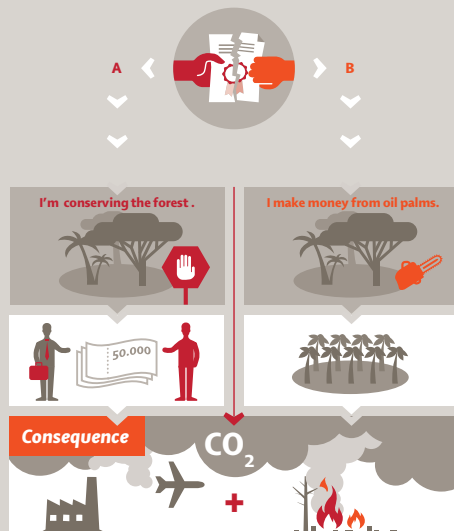


The **Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation mechanism** aims to create financial incentives for forest conservation in developing countries. REDD+ has two main objectives: cutting greenhouse gas emissions by reducing deforestation and providing alternative income sources for marginalised rural areas in the Global South. Moreover, REDD+ may serve as an offsetting mechanism for greenhouse gases emitted in the Global North.



Problem

Competing and ambiguous land tenure in many tropical frontier areas makes forest carbon offsetting a rather risky approach for mitigating climate change, especially if different actors lay claim to the very same piece of forest. One such actor may be the **state**, who has received REDD+ payments from an industrialised country for offsetting emissions, and another may be a **local forest owner** who has sold the very same piece of forest to an oil palm company.



Instead of cutting emissions, forest carbon offsetting could give rise to **additional greenhouse gas emissions** if property rights are not clearly defined. Those actors that have paid **forest owner A** for offsetting emissions by conserving forests have emitted greenhouse gases. If **forest owner B** converts the same forest area to an oil palm plantation, the greenhouse gases fixed in the forest are released additionally.

Case study: Indonesia



Sources: CAIT, Climate Data Explorer, <http://clit.wri.org/historical> (accessed 18.02.2016); Hein, J., Adiwibowo, S., Ditzsch, C., Boyani, Soetarto, E. & Faust, H. (2015). Rescaling of Access and Property Relations in a Frontier Landscape: Insights from Jambi, Indonesia. *The Professional Geographer*, 1-10. Indrarto, G. B., P. Murharjanti, J. Khatarina, I. Pulungan, F. Ivalerina, J. Rahman, M. N. Prana, I. A. P. Resosudarmo, and E. Muhanom. 2012. The context of REDD+ in Indonesia. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria. 2013. Laporan Akhir Tahun Jakarta Selatan, Indonesia: Sekretariat Nasional Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA). Van der Werf, G. R., D. C. Morton, R. S. DeFries, J. G. Olivier, P. S. Kasibhatla, R. B. Jackson, G. J. Collatz, and J. Randerson. 2009. CO₂ emissions from forest loss. *Nature geoscience* 2(11):737-738.

Outlook

1. A non-offsetting approach to REDD+: Investment in forest conservation is urgently needed in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve biodiversity. As an offsetting mechanism, REDD+ does not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Land conflicts could even give rise to additional greenhouse gas emissions.

>> Real and additional emissions reductions can be achieved by implementing non-offsetting approaches to REDD+.

2. Land reforms: Land conflicts should be resolved prior to implementing REDD+ by reforming land and forest tenure. Decision-makers should consider that tenure reforms and tenure formalisation create both winners and losers. Successful reforms require strong political coalitions.

3. What are the root causes of land conflicts? When it comes to designing socially inclusive land reforms, it is essential to understand the historical root causes of land conflicts and ambiguous and conflicting land tenure.

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