

*demonstrating that it has a vital role in combating climate change*

- *Show that forest restoration can also provide real, tangible, deliverable solutions today for local communities and the world's population alike.*
- *Recognise and promote the role of the Commonwealth's next generation of people who will be driving forward and delivering change in the future.*

*The Conference will seek to clarify the connections between forestry and finance, agriculture and energy generation in relation to climate change and whilst it is non political, will look to influence government policies.*

## **Introduction**

Climate change has focused our attention on the need for urgent and decisive action if we are 'to avoid the Earth passing a point of no return beyond which the future will be out of our hands'.<sup>i</sup> Gradual increase in global temperature could lead to abrupt changes, so called tipping points, such as the melting of ice sheets and glaciers and the loss of tropical forests.

Climate change is not the only process that can result in tipping points. Rokström et al (2009)<sup>ii</sup> propose a set of nine 'non negotiable planetary conditions that humanity needs to respect in order to avoid the risk of deleterious or even catastrophic environmental change at continental to global scales.' The nine planetary boundaries are: climate change; ocean acidification; stratospheric ozone depletion; atmospheric aerosol loading; bio geo chemical flows, interference with Phosphorous and Nitrogen cycles; Global freshwater use; land use system change; rate of biodiversity loss; and chemical pollution (See figure 1).





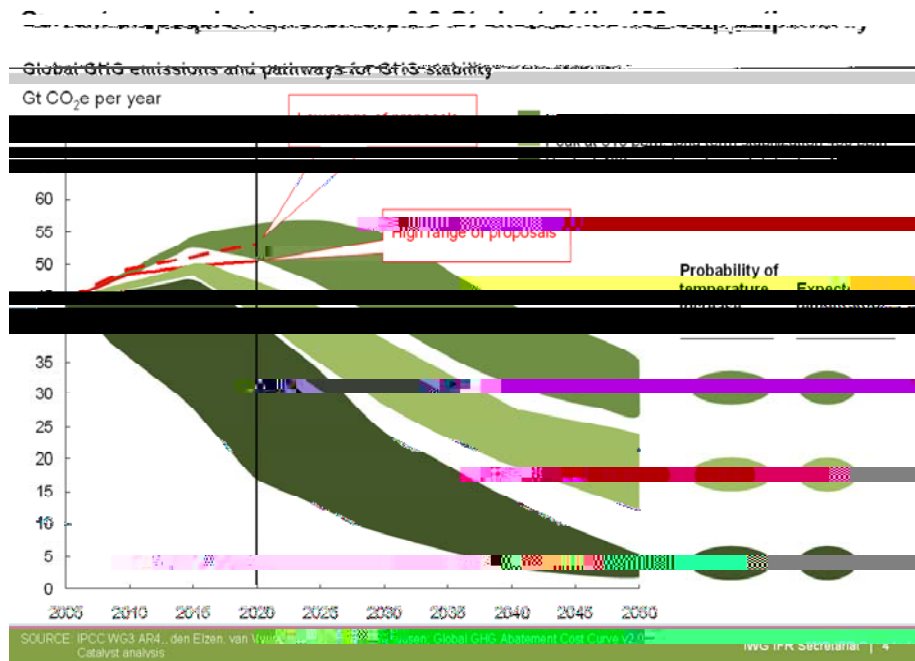


Figure 2 Global greenhouse gas emissions and pathways to stability

### Adapting to climate—the role of forests

Forests are not only important for the role they can play in stabilizing green house gas emissions, but also for their role in helping people adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change. Sustainably managing, conserving and restoring forests so that they continue to provide the ecosystem services that allow people to adapt to climate change is a message that this conference needs change

## **Seizing the opportunity for forest restoration**

We need to seize the opportunity that

## Governance and self organization

REDD plus strategies can best be achieved through multistakeholder platforms that include the views of all relevant actors and stakeholders in decisions. Perhaps the greatest challenge that this entails is the recognition that those with most to gain or lose through managing forests, the rural poor, are often those least well equipped to take part in negotiations. The creation of multistakeholder processes will, therefore, require considerable investment in human and institutional development (Jackson 2009).

REDD plus and climate adaptation present opportunities to build on the extensive experience in the forest sector with multistakeholder forest governance reform processes. But this will require us to build on the hard won gains made to date in the forest sector in promoting a more people centred, multifunctional, and pluralistic understanding of forests and sustainable forest management.

Multistakeholder forest governance processes have taught us some salient lessons for climate change including:

- The likely impact of climate mitigation adaptation strategies on rural communities and forest dependent groups, particularly the rural poor, women and indigenous peoples needs to be understood within both national and sub national contexts. REDD plus strategies need to consider land use, carbon rights and adequate legal frameworks including securing forest rights for those people who are most dependent upon forests for their livelihoods. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, REDD must not be used to wrest control of forests from local people.
- Participatory national forest governance reform is often a prerequisite to identifying and improving prospects for implementation of necessary and agreed measures to combat climate change.
- Forest governance practices, such as multi stakeholder engagement, need to be better linked with REDD plus national strategies and activities. The best practice emerging from national and regional forest governance reform processes – including those related to the Ministerial Conferences on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) and the development of related national schemes provide an excellent governance underpinning for the future REDD regime and other climate change initiatives. It should be emphasized that forest governance reform is a matter of societal choice and that reform processes need to be nationally owned and enjoy the support of key stakeholders.
- REDD plus should ensure transparency and inclusiveness from the outset. National strategies and action plans and REDD plus action

safeguards as discussed under the UNFCCC and these safeguards should also be applied in REDD monitoring protocols.

## SCALE

The functioning and management of forests is inextricably linked to the surrounding landscape, which often, but not always, is dominated by agriculture. For this reason forests need to be considered as parts of broader social ecological systems in which actors that are relevant to REDD plus and climate adaptation can be identified and brought together and in which those most dependent on forests can have a large part in deciding the particular mix of goods and services forest provide, including the role of forests in combating climate change

Landscape level approaches provide an interesting option for forest based mitigation and adaptation because they provide a scale that enables opportunities for specialisation of use and management, for trade offs between land uses, for markets to be developed and for community based organization.

Adapting to the change requires us to connect processes across scales. Policies, institutions, markets and environmental flows have effects at multiples scales. Decisions on REDD plus and forest management should not be simply taken on short term economic grounds, but based on the implications for human well being and the ecological resilience of forests. Economic analysis must take its rightful place as a powerful tool that aids, rather than determines, societal decision making.

and imminent policy change. In this context, learning will always struggle to keep up with change and we will never 'know enough' so the recommendation of Jacobs et al, to favour short term, easily adjusted decisions, may be wise.

We need to develop a better understanding of the relationships between people and forests and in particular their vulnerability to changes in policies, practices and institutional arrangements that may accompany schemes such as REDD plus. We also need to better understand the opportunities and constraints for forest dependent communities to engage easily



## Conclusion

I want to underline a hopeful message – in the face of global change, restoring forest landscapes has the potential to benefit society in many ways. REDD plus and adaptation, if properly applied, can reduce green house gas emissions, improve the resilience of people and nature, enable sustainable forest management and enhance the delivery of ecosystem goods and services.

However, to achieve this vision, we need to continuously, strongly and publicly argue that carbon sequestration is only one of many ecosystem services that forests can provide. The extent to which forests are used to sequester carbon versus their role in providing other goods and services must be a matter of societal choice rather than a decision taken on simple economic or carbon storage grounds (Jackson 2009). REDD plus and climate adaptation mechanisms must provide tangible benefits for forest dependent communities if they are to work and this requires governance that allows decisions to be made with full participation and openness is essential.

At the beginning of my presentation I noted that there were several planetary boundaries that are of direct relevance to forests including climate change, land use change and biodiversity loss. It is imperative that meet one of the aims of this conference that is to strengthen support for forest restoration and help move forestry up the political agenda by demonstrating that it has a vital role in combating climate change. But to maintain political support for forests it is equally imperative that we demonstrate the value of forests in relation to land use change and biodiversity loss as well as in the wellbeing of people and in leading us to a more sustainable 'green economy'.

Thank you

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<sup>i</sup> Hamilton, Clive (2010) *Requiem for a Species. Why we resist the truth about climate change*. ISBN: 978 1 84971 081 7. Earthscan. 286pp.

<sup>ii</sup> Rockström, J., W. Steffen, K. Noone, Å. Persson, F. S. Chapin, III, E. Lambin, T. M. Lenton, M. Scheffer, C. Folke, H. Schellnhuber, B. Nykvist, C. A. De Wit, T. Hughes, S. van der Leeuw, H. Rodhe, S. Sörlin, P. K. Snyder, R. Costanza, U. Svedin, M. Falkenmark, L. Karlberg, R. W. Corell, V. J. Fabry, J. Hansen, B. Walker, D. Liverman, K. Richardson, P. Crutzen, and J. Foley. (2009). Planetary boundaries:exploring the safe operating space for humanity. *Ecology and Society* 14(2): 32. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/Rokstrom> (2008)