

Statements Indicating Government of India's Stand on REDD

June 1-12, 2009: In its official submission to the Bonn meeting of the UNFCCC, India lays out a position whereby “market based approaches” should be used to “provide positive incentives” for afforestation, reforestation and “reduced deforestation.” “Non-market approaches” need only be used for “stabilisation of existing forests” (it is unclear what this means). Hence, carbon trading should apply to afforestation projects (tree plantations), 'reforestation' projects (also likely to be plantations), and also to forest 'protection' efforts that would reduce deforestation.¹

July 19, 2009: Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh, in his statement given to the visiting US Secretary of State, *inter alia* said the following:

“Sustainable forestry management is of profound importance to us. We are just embarking on a close to \$ 3 billion programme (and \$ 3 billion to begin with) to regenerate our natural forests that already cover some 165 million acres –roughly the size of Texas. This is one of the largest carbon sinks in the world—and a sink that will only grow in size and impact. In this connection, I seek your support for India’s proposals to the UNFCCC and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries, REDD+, that is to acknowledge and reward countries who are in the business of actually expanding forest cover.”

The “\$ 3 billion programme” is the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority, which has been institutionalised through a Supreme Court order despite this model being rejected by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology and Environment and Forests in October 2008.

The Standing Committee strongly criticised the government for such programs and made specific recommendations that all spending should be under the control of panchayats and gram sabhas and no program should be undertaken in violation of people's rights. All of these recommendations have been ignored in the current CAMPA guidelines, which make no reference to people's forest rights.

November 26, 2009: Prime Minister's joint statement with US President Barack Obama includes following reference:

“The two countries will also work to reduce emissions from land use, including deforestation, forest degradation, enhanced sequestration, and sustainable management of forests.”

¹ Paper 20-D, p. 112, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change document FCCC/AWGLCA/2009/MISC.4 (Part I)