



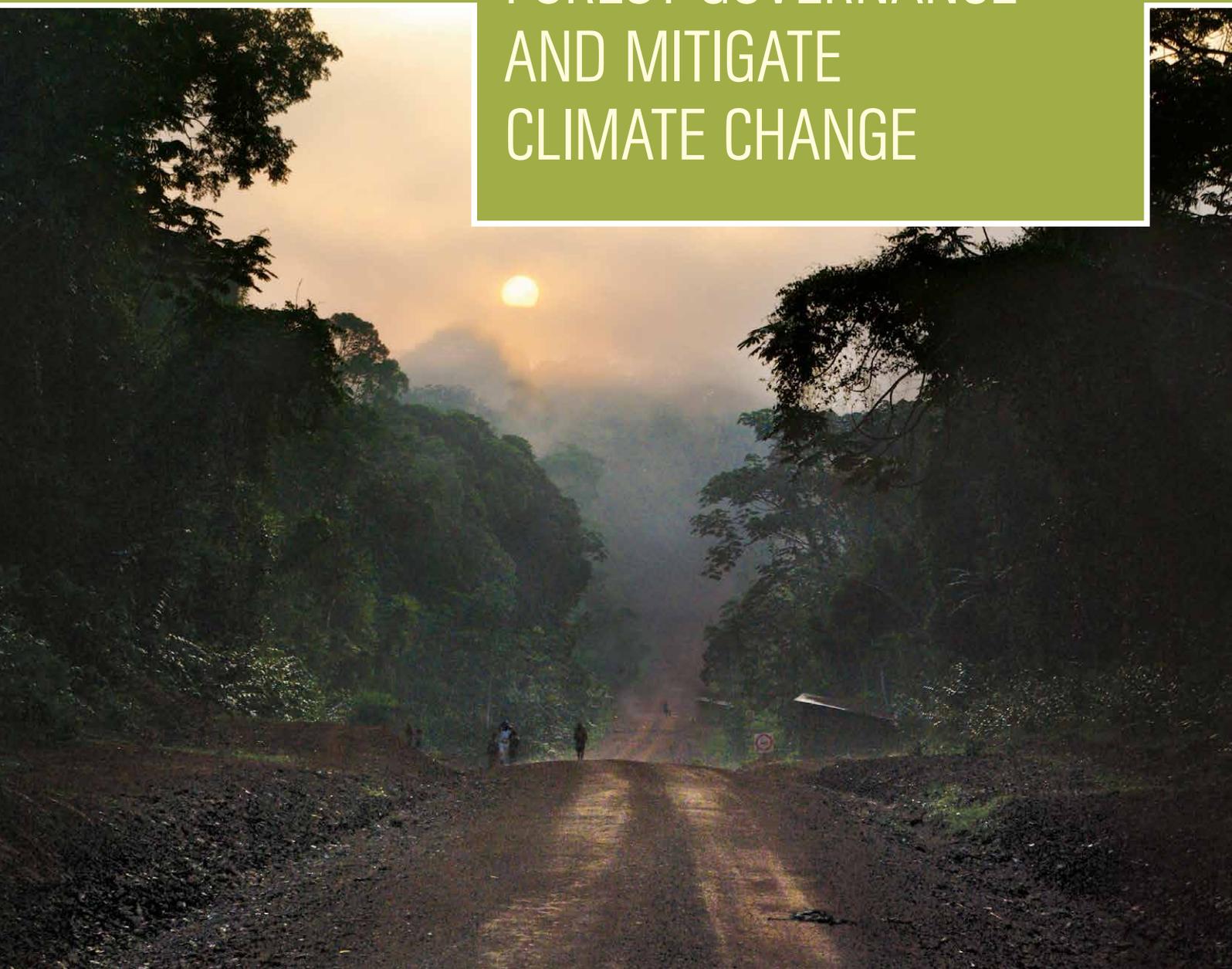
Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

## FAO FLEGT PROGRAMME

FOREST  
LAW  
ENFORCEMENT,  
GOVERNANCE AND  
TRADE

# FLEGT & REDD+

WORKING TOGETHER  
TO STRENGTHEN  
FOREST GOVERNANCE  
AND MITIGATE  
CLIMATE CHANGE



## INTRODUCTION

**F**orest loss contributes to one-sixth of annual greenhouse gas emissions, making it a major contributor to climate change. Experience shows that approaches to reducing deforestation and forest degradation and strengthening forest governance – such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) and Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) – can be far more effective in countering forest loss if they are jointly implemented. To date, however, few countries have capitalized on the synergies between these processes. Widely acknowledged similarities between the objectives of REDD+ and FLEGT initiatives present obvious opportunities for common action to address deforestation and strengthen forest governance. Both REDD+ and FLEGT share a number of common goals and approaches and target the same actors – forest sector stakeholders from government entities, local communities and indigenous people, as well as the private sector. Both are incentive-based mechanisms to promote the sustainable management of forests, and both place strong emphasis on forest governance for their success.

Global initiatives such as these also rely on action by a range of different actors in order to implement their respective goals and contribute effectively to meeting country climate and development objectives. The cases presented here demonstrate that, although practical implementation of climate change and forest governance support initiatives may vary from country to country, aligning the actions of stakeholders involved in REDD+ and FLEGT can make a greater and more sustained contribution to the forest sector’s ‘mitigation potential’ and to addressing the core drivers of weak forest governance.

### CASE SUMMARY

## Côte d’Ivoire

### JOINT EFFORTS TO ADDRESS LEGAL, REGULATORY AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Faced with severe forest loss and degradation, Côte d’Ivoire is pursuing the twin goals of improving forest governance and addressing climate change, combining the two approaches to produce a more effective overall impact. Playing an active role in both the FAO Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and the UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+), this West African country is showing its determination to protect its forest resources by harnessing synergies between the two global initiatives.

Solid and coherent legal, regulatory and institutional measures will be critical to the success of both FLEGT and REDD+ in Côte d’Ivoire. And although different ministries lead in each case – and there are different specific legal needs if each is to succeed – the two strategies share a number of

challenges. In response, actors involved are working together to revise the legal framework, which has the potential to impact both initiatives, producing real benefits for forest resources and livelihoods.

At the Government’s request, FAO’s legal department has teamed up with the FLEGT and REDD+ programmes to launch a multi-stakeholder national Legal Working Group, tasked with creating a strong legal and regulatory framework by ensuring a multi-stakeholders participatory process.

Serving as a think tank to build on existing commonalities between the programmes, the Legal Working Group has two main objectives – to remove legal obstacles and shape new regulations.

A first step has been to conduct a legal analysis across sector specific



legislations, such as forest, land and the environment, highlighting inconsistencies that might undermine implementation of both initiatives. The process has already helped to set out a new course of action for a results-based approach, driving initiatives that are complementary rather than contradictory, and which will contribute to better forest governance and a more effective climate change mitigation strategy.

## Viet Nam

### A STRATEGIC PLAN TO BALANCE THE TIMBER INDUSTRY WITH SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

In a country that relies on a wood furniture industry to generate a significant share of foreign trade, developing a strategy to ensure a reliable supply of legal and/or sustainable timber is of critical importance. Viet Nam has taken up the challenge by drawing up a national plan for forest protection and production that combines both forest governance and climate change mitigation efforts. The Government made a deliberate decision to insert forest governance objectives clearly in its climate change action strategy, while also launching in-country Voluntary Partnership Agreement negotiations – legally binding trade accords between the EU and a timber-exporting country to ensure that timber and timber products imported into the EU are of legal origin – and inserting governance goals firmly within its climate change agenda. The result is a forest policy which balances the country's important furniture sector with forests that are more sustainably managed.

Addressing land tenure is a crucial component of the mix, since secure and legal land tenure is a prerequisite for legal timber harvesting. Strengthening forest and forestland tenure security is both a strategy under the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) – which seeks to promote climate change mitigation – and a priority area of concern for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), which aims to achieve improved forest governance. Viet Nam is committed to achieving improved land tenure through both pathways, which are together helping to promote the engagement of civil society and its contribution to the national forestry dialogue.

More evidence of the strong scope for a combined forest governance and climate change mitigation approach can be seen in



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Viet Nam's decision to share resources from climate change to invest in a timber legality assurance system. The Government is developing the Viet Nam Timber Legality Assurance System (VNTLAS), as a mechanism that aims to facilitate market access for a responsible and sustainable timber industry. In a neat twist, the cost for making this potentially game-changing move towards better forest governance is being funded by the country's resources earned under the REDD+ climate change mitigation scheme.

## Honduras

### A COMMON APPROACH TO FOREST GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION YIELDS RESULTS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous people have a particular need for secure land tenure and a say in consultations that affect their future. In Honduras, indigenous groups have joined forces behind the two separate but complementary forest governance and climate change mitigation initiatives – FLEGT and REDD+ – to pursue their common agenda.

From the outset, a number of common features were identified between the two initiatives in Honduras, the first Latin American country to be involved simultaneously in both programmes. Both initiatives are working to clarify land tenure and access rights regarding forests, and in the case of each, it will be crucial to improve local capacities for monitoring illegal logging and deforestation and have a common mechanism for consultation. There is also good scope for using each other's mechanisms. For example, implementation

at local level of a system to assure legality – a mechanism under FLEGT – can create key capacities for mechanisms to monitor and verify REDD+, and vice versa. And successful cases of community forestry illustrate the strong potential for implementing both FLEGT and REDD+ in the same forest area. Results of this combined approach are encouraging. By playing an active role in national REDD+ and FLEGT processes, indigenous people's groups have succeeded in gaining greater recognition of their rights to land tenure. In the past, inadequate mechanisms for effective participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making affecting land use have posed a major stumbling block. But now, joint efforts by REDD+ and FLEGT to adopt a common methodology towards Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) are helping to align efforts by the country's nine indigenous and Afro-descendent groups to



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protect their rights through this key principle. Indigenous people are currently preparing a new draft legislation to formalize FPIC in the legal framework, which is expected to be presented to the Honduran Assembly later in 2016. Meanwhile, a common platform, the Mesa Indígena Para Cambio Climático (MIACC), is helping to foster participation of indigenous and Afro-Honduran representatives in climate related discussions. Formed in 2012 to coordinate indigenous peoples' activities on climate change for REDD consultation, the platform is now also proving valuable in moving forward Voluntary Partnership Agreement negotiations under the FLEGT forest governance programme.



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CASE SUMMARY

## The private sector

### ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AGENDA AND EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN FOREST GOVERNANCE

Initiatives to address climate change mitigation, legality and sustainable forest management cannot succeed without engaging the private sector – the people on the ground who carry out forest management, timber harvesting and processing, and drive commerce in forest products at all levels. However, there is some confusion as to what the role and responsibility of private sector actors should be, and how they can engage.

Substantial efforts are needed to ensure that private sector players of all sizes, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs), have the capacity to follow legislation and implement best practices for climate change mitigation and forest governance objectives as part of their business plans.

Effective relationships between the private sector and government are also essential if national strategies involving the forest sector are to be successful. This requires real, meaningful

communication, in order to understand the challenges and needs affecting each party, and recognize the benefits of collaboration. The REDD+ and FLEGT agendas have strong potential to create a structure for this cooperation to take place.

In addition, industry groupings can play a vital role in helping SMEs and trade associations to gain a better position through a multiplier effect and keep industry members informed regarding events and processes that impact their sector.

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