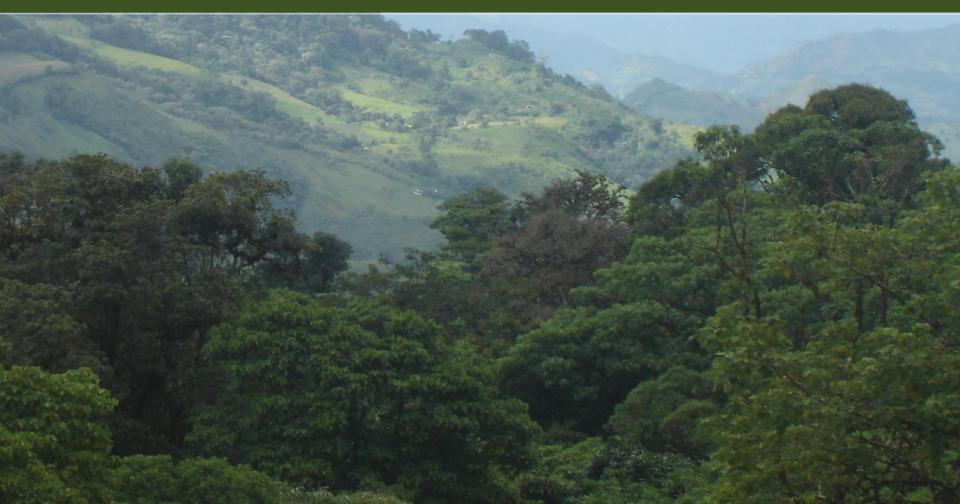
How Mekong REDD+ strategy documents address legal and illegal forest conversion



Forest Trade and Finance

July 2014



Initial review of REDD+ strategy documents



- FT reviewed Mekong REDD+ readiness documents:
 - Readiness Preparation Proposals (R-PPs); Myanmar REDD+ Readiness Roadmap; Laos Forest Investment Program (FIP); Vietnam Emission Reductions Program Idea Note (ER-PIN)
- Key Questions:
 - 1. Was conversion for agriculture listed as major driver of deforestation?
 - 2. Was illegal conversion differentiated from legal?
 - 3. Were different tools/strategies identified for legal vs. illegal conversion?

General findings



- 1. Commercial agricultural expansion identified as primary driver of deforestation
- 2. Limited discussion of the scale of illegality associated with conversion
 - mention of "weak law enforcement" & "conflicting regulations"
 - "unclear land tenure"
- Limited discussion of specific tools to address illegal conversion
 - "implement laws" & "harmonize regulations"

Potential tools to address illegal conversion



- Better data
 - If you don't know problem, how do you address it?
 - Analysis of drivers of illegal deforestation
 - large-scale clearance vs. small-scale encroachment?
- National processes to more clearly define legality of land conversion
 - Clarify laws (loopholes; retroactive degazetting of forests)
 - Improve laws to meet international standards (e.g. FPIC; purchasing policies of international buyers)
 - Streamline laws (easier for responsible investors)



Potential tools to address illegal conversion



- Ensure timber/commodities have the documentation needed meet the requirements of trade-based approaches
 - public procurement policies
 - EUTR
 - Lacey Act
- Donor programs & international community
 - Criteria for Emission Reduction Program Document (ERPD)
 - VPA processes



Upcoming FT policy brief



- Short report:
 - Key findings from review of REDD+ readiness documents
 - Definition of illegal conversion and main types of illegalities
 - Parallels with efforts to combat illegal logging
 - Specific tools that could address illegal conversion timber and other commodities
- We welcome your input!



Questions



- Is legal vs. illegal conversion being discussed in REDD+ forums? But too controversial for REDD+ documents?
- How have REDD+ dialogues around illegal conversion evolved in the last few years?
- Terminology?
 - Legal vs. illegal
 - Planned vs. unplanned
- What are the best tools for REDD+ to address illegal conversion in the Mekong?



