

MAKING MONITORING MATTER: HOW HAS THE USE OF OPEN-SOURCE TECHNOLOGY IN COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST MONITORING IMPROVED LOCAL AND EXTERNAL DECISION MAKING?

Wednesday, 9 September 2015, 19:45 - 21:00
Meeting room 12A, International Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa

Introduction

While national capacities to understand the dynamics of forest change have significantly improved, important information gaps remain. Tropical forest countries undertaking climate mitigation activities like REDD+ under the UNFCCC will require an array of complementary data on, for example, local deforestation and degradation drivers, social wellbeing and biodiversity indicators, to develop comprehensive national forest monitoring and safeguard information systems. The participation of forest peoples in monitoring (community-based forest monitoring - CBFM) can provide the means to deliver the necessary ground data to fill these information gaps and support local, national and international undertakings on forest conservation.

CBFM is an important tool for supporting local level engagement with external environmental policy interventions and related developments that impact communities. Equally such policies can be informed from the extensive traditional knowledge and information exchanges generated by these communities. In recent years, open-source applications and technological tools such as mobile devices have been promoted as one approach to improve and overcome challenges to CBFM such as data accuracy, transcription errors and illiteracy barriers, and enable more effective information transfers for improved forest monitoring and better decision-making.

Objectives

Drawing on experiences and experts from technology-based monitoring projects among forest-dependent communities in Brazil, Guyana, among others worldwide, this event seeks to:

- (1) Highlight the role of technological tools within CBFM models for multi-scale decision making;
- (2) Create dialogue around the opportunities and challenges (trade-offs), the strengths and weakness, of using such tools among communities to generate information for different forest data end-users.

Output: Participants gain a practical understanding of how and when to apply technology to bolster monitoring initiatives and improve multi-stakeholder decision-making.

Preliminary agenda

19:45 – 19:50	Welcome & agenda
19:50 – 20:00	How is technology being used in community-forest monitoring models?
20:00 – 20:50	Opportunities and challenges in using technological tools with forest communities for improved decision-making.
20:50 – 21:00	Closing remarks

Light refreshments will be served