



First 2013 Workshop of the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force - Mexico

July 12, 2013

Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico

The first meeting of the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force (known by its English acronym GCF) - Mexico was held on July 11, 2013 in the city of Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas.

One of its primary objectives was to convene the South Southeast states in order to encourage the exchange of information on advances in the design of public policy focused on deforestation and degradation in the South-Southeast region, as well as to open a dialogue at the federal level about this topic and promote greater participation within the GCF network by Mexican States.

The first point on the agenda was a discussion about initiatives to reduce emissions caused by deforestation, degradation and land use, taking into consideration the important role played by state governments, as well as the components that a jurisdictional program should have and the role that the GCF plays in these matters.

The State Ministers of the Environment in attendance were from the following states: Quintana Roo, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Tabasco and Jalisco, with special participation by GCF member states Chiapas and Campeche. Manuel Velasco Coello, Constitutional Governor of the State of Chiapas, was present as well, and delivered a message about the importance of fighting together against climate change. He mentioned the importance of initiatives such as that of the GCF in reaching common goals.

The next items on the agenda were reports from each of the participating States on advances in developing policies for the reduction of emissions caused by deforestation and land use changes.

Campeche commented that it has three published ordinances and that the state REDD+ strategy is in the process of being designed. Among its next actions is participation in the construction of ENAREDD+. Quintana Roo, for its part, commented that it established a REDD+ working group in May of this year, in which Ministers and Directors participated with the objective of prioritizing types of support for the forestry, environmental and farming sectors.

Tabasco affirmed that it has a State Reforestation Council with participation by the three levels of government and NGOs. It has published a Climate Action Plan.



Chiapas shared information about the context for REDD+ in the state and spoke about REDD+ projects in the Lacandon Rainforest and El Ocote. Their state REDD+ strategy is in development as well. In terms of future actions, it is planning to write regulations in accordance with the Climate Change Law of Chiapas.

The State of Oaxaca spoke about REDD+ as an opportunity in a geographic area like itself, in which 30,000 hectares are deforested each year. It has a Technical Consulting Council (CTC) made up of producers, representatives of different economic sectors, civil society and state government. In the future it hopes to include a community vision in REDD+ processes.

Guerrero commented that it has a green fund, a forestry trust and a project for alternative energy use.

Jalisco brought up the need to strengthen its policy at a local level, focusing on the holistic development of a micro watershed.

After the state presentations there was a rich round of questions, with exchanges about experiences and comments about strengthening the South-Southeast group. This was key in framing the discussion that followed.

Ana Karla Perea, Chief of International Affairs for the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR), spoke about the progress of the national REDD+ process and perspectives on state participation. She affirmed that ENAREDD+ will be the guide for the next 40 years, and she recognized that sustainable rural development and community forest management are its centerpiece and will be strengthened through a framework of wide participation such as that of the CTCs.

Lucio Santos, Coordinator of the CONAFOR project to strengthen capacity and cooperation in the South South, spoke about the National Monitoring, Reporting and Verification system and state-level perspectives. He spoke about the need to define criteria for state allocation and feedback.

Sergio Graf, CONAFOR's Coordinator of Production and Productivity, spoke about existing financing and REDD+ opportunities in Mexico; later the floor opened up and discussion turned to the idea of the need to review state advances to generate synergy through integration.

There was a general acceptance of the need to participate in a REDD+ design process and to affirm that we do not find ourselves confronting an "environmental problem" but rather that the question concerning us is of rural development undertaken in an integrated way.



Next on the agenda was a discussion about the process for joining the GCF as a member state. This presentation generated several questions about the internal workings of the GCF, its structure and its governance. In this respect, the real-time videoconference with William Boyd, Senior Advisor and Leader of the GCF, was very enriching.

As upcoming action items, the following Agenda was defined with these broad work areas:

- 1.- Support the development of state initiatives: safeguards, monitoring and institutional arrangements.
- 2.- Training. Within the pertinent institutions and other actors at the regional level.
- 3.- Management and follow-up of what is initiated, in the area of PEF (federal expenditure budget) resources, criteria and common indicators.

In terms of topics for trainings, identifying the needs for technical training was suggested, specifically MRV, as well as a course about how to design a State REDD+ strategy. Consultancy services regarding voluntary markets were also proposed, as well as a strategic study to identify opportunity areas.

After an intense discussion about joint management and opportunities to work together as a region, the participants agreed to continue coordinating actions and to advance in proposing trainings in the following areas: MRV, REDD+ and its state strategies and the state of markets and mechanisms for participation.

In closing the workshop, the participants agreed to take up in their respective States the idea of joining the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force - Mexico.