Concept Note

Rio+20 Side Event on
The Landscape: Transformative Action thru Cross-Sectoral Coordination

Tuesday 19 June 2012, 13:30 - 15:00
RioCentro Convention Center, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Around the world there are extraordinary examples of integrated sustainable land management approaches that have improved the livelihoods of millions of people; from the transformation of the Loess Plateau in China to the hillside restoration across Rwanda. These are called a landscape approach, which incorporates economic, social and environmental actions required to achieve sustainability.

Global leaders have not emphasized and operationalized enough the value of local wisdom, global expertise and the transformative power that emerges when sustainable economic growth and food systems are combined.

Food security is one illustration of the critical need for cross-sectoral approaches to economic development. We cannot feed people without protecting forests or protect forests without feeding people. We cannot sustainably grow our economies without valuing our environment. We must bridge the gaps between agriculture, forests, water, land and energy, and between rhetoric and action. The event will focus on two sectors: agriculture and forests. The side event will be held at the Heads of State and Ministers level.

Lead organizer: United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) on behalf of Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)


Speakers:
Heads of State and Ministers, pending
Kofi Annan TBC
Rachel Kyte, Vice President and Network Head, Sustainable Development, World Bank
Zukang Sha, Secretary General, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, TBC
Eduardo Rojas- Briales, CPF Chair
Expected contribution to the outcome of UNCSD/Rio+20:
The endorsement by leaders of the need for an integrated approach across agriculture and forests as a pilot initiative to achieve a fundamental change. Key messages to be considered include: adopting a landscape approach to sector planning; catalyzing cross-sectoral action; effectively engaging the private sector and broadening all sources of finance to advance cross-sectoral cooperation and partnership; getting governance and institutions right; prioritizing agricultural intensification; capturing true values and functions of forests; targeting the most vulnerable populations; restoring degraded landscapes; and achieving significant public and private investment to gain long term benefits.

A cross-sectoral approach between the Agriculture and Forest sectors will serve to break down institutional silos, facilitating a partnership among public and private agencies across these two sectors, focusing on better cooperation in these sectors in communities, rural and urban development, natural resources, biodiversity, energy and water and disaster management to achieve true sustainability.

A landscape approach can also be a cornerstone of successful implementation of REDD+, given the need to balance, for example, forest and agricultural objectives, including protecting forests, increasing afforestation, reforestation, and livelihoods from forests while addressing increasing pressure for food.

Early action ahead of international agreements is needed to improve the viability, scope and accessibility of agriculture and forest options to achieve food security, livelihoods, climate change adaptation and reduced environmental impacts. A crucial component of early action is enhancing knowledge sharing and capacity building. There is a need to create, designate, or integrate national and regional knowledge networks or platforms into climate-smart agricultural and sustainable forest management programmes.

New funds have been identified to increase food security to respond to the food price crisis, to promote climate-resilient development, to reduce unsustainable deforestation and forest degradation, to afforest and reforest, as well as to protect natural forests, and to support climate adaptation and mitigation more generally. The challenge for countries is to coordinate different funding mechanisms without overlap so as to invest at the scale needed to achieve the goals of integrated climate-smart agriculture and sustainable forest management. Capacity needs to be strengthened to enable developing countries to access these existing and emerging finance mechanisms. There is also scope for the redirection of agricultural and forest finance to be intersectoral, as well as to integrate forest and agricultural policy into development finance.

The international community needs to demonstrate commitment and political will to the multiple agendas of food security, adaptation, environmental protection and economic and social needs by stepping up investment support to integrated actions on climate-smart agriculture and forests, particularly the scaling up of best practices and technologies as part of early actions.

Rio+20 provides an ideal opportunity for Member States to recognize the following key messages to agree on action:
Issues for Key Messages:

- Fostering cross-sectoral approaches to implement integrated actions;
- Enhancing governance and institutions to incentivise sustainable and integrated practices;
- Sustainably intensifying agricultural production;
- Capturing true values and functions of forests;
- Targeting the most vulnerable populations;
- Restoring degraded landscapes; and
- Developing an integrated approach to Sustainable Forest Management and Sustainable Agriculture which includes significant and ongoing public and private investments for long-term benefits.

High-level political commitment to advance an integrated landscape approach to Sustainable Agriculture and Sustainable Forest Management, including:

Thinking outside the box: Developing a framework for action in the context of an integrated landscape approach which incorporates the cross-sectoral and the cross-institutional, for example through:

- Identification of areas of cooperation for donors and the private sector to finance cross-sectoral, cross-institutional agriculture and forest programmes in the physical landscape;

- Capacity building to enable developing countries to access existing and emerging finance mechanisms to increase food security, to promote climate-resilient development, to reduce unsustainable deforestation and forest degradation, to afforest and reforest, and to protect natural forests, and to support climate adaptation and mitigation more generally;

- Integration of the existing national and regional knowledge networks and platforms for the identification and dissemination of climate-smart agriculture and sustainable forest management approaches and practices.