

EcoNexus

Contact: Dr. Susanne Gura, gura@dinse.net

The UNFCCC negotiations do not fulfil expectations. Including more agenda items will delay and complicate it even more.

Agriculture is already in the CDM: palm oil and pig factory farms, two very contested industries.

Agriculture is already in the Adaptation Fund, which however depends on carbon markets. This and other experiences with carbon market must be looked into.

Additional carbon sinks for offset opportunities are a major reason for propositions to include soils and agriculture.

IPCC warned regarding economic (low carbon price) and social feasibility of soils in carbon markets.

Soils have been left out on purpose from the CDM, as sound MRV is not possible. MRV propositions are all based on aggregate level assumptions, far unsafer assumptions than those already unsafe assumptions made so far in the CDM.

“Offsets are an imaginary commodity created by deducting what you hope happens from what you guess would have happened” (see Econexus report [Agriculture and Climate Change - Real Problems, False Solutions](#) p8)

The carbon market is prone to cheating in many ways, see Friends of the Earth “Ten ways to game carbon markets” publication .

Subprime carbon is a similar danger than subprime mortgage.

There is very little business trust in soil carbon sinks in the carbon market.

Public money is wasted trying to leverage private money.

Carbon prices are low. Smallholders do not get monetary benefits – see WorldBank Biocarbon Kenya project.

Agriculture is an important driver of deforestation, in particular agrofuels and feed. The conclusion should be to stop growing more feed and more agrofuels, but not to add agriculture to REDD+. This proposition will add soils to the offset opportunities.

Agricultural intensification is a driver of deforestation: The Amazon rainforest is deforested with a view to grow GMO soy for the world feed market, even if cattle graze the land in the first years.

Promoting agriculture in REDD+ is likely to increase investment in intensive agriculture and lead to more deforestation.

Lifestyle changes are not only driven by the negative example of Annex1 countries, but also by massive subsidies. Policymakers must expose industrial animal food as negative for climate and food security. Absolute emission levels keep increasing, even if lowered per unit product. Its multiple associations with human and animal disease, animal welfare, and substandard labour conditions are massive unresolved problems.

There are very small nutritional needs for red meat, mainly by children and by women in reproductive age. Plant proteins have a far better nutritional as well as food security impact than animal proteins.

If industrial livestock production is reduced, methane emissions would probably drop considerably within 7-8 years –very likely the cheapest way to buy time. Nitrous oxide emissions could be reduced by around two thirds and considerably reduce the threat of long term climate change.

But if more grasslands are uprooted for cropland, not only their extensive root systems will release large amounts of GHG, but also food security of people living in marginal regions will be jeopardized.

9 billion people can be fed more securely on a healthier diet than the current average, on an agricultural system with far less chemicals and on a plant food emphasized diet. Agricultural emissions would decrease considerably, and organic carbon sinks would increase. This would lower soil degradation.

The IAASTD report (“IPCC of agriculture”) prepared by around 400 scientists and signed by around sixty countries, underscores this opportunity.