Overview

With roughly 28.5 million hectares of forests which sequester relatively high levels of carbon, PNG’s forests have significant potential both as carbon sinks and carbon sources. In recent years agricultural expansion, unsustainable logging, and infrastructure development from mining and gas has played a large role in deforestation and degradation. With a 1.4% annual deforestation rate, forest carbon emissions now account for an estimated 95% of the countries total greenhouse gas emissions. Despite playing a pivotal role in international REDD+ negotiations, REDD+ readiness in Papua New Guinea is still in relatively early stages, with an R-PP currently undergoing development and very few project level activities. Still, the country has secured $6.4 million from UN-REDD to develop an MRV system, has developed draft FPIC guidelines at the national level, and is seeing an increased number of project level activities get off the ground.

Drivers of Deforestation and Degradation

Direct:
- Infrastructure development
- Unsustainable logging
- Agricultural expansion
- Underlying:
  - Population growth

REDD activities are being coordinated both by the OCCD and PNGFA, and it remains unclear which agency will take the lead on REDD+. A consulting company hired by the OCCD estimates that reduced impact logging and sustainable forest management alone could account for up to 60% of REDD+ emissions reduction potential in PNG. PNG stands out from most REDD+ countries with its distinctive land tenure system which gives communities ownership rights to 97% of the country’s land and allows trees to be purchased separate from land. In order to address the implications of this unique tenure system on REDD+, the PNGFA is working with GIZ to clarify carbon rights in the country.

National REDD Institutions

The Office of Climate Change and Development (OCCD) - Established in in March 2010 by the National Executive Council (NEC), the OCCD serves as the coordinating entity for all climate change policy in PNG; it is the Designated National Authority under the Kyoto Protocol and the Implementing Partner under the UN-REDD process.

Papua New Guinea Forest Authority (PNGFA) - The agency responsible for the management of PNG’s forests and for monitoring and surveillance of forest areas. The PNGFA has been active in REDD+ readiness activities.

Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) - is tasked with the administration and implementation of the Environment Act 2000 which lays out responsibilities for protected areas, maintaining biodiversity and the provision of environmental services.
LEAF Policy Assistance

LEAF adopts a regional approach in strengthening capacities across the six target countries - Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Viet Nam - to produce sustainable reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the forestry and land use sector.

PNG is making significant advancements in REDD related policy, giving LEAF opportunity to provide support in several areas including:

1. Supporting the development of regulations to nest project or jurisdictional REDD+ programs into the national program.
2. Analyzing the existing Forestry Act and providing technical inputs for how REDD+ can be streamlined into existing policy.

Implementation:
The support provided by LEAF will be implemented primarily through the following activities:

- Desk based reviews and stakeholder consultations.
- Capacity building regional workshops.

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