



# Implementing REDD + at the national level: Stakeholder engagement and policy coherences between REDD + rules and Kenya's sectoral policies



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## ABSTRACT

Effective implementation of rules on reduced emission from avoided deforestation and forest degradation (REDD +) depends on the compatibility between these rules and existing sectoral policies associated with forests. This paper applies content analysis of policy documents, semi-structured interviews and case study analysis to examine the interplay between REDD + rules and Kenyan sectoral policies and local socioeconomic settings. Results reveal that the preparation of national REDD + strategies in Kenya is usefully coordinated by the Kenyan forestry sector drawing on the sector's policy mandate and past experiences in forest management. This sectoral mainstreaming however degenerates into negative vertical policy interplay caused by poor consultations with key sectors outside the forestry sector e.g. lands and agriculture and is further exacerbated by sectoral competition for climate finance. Analysis of REDD + coherences with sectoral policies revealed that forest policies on reforestation and decentralisation are coherent with REDD + rules (horizontal interplay) but this coherence is impeded by limited implementation of these measures e.g. poor support and coordination of Community Forest Associations. Lack of coherence was mainly observed between REDD + rules and resettlement and agricultural mechanisation policies prescribed in the lands and agriculture policies. Agricultural mechanisation and resettlement policies are synonymous with deforestation especially through illegal and politically motivated agricultural or settlement expansions into Kenya's forest areas. At the local level, REDD + showed potential to positively influence local livelihoods but the aforementioned national institutional gaps and strict carbon standards and prices lead to negative trade-offs between carbon sequestration and alternative livelihoods. The paper advocates for strong multi-stakeholder consultative mechanism so that both Kenyan policy and socioeconomic settings can support effective REDD + implementation.

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## 1. Introduction

Reduced emissions from avoided deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) has received international legitimacy as a cost-effective mitigation option poised to constitute a major part of the expected post-Kyoto climate agreement (Stern, 2006). A range of policy measures on monitoring, verifying, reporting, financing and safeguarding REDD + activities, have been globally crafted since the programme's inception at the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) in Bali. These policy measures have

been shaped through subsequent decisions including the 15th COP in Copenhagen (decision 1/C15), the 16th COP in Cancun and the recently agreed Warsaw Framework for REDD + (Table 1). The Warsaw framework particularly provided an explicit roadmap for REDD + implementation bringing together technical and institutional implementation guidelines.

As REDD + implementation options become clearer, developing countries are getting ready to implement the programme within their jurisdictions amidst diverse international, regional, national and local interests (Corbera and Schroeder, 2011; Atela et al., 2014). Implementing REDD + involves translating the negotiated decisions on forest protection into practise and coordinating activities to deliver on sustainable development outcomes (Appendix 1/CP. 16) (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980). REDD + implementation at the national level in most developing countries currently involves instituting global rules as part of national policies (Cerbu et al., 2011; Peters-Stanley and Gonzalez, 2014) and protecting forests at the local level.

*Abbreviations:* CDM, Clean Development Mechanism; CFA, Community Forest Association; COP, Conference of Parties; FCPF, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility; ICDP, Integrated conservation and development project; KFS, Kenya Forest Service; MVR, Measurement, Verification and Reporting; R-PIN, Readiness Idea Note; R-P, Readiness Proposal.

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**Table 1**  
Rules on REDD+ design components based on COP decisions.

Design feature	Description	COP decision
Activities	(1) Avoiding deforestation by for example keeping existing forest intact and addressing key drivers of deforestation.	Decision 1/CP. 16 Decision 2/CP. 13
	(2) Avoiding forest degradation by for example avoiding the conversion of natural forest to plantation forest.	
	(3) Conservation of forest carbon stocks by	
	(4) Sustainable forest management by avoiding extraction of premature trees below 30 years of age.	
	(5) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks through increasing indigenous high carbon value tree species and cover.	
Scale	(1) National and subnational forests defined based on national circumstance e.g. 10% canopy cover for Kenya.	Decision 2/CP. 13 UNFCCC (2009), Republic of Kenya (2010a)
	(2) Subnational projects expected to be nested into national systems.	
	(3) Subnational activities to be verified using expert standards.	
MVR	(1) Credible, result based nationally implemented MVR	Decision 4/CP.15 Decision 1/CP.16
	(2) The Monitoring process to apply scientific techniques of remote sensing e.g. FAO approaches within the IPCC's LULUCF guide.	Decision 12/CP.17 Decision 10/CP.19 Decision 11/CP.19 Decision 13/CP.19
	(3) International verification through internationally accepted standards such as the VCS or team of experts.	Decision 14/CP.19 Decision 15/CP.19 UNFCCC (2009)
	(4) Avoiding leakage – avoiding shifting drivers of deforestation to other areas. National MVR to help avoid leakage.	
	(5) Additionality – requires that REDD activities increase carbon storage above the level at which of would occur without the activity.	
	(6) Permanence – measures to ensure that emissions avoided are not reversed through future deforestation.	
Finance	(1) Result based funding	Decision 4/CP.15
	(2) Both market and public sources: can be in form of grants, loans, budgetary support among others.	Decision 2/CP. 17 Decision 9/CP. 19 (UNFCCC, 2009).
	(3) Funds should be managed Principles for REDD+ finances including transparency, accountability, predictability	(UNFCCC, 2012)
Safeguards	(1) Community consultation on land and carbon rights.	Decision 4/CP15 Decision 1/CP.16
	(2) Community consent in line with the UNFCCC safeguards.	Decision 12/CP.17 Decision 12/CP19
	(3) Sustainable development and poverty alleviation	FCPF (2012)
	(4) Equitable benefit sharing and conflict resolution mechanism	
	(5) Biodiversity conservation	

Effectively curbing deforestation through REDD+ depends on existing policies and socioeconomic settings governing forests at national and local levels (Leach and Scoones, 2015). Existing policies and socioeconomic setting are characterised with multiple stakeholders and national sectors linked to forests in one way or another. Ensuring multi-stakeholder engagements in a manner that creates coherence across the interests of various forest stakeholders is critical for implementation (Appendix 1/CP. 16, g) (Ribot, 2009).

Concerns have been raised about the coherence between global policies emphasising sustainable forest management and national

sectoral policies, especially in the context of rising deforestation in tropical areas (Chundama, 2009). For instance, the 2012 Earth Summit raised concerns about the poor performance of international treaties in curbing deforestation in national contexts where they are implemented (UN, 2012).

Existing debates have usefully investigated the preparedness of developing countries to adopt REDD+ rules (Kanowski et al., 2011; Minang et al., 2014b) as well as their level of stakeholder involvement in national readiness processes (Brown et al., 2011; Cerbu et al., 2011; Vatn and Angelsen, 2009). Yet, several studies (e.g. Minang et al., 2014a), Ghazoul et al. (2010) report many instances of poor stakeholder engagements in national REDD+ processes. Other studies also reveal that national policies, especially those outside of the forestry sector, are key drivers of deforestation in many developing countries (Wehkamp et al., 2015; Brown and Bird, 2008). Most of these studies strongly recommended the need for institutional transformations and enhanced stakeholder consultations in national REDD+ decisions. Informing such institutional transformation requires knowledge about where and how various sectoral policies might undermine or support REDD+ rules.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the implementation of global REDD+ rules within Kenyan policies and identify sources of coherences and conflicts between REDD+ design rules and existing sectoral policies and local socioeconomic settings. The specific objectives are: (1) to evaluate how global REDD+ rules are instituted into national settings, (2) to analyse the stakeholder engagement in the national REDD+ process in Kenya, (3) to analyse the interplay between global REDD+ rules and Kenya's sectoral policies on forests, land and agriculture and (4) to assess the interplay between REDD+ rules and local socioeconomic setting.

By addressing these objectives, this paper provides insightful and comprehensive understanding of how policies are crucial in addressing deforestation in Kenya and elsewhere. The Kenyan case can provide lessons for other sub-Saharan African countries preparing to implement REDD+. The next section presents the study's theoretical framework. A description of methods employed, results and discussions follow subsequently.

## 2. Theoretical framework: policy interplay

Policy interplay refers to the process by which two or more policies interact and influence each other's effectiveness (Young, 2002). Decisions made under one policy (source policy) affect the effectiveness of another policy (target policy). Policy interplay is crucial in natural resource governance, especially in the context of fast emerging social systems that depend on existing institutional contexts. As such, policy interplay has become a critical variable in policy analysis by enhancing our understanding of policy effectiveness (Young, 2002; Gehring and Oberthür, 2009).

Policy interplay can be framed in various ways: symmetrical, unidirectional or vertical versus horizontal dynamics. In symmetrical interactions, two policies complement and equally influence each other (e.g. legal rules that support and shape effective operations of ecosystem markets). In unidirectional interactions, one policy has more effects on the other (e.g. international regulations modifying local level institutions (Young, 2002; Gehring and Oberthür, 2009; Oberthür and Stokke, 2011). Vertical interplay refers to the interaction between policies operating at different organisational levels such as global forestry policies interacting with national sectoral policies or local customary laws. This vertical interplay may involve adjacent institutions such as national and local government institutions or distant institutions such as global environmental rules and informal local settings. Furthermore, horizontal interplay mainly involves the interaction between two policies operating at the same level of social organisations (e.g. agriculture and forestry policies at the national level). Both vertical and horizontal interplay are relevant in REDD+ where global processes

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