserve the forests. Such limitation of the focus, however, is turned into an advantage to encourage us showing a clear objective of the paper, or to propose simple methods to evaluate national REDD-plus programs for the local stakeholders.

Materials and Methods

Relevant laws and regulations issued by the government of Indonesia and local ordinances issued by West Kutai district were collected and described, with special attention to their purposes and implementing agencies. Then the programs were evaluated from the viewpoint of expectations for achieving 'triple-benefit' which is relevant to 'effectiveness' and 'equity' of the governance, and 'feasibility' when the programs would be practiced on the

ground.

It is essential for the real evaluation process to involve various stakeholders such as the local people, central and local government, private companies, NGOs, and scholars. The objective of the article, however, is not to get concrete result of evaluation of the programs, but to show the simple method for evaluation by trial evaluation by scholars. The trial evaluation was done as a result of discussion on December 6, 2010 at Center for Social Forestry (CSF), Mulawarman University. Participants of the discussion for evaluation are three staffs of Mulawarman University, who know very well the real situation in West Kutai District of East Kalimantan, and me.

Evaluation in terms of 'triple-benefit'

The 'triple-benefit' comprises (1) emission reduction from mitigating deforestation and forest degradation, which is the main purpose of the REDD-plus mechanism, (2) biodiversity conservation, which is accordant to the Convention on Biodiversity, and (3) poverty alleviation, which is in accordance with United Nations Millennium Development Goals. It makes sense for the government to achieve the "triple-benefit" to abide by international agreements.

Evaluation results were assigned numerical scores for the expected achievement of the "triple-benefit": "+2" for a strong positive effect on each aspect, "+1" for a weak positive effect, "-1" for a weak negative effect, and "-2" for a strong negative effect.

Evaluation in terms of 'feasibility'

The 'feasibility' on the ground is indispensable for evaluating the programs. Even if a program is expected to have a strong positive effect on preventing deforestation, for example, the program might be rated as less important if it faces implementation problems in the field.

Evaluation results for "feasibility" assigned these scores to each program: "+3" for a grade of high feasibility on the ground, "+2" for a grade of fair, and "+1" for a grade of low.

National REDD-plus programs

National forestlands, which are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forestry, are categorized into production

Table 1. Distribution of profit among stakeholders

Unit: %

Rights/concession	Governments ^b	Local community	Project initiator/sponsor
Forests for specific purposes & utilization/protection forest	50	20	30
Timber utilization of natural forest/plantation forest/ecosystem restoration	20	20	60
Timber utilization of plantation forest (by people's group)	20	50	30
Individual forest (on private land) ^a	10	70	20
Community forest (by people's group)	20	50	30
Customary forest (by indigenous community)	10	70	20
Village forest (by village organization)	20	50	30
Forest Management Unit	30	20	50

Source: Appendix III of Minister's Decree No.36, 2009.

^aExcept this right, all other rights/concessions are issued on national forestland; ^bDistribution in governments: State (40%), Province (20%), District (40%).

forests (*Hutan Produksi*), protection forests (*Hutan Lindung*), conservation forests (*Hutan Konservasi*), and convertible production forests (*Hutan Produksi dapat Dikonversi*). These categories are based on 1983 forestland use planning with consensus (*Tata Guna Hutan Kesepakatan: TGHK* in Indonesian). Meanwhile, overall land-use planning is under the authority of local governments, based on Law No. 24/1992 (renewed by Law No. 26/2007) regarding spatial planning (*Rencana Tata Ruang: RTR*). Under spatial planning, the land has since 2007 been divided into forestry zones (*Kawasan Budidaya Kehutanan: KBK*) and other zones (*Areal Penggunaan Lain: APL*), including conservation zones, although it was initially classified into three types: forestry zones (*KBK*), non-forestry zones (*Kawasan Budidaya Non Kehutanan: KBNK*), and protected zones (*Kawasan Lindung*).

The Minister of Forestry issued two important decrees to prepare for the implementation of REDD-plus activities. Minister's decree No. 30 in 2009 declared that REDD would be implemented for all forest categories such as production forests, protection forests, and conservation forests, and that REDD would be implemented for every type of forest ecosystem, such as natural forests and plantation forests. Minister's decree No. 36 in 2009 determined that the carbon-sink and absorption project would last 25 years.

It seems that the government appoints the activities based on the formal rights and concessions, indicated in Appendix III of Minister's Decree No.36, 2009 (Table 1), as REDD-plus activities.

Table 1 also showed the distribution of profits among stakeholders to show which activity benefits whom. The government benefits by receiving 50% of the profits from the management of forests for specific purposes such as research and education, and the management of protection forests. Project initiators and sponsors benefit by receiving 60% of the profits from forest management for timber utilization based on concessions in natural forests, plantation forests, and restored ecosystems, and they receive 50% of profits from activities in the capacity of Forest Management Units. Local people benefit the most because they receive 70% of profits from managing individual forests (*Hutan Rakyat*) on privately owned land and managing customary forests (*Hutan Adat*) on national land, while 50% of profits goes to villager groups managing plantation forests (*Hutan Tanaman Rakyat*) and community forests (*Hutan Kemasyarakatan*) on national forestland, and 50% to village organizations managing village forests (*Hutan Desa*).

Results and Discussion

Table 2 indicates the results of our evaluation of activities supported by national programs.

- Most activities are considered to have strong or weak positive effects (scores: +1, or +2) on emission reduction, biodiversity conservation, and poverty alleviation.
- Plantation forest management for timber utilization by private companies, however, would have a weak negative effect (score: -1) on biodiversity conservation due

Table 2. Evaluation of activities supported by national programs

Stake-holder	Rights/programs	Evaluation in terms of 'triple-benefit'				Evaluation in terms of 'feasibility' (Y)	Score (XxY)
		Emission reduction	Biodiversity conservation	Poverty alleviation	Total (X)		
Government	FM for specific purposes	+2	+2	+1	+5	+2	+10
	Protection FM	+2	+2	+1	+5	+1 ^a	+5
Sponsor/initiator	Natural FM	+2	+2	+1	+5	+2	+10
	Plantation FM	+1	-1 ^a	-1 ^a	-1	+3	-3
	Restored F ecosystem M	+2	+2	+1	+5	+1 ^a	+5
Local community	Activities as FM Unit	Impossible to evaluate because of not being formed					
	M of individual forest	+2	+2	+2	+6	+1 ^a	+6
	M of customary forest	+2	+2	+1	+5	+2	+10
	Plantation FM by people	+1	+1	+2	+4	+3	+12
	M of community forest	+2	+2	+1	+5	+2	+10
	M of village forest	+2	+2	+2	+6	+2	+12

Source: Created by discussion on December 6, 2010 at Mulawarman University.

^aExplained in the text.

to large-scale monoculture, and a weak negative effect (score: -1) on poverty alleviation due to the tendency to expropriate land cultivated by local people.

- Feasibility of protection forest management on the ground is considered to be low (score: +1) because of conflicts with local people.
- Restored forest ecosystem management for timber utilization and management of Individual Forest on privately owned lands are also regarded as having low feasibility (score: +1) because we could not find any examples in East Kalimantan at the time.

The evaluation indicated promising selected activities for each stakeholder, if supported by national policy, in terms of achieving 'triple-benefit' as well as feasibility on the ground. Even though we saw various types of customary forest management in West Kutai district, we were unable to find instances of formal Customary Forest (*Hutan Adat*) management supported by the government, because a minister's decree has not yet been issued to guide the formalities for approval. It is, then, evident that promising selected activities in West Kutai district, the Province of East Kalimantan are;

- Management of forests for specific purposes such as research and education is promising for the government.
- Natural Forest Management for timber utilization is advisable for private companies (sponsors and project

initiators).

- Plantation forest management by villagers' groups (*Hutan Tanaman Rakyat: HTR*) for timber utilization, management of Village Forests (*Hutan Desa*) by village organizations, and management of Community Forests (*Hutan Kemasyarakatan*) by groups of local people are preferable for local communities.

National policy dictates that all of these activities are to be conducted on national forestland.

Conclusions

We successfully show the method to select promising REDD-plus activities supported by national programs. Then we should go on to the next step, or examine the possibility to introduce such activities. Simple method can also be applied; (1) to clarify the constraints to disturb these activities, (2) to estimate the cost to introduce these activities including the management of NTFP as well as timber, (3) to clarify the intention of the people by using questionnaire survey. As a result of these study, we will be ready to improve existing programs, to devise the combination of existing programs, or /and to propose brand new programs in order to promote REDD-plus activities.

The simple method indicated in the paper could be applied in other countries. It is particularly applicable for the

local stakeholders to make bottom-up policy recommendations to the government as well as to select appropriate national programs under the existing policy framework.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the staffs of Mulawarman University, especially Dr. Fadjar Pambudhi, the Director of Center for Social Forestry (CSF), Dr. Ndan Imang, the Vice Director of CSF, and Mr. Martinus Nanang, staff of CSF, for their commitments in the evaluation of national program. The paper was partially supported by the Grant of Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research (ARCP2010-02CMY-Phua).

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