REDD+ Country Profile

MEXICO

January 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Mexico is the 11th most populous country in the world with a population of 112.3 million people,[1] of which over three-quarters of the population resides in urban centres.[2] Around half of the country's population lives in extreme poverty. Despite this, Mexico has the second-largest economy in Latin America, after Brazil.[3]

Numerous active volcanoes, deserts and elevated mountainous regions form Mexico's variable terrain. The country's major natural resources include: timber, minerals, natural gas and petroleum.[4] Mexico is considered a mega-biodiverse country with 10 per cent of the world's plant and animal species. The country is ranked in the "top ten" of the world for the largest area of primary forest at 3 per cent of its landmass.[5] Around 14 per cent of the total population is recognized as indigenous peoples comprising a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups making Mexico extremely culturally diverse. However, due to rapid population growth and the slashing and burning of forests for industrial development and farming, only 33.3 per cent – or 64,802,000 hectares – of Mexico is forested.[6] Mexico's deforestation rates were 3,740 km² per year in 2000, which decreased to 2,490 km² per year between 2006 and 2010.[7]

Recognizing that deforestation and forest degradation originate from both internal and external sources in the forestry sector, a multi-sectoral coordination and strengthened governance should be promoted to achieve the complementarity of public policies necessary for sustainable rural development (SRD). In this context, coordination of agricultural and forestry laws, policies, and programmes is needed in order to reduce the main pressures that lead to deforestation and forest degradation.

Mexico has made considerable progress in the construction of its National REDD+ Strategy (ENAREDD+) through an open, participatory and inclusive process, engaging civil society and government agencies in order to have a joint National REDD+ Strategy with collective ownership. The ENAREDD+ was established under an SRD framework that requires coordination of forest and non-forest policies, the strengthening of governance mechanisms and participative processes at the local level, institutional arrangements, and appropriate funding mechanisms. Mexico's REDD+ strategy is expected to unfold on a subnational level (nested approach) rather than a single programme or policy instrument, and is expected to follow a territorial approach in which sustainable rural development acts as the foundation for REDD+ implementation. The REDD+ Early Action areas are located in Mexican states with high biodiversity, cultural diversity and high rates of deforestation but also great REDD+ potential. Mexico's subnational processes and lessons learned could help scale up and demonstrate best practices in a number of areas for the country's REDD+ efforts.

Mexico has a number of notable successes in relation to REDD+ progress. Related to participation, Mexico is committed to ensuring a wide dissemination of REDD+-related information to the various stakeholders in order to promote their full and effective participation in the preparation of the ENAREDD+.

Governance

Setting the goals for REDD+, building the legal institutional arrangements to undertake it, and ensuring that all major REDD+ stakeholders can participate in its governance.

Goals

Has the country set ambitious and time-bound REDD+ goals and spelled out REDD+ guiding principles?

Accomplishments	The Mexican Congress advanced a set of legal reforms to the country's environmental law in 1988 and forest sustainable development law in 2003, focused on harmonizing the definitions of key terms and the development of economic instruments to promote environmental services that provide benefits to forest owners and forest land users. Reforms in the forest sustainable development law consider the inclusion of REDD+ safeguards and the establishment, in a period no longer than three years (2015), of a national system for monitoring, registration and verification to evaluate and systematize emission reductions derived from the prevention of deforestation and forest degradation (LGDFS art. 45, 134bis).
Ongoing	Through recent years Mexico has been developing a series of national strategies and programmes to strengthen forests' capacity to respond to climate change, such as the Special Programme on Climate Change (Programa Especial de Cambio Climático, PECC), under construction, which categorizes priority actions across sectors and sets an ambitious target of 50 per cent reduction in greenhouse emissions by 2050, compared with 2000, for which the REDD+ strategy has become central due to the mitigation potential of forests in the country. Also ongoing is the Forestry Strategic Programme 2025 (PEF), which will formulate short-, medium- and long-term plans and operational programmes to promote the sustainable use of forest resources. Further, the federal government through the National Forestry Commission (Comisión Nacional Forestal; CONAFOR) is driving the development of REDD+ Early Actions (Acciones Tempranas REDD+; ATREDD+), which are a set of institutionally articulated efforts at the subnational level to address the causes of forest loss in a territory through policy instruments and specific actions. Under the ATREDD+, Mexico is also piloting innovative and unique local governance models related to land-use management with the objective to plan, guide and assist groups of communities in landscape-based management and to help harmonize government interventions in the rural sector. At this time, REDD+ Early Actions are being developed in the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Jalisco, Campeche, Yucatán and Quintana Roo, within which about 70 per cent of the nation's deforestation is occurring.[8]
Planned	The development of the REDD+ process in the country will be consistent with the government's National Development Program (NDP) 2013-2018, which seeks sustainable development as one of its key pillars and therefore aims to reduce the cost of environmental degradation, and also will be aligned with the targets, objectives and strategic actions for mitigation in the forest sector included in the Climate Change Strategy. In REDD+ Early Action areas schemes will be promoted to ensure the participation of the stakeholders to influence decision-making on land management by strengthening local governance mechanisms as tools to plan and implement strategies for aligning public policies to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in a specific territory. Lessons learned from ATREDD+ will contribute toward the construction of subnational REDD+ strategies.
Gaps/Next steps	A dissemination and communication process on REDD+ socialization will be conducted in ATREDD+ areas.

Institutional arrangements

Are institutions in place to manage and coordinate REDD+ (e.g. inter-ministerial coordination, participation of all stakeholders secured)?

Accomplishments	Many institutions and organizations are involved with REDD+ issues in Mexico. Various federal ministries are participating in the conceptualization and implementation of REDD+ in Mexico, under the Inter-ministerial Climate Change Commission (CICC) established in the Climate Change General Law. The CICC is composed of representatives from 10 federal ministries, presided over by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT). The CICC is responsible for promoting the coordination of climate change actions between different governmental entities and for the development of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and programmes, as well as their implementation. The CICC also includes several working groups, including a REDD+ Working Group (GT-REDD). CONAFOR has been leading the construction of its National REDD+ Strategy (ENAREDD+) progressively through a participatory process. In 2010 a multi-stakeholder technical advisory committee (Comité Técnico Consultivo or CTC-REDD+) was created, including representatives of governmental institutions (forestry and non-forestry), NGOs, indigenous peoples, forest community-based organizations, the academic sector and financial institutions, to discuss the preparation of the National REDD+ Strategy and other related programmes. Recently, other platforms have been established such as the ENAREDD+ Working Group of the Consejo Nacional Forestal (CONAF).
	Civil society has been actively participating in the REDD+ preparation process. An example of this is the creation of a consortium of international and Mexican conservation organizations known as the M-REDD+ Alliance, which includes the Rainforest Alliance, el Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, A.C., Espacios Naturales y Desarrollo Sustentable, Woods Hole Research Center and The Nature Conservancy. The objective of the M-REDD+ Alliance is to support the government's efforts during the REDD+ preparation process.
Ongoing	The government of Mexico is committed to continuing the construction of the National REDD+ Strategy through an inclusive process and by conducting a wide dissemination of REDD+-related information to the various stakeholders. Particular attention is paid to indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities as well as to other vulnerable groups such as women and youth.
	Actually, CONAFOR benefits local communities and *ejidos* to combine sustainable forest management with socioeconomic development through environmental conservation, land use and restoration programmes. An example of this is the approach of the Community Forestry programme, which includes the identification and integration of spaces for social participation and consultation (*foros regionales* or regional natural resources committees) to plan, evaluate and monitor the construction of community development processes and to strengthen social capital.
	Also, the states of Chiapas and Campeche are part of the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force (GCF), a multi-jurisdictional collaborative effort established between 19 states and provinces from Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Spain and the US. The GCF supports the development of the appropriate technical, legal and institutional frameworks for comprehensive cross-jurisdictional REDD+ and low emissions rural development initiatives.
Planned	As part of the preparation process, Mexico will strengthen the existing multi-stakeholder participative platforms at the national, state and local levels in order to ensure the stakeholders' full and effective participation in the preparation of the National REDD+ Strategy (ENAREDD+). Through this, a participatory and inclusive process for the finalization of a viable and culturally appropriate ENAREDD+ will be ensured.
Gaps/Next steps	Work on harmonizing the state initiatives with the National REDD+ Strategy without impeding local initiatives: promote consistency and coherence between the subnational and the national levels.

Legal

Does the country have a legal framework that supports the implementation of REDD+ (e.g. special focus on land rights/tenure rights, carbon rights assigned)?

Accomplishments	Mexico has a solid legal framework, which provides new tools and structures to meet the challenges of climate change and that is also relevant for REDD+. Among these instruments are the Climate Change General Law presented in 2012 and the Climate Change Strategy released in June 2013.
	Land tenure issues involving local communities and indigenous peoples have been generally resolved (about 45 per cent of forest land represent communities and *ejidos*).[9] Forest land owners have the established right to be the direct beneficiaries of the economic revenues generated by the sustainable management of their forests. Further, regulations have been developed that directly support the REDD+ strategy, such as the recognition of carbon capture as an environmental service under the General Law of Sustainable Forest Development. This provides a secure legal framework regarding property rights and respects the system of governance of the territories and community forests.
Ongoing	To encourage participatory law developments, the Legal Unit of the National Forest Commission of Mexico has recently created a workspace to promote discussion and analyze forest, land, agriculture and environmental laws, which could be used to further address cross-sectoral issues related to REDD+ implementation, in collaboration with the Legal Unit of the Ministry (Secretary) of Agriculture and Livestock (SAGARPA).[10] The Mexican government is working to eliminate the contradictions between incentives, which promote both forest ecosystems conservation and forest degradation and/or loss.
Planned	The legislative power will work in developing the needed reforms to align the applicable legal framework to policy applications.
Gaps/Next steps	A large part of Mexico's rural population faces significant challenges in overcoming poverty and entering a future of broad-based, sustainable development in the countryside. Successful implementation of REDD+ could be hindered if it is not couched and implemented in terms of financial benefits for impoverished populations surrounding forests and conservation areas.

Tracking REDD+ Progress
Successful REDD+ implementation will depend on the country's ability to track and report on the state of the forests and REDD+ progress against a reference level.

MRV
Advances in putting in place a measurement, reporting and verification system for REDD+.

Accomplishments	The national forest inventory is now linked to the REDD+ MRV system in line with the latest recommendations from the UNFCCC. Mexico has a strong background in forest monitoring and already produces a regular National Forest Inventory (NFI) and is therefore well positioned to develop a robust national forest monitoring programme.
Ongoing	Mexico is working to develop, through the Mexico-Norway Project, a national system for MRV in the forest sector, as well as tracking the effectiveness of policies, providing transparency and accuracy as much as possible, and the promotion of local-level participation. Mexico would utilize a combination of satellite imagery and data from a national forest inventory to monitor the level of emissions that occur from forest change. A number of activities are aimed at promoting capacity for REDD+ in Mexico, including those that support the development of the MRV system and enhance local capacity for such systems. For example, the Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature is implementing the Forest Monitoring Capacity Building Project and aims to directly support seven civil society organizations in building capacity among 16 forest communities in forest-monitoring technologies.[11] Progress made on the MRV system: an historical analysis (1990-2010) to estimate net deforestation (LANDSAT 1:100,000), identification of hot spots, analysis of drivers of deforestation, emission factors – National Forest and Soils Inventory Data (INFyS), activity Data: annual monitoring 2011-2013 (Rapideye: 1:20,000).
Planned	Mexico's vision on MRV is to develop a multi-scale and multifunction forest monitoring system that takes full advantage of the existing national forest inventory along with regional or local inventories to monitor carbon stocks with low uncertainty. Mexico is a demonstration country for GEO Forest Carbon Tracking. Complementary activities will include developing an early-detection system for land-use change (using coarse and mid-resolution imagery). A multi-scale measuring scheme is under development, connecting information at project and subnational and national levels for a single accountability data set, with the support of the government of Norway.[12]
Gaps/Next steps	Develop and strengthen capacities to implement and maintain the MRV system at different scales. Build technical capacity in MRV at national, subnational and local levels. As Mexico currently lacks an operative satellite system to monitor annual land-use changes, short-term MRV activities will include the development and implementation of an operative satellite monitoring system to offer annual national activity data.[13] Methodological research on multi-scale MRV systems and the reinforcement of already ongoing pilot REDD+ research will also be priorities.

Reference levels
Has the country developed on national or subnational reference levels? What approach was adopted (e.g. historical, historical adjusted)?

Accomplishments	Mexico has generated a spatially explicit model of deforestation risk over time and will improve this model based on analysis of drivers. The reference levels will be determined through a combination of historical data and by adjusting for national circumstances, for which explicit and transparent criteria will be developed.[14]
Ongoing	The historical deforestation data will be derived from several remote-sensing products that are being developed and assessed based on historical ground-truthing efforts.[15]
Planned	Mexico and Norway have signed an MoU that will allow for dedicating resources to develop the reference scenario for Mexico.[16]
Gaps/Next steps	Develop and strengthen institutional capacities to enable the country to continuously improve the construction of the reference levels tracking emissions and removals of carbon.

Getting REDD+ Done
Achieving REDD+ that is (a) undertaking intervention strategies that address the country drivers of deforestation and (b) mobilizing the financial resources to pay for it.

Addressing drivers of deforestation
What are the main strategies and programmes to reduce deforestation (e.g. increase protected areas, support shift to sustainable agricultural practices, increase law enforcement)?

Accomplishments	The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales; SEMARNAT), through its General Forestry and Soil Management Office (Dirección General de Gestión Forestal y de Suelos), and the Environmental Protection Agency (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente; PROFEPA) are in place and responsible for enforcing environmental laws, regulating forest activities and authorizing the use of forest resources. However, the most notable approach Mexico is undertaking is its Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) programme, which aims to provide financial incentives to people who own forest land and are working to implement sustainable land-use techniques, and so encourage adequate provision of environmental services nationwide. During the 2007-2012 period, the PES programme supported more than 2.9 million hectares that benefited 5,042 environmental service providers in the country with an amount of 6.134 million pesos. CONAFOR has designed and begun the implementation of models to allow testing, at different scales and conditions, of the causes of forest and carbon loss, from the application of different public policy instruments and coordinated actions across different sectors that affect rural development. The implementation of the early REDD+ actions aims to provide expertise for the development of the ENAREDD+ and demonstrate that it is possible to stop deforestation and degradation of forests via the correct application of programmes and public resources from institutions of the forest, agricultural and environmental sectors. In this way ENAREDD+ is working to achieve sustainable management of forest resources and support sustainable and productive projects that avoid the loss of forest cover and other natural resources.
Ongoing	A series of REDD+-related projects and initiatives are being designed, implemented and financed by national and international nongovernmental organizations in order to strengthen resilience to climate change. For example, the Mexican Civil Council for Sustainable Silviculture (Consejo Civil Mexicano para la Silvicultura Sostenible; CCMSS) is working in a number of municipalities and forest regions to develop REDD+ strategies as part of its REDD Community project, and AMBIO (La Cooperative Ambio S. C. de R. L.) has established two forest carbon projects. Further, the GCF has been working in collaboration with the REDD+ Offset Working Group (ROW) and the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop a system of internationally recognized REDD+ credits for California's cap and trade compliance market.[17] The ROW is being designed so that California's compliance market may recognize international REDD credits and help finance REDD in Mexico.[18]
Planned	None, or no information available.
Gaps/Next steps	Community and industrial users of the forests often lack legal, technical and environmental permissions to use forest resources. This is partly due to time-consuming permitting requirements, which may be creating disincentives to manage forests legally.[19] Programmes to incentivize and improve the permitting processes may help avoid illegal land clearings and reduce poorly planned development activities. More efforts to improve enforcement activities in Mexico are needed, particularly through inter-sectoral collaboration, an issue already identified and promoted in Mexico's REDD+ vision.

Finance

What resources is the country counting on to pay for REDD+ implementation (e.g. multilateral, bilateral, own country resources, voluntary and offset carbon markets)? How much has been committed, transferred and disbursed?

Accomplishments	A range of funding from domestic, bilateral and multilateral sources supports REDD+ activities in Mexico.
	Title — *Amount (US$)*
	Specific investment loan (SIL) to Mexico for forests and climate change — 350,000,000
	Forest Investment Program (FIP): — 60,000,000
	a) Mexico forests and climate change project (Donated; FIP) — 25,660,000
	b) Mexico forests and climate change project (Loan; FIP) — 16,340,000
	c) Forest Investment Plan (Project 3. Financing low carbon strategies in forest landscapes) — 10,000,000 (Loan FIP) / 5,000,000 (Donated FIP)
	d) Forest Investment Plan (Project 4. Support for forest-related micro, small and medium enterprises in ejidos and communities) — 1,800,000 (Loan FIP) / 1,200,000 (Donation FIP)
	e) Forest Investment Plan (Project 4. Support for forest-related micro, small and medium enterprises in ejidos and communities) — 3,000,000 (Donation FOMIN)
	Reinforcing REDD+ readiness in Mexico and enabling south-south cooperation — 15,000,000
	REDD+ Preparation Proposal in Mexico (Not yet established) — 3,800,000
	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Mexico Program (MREDD+) — 30,000,000
	Implementing early REDD+ actions in priority watersheds in Mexico through building local governance mechanisms — 2,000,000
	Methodology of a model of inter-municipal governance for the implementation of REDD+ mechanisms at the local level (Joint Fund for Scientific and Technical Cooperation Mexico-Spain) — 40,000
	2012 Agreement – Program for the inter-municipal integral forestry development and its linkage with the National REDD+ Strategy – Pilot: Río Ayuquila-Armería and other priority watersheds — 240,000
Ongoing	The ROW and ARB (noted in the section above) are working to establish a link between Mexico's REDD+ programme activities and California's compliance market so that California is able to receive carbon credits generated in Mexico in exchange for ongoing and long-term funding of Mexico's climate change mitigation efforts.
Planned	None, or no information available at this time.
Gaps/Next steps	None, or no information available at this time.

REDD+ for People and Nature

Ensuring that the country REDD+ strategy (a) has in place adequate safeguards to protect vulnerable social groups and preserve tropical forest environments and that (b) beyond doing no harm, they also offer new income and livelihood opportunities to indigenous peoples, local communities and the rural poor.

Social and environmental safeguards

What safeguards is the country applying to/implementing (FCPF, UN-REDD, REDD, SES)? Are there safeguard information systems in place?

Accomplishments	Seven socio-environmental safeguards have been established. Mexico recognizes all UNFCCC safeguards, and they are in line with the National REDD+ Strategy of Mexico along with other principles included in Mexican law (Art 134). Several articles in the Mexican Constitution and in the Agrarian and Indigenous Development Commission Laws outline the importance of safeguards and are integral influences in policy development. Furthermore, the Mexican government has ratified ILO 169, and thus recognizes the importance of promoting and ensuring the participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy, which promotes participation by and inclusion of indigenous peoples.[13] Furthermore, the the Mexican General Law for Sustainable Forest Development (Ley General de Desarrollo Forestal Sustentable) establishes that the legal instruments and environmental policies that regulate and promote the improvement and conservation of environmental services must guarantee respect for the safeguards that are recognized by international law.
Ongoing	An analytical process is being developed in order to further identify key elements for the construction of the National Safeguards Information System. This process includes the analysis of the legal framework and identification of gaps.
Planned	Mexico will pilot standards with the REDD+ SES initiative in two of its Early Action areas.
Gaps/Next steps	None, or no information available at this time.

Benefit sharing

Is there a finance mechanism in place that secures fair distribution of benefits to indigenous peoples, local communities and the rural poor?

Accomplishments	Through REDD+, Mexico is looking for an integral improvement to the social welfare of its population and of the economic activities in the territory lying outside urban areas in accordance with the applicable provisions, ensuring permanent conservation of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services in the territory. As an example, Mexico has the world's largest programme of Payment for Environmental Services, which rewards and supports mechanisms for hydrological, carbon and biodiversity services. Participants are paid on performance and receive technical assistance (managed by CONAFOR), which involves payments for hydrological services.
Ongoing	Mexico is discussing finance approaches for REDD+. Early ideas include the following: the funding system established should be multiple, diverse, progressive and efficient, and will facilitate the long-term maintenance of climatic and socioeconomic benefits and other environmental benefits from forests; the development of a REDD+ finance mechanism must be aligned with national mechanisms that will be defined; financing should be sought from other sectors (e.g. agriculture) that are complementary and directed toward common goals of integrated land management.
Planned	CONAFOR will develop a process to further analyze issues related to the financing architecture and financing mechanism for REDD+, including expert dialogues and analytical work.
Gaps/Next steps	Incorporate and take into account lessons learned from existing regional and local financing mechanisms.

WWF (PLANNED) ACTIVITIES UNTIL 2015 & PARTNERS

WWF played a key role in the constitution of the Technical Advisory Committee (CTC-REDD+), supporting the government in establishing stronger relations with the civil society in REDD+-related issues. This leadership role led WWF to serve as president of the CTC-REDD+ in its first year of existence.

WWF-Mexico was involved actively in building the REDD+ Vision, a key milestone toward consolidating a robust policy framework that truly halts deforestation and degradation in Mexico. WWF-Mexico has a good relationship with governments and has worked closely with the Mexican Forestry Commission (CONAFOR), the Ministry of Environment (SEMARNAT) and many governmental and nongovernmental partners such as academic institutions. WWF-Mexico has played an instrumental role in the REDD+ process in Mexico, mainly through actively participating in the Technical Advisory Committee and working with other CSO partners in building consensus for REDD+ at the national level. However, since many CSO partners work in the topic at the national and subnational levels, WWF-Mexico is focusing now more in working in climate change and energy issues.
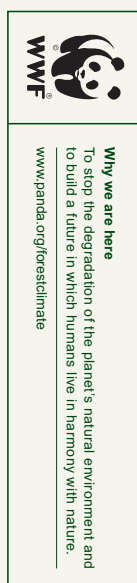
OUR WORK

WWF's Forest and Climate Programme works to ensure that the conservation of tropical forests as carbon stores is secured by green economic development that benefits people, the climate and biodiversity in transformational ways.

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This publication is made possible through a partnership with WWF-Germany. To learn more about the REDD+ related work of WWF-Germany, visit: **bit.ly/11ABTFx**

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