

REDD+ Institutional Options Assessment

Developing an Efficient, Effective, and Equitable Institutional
Framework for REDD+ under the UNFCCC

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Acronyms

AWG-LCA	Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the UNFCCC
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
COP	Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC
ERT	Expert review team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility of the World Bank
FIP	Forest Investment Program of the World Bank
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HLB	High-level Body for REDD+ (as defined in section 3.2 of this Assessment)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IWG-IFR	Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
NAMAs	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation, forest Degradation, conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

Executive Summary

The REDD+ Institutional Options Assessment summarizes the institutional issues that must be considered in order to establish an effective, efficient, and equitable international institutional framework for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation, forest Degradation, conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+). The assessment is informed by the ongoing United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations for a Copenhagen agreement. It further builds on the notion that REDD+ implementation will likely progress through different (but not necessarily formalized) phases, including: national REDD+ strategy development and capacity building (Phase 1), implementation of national REDD+ policies and measures (Phase 2), and full-scale implementation (Phase 3).

International REDD+ institutional arrangements will unavoidably have a challenging task of interacting with national governments relative to the performance of their national REDD+ strategies, while not encroaching on the sovereign discretion of nations to design adequate and acceptable policies and measures nationally. The international institutional and implementation arrangements will have substantial consequences for national economies and for the impact of REDD+ on many forest-dependent communities, including indigenous peoples. REDD+ institutional arrangements must therefore originate from a process characterized by the highest possible political legitimacy and must strive to maintain and enhance their legitimacy over time.

Irrespective of the agreed final institutional arrangement, a REDD+ mechanism that incentivizes measurable action, efficiently channels resources, and duly accounts for the different national and subnational interests would have to include the following essential functions: oversight, financial support, standard setting, certification of results, and accountability. Institutions that fulfill these functions must be able to take political decisions, implement them through operational arrangements, and inform them by providing technical

assessments. The Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC will have to be supported by institutions that oversee the implementation of a REDD+ mechanism, by implementation agencies, and by technical bodies.

It is likely that REDD+ actions will have to rely on different funding sources and financing instruments in order to meet the needs of developing countries and provide some flexibility for the support by developed countries. A variety of institutional models could be set up to accommodate these different funding sources and the essential functions of a REDD+ mechanism. This report explores three models that could function autonomously, operate concurrently, or emerge at different stages in the implementation of an international REDD+ mechanism.

The **REDD+/NAMA Register Model** considers the institutional requirements for the international recognition of bilateral or unilateral REDD+ actions and financial support in a REDD+/Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) register. Such a register could facilitate the tracking and coordination of funding sources and the monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) of internationally recognized actions and corresponding financial support. It would provide transparency and help ensure the integrity of an international REDD+ mechanism. The REDD+/NAMA register could initially be operated by an institution outside of the UNFCCC and later become part of a more permanent REDD+ institutional architecture.

The **COP-Mandated Fund Model** sets out the institutional requirements for the establishment of a fund to support REDD+ actions under the authority of the COP. Such a COP-mandated fund could be dedicated to REDD+ or to broader climate change mitigation finance. It could be administered by decentralized arrangements, the COP, or one or several operating entities. The flow of finance would go from the trustee of the fund directly or via a REDD+ agency to the national institutions of the REDD+ country. The arrangements that support the fund should be flexible enough to (a) allow different levels of initial responsibilities and involvement of national institutions, and (b) devolve responsibilities to national institutions as they grow their capacities.

Under the **REDD+ Market Model**, principles, standards, and institutional capacity would be agreed to allow the quantification of GHG emission reductions and enhancement in stocks that could be converted into tradable carbon units. At a minimum, a market-compatible model would require a forest emissions inventory, a reference level endorsed by the COP, and a national or international GHG registry. The COP could define criteria based on which standards for GHG performance metrics, social and environmental impacts, and participation requirements could be developed. REDD+ countries would monitor performance against a reference level of deforestation.

Ultimately, the success of an international REDD+ mechanism will depend on the existence of national arrangements that are able to deliver emission reductions at scale. To ensure transparency and inclusiveness, decision-making processes should include a system that engages representatives of forest-dependent people, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

While a detailed discussion of national arrangements supporting REDD+ falls outside the scope of this assessment, the functions associated with how national institutions interact with the international REDD+

architecture are relevant to this analysis. These include: managing the relationship with entities operating at the international, multilateral, or bilateral level (including designing and submitting country-driven REDD+ strategies); implementing internationally agreed minimum standards; and overseeing the relations with the international carbon market.

The urgent need to reverse current trends of tropical deforestation and the positive political momentum favors the establishment of an interim phase to accelerate action on REDD+. The Copenhagen COP (COP-15) could facilitate REDD+ accelerated action by adopting a number of relevant decisions, including the decision to recognize early action and financial support undertaken in compliance with agreed REDD+ principles. In addition, COP-15 could authorize and adopt some guidance for the establishment of a REDD+ interim mechanism. Such guidance could address the allocation of competences for the exercise of some essential tasks such as mobilizing funds, applying agreed standards, approving REDD+ projects and programs, advising on technical aspects, and admitting and hearing complaints by affected stakeholders. New or existing entities, either within or outside the Convention framework, could perform these essential tasks during the interim phase.

1 Introduction

This REDD+ Institutional Options Assessment summarizes the institutional issues that must be considered in order to establish an effective, efficient, and equitable international institutional framework for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation, forest Degradation, conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+). Reaching an agreement on the functions (what needs to be done) and roles (which institutions should perform these functions) to support REDD+ is a central aspect of the negotiations on enhanced mitigation action by developing countries under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

An agreement on the cornerstones of a REDD+ mechanism at the 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP-15) in December 2009 in Copenhagen would, if properly designed, illustrate that a partnership between developed and developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in a cooperative international framework is possible. An agreement on REDD+ would address one of the largest sources of GHG emissions in the developing world. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment report suggests that the land use sector has the potential to contribute about a third of the global GHG emission reductions necessary to achieve the 450 parts per million carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) target by 2020, while delivering positive development benefits.

An assessment of the function and roles of REDD+ institutions cannot be complete without taking into account the broader institutional architecture under the UNFCCC. Therefore, the institutional models analyzed in the context of this report place REDD+ in the context of proposals for developing country Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) under the UNFCCC, with relevant adjustments to account for REDD+ special features wherever necessary. NAMAs and REDD+ both involve actions being undertaken by and/or within developing countries to help mitigate climate change. Despite these obvious overlaps, both topics are currently discussed as separate agenda items in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) under the UNFCCC. While

REDD+ may eventually be considered just another type of NAMA, it has a number of unique characteristics. Most important, achieving large-scale REDD+ over the long term will present risks and opportunities to large numbers of indigenous and forest-dependent communities, raising social implications and requiring social safeguards.

This Assessment anticipates that while a Copenhagen agreement will establish the basis for a longer-term international climate agreement, the details and formal entry into force of such agreement may take several years. In order to respond to the urgent need to address tropical deforestation, this Assessment considers the need for an interim finance mechanism, which may be necessary as soon as 2010 to support developing country action on REDD+. Any interim mechanism should, however, correspond to principles and standards agreed to under the UNFCCC so that it could be integrated into a more permanent institutional arrangement.

The report builds on the REDD Options Assessment Report (www.redd-oar.org) and addresses an area many thought might benefit by further in-depth analysis and assessment—that is, the institutional arrangement supporting a REDD+ mechanism. We are grateful to the Government of Norway for renewed financial and non-financial support for this endeavor, and we are indebted to the 40 national and international experts that participated in the online consultations on the draft report, and to the 20 individuals who traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a highly interactive consultative meeting. While the authors take full responsibility for the content of this report, they received their inspiration and relied on the feedback received from the broader community of REDD+ and UNFCCC institutional experts.

This Assessment is structured as follows: section 2 sets the context by describing the status of REDD+ negotiations and implementation, section 3 lists the relevant functions that an international REDD+ mechanism must fulfill and introduces institutions that could execute such functions, section 4 analyzes the functions and roles supporting the various complementary institutional models that could coexist as part of an international REDD+ mechanism, section 5 considers the role of national-level institutions, and section 6 evaluates the necessary institutional requirements for mobilizing interim finance for REDD+.

2 Taking Stock: Negotiating and Implementing REDD+

2.1 Current REDD+ Negotiations

This Assessment draws on progress thus far in the REDD+ negotiations under the UNFCCC.¹ A mechanism for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation was first proposed by a group of countries led by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica at COP-11 in 2005 in Montreal. A contact group was established, and through the Bali Action Plan at COP-13, Parties decided to include policy approaches and positive incentives on REDD-related issues in the negotiation agenda for the “*full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012.*” The Bali Road Map also encouraged demonstration activities and provided indicative methodological guidance.

Since then, several technical aspects have been discussed and addressed by Parties under the auspices of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including the establishment of reference levels, the treatment of leakage, and non-permanence. The progress on the discussions surrounding methodological aspects of REDD+ have, to some extent, cleared the way for negotiators to move on to the more political and institutional challenges related to the implementation of a future REDD+ mechanism. Current negotiations focus on the need for appropriate and predictable financial support for REDD+ and other mitigation actions, the establishment of new (or reformed) funding mechanisms, and structuring the access to these funds by developing countries.

Given the progress made thus far, a Copenhagen agreement on REDD+ could reasonably be expected to include agreement on the objectives, scope, and principles of REDD+ in a treaty instrument, accompanied by a set of COP decisions to deal with methodological issues and spur immediate action in a period prior to the entry into force of a new agreement. These decisions could set out the scope and the implementation phases of REDD+, and provide guidance on key principles identified by the Parties as essential to a successful REDD+, such as issues of governance, participation of local communities and indigenous peoples, encouraging biodiversity, and socioeconomic benefits.

¹ Document FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/INF1 dated 22 June 2009, at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/awglca6/eng/inf01.pdf>. See, in particular, Sections III.B on mitigation by developing countries, III.C on REDD, and IV.A on enhanced action on the provision of financial resources and investment.

To the extent possible, modalities for forest-sector mitigation actions should fit into the generic modalities being developed for NAMAs, referred to in para 1b(ii) of the Bali Action Plan. Recent developments in the negotiations on NAMAs indicate convergence around a number of ideas, including:

- Three types of NAMAs: (1) actions undertaken by developing countries and not enabled or supported by other Parties (“unilateral NAMAs”), (2) actions supported by developed countries (“support path”), and (3) actions undertaken to acquire carbon credits (“accreditation path”).
- A NAMA register that would be established to facilitate matching actions with support and to ensure there were processes in place for monitoring, reporting, and verification of both actions and the corresponding financial support.
- The registration of national schedules with the UNFCCC that would list particular goals, long-term national GHG limitation or reduction pathways, and underpinning policies and measures. Parties would establish, regularly update, and implement these schedules.

The negotiations around REDD+ have progressed faster than the discussion of NAMAs, and some Parties are reluctant to discuss REDD+ alongside NAMAs until these discussions have become more concrete. The comparatively advanced status of the REDD+ negotiations is expected to enable a constructive exchange around the institutional arrangements governing REDD+ that may also inform the deliberations on institutional arrangements of financial mechanisms more generally.

2.2 Early REDD+ Implementation

A number of international initiatives have emerged following the mandate included in the Bali Road Map for supporting REDD+ demonstration activities, over and above ongoing activities in the area of forest protection. Around 40 developing countries are now engaged in REDD+ strategy development and pilot activities. The fact that REDD+ implementation is already underway is a distinctive feature of REDD+ compared to other mitigation sectors. Relevant initiatives are implemented through the following international, bilateral, and unilateral programs:

- International REDD+ initiatives include the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the collaborative partnership program on REDD between the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (UN-REDD), the World Bank's Forest Investment Program (FIP), and historic players in the field of forest protection such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).
- Many developed countries have initiated new cooperation efforts in response to the invitation for REDD+ demonstration activities in the Bali Road Map, most notably Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, but also Australia's International Forest Carbon Initiative, and the Congo Basin Forest Fund managed by the African Development Bank and supported by Norway and the United Kingdom, among others.
- Many forest countries like China, Costa Rica, and countries of the Congo Basin have recently expanded domestic forest protection and sustainable forest management efforts, enhanced sustainable forest management capabilities, and modernized their forest sector legislation. Brazil's Plan of Action for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon is a major example of a domestic initiative. It has been implemented jointly since 2004 by 13 ministries of the federal government coordinated by the Office of the President.

2.3 REDD+ Phases

To be effective, a REDD+ mechanism needs to include flexible instruments that provide adequate, predictable, and sustainable resources to support REDD+ actions at the national level. There is a growing consensus that as a country moves toward full-scale REDD+ implementation it will need to develop a REDD+ strategy; build monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) capacity; and adopt relevant enabling policies. Financial and technical support should be designed to incentivize the ability to implement REDD+ actions without further delay, and should be flexible and dynamic enough to take into account developing countries' differing national circumstances and capacities.

There appears to be some consensus among negotiators that REDD+ implementation will pass through phases that encourage countries to progress from the initial building

of capacities toward achieving long-term REDD+ results in a measurable, reportable, and verifiable way. While the various phases would not need to be formalized, phases in implementation are likely to correspond to various mechanisms and initiatives providing financial support to REDD+ countries (such as the World Bank's FCPF support of initial REDD+ readiness).

Without prejudging the outcomes of the Copenhagen COP, this Assessment is built on the following understanding of three phases in REDD+ implementation:

- Phase 1: National REDD+ strategy development and capacity building (REDD+ readiness);
- Phases 2a and 2b: Implementation of national REDD+ policies and measures; and
- Phase 3: Full-scale implementation.

In many countries, support would begin with capacity building, institutional strengthening, and the building of monitoring capacities (Phase 1). The implementation of policies addressing the drivers of deforestation would create the enabling environment for REDD+. REDD+ countries could receive performance-based support triggered by the achievement of agreed indicators (Phase 2a). As soon as countries have the relevant data and capacities, they could also adopt a national reference level that allows for the accounting for GHG benefits (Phase 2b). During the period in which a country lacks the capacity to account for fully measured tons of GHG reductions, climate benefits could be estimated based on the basis of proxy indicators for reduced deforestation.

Phase 3 could rely on a results-based compensation mechanism for fully measured, reported, and verified emission reductions and removals from the forestry sector. This last phase could also receive funding through the marketing of carbon units on international carbon markets. Countries could pilot this phase by implementing subnational activities and building MRV and project implementation capacities.

Taking into account the different capacities of countries, REDD+ countries would navigate these phases at their own pace. They could also leapfrog earlier phases if the conditions for the participation in more advanced phases are fulfilled.

Table 2.1 summarizes the various elements of a phased approach toward REDD+ and illustrates the corresponding financing mechanisms and the required MRV capabilities.

Table 2.1: The phased approach toward REDD+

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
✓ Activities	<p>National REDD+ strategy development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of REDD+ policies and legislative action. • National consultations. • Institutional strengthening. 	<p>National REDD strategy implementation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land tenure and governance reforms. • Forest law enforcement. • Forest management planning. • Reduced impact logging. • Expansion of forest reserves. • Agriculture modernization. • Modernization of wood energy supply. • Wildfire and pest management. • Payment for environmental services. 	
✓ Financing	<p>Initial support for national REDD+ strategy development and REDD+ readiness.</p> <p>Currently, provided by the FCPF, UN-REDD, and various bilateral initiatives.</p>	<p>Bilateral and multilateral funding from bilateral and multilateral sources and COP-mandated funds. Continued funding under this mechanism would be results based.</p> <p>Phase 2a: Estimates for support of approx. EUR 2 billion over 2010–15 for preparatory activities.¹</p> <p>Phase 2b: Estimates of approx. EUR 13–23 billion over 2010–15 assuming 25% REDD by 2015.¹</p>	<p>Market or nonmarket funding that rewards performance on the basis of quantified forest emission reductions and removals against agreed reference levels.</p> <p>Expansion of Phase 2b with EUR 7–14 billion per year assuming 50% REDD by 2020.²</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Connection to compliance markets.</p>
✓ Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy adopted. • Legislative and policy assessment completed. • Consultations conducted. • Institutions in place. 	<p>Phase 2a: Measures enforced.</p> <p>Phase 2b: Simplified and conservative estimate of emissions and removals against agreed reference level.</p>	<p>Compliance-grade estimate of emission reductions and removals against agreed reference level.</p>
✓ MRV Capacities	<p>Capacity development.</p>	<p>Phase 2a: Further capacity development.</p> <p>Phase 2b: Basic monitoring capacities.</p>	<p>Advanced monitoring capacities.</p>
✓ Relationship with COP's Overall Mitigation Agenda	<p>Demonstration activities encouraged by COP-13 (Bali Road Map).</p> <p>Informs initial stages of NAMA preparation.</p>	<p>Interim operations to be launched by COP-15, based as much as possible on NAMA decisions and existing structures. Transition into UNFCCC framework as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Integration into NAMA structures.</p>

¹ Summary of the preliminary report of the Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD, second draft, IWG-IFR, September 23, 2009.

² Communication from the European Commission, "Stepping Up International Climate Finance: A European Blueprint for the Copenhagen Deal," COM(2009) 475/3, September 10, 2009.

3 Key Issues

An international REDD+ mechanism needs to include flexible instruments that provide adequate, predictable, and sustainable resources to support REDD+ actions. The national circumstances of REDD+ countries are extremely diverse and policy incentives will have to respond to different phases in the implementation of REDD+. A REDD+ mechanism needs to be backed by strong national and international institutions to govern fund mobilization, allocation, and disbursement. In accordance with the Bali Action Plan, agreed institutional arrangements should also enable the review, monitoring, and verification of developing country action and developed country contributions to it.

The successful implementation of REDD+ will depend on the capacity of national institutions entrusted with carrying out REDD+ activities. These institutions will need to demonstrate the effectiveness, responsiveness, environmental integrity, and fiduciary accountability necessary to gain the confidence of international investors and local communities. An international REDD+ mechanism will play a crucial role in many forest countries in building this capacity and this confidence.

Moreover, REDD+ institutional arrangements will unavoidably have to deliver tough judgments in relation to the relative performance of national REDD+ strategies and actions, while not encroaching on the sovereign discretion of nations to design adequate and acceptable policies and measures nationally. The international institutional and implementation arrangements will have substantial consequences for national economies and for the impact of REDD+ on many forest-dependent communities, including indigenous peoples. REDD+ institutional arrangements must therefore originate from a process characterized by the highest possible political legitimacy and must strive to maintain and enhance their legitimacy over time.

3.1 Functions

There are a number of functions that will need to be part of the design of an international REDD+ mechanism to ensure that such mechanism incentivizes real and measurable emission reductions and enhancements of removals (environmental integrity); that it efficiently channels resources to REDD+ countries (financial

efficiency); and that it is accountable to national and subnational actors affected by REDD+ actions (participation and due process). Many proposals for the establishment of a REDD+ mechanism have been presented by Parties and have been included in the negotiation text of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA). Most of these proposals, however, are limited to certain elements or to a distinct part of the design of such mechanism. Irrespective of what the final decision on the institutional arrangement will be, five main functions can be distilled from the various proposals:

- **Oversight.** Oversight entails the setting of overall policies and program priorities for a REDD+ mechanism. This includes taking decisions of important political character, such as determining whether a particular country is eligible for REDD+ support, and managing relationships between the REDD+ mechanism and other institutions necessary for its functioning and, once in operation, oversight of the whole mechanism, including the financial support provided, to ensure that it is operating according to principles and standards established.
- **Financial support.** Financial support encompasses three main tasks: resource mobilization or revenue raising, allocation, and disbursement. The three prerequisites for a successful funding mechanism are: (a) that it is well funded in terms of quantity, sustainability, and predictability; (b) that resources are allocated and distributed fairly, effectively, and efficiently; and (c) that the decisions on what to fund are taken according to agreed principles and criteria.
- **Standard setting.** The results-based character of REDD+ requires the formulation of criteria and indicators that allow the determination of performance and the eligibility for incentives. Standard setting includes the development of technical or fiduciary criteria and social and environmental standards.
- **Certification of results.** This is the function that ensures the quality of the actors involved and of the products resulting from their involvement. Certification of results and operations is based on a technical expert assessment and the political approval of such assessment.

- **Accountability.** This is the system that ensures that the various entities and institutions involved in a REDD+ mechanism can be held responsible for their actions and decisions.

Table 3.1 breaks down the functions of a REDD+ mechanism into specific tasks. Depending on the REDD+ institutional arrangements finally adopted, not all of these tasks may be relevant.

3.2 Institutions

Either existing institutions or new ones would have to be entrusted with the roles of carrying out the functions and tasks enumerated above. At a minimum, a functional international REDD+ mechanism would involve:

- The **Conference of the Parties (COP)**, which exercises the overall oversight function for a REDD+ mechanism and sets the standards that will determine which kinds of REDD+ activities and REDD+ support are recognized as contributing to the implementation of the Convention.
- An **Executive or “High-level” Body (HLB)** accountable to the COP and entrusted with the day-to-day supervision and oversight of the REDD+ mechanism, including through the development and application of standards. The role of a high-level body could be fulfilled by an existing or newly created entity or could be integrated into the broader NAMA support structure or set up as a dedicated REDD+ entity.
- **Administrative and technical bodies** that provide secretariat support to the high-level body, support international MRV, contribute to the development of standards, and provide technical advice. Technical advice can be provided by expert panels established under the high-level body or by existing national and international institutions.
- One or more **REDD+ agencies**, accountable to the high-level body, and responsible for the design and implementation of REDD+ activities in accordance with agreed policies, and that meet agreed criteria (for example, the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), multilateral development banks, UNDP, UNEP, and bilateral development agencies).
- **National entities in REDD+ countries** that would perform the functions of REDD+ agencies within particular countries, or work in partnership with the REDD+ agencies in carrying out REDD+ activities, and that meet agreed criteria (for example, the Amazon Fund).
- **Institutions and market** arrangements in developed countries to deliver funding and create markets for REDD+.

To ensure the political legitimacy of an international REDD+ mechanism and an environment conducive to the participation of both developed and developing countries in REDD+, the governing body/ies of a REDD+ mechanism should provide for equitable representation of developed and developing countries and take their decisions through a transparent, inclusive, and accountable process. It should respond to the overall guidance of the governance structure of a UNFCCC by establishing work programs that are responsive to the agreement’s midterm and long-term goals, and that are consistent with UNFCCC principles.

To ensure transparency and inclusiveness, the decision-making process should include a system that seeks the views of and engages with representatives of forest-dependent people, civil society organizations, and the private sector. It should also establish and be accountable to a body that can receive and processes complaints and concerns from local communities, as well as private sector investors, regarding the consistency of REDD+ activities with agreed standards and policies.

Before considering the establishment of new bodies or institutions, it is crucial to review whether any existing institutions could perform some or all of the functions listed above. There are certain functions that can be performed only by the COP, in particular, those that involve high-level political decisions that, in essence, determine which kinds of activities and financial flows will be recognized as official contributions toward the fulfillment of Parties’ actions and commitments under the UNFCCC. Decisions of this nature that need to be made with a certain degree of frequency would most likely be delegated by the COP to a high-level body.

Figure 3.1: Functions and tasks of a REDD+ mechanism



The existing institutions that are most cited by Parties as having a potential role in performing the REDD+ functions include the GEF, the World Bank, and the FAO, UNDP, and UNEP, which have together created UN-REDD. Each of these institutions has some experience in supporting forest management in developing countries, and some are beginning to fund REDD+ specific activities on the ground. If these are successful, they will have helped establish the basis on which full-scale REDD+ operations can begin.

While each of these institutions has relevant REDD+ capacity, many Parties, particularly developing-country Parties, believe they could do so only if they are subject to the authority of the COP and/or undergo significant governance reforms that allow for balanced and

transparent governance. Developing-country concerns are less about gaps in institutional or technical capacity than about gaps in legitimacy and credibility.

Other multilateral development banks and non-governmental organizations are also positioning themselves to play a role in supporting REDD+ activities but would likely operate on a smaller scale within a COP-endorsed system. This role might be analogous to the role of “Executing Agencies” under the GEF (Box 3.1).

Finally, it should be kept in mind that bilateral, multilateral (including UN agencies), and regional aid agencies may become a significant source of REDD+ support and may operate in parallel with multilateral arrangements. The coherence of these activities might be promoted through COP guidance and internationally certified strategies.

Box 3.1: Existing institutions that play or may play a role in REDD+ implementation

Global Environment Facility (GEF): The GEF does not have a REDD+ program per se, but it does have a mandate to raise resources and make grants to developing countries in support of the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Its Council and Secretariat could, in theory, and provided the proper reforms were undertaken, perform the oversight functions outlined above in a way that was accountable to the COP. It would, however, need to overcome the perception shared by many developing countries that its Council is dominated by donors, that its project cycle is slow and cumbersome, and that its present resource allocation framework is biased toward the high-GHG-emitting countries and against smaller, less-powerful countries.

World Bank: The World Bank has pioneered a number of funds aimed at reducing GHG emissions through investments in forests, and could perform most of the functions enumerated above. Its Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the Forest Investment Program (FIP) are preparing countries to participate in REDD+, and are hoping to scale-up toward investments in compensated reductions of GHG emissions. While the Bank has the legal and staffing capacity to design and execute REDD+ projects, its independence from the COP raises concerns similar to those about the GEF—a perception of an imbalanced governance structure and a lack of sufficient accountability to the COP. The Bank has also developed what many consider a controversial track record of investments in timber as a source of export revenue and may lack some legitimacy in the eyes of certain stakeholder groups.

United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD): The focus of UN-REDD is on joint action on the ground in collaboration with the World Bank and GEF and focuses mostly on helping countries with capacity building and REDD readiness programs. As such, it is in a position to cover only part of the functions of a REDD+ fund under the authority of the COP, but by involving the partner agencies—FAO, UNDP, and UNEP—more directly, these functions could be expanded.

4 Funding Approaches and Institutional Models

There seems to be wide acknowledgement that, at least in the near term, REDD+ activities are likely to rely on a number of different funding sources and implementation arrangements to meet the variety of needs of both developed and developing countries. It is also likely that some developed countries will prefer to support, or be able to contribute more easily to supporting, REDD+ if a variety of financing arrangements are available to them. Funding sources would include both private and public sector funding, with the former probably mostly related to carbon markets while the latter includes bilateral, multilateral government, and public sector funding support. Institutions will need to ensure the environmental integrity of the actions and the sustained availability of finance if an international REDD+ mechanism is to succeed.

Centralizing and/or closely coordinating REDD+ functions will be essential to:

- Ensure that REDD+ resources are made available with equal opportunity to as many eligible countries as possible;
- Operationalize the consistent and comparable registration and monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) of REDD+-derived NAMAs, and of the support of these NAMAs, within the common framework being developed under a Copenhagen agreement; and
- Create the common standards necessary for the eventual inclusion of REDD+ offsets/allowances into a global market.

To capture the variety of institutional arrangements that could perform the REDD+ functions outlined above, accommodate a variety of funding sources and implementing strategies, and generate a fair and effective REDD+ mechanism, this section explores the implications of three institutional models. Each model could function independently, could operate in parallel, or could emerge at different phases in the development of REDD+, while serving the needs of developing and developed countries (Figure 4.1). The models are:

- **The REDD+/NAMA Register Model:** The registration of bilateral and unilateral REDD+ actions and financial support in an internationally managed REDD+/NAMA register;
- **The COP-Mandated Fund Model:** The funding of REDD+ actions through a COP-mandated international fund; and
- **The REDD+ Market Model:** The funding of REDD+ actions through approaches that account for tons of GHG reductions and are thus carbon-market compatible.

The analysis focuses on the functions and roles that need to be fulfilled internationally to support these models and ensure recognition of REDD+ actions and corresponding financial support under the UNFCCC.

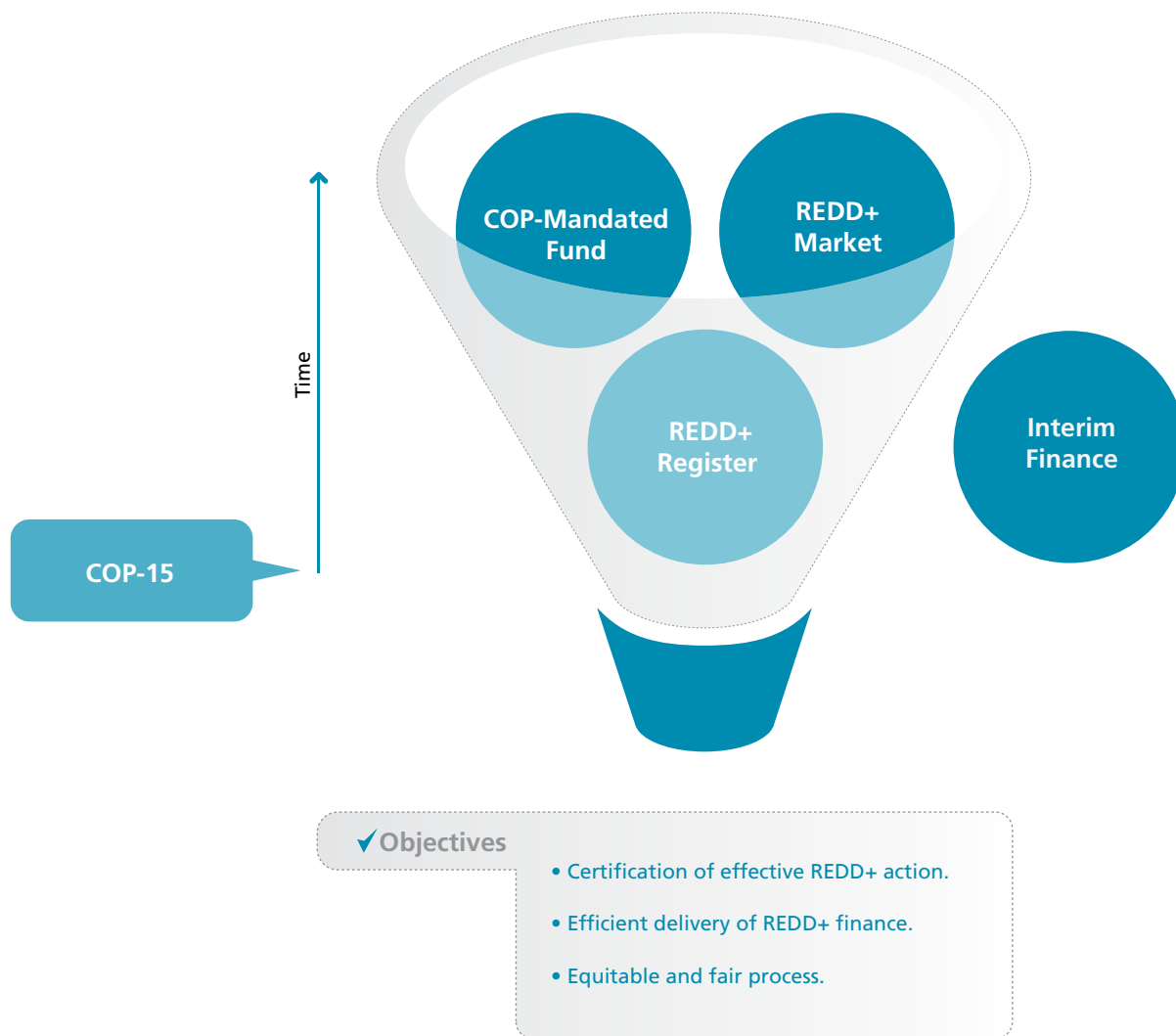
4.1 REDD+/NAMA Register Model

This section describes the implementation of an institutional model that would allow for the registration of REDD+ actions and financial support for such actions. It anticipates that a Copenhagen agreement will establish a system for the international recognition of REDD+ actions and financial support for such action, possibly help to match action with support, and enable the MRV of both REDD+ actions and support. Since a REDD+ register is likely to eventually be integrated into a broader NAMA support and register structure, it is referred to as the REDD+/NAMA Register Model, but could function independently on an interim basis. The flow of finance would go directly from developed country to the REDD+ country, rather than from a central COP-mandated fund.

4.1.1 Context

Deliberations under Bali Action Plan item 1b(ii) (NAMAs) include the notion of a register of action and support. Various UNFCCC Parties have proposed specific steps for establishing a NAMA register, including the registration of developing country actions enabled through their own resources and verification at the national level, and presented ideas on MRV for finance and technology transfer.

Figure 4.1: REDD+ funding models



REDD+ countries may choose to unilaterally declare their intent to implement specific policies and measures or to meet certain GHG reduction goals. They may also commit to implement REDD+ actions or achieve REDD+ results in return for financial and technical support from developed countries for such actions. Such declarations, which are expected to be included in national REDD+ strategies, can be matched to support from another country or a group of countries.

Bilateral agreements may regulate the contractual relationship under which these Parties match REDD+ actions with financial support (Figure 4.2). While such bilateral agreements would not be directly subject to COP oversight, if Parties wish to be recognized in a REDD+/NAMA register, the agreements would need to meet standards set by the COP for the MRV of actions and support. The actions and the funding agreed will also be subject to the international MRV procedures agreed by the COP, including any agreed compliance procedures.

4.1.2 Functions and Roles

A REDD+/NAMA register could facilitate (a) registering of proposed REDD+ actions, (b) tracking and coordination of funding sources, and (c) MRV of actions and support. It would ensure transparency and help ensure the integrity of REDD+ actions and bilateral support.

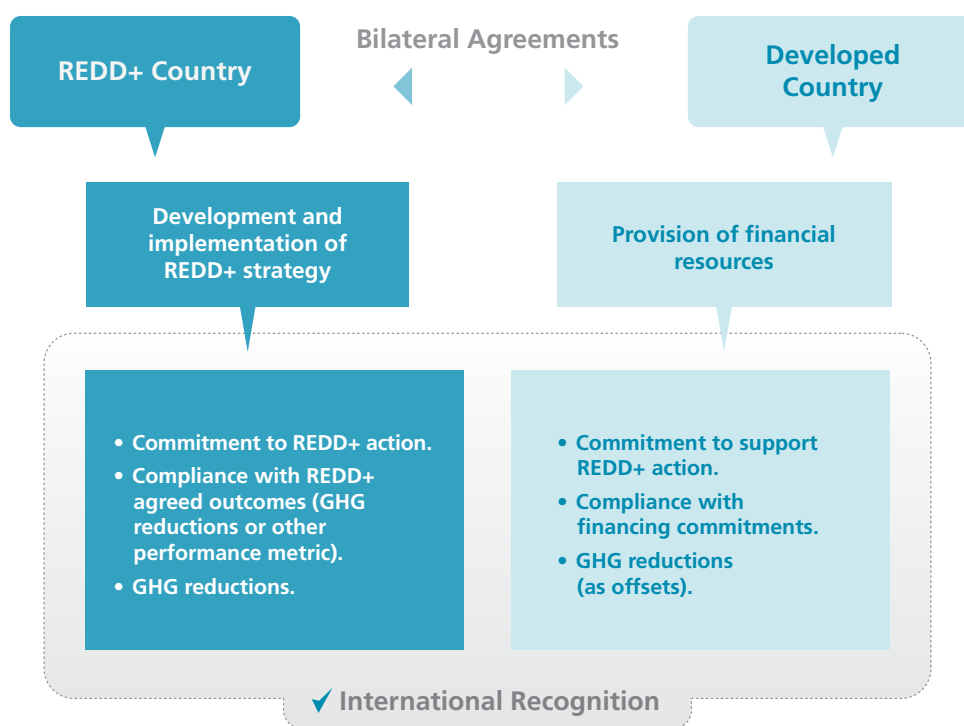
The proposed UNFCCC REDD+/NAMA register could support the three phases of REDD+ implementation. It could start operating before a formal REDD+ mechanism has been established on the international level and record transactions pertaining to interim REDD+ actions and funding. It could initially be operated by an institution

outside of the UNFCCC and later transferred to form part of a more permanent REDD+ institutional architecture.

Essential tasks associated with the operation of the proposed register would include:

- Maintaining and operating the register;
- Approving (or merely recording) REDD+ strategies, performance metrics, and transactions, including any REDD+ eligibility criteria (see Box 4.1).
- Verifying eligibility for the NAMA “support” or “accreditation” path, as soon as the recorded strategies and transactions fall formally under the NAMA umbrella.

Figure 4.2: Bilateral agreements



Box 4.1: Development of eligibility criteria and screening transactions

Eligibility of a forest country to participate in a REDD+ mechanism (the NAMA support path) may relate to: (a) having registered a REDD+ strategy (eligibility for Phase 2), or (b) the adoption of a reference level and the capacity to monitor GHG emission reductions (eligibility for Phase 3). Eligibility should be harmonized with broader NAMA eligibility. Standard practices will be required to value different sorts of support such as grants, loans, technology transfers, and technical assistance.

Transactions that the high-level body may potentially screen out, as directed by the COP, could include:

- Transactions not recognized by the recipient REDD+ country as contributing to the development or implementation of its REDD+ strategy;
- Transactions that are not properly valued in accordance with COP or high-level body guidance (for example, a concessional loan treated as a grant); or
- Transaction amounts that are separately reported as official development assistance to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC).

The functions and roles of the REDD+/NAMA register are outlined in detail in Table 4.3. Functions in bold may be specific to REDD+. Functions in italics could be performed by NAMA institutions, but could also require a temporary REDD+ solution before NAMA institutions are operational.

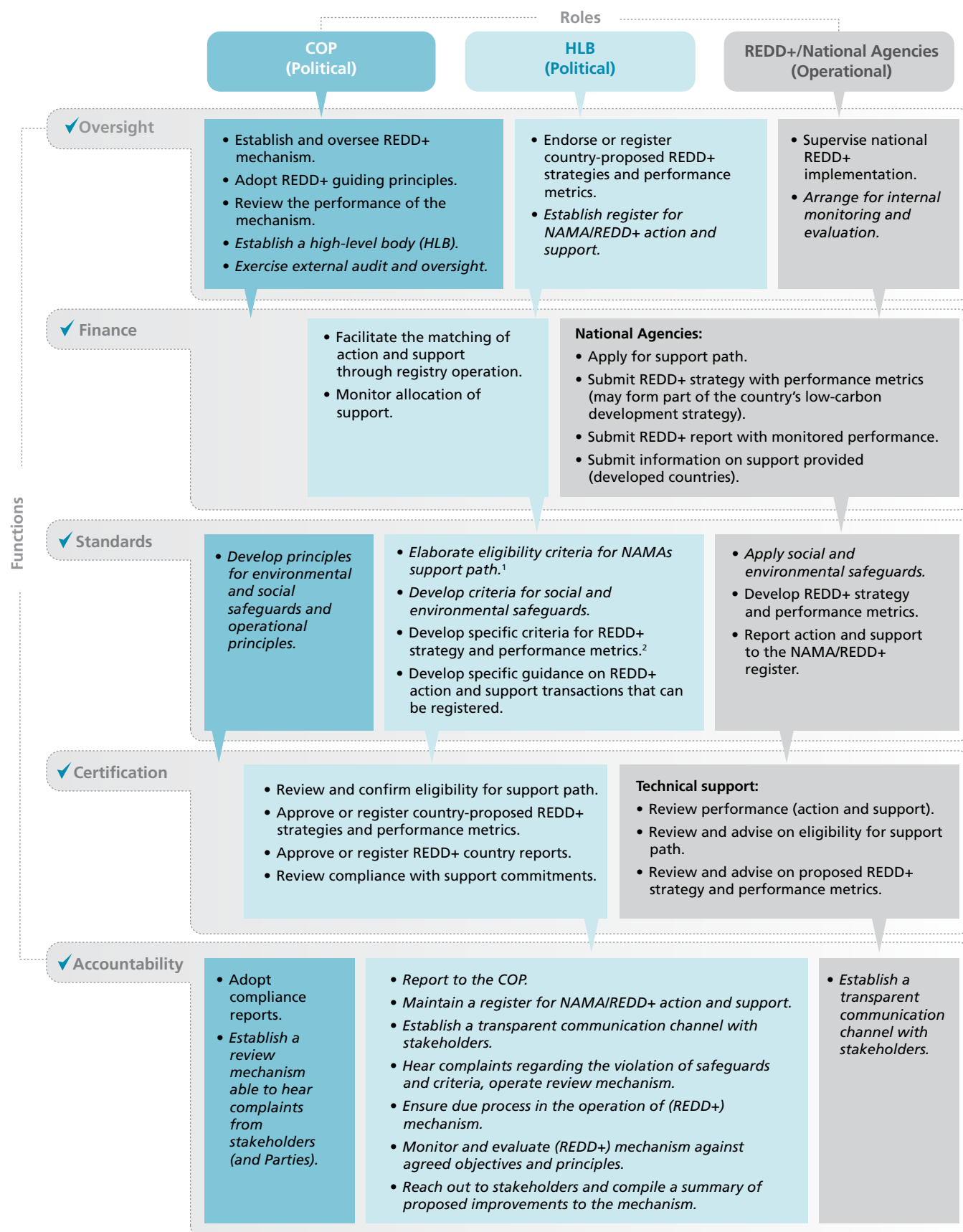
To be able to execute these tasks, the COP or a high-level body would have to develop criteria and guidance related to REDD+ strategies and the MRV of REDD+ actions and support. Countries could propose country- and action-specific performance indicators (Phase 2a) or monitor performance against a reference level of deforestation (Phase 2b/3). The COP could define criteria based on which the high-level body and its technical advisors could develop standards for, among others:

- GHG performance metrics, to include elements of effective implementation, proxies for GHG results, or quantified GHG reductions;
- Socioeconomic and environmental impact assessments;
- Consultations and public participation; and
- Accounting for REDD+ country's own contribution to the REDD+ implementation costs in relation to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

The role of a REDD+ high-level body could be executed by an existing or a newly established institution, it could be established as a dedicated REDD+ body, or it could be set up by the COP as a cross-sectoral coordination entity assisted by a permanent secretariat. Examples of existing entities that fulfill functions similar to a REDD+ high-level body include the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Executive Board, the GEF Council, and the Adaptation Fund Board. Where an existing institution is assigned to serve in the high-level body role, it is likely that it would have to undergo significant reform to expand its functionality to ensure the efficient and equitable administration of a REDD+ mechanism. If the REDD+ governance structure was integrated into the broader cross-sectoral international NAMA institutional architecture, there would also be no need for a separate high-level body specialized in REDD+.

Supporting tasks could be performed by the UNFCCC secretariat along with technical panels or entities. For instance, the UNFCCC secretariat could administer the register, including recording, archiving, and updating the data. Technical bodies, panels, or individual experts could, in turn, be charged with reviewing and advising on REDD+ strategies, performance metrics, and country reports.

Table 4.3: REDD+/NAMA Register Model



¹ Eligibility of a forest country to the support path may relate to, for example, having registered a REDD+ strategy (beyond Phase 1), not being engaged in the accreditation path (that is, before Phase 3), and taking mitigation action in key national GHG source categories. Eligibility of support for registration may relate to, for example, the forest country being eligible to the support path, the forest country confirming that the support contributes to its strategy, and the support not being accounted for as official development assistance. Standard practices will be required to value different sorts of support such as grants, loans, technology transfers, technical assistance, etc.

² Country-specific performance metrics would be proposed by countries. High-level bodies may require performance metrics to include elements of effective implementation, proxies for GHG results, socioeconomic and environmental impacts, participation, own contribution to the costs in relation to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, etc. Content would likely include, among other things, proposed performance indicators, including proxies for GHG REDD+ results and in relation to socioeconomic and environmental impacts.

Institutions that might channel financial and technical support to REDD+ countries in Phase 1 and Phase 2 include the FCPF readiness fund, the UN-REDD collaborative program, the GEF, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), and bilateral cooperation agencies.

4.1.3 Additional Tasks

In addition to the tasks listed above, a REDD+/NAMA Register Model could also be endowed with a mandate to exercise more centralized tasks to support a REDD+ mechanism, such as:

Register with a mandate to validate graduation through phases

Provided that a COP-15 agreement on REDD+ includes a formal acknowledgement of a phased approach, the register mechanism may provide for official validation of countries' transition through phases of REDD+ implementation.

Register with a mandate to match performance and payments

The register could be limited to record pre-agreed bilateral arrangements where support and action are matched based on the initiative of individual countries. Alternatively, the register could be used to match the proposed REDD+ actions with interested supporting countries at the time of registration.

Register with a mandate to control allocation of resources

In addition, the mechanism could create incentives for developed countries to distribute the financial support in an equitable and fair manner. It could establish overall allocations caps. Financial support could then only be registered and counted against UNFCCC financial commitments up to the established cap. The allocation of eligible resources to a country would probably reflect the rate of a country's deforestation/degradation and/or the size of a country's forest left to protect.

Register with a mandate to exercise a rating task

Beyond maintaining the register with REDD+ strategies and actions and REDD+ monitoring reports, the COP may ask the high-level body to actively assess and evaluate these strategies and their implementation.

4.2 COP-Mandated Fund Model

Under this model, REDD+ actions would be supported by a REDD+ fund controlled by the COP. Such fund could be dedicated to REDD+ or to broader climate change mitigation finance. It could be administered by the COP or by an operating entity. The flow of finance would go from the trustee of the fund directly or via a REDD+ agency to the national institutions of the REDD+ country.

4.2.1 Context

Some UNFCCC Parties have argued for the creation of a dedicated COP-administered REDD+ fund or a fund that would include in its mandate the support of REDD+ activities by developing countries. Some of these Parties argue for the establishment of a special REDD+ fund (for example, Alliance of Small Island States, Brazil, and Tuvalu), while others argue for the establishment of international climate change funds more generally (for example, the Group of 77 [G77] & China). They do not refer to REDD+ specifically; rather, they refer to the need to provide support for climate change action in developing countries under the umbrella of the COP.

The arguments most frequently put forward in favor of a COP-mandated fund, whether dedicated to REDD+ or covering climate change mitigation in developing countries more broadly, range from equity considerations, to flexibility for funding the early phases and for the implementation of activities in advanced phases, to enhanced ownership and control by developing-country Parties to allow the application of funding to national priorities (Box 4.2).

Box 4.2: Mobilization of Funds

Given the magnitude and scale of resources required, much of the discussion has focused on the inadequacy of the present levels of climate change funding and, consequently, on suggesting ways to generate revenue to complement market-based approaches.

According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, support for developing-country Parties could come from multilateral, bilateral, or regional channels or it could flow through a financial mechanism as defined in Article 11 of the Convention. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), as the designated financial mechanism under the Convention on an ongoing basis and subject to review every four years, provides funding under the GEF trust fund and through two other special funds, the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). Under the Kyoto Protocol, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) generates resources to contribute to the Adaptation Fund. All of these are potential sources of funding for REDD+. The focus of much of the discussion on climate change finance has been on how to scale-up the level of funding, including through the creation of new and innovative financing mechanisms that could facilitate the flow of large-scale additional funds.

The main categories of options cited by Parties for enhancing the level of funding include: (a) increasing the level of funding of existing mechanisms; (b) additional contributions linked to specific sectors or performance factors; (c) more stringent commitment by developed-country Parties that could generate more resources for developing-country Party support; (d) other sources of funds including the extension of CDM-type levies to other market mechanisms, an International Air Travel Adaptation Levy, an International Maritime Emissions Reduction Scheme, and the auction of allowances. All could theoretically be used to source a fund for REDD+ or a fund that includes within its mandate the funding of REDD+ activities.

4.2.2 Functions and Roles

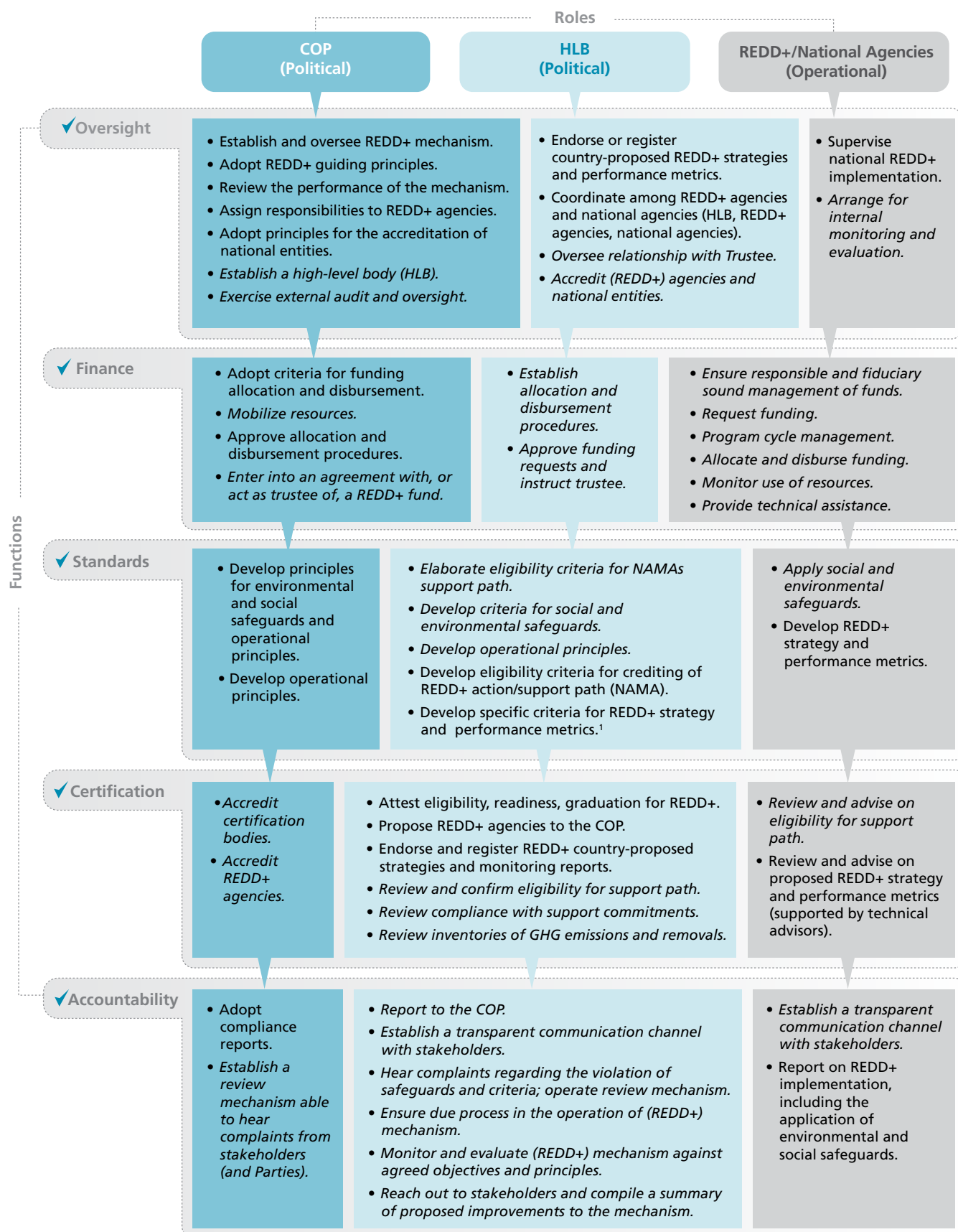
The tasks of a COP-mandated fund would go beyond those of a REDD+/NAMA register since it would elevate the “financial support” function of a REDD+ mechanism to the international level. The following tasks that relate to financing of REDD+ actions would need to be performed by a COP-mandated fund:

- Resource mobilization;
- Establishment of allocation and disbursement criteria and procedures;

- Allocation and disbursement of funding;
- Monitoring of allocation of support; and
- Ensuring responsible and sound fiduciary management of funds.

The functions and roles of a COP-mandated fund are outlined in detail in Table 4.4. As in Table 4.3, functions in bold may be specific to REDD+. Functions in italics could be performed by NAMA institutions, but could also require a temporary REDD+ solution before NAMA institutions are up and running.

Table 4.4: COP-Mandated Fund Model



¹ Eligibility of a forest country to the support path may relate to, for example, having registered a REDD+ strategy (beyond Phase 1), not being engaged in the accreditation path (that is, before Phase 3), and taking mitigation action in key national GHG source categories. Eligibility of support for registration may relate to, for example, the forest country being eligible to the support path, the forest country confirming that the support contributes to its strategy, and the support not being accounted for as official development assistance. Standard practices will be required to value different sorts of support such as grants, loans, technology transfers, technical assistance, etc.

² Country-specific performance metrics would be proposed by countries. High-level bodies may require performance metrics to include elements of effective implementation, proxies for GHG results, socioeconomic and environmental impacts, participation, own contribution to the costs in relation to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, etc. Content would likely include, among other things, proposed performance indicators, including proxies for GHG REDD+ results and in relation to socioeconomic and environmental impacts.

The administration of resources under the COP requires the mobilization of resources at the international level. Provided that such resources are secured, there are various alternatives to how the funds could be administered. The alternatives allow for a more or less centralized COP oversight over the funds and include:

- A consolidated but decentralized administered fund;
- A fund administered by the COP; and
- A fund administered by the GEF or another operating entity.

Under all three alternatives, the allocation of resources to countries would be made according to criteria and formulas approved by the COP. The REDD+ performance metrics could be the same as that applied in the operation of the REDD+/NAMA register.

Decentralized Administered Fund

Under this alternative, REDD+ could be supported by a fund that consolidates funding at the COP level but allows for the allocation and disbursement of funds according to criteria and procedures formulated by various international and national bodies. Resources are deposited in one fund but functions of oversight, financial support (with the exception of the trustee-related tasks), standards setting, and certification of results would be undertaken by a range of international and national entities. The fund could rely on a very small secretariat with a role limited to administrative and coordination tasks. The trustee's sole responsibility would be to exercise a treasury function.

Program cycle management and fiduciary management of resources would rest either with national entities entrusted to manage REDD+ activities at the national level or with REDD+ agencies at the international level. Where appropriate national capacities and institutions are in place, national entities could handle disbursements. Where such capacities are lacking, greater support from REDD+ agencies would be needed.

An international high-level body would have to establish standards relating to performance evaluation and the accreditation of REDD+ agencies and national entities in REDD+ countries.

COP-administered REDD+ Fund

Revenue could also be channeled through a more centralized fund administered by the UNFCCC. Under this alternative, the COP would have to establish a secretariat to manage and support the decision-making process through the full program/project cycle. The requests for funding would be presented to the fund secretariat, which, with the support of technical bodies, panels, and experts would make these decisions on the basis of national REDD+ strategies and plans.

In contrast to the decentralized administered fund, where most of the decisions are taken at the national level (or by international institutions entrusted to help countries in need of building their capacity), in the case of a COP-administered fund, many decisions, such as disbursement of funds, are retained at the international level.

Operating-entity-administered REDD+ Fund

Under this alternative, the COP would delegate the management of a REDD+ fund to an existing international institution or several institutions such as the GEF, the World Bank, or a UN Agency (acting as REDD+ agencies). The administration of such a fund would have to rely on a mix of centralized decisions on disbursement and decentralized management by one or several REDD+ agencies. National entities would present funding proposals to the designated REDD+ agencies based on established criteria and standards. The proposals would be evaluated and assessed by the relevant REDD+ agency, which makes the decisions on funding as per delegation of the COP.

4.3 REDD+ Market Model

Under a REDD+ Market Model, principles, standards, and institutional capacity would be agreed to allow the quantification of GHG emission reductions and enhancement in stocks that could be converted into tradable carbon units. The market-compatible model describes the functions and roles that international institutions would have to fulfill to create verified GHG reductions that would be compatible with the NAMA “accreditation path.”

4.3.1 Context

A REDD+ mechanism could oversee the conversion of emissions reductions or enhanced removals from REDD+ actions into REDD+ units that could then be sold to governments or authorized private entities for compliance with quantified emission-reduction obligations.

Market-compatible approaches would be an option for those REDD+ countries that have progressed to a complete accounting system for their forestry sector emissions, including compliance-grade MRV procedures. Carbon units could be issued to REDD+ countries and authorized public and private entities. They could be fully or partly fungible with global compliance carbon markets, such as a UNFCCC-defined international emission trading system and regional/domestic emissions trading schemes.

A condition for the creation of REDD+ carbon units is the establishment of reference levels and supporting MRV systems that allow for the accounting for tons of GHG emission reductions and enhancement in stocks and the tracking of units in national and international registry systems. The annex to document FCCC/SBSTA/2009/L.9, elaborated at the Bonn II talks in June 2009, proposes a draft decision by the COP on methodological guidance on REDD+ for further consideration. Also, the Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD (IWG-IFR) identified the dual need for a phased approach with basic MRV capacities and conservative accounting to get started with large-scale, performance-based payments without delay (Phase 2b) and a compliance-grade approach with undiscounted payments for verified emission reductions once advanced MRV and advanced GHG inventory capacities are in place (Phase 3).²

4.3.2 Functions and Roles

Climate benefits could be measured against an agreed reference level and REDD+ units could be issued ex post, after the environmental benefits have been accrued, measured, and verified. Alternatively, a portion of the REDD+ units could be issued ex ante based on an agreed reference level. In any event, access to and participation in a market-compatible mechanism would require meeting a number of criteria including:

- An operational forest GHG inventory with a track record of successfully reviewed inventory reports;
- An agreed reference level endorsed by the COP; and
- A functional national or international GHG register.

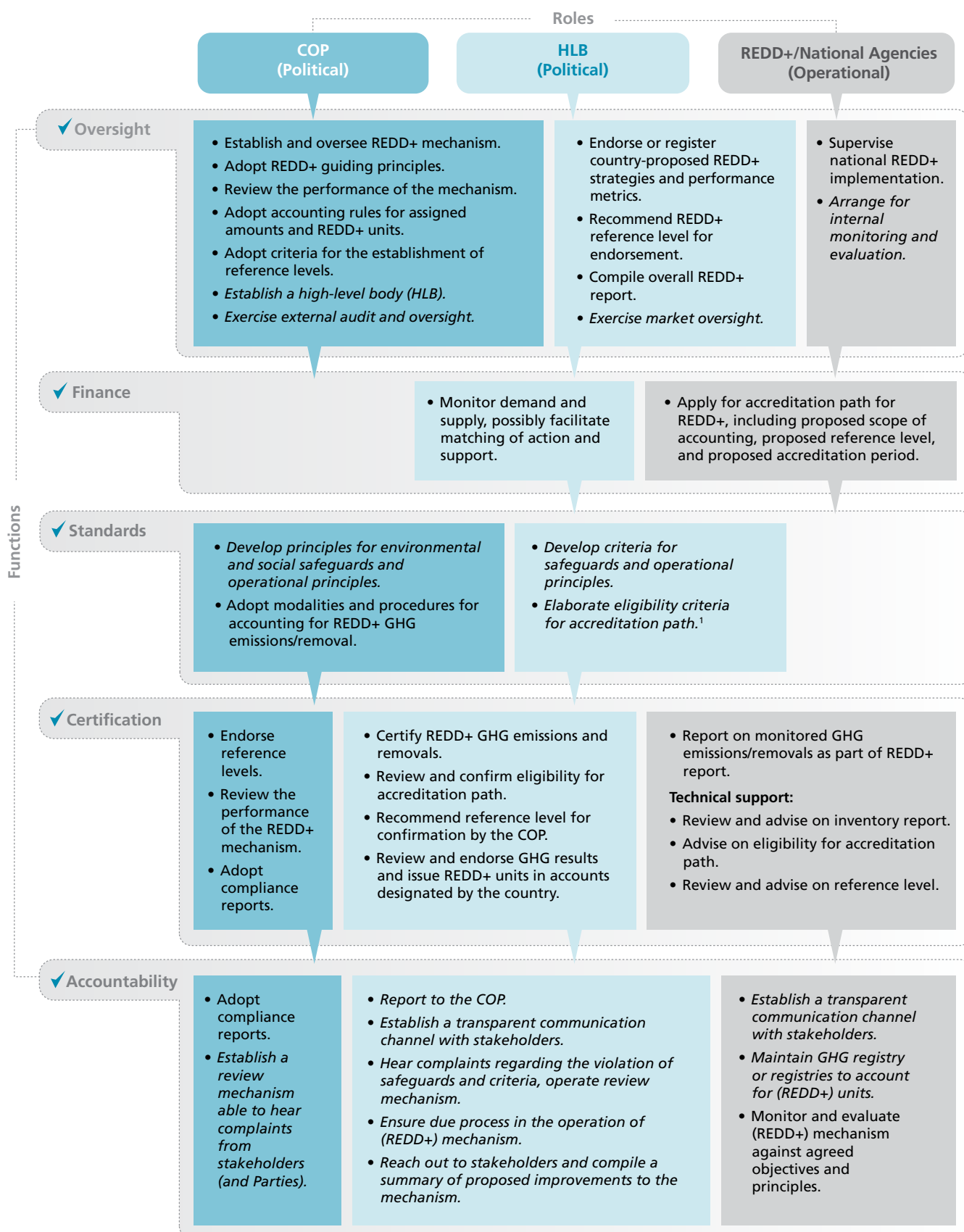
Consequently, at the international level, the following additional tasks would have to be exercised by any market-compatible funding model:

- Reviewing and adopting a REDD+ reference level;
- Elaborating and confirming eligibility criteria for a NAMA accreditation path;
- Approving monitoring reports and registering verification of monitoring reports; and
- Developing trading infrastructure, including:
 - Guidance on a national and international carbon registry system; and
 - Market supervision.

Functions and roles of the certification process are outlined in Table 4.5. Functions in bold may be specific to REDD+. Functions in italics could be performed by NAMA institutions, but could also require a temporary REDD+ solution before NAMA institutions are up and running.

² IWG-IFR preliminary report of the informal working group on interim finance for REDD, second draft, August 28, 2009. A third draft of the report is forthcoming in early October 2009.

Table 4.5: REDD+ Market Model



¹ Eligibility of a forest country to the accreditation path may relate to, among other things, having successfully passed a review process for its inventory report following prevailing IPCC methodological guidance and proposing a scope of accounting that encompasses key national GHG source categories.

A market-based model for REDD+ finance will require an authority that certifies the environmental integrity of REDD+ units. Such authority is likely to be vested with the high-level body because it has to be independent of national policies and international support processes. Since it is unlikely that participant REDD+ countries will establish and maintain GHG registries in the short term, the high-level body or an entity providing administrative support would also have to maintain a registry into which approved REDD+ units could be issued. The international registry could be structured similarly to the CDM registry and managed by the UNFCCC secretariat. It would have country accounts for participating REDD+ countries. Countries could decide whether they want to authorize subaccounts. The REDD+ registry would be linked to national registries via the international transaction log.

4.3.3 Additional Tasks

In addition to the general tasks described above, international institutions supporting a REDD+ market model could also assume the following additional tasks.

Verification of GHG inventory reports

The REDD+ mechanism could oversee the review of GHG inventory reports of REDD+ countries. The certification of the reports would constitute an eligibility requirement for the issuance of REDD+ units for GHG reductions and removals achieved by a REDD+ country. Options for the review of inventory reports include:

- Expert review teams (ERTs) review national GHG inventories of Annex I Parties. The UNFCCC secretariat forms these teams from a roster of experts on an ad hoc basis.³ The roster is composed of experts nominated by Parties. Most experts are scientists and/or are responsible for GHG inventories in their own country. The expertise of the review teams ensures that the review results are objective, credible, and recognized by Parties. Moreover, it helps build inventory capacities across Parties. The main problem with this process is the lack of depth of the pool of experts that can be mobilized to perform this work properly. The lack of qualified reviewers is already a problem for the review of Annex I inventory reports.

- Monitoring reports of CDM projects are verified by independent auditors selected by project participants among those accredited by the CDM Executive Board for that service. Compared to ERTs, the verification teams assigned by designated operational entities generally tend to have less technical expertise but put more emphasis on audit formalism.
- A third approach could be the creation of an international corps of professional reviewers to act as the backbone of each expert review team, to secure consistent application of standards and increase the pool of qualified experts.

Approval of subnational REDD+ activities

International REDD+ institutions could also administer a mechanism that registers approved and authorized subnational REDD+ activities that are implemented previous to the adoption of a national reference level or within the context of a national reference level.

To facilitate private sector investment in REDD+, an international REDD+ mechanism could approve and register REDD+ subnational activities. It could operate similarly to the Kyoto Protocol Joint Implementation mechanism that facilitates GHG reduction projects in Annex I Parties. The body registering subnational activities could be modeled after the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee.

REDD+ countries would also have to appoint a national REDD+ authority that authorizes and approves subnational activities at the project or program level. The country would also have to adopt approval criteria that take into account national priorities and the specific legislative context.

³ For details, please see http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/review_process/items/2762.php.

5 National Institutions

The success of a REDD+ mechanism will ultimately depend on the existence of national-level institutions that are able to deliver emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation at scale and in effective, efficient, and equitable ways. While international support may help to induce policy changes in REDD+ countries and to enable accurate monitoring and reporting of the results achieved, it is essential that REDD+ strategies be country driven and nationally specific in order to duly account for the particular needs and priorities of each country.

The design of REDD+ national institutions depends on the particular country economic and legal systems, domestic policy priorities, existing institutions, and the availability of resources. National institutions are as varied as the circumstances and capabilities of the countries where they exist, and how REDD+ countries decide to elaborate their REDD+ strategies and the development of supporting implementation frameworks are matters of national choice and sovereignty. A detailed discussion of national arrangements supporting REDD+ is therefore outside the scope of this Assessment.

On the other hand, whereas the decisions on the optimal regulatory approach and national institutional framework needed to implement REDD+ strategies should be left with each REDD+ country, aspects concerning how these national institutions interact with the international REDD+ architecture merit some consideration. The interface between the national-level and international REDD+ institutions require REDD+ countries to fulfill the following functions:

- Managing relationships with the entities operating under the (a) UNFCCC REDD+ mechanism, (b) national or regional REDD+ programs, and (c) international multilateral and bilateral sources of REDD+ funding. These include:
 - Requesting and receiving funding from international sources;
 - Submitting country REDD+ strategies;
 - Submitting country REDD+ reports with MRV performance; and
 - Regularly reporting to the COP or high-level body on REDD+ implementation.

- Agreeing to and implementing:
 - International funding, fiduciary, and reporting procedures;
 - Standards, MRV methodologies, and other technical procedures; and
 - Social and environmental standards and grievance procedures.
- Overseeing relations with international carbon markets.

Whether administered by national institutions or international REDD+ agencies, the impact that REDD+ is likely to have on many forest-dependent communities, including indigenous peoples, requires special emphasis on participative processes in the decision making of REDD+ policies and the establishment of accountability procedures that empower local communities.

To facilitate interaction with international institutions, REDD+ countries should designate a REDD+ focal point to coordinate relations between national REDD+ implementation and the international REDD+ mechanism. The focal point could coincide with the UNFCCC focal point or be assigned to a different and specialized office. It could serve as mere coordinator of communication or assume more substantive tasks such as actively facilitating the development of a REDD+ strategy at the national level or coordinating the national MRV systems.

The depth and breadth of national REDD+ agencies will influence the REDD+ international arrangements in that well-developed national institutions may now or in the future assume roles that under traditional UNFCCC financing have been managed by operating and implementing agencies. As national REDD+ agencies become institutionally solid and gradually incorporate appropriate governance principles (such as transparency, quality control assurance, and fiduciary accountability), they may increasingly take on functions related to the management and deployment of international funding, internally contracting for the certification of their operations, results, and reporting procedures. Eventually, the role of international entities could be reduced to the technical review of the established national arrangements, which, in contrast to

the concept of verification and certification, does not entail the checking of the accuracy of the data reported, but only the confirmation that the process through which such data are produced follows the minimum internationally agreed criteria and standards.

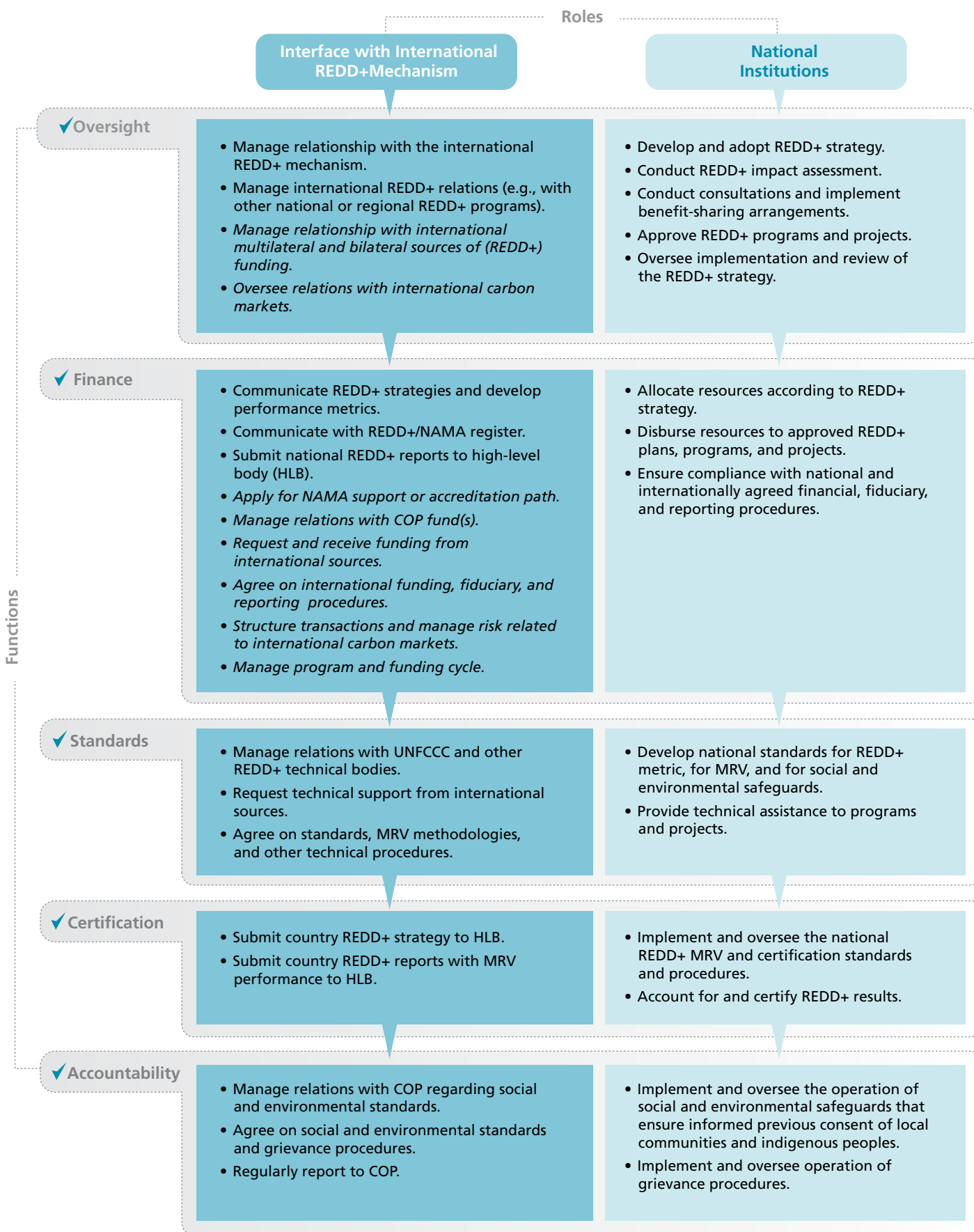
An example is Brazil's Amazon Fund that has been set up to perform many financial and technical roles that in other cases would be left to international institutions. The Fund was created by decree on August 1, 2008, to provide incentives for efforts to prevent and control deforestation in the Amazon. The Amazon Fund is currently supported by the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. It is managed by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), which is also in charge of fundraising, project selection, and contracting, as well as project monitoring and evaluation. The Amazon Fund includes a Guidance Committee responsible for setting

the guidelines and following up on achievements, and a Technical Committee responsible for attesting to the quantity of GHG emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation.

In summary, the REDD+ international design needs to be flexible enough (a) to allow different starting points for national institutions, and (b) to devolve responsibilities to national institutions as they grow. This is in line with the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness to *"use country systems and procedures to the maximum extent possible. Where use of country systems is not feasible, establish additional safeguards and measures in ways that strengthen rather than undermine country systems and procedures."*

Table 5.1 lists the main functions that national institutions in REDD+ countries would have to perform, distinguishing between international interface functions and national-level functions.

Table 5.1: Functions of national institutions



6 Accelerated Action

A Copenhagen agreement is expected to establish the premises upon which a long-term and permanent international climate change strategy will operate, leaving the actual details and modalities, including financing mechanisms in general, and a REDD+ financing mechanism in particular, to be adopted at later stages. The pressing need to reverse the current rates of tropical deforestation and associated greenhouse gas emissions, however, suggests that a Copenhagen agreement incentivizes REDD+ actions as soon as 2010. Politically it is important to maintain the momentum and respond to the expectations created through the various multilateral and bilateral initiatives supporting REDD+ capacity building and strategy development (Phase 1 REDD+ to support REDD readiness). Responding to these needs, an Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD has been set up to evaluate REDD+ interim needs and suggest arrangements on how to allocate such finance. While an interim mechanism could be set up outside of the UNFCCC framework, such a mechanism should be in line with the principles and standards set out by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to allow for the future recognition of any REDD+ early action and corresponding financial support. The COP could facilitate interim finance for REDD+ by adopting a number of decisions at COP-15 that ensure the coherence of an emerging REDD+ framework.

6.1 COP-15 Action

A REDD+ accelerated action sanctioned by the UNFCCC would be supported by decisions taken at COP-15 that address the following issues:

- Providing a clear statement on the establishment of a REDD+ mechanism;
- Defining a REDD+ mechanism, which includes laying out the scope and objectives;
- Setting a common goal to halt forest loss and reduce gross deforestation in accordance with an agreed timetable;
- Providing a clear statement on funding necessary to achieve the established goal (on the basis of predictability, adequacy, and sustainability of resources);

- Establishing the governing principles that should orient the Parties' mitigation and financial efforts (with particular consideration for the necessary environmental and social safeguards applicable to indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities);
- Recognizing early action and early financial support undertaken in accordance with the REDD+ scope, objective, and guiding principles, including the role of subnational activities; and
- Laying out the broad institutional framework required for a REDD+ mechanism, including an interim institutional arrangement.

While all of the above-mentioned points are applicable to the further development of the long-term UNFCCC REDD+ mechanism, the last two issues (that is, promotion of early action and interim institutional arrangements) are of particular importance for the REDD+ interim phase. The assurance that the COP would be willing to recognize REDD+ actions and financial support provided before the entry into force of an international REDD+ mechanism is crucial to the engagement of Parties that may wish to have their actions and support counted against their UNFCCC commitments and, to the extent that private funding is sought for REDD+, of the private sector, which requires a minimum level of regulatory predictability before making investments during the interim phase. The institutional functions and roles for the interim phase are dealt with in more detail below.

6.2 Interim REDD+ Arrangement

Some level of institutional organization would be needed to operationalize a REDD+ interim mechanism and to allocate competences for the exercise of some essential functions. A new body or existing entities, either within or outside the UNFCCC, could be tasked with the exercise of the minimum set of functions required during the interim phase.

6.2.1 Interim REDD+ Functions

The minimum set of tasks of a REDD+ interim mechanism would include:

- Mobilizing the funds required for interim REDD+ finance;
- Applying criteria and common standards (that is, on performance indicators, funding allocation, and social and environmental safeguards), preferably developed and supported by the COP;
- Approving REDD+ projects and programs, including subnational REDD+ activities;
- Approving funding requests;
- Coordinating with the UNFCCC;
- Maintaining a register of REDD+ actions and supporting and facilitating the matching of action and support through register operation;
- Introducing a support mechanism for enhancing coherence and coordination of ongoing activities;
- Advising on technical aspects related to the adopted common criteria and standards; and
- Establishing a review procedure to address complaints by stakeholders and to inform an emerging international REDD+ mechanism under the UNFCCC.

6.2.2 Interim REDD+ Roles

If COP-15 decides to create a new entity to exercise the role of a REDD+ high-level body during the interim period, the governance and financial-related functions listed above could be performed by this body. However, if no such entity is created, these functions could be temporarily assigned to the existing entities, within and outside the UNFCCC. Any such institution(s) would exercise these functions on a temporary basis until the permanent institutional arrangement of a long-term REDD+ mechanism is established.

Regardless of the actual entity entrusted with the oversight and financial-related functions of the interim mechanism, it is crucial that the process of developing criteria and standards abide by the REDD+ guiding principles to be established at COP-15. The objective of such standards is to enable the transparent and comparable recording of REDD+ actions and financial support in a REDD+ register as proposed under

section 4.2 above. The establishment of a REDD+ register constitutes the simplest step toward an international REDD+ mechanism.

The UN-REDD and the FCPF could adjust, where needed, their current project/program eligibility and funding allocation/approval criteria (or further develop them, as the case may be) so that they are in line with the established REDD+ guidance principles. Similarly, in the event of bilateral support for actions, countries wishing to have their contributions recognized under the UNFCCC would have to agree that actions taken under a bilateral arrangement be informed by criteria and standards that are consistent with the REDD+ guiding principles.

The UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice could potentially provide the technical inputs for the development of standards and criteria. An independent roster of technical experts (within and/or outside the UNFCCC) could be charged with assessing the REDD+ performance and environmental outcomes. Their primary objective would be to verify that such actions have been taken in accordance with the adopted standards and criteria.

In the absence of a new COP-created institution to exercise the role of a high-level body, either the UNFCCC secretariat or an institution outside the UNFCCC could take on the management of the register that records actions from REDD+ countries and support from developed countries that are in accordance with the REDD+ guiding principles. The entity administering the REDD+ register could also temporarily exercise the financial function of facilitating the matching support with actions.

Finally, a review procedure could be established to give aggrieved non-state actors (in particular, indigenous and local communities) the opportunity to bring complaints at the international level. Since the UNFCCC has not yet established any body or panel with a mandate to hear and address these types of complaints, either a new entity could be created under the COP or existing entities (such as the FCPF and the UN-REDD) could be requested to establish a similar conflict resolution mechanism. The review procedure would, at a minimum, ensure that the views and concerns of stakeholders with an immediate interest in a given REDD+ action are taken into consideration before any such action is endorsed or approved at the international level.

Glossary

Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA):

A subsidiary body under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and launched through the Bali Action Plan. The AWG-LCA conducts a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective, and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreement and adopt a decision at its 15th session.

Allocation:

A set of principles, guidelines, and rules that define the allocation of mobilized resources among the different REDD countries and REDD+ actions.

Annex I Parties:

The developed countries listed in Annex I to the UNFCCC that were committed to return their greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 as per Article 4.2 (a) and (b). Annex I Parties have also accepted emissions targets for 2008–12 as per Article 3 and Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol.

Bali Action Plan:

In December 2007, in Bali, the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC adopted the Bali Action Plan describing a two-year process to finalize an agreement in 2009 in Denmark (UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.13). In the Bali Action Plan, the Parties confirmed their commitment to address the global climate challenge by including, among other things, policy approaches and positive incentives on issues related to REDD.

Carbon market:

A market that creates and transfers emission units or rights.

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM):

A mechanism established in Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol and designed to assist non-Annex I Parties in achieving sustainable development and in contributing to the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC, and to assist Annex I Parties in achieving compliance with their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments.

Conference of the Parties (COP):

The body under the UNFCCC expected to act as supreme authority over the REDD+ mechanism. Pending structural decisions made in Copenhagen, however, this role could be held by the Assembly of Parties to another Treaty as agreed by UNFCCC Parties.

Deforestation:

As defined in the Marrakech Accords, the direct human-induced conversion of forested land to non-forested land.

Degradation:

Changes in the forest that negatively affect the structure or function of the forest stand or site, and thereby lower the capacity of the forest to supply products and/or services. With respect to REDD, degradation refers specifically to a reduction in carbon density.

Disbursement:

A set of principles, guidelines, and rules that define how REDD countries can access mobilized funds. Access to funds by REDD countries can be either direct or indirect, depending on whether an intermediary international body or agency is used to manage and coordinate the release of monies.

Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF):

The FCPF is a World Bank program created to assist developing countries in their efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and land degradation. Objectives include capacity building for REDD activities in developing countries and testing a program of performance-based incentive payments in some pilot countries.

Forest Investment Program (FIP):

The FIP is a World Bank program that seeks to support REDD-efforts in developing countries by providing up-front bridge financing for readiness reforms and investments identified through national REDD readiness strategy-building efforts.

Informal Working Group on the Interim Finance (IWG-IFR):

The IWG-IFR is an informal working group of interested countries convening to discuss how to secure early action on REDD, and this could fit with a long-term REDD mechanism under the UNFCCC. The IWG-IFR seeks to be informed by and inform the ongoing negotiations on REDD+ under the UNFCCC but without preempting any decisions or outcomes.

Institutional models:

Refers to the institutional requirements that arise from the different funding approaches and which are analyzed in this report, namely: (a) the REDD+/NAMA Register Model; (b) the COP-Mandated Fund Model; and (c) the REDD+ Market Model.

Kyoto Protocol:

A protocol adopted in 1997 under the UNFCCC. The Kyoto Protocol, among other things, sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries. The first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends in 2012.

Leakage:

Greenhouse gas emissions displacement that occurs when interventions to reduce emissions in one geographic area (subnational or national) cause an increase in emissions in another area through the relocation of activities.

MRV system:

For developing countries, a set of principles, rules, guidelines, and methods for the monitoring, reporting, and verification of REDD+ actions against set reference (emissions) levels; for developed countries, a set of principles, rules, guidelines, and methods for the monitoring, reporting, and verification of financial and technical assistance against committed resources for the design and implementation of REDD+ actions.

Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs):

Refers to the actions set out in paragraph 1(b)(ii) of the Bali Action Plan and which may or may not include REDD+ actions.

Non-Annex I Parties:

All countries that are not listed in Annex I to the UNFCCC or the Kyoto Protocol. Most developing countries are Non-Annex I Parties.

Phased approach:

Refers to the stepwise approach of engaging in REDD+, consisting of: (a) readiness activities, (b) implementation of national REDD+ policies and measures, and (c) full-scale implementation with payment for performance on the basis of quantified emissions and removals against agreed reference levels.

Proxy indicators:

Indicators that are measured against proxies on reduced emissions and enhanced removals but which do not refer to actual emission reductions achieved by certain REDD+ actions.

Readiness:

REDD country actions including a process of policy design, consultation, and consensus building, and testing and evaluation for a REDD national strategy, prior to scaled-up REDD implementation.

REDD+:

Reduced Emissions from Deforestation, forest Degradation, conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

REDD+ Mechanism:

A set of principles, modalities, guidelines, and institutional arrangements to be agreed at (and after) COP-15 that lays out a mechanism to finance and support REDD+ actions in developing countries.

REDD+/(NAMA) Register:

A mechanism that manages and oversees the operation of an electronic system in which developing countries record their REDD+ actions (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions) and developed countries enter their financial support for the recorded REDD+ actions.

REDD Options Assessment Report:

A report prepared for the Government of Norway that assesses key issues for a future REDD mechanism within the UNFCCC and informs some of the critical choices that will need to be made about REDD at COP-15 and beyond. The report can be accessed at www.redd-oar.org.

Reference (emission) levels:

A reference level is synonymous with a crediting baseline for providing incentives for a participating REDD country if emissions or proxy indicators are below that level.

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA):

Constituted under the UNFCCC and responsible for providing the Conference of the Parties (COP) with advice on scientific, technological, and methodological matters.

Subnational activities:

Activities implemented at the subnational level as part of a country's REDD strategy. Subnational activities can be implemented by governments, local authorities, nongovernmental organizations, or private entities. They may be embedded in a national or international crediting mechanism.

Tier:

Applying the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), countries are provided with options to estimate greenhouse gas emissions. Tiers represent levels of methodological complexity, where Tier 1 is the most basic estimation methodology, Tier 2 is the intermediate methodology, and Tier 3 is most demanding methodology in terms of complexity and data requirements.

UN-REDD:

A Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries, the UN-REDD Program brings together the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the development of a multi-donor trust fund (established in July 2008) that allows donors to pool resources and provides funding to activities of this program.

About Meridian Institute

Meridian Institute is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to help people solve problems, make informed decisions, and find solutions to some of society's most complex and controversial issues. Meridian's mission is accomplished through applying collaborative problem-solving approaches including facilitation, mediation, and other strategic consultation services. Meridian works at the local, national, and international levels and focuses on a wide range of issues related to natural resources and environment, science and technology, agriculture and food security, sustainability, global stability, and health. For more information, please visit www.merid.org.

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