Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative

CIVIL SOCIETY - CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Rationale and focus

Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) hereby call for proposals to the third tranche of the Funding Scheme for Civil Society. Administered by Norad since 2009, the funding scheme is an integrated, strategic component of NICFI. The scheme shall contribute to the climate and development goals set for NICFI by the Norwegian Parliament. Civil society can play a crucial role in reaching the overarching goals of contributing to the establishment of a global regime for REDD+, reduced CO₂ emissions from deforestation and forest and peat degradation, sustainable development and human rights.

It has been documented that civil society so far has played a crucial role in advancing these goals, both locally and on the global arena. Through the first two tranches of the grant scheme, Norway has supported close to 90 civil society projects. During the period 2009-2014, civil society has strengthened the support for REDD+ among key actors and documented development benefits from initial REDD+ implementation efforts. Civil society may contribute both to policy development and consensus building, promote rights and sustainable economic development through awareness raising, sharing of knowledge and skills, and testing and implementing of green livelihood models. Civil society may also take direct part in promoting and protecting human rights, especially of indigenous people and other forest dependent populations.

Norway’s government has decided to establish a third tranche of the climate and forest funding scheme to civil society. Therefore, for the period of 2016-2020, civil society organizations are invited to present project proposals in four selected thematic areas presented below. The grant scheme as a whole shall continue to contribute to NICFI’s goals, and the selected organizations are invited to present proposals that over the next five-year period will contribute to one or several of the following outcomes:

1. Incentives to achieve REDD+ efforts are established through the new international climate regime and/or other climate, environment and development funding streams.

2. Governments in targeted developing countries have implemented REDD+ related policies, measures and safeguards, such as policies for green growth, sustainable livelihoods, land use-planning, the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities and women's rights.

3. Private sector actors have implemented social and environmental policies and practices that reduce the pressure on forests, and are engaged in global public private partnerships to reduce deforestation.
These outcomes are seen as important steps in order to reach NICFI's main goals. REDD+ is not simply an issue of improved forest management, it is a fundamental development choice, involving stakeholders on all levels of society across several sectors and geographies. The climate change mitigation potential of REDD+ will never be fully realized unless it offers a more attractive and viable development option than the destructive use of forests. It will also not be possible to achieve reduced deforestation without effective and relevant REDD+ policies being implemented by tropical forest countries. Finally, the private sector can provide massive contributions by reducing the pressure the forests through deforestation free supply chains.

The New York Declaration on Forests¹, adopted at the UN Climate Summit on 23 September 2014, sets ambitious targets fully aligned with the goals of NICFI. It offers a new platform for cooperation and confirms ambitious global goals on forest and climate that can only be met through comprehensive efforts by national and sub national governments, companies, indigenous peoples and NGOs/CSOs. Support provided through this grant scheme aims to enable civil society organizations to continue to play their vital role.

The civil society grant scheme for 2016-2020 will be centered on four thematic priorities, presented in detail below. These thematic priorities are significant in driving the REDD+ agenda forward and civil society is seen as having an important role. To reach the outcomes presented above, these are the areas where action is most needed and where civil society is seen as being especially important. Projects within these four areas may contribute strategically to one or several of the outcomes above. The projects must not reach all three goals, but the grant scheme as a whole shall contribute to all of them.

### Thematic areas

1. **Indigenous and Other Forest-dependent Populations' Rights and Interests**

   It is documented that situations where Indigenous Peoples and local communities have no or weak legal rights, their forests tend to be vulnerable to deforestation and degradation and thus become the source of carbon dioxide emissions. Further, legal forest rights for communities and government protection of their rights tend to lower carbon dioxide emissions and deforestation². In addition, experience show that strengthening the forest rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities has other development benefits. These include helping communities adapt to climate change, securing livelihoods, conserving biodiversity, cultural survival, political inclusion, and avoiding or reducing conflicts. Therefore, measures to protect and promote the rights and interests of peoples living in and from the forest is crucial to ensure establishment of successful REDD+ mechanisms as well as for implementation of national REDD+ strategies. Through this

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thematic area, the issue of tenure and rights will be specifically addressed in order to increase national and global support for REDD+.

Examples of possible projects within this thematic area:

- Advocacy work for indigenous populations and other communities inhabiting forest areas, with a special emphasis on groups that are disadvantaged
- Alignment of relevant international obligations and safeguards information systems
- Supporting indigenous peoples’ dialogue with governments, the private sector, and/or other relevant actors about land rights, projects and policies
- Advancing women’s rights and interests in REDD+ at all levels
- Activities related to land conflicts and making and proposed land designations, concessions and rights claims more transparent and equitable
- Legal reform and policy processes with regards to land and land tenure

2. Commodity Supply Chains and Green Growth

Estimates\(^3\) show that commercial agriculture is the most important driver of deforestation in Latin-America (around 2/3 of total deforested area), while in Africa and (sub)tropical Asia it accounts for around 1/3 of deforestation (of similar importance as subsistence agriculture). Companies thereby have an important role to play in reducing deforestation by changing their practice and policies. During the last few years, we have seen a remarkable development in the willingness of companies to reduce their deforestation footprint. The potential for reducing the pressure on forests from the private sector is huge. With this category, NICFI seek to support projects that engage multiple stakeholders, with governments, private sector and civil societies— with civil society organizations in key roles — in developing and promoting supply chains of relevant commodities that can meet market and consumer demand without contributing to unsustainable deforestation and forest degradation practices. Projects should promote policies providing alternatives to deforestation based on basic needs livelihoods (such as subsistence farming and reliance on fuel wood for energy) in ways that alleviate poverty and promote sustainable and equitable development for local populations and smallholders. Civil society can serve as advocates and watchdogs, as well as service providers and independent verifiers. Prospective grantees under this thematic area would need to specify the particular supply chains (both commodity, and in some cases, specific companies and geographies) that would be the focus of their work.

Examples of possible projects within this thematic area:

- Advocacy work for companies to announce time-bound corporate commitments to deforestation free supply chains or operations
- Promote/address major voluntary forums for sustainable supply chains, such as roundtable processes, sector associations or national sector development.

• Facilitate the participation of smallholders in sustainable supply chain commitments
• Transparency in commodity supply chains and link voluntary commitments to other public/private sector policies.
• Encourage commodity buyers to source and invest preferentially from states and provinces implementing jurisdictional REDD+ initiatives.
• Understanding of how the financial sector can contribute to the goal of deforestation-free commodity supply chains
• Green Growth initiatives that improve livelihoods without contributing to environmental degradation.
• Engaging private sector companies in the global REDD+ community, including through articulating their views on public policies needed for them to deliver on their commitments.

3. Legality, Transparency and Governance

Governance issues are critical to the success of REDD+ and it is crucial to identify and address issues such as legality, transparency, traceability and good governance on all levels. Political and socio-economic vulnerabilities pose a significant challenge to the realization of REDD+ objectives. It is estimated that illegal logging accounts for 50-90 per cent of all forestry activities in key producer tropical forests and 15-30 per cent of all wood traded globally. Illegal logging occurs in many formally protected forests, especially in tropical countries. Often, the poorest parts of the populations suffer most because of corruption and weak governance. It is important to tackle the root causes of corruption and illegalities, while addressing issues such as poverty. This thematic area concerns implementation and enforcement of key REDD+ related policies such as law enforcement, anti-corruption efforts, access to information and legal action in the forest sector in key forest countries.

Examples of possible projects within this thematic area:

• Supporting “watchdog” actors and implementers with transparency and traceability
• Target illegalities in the forest sector and contributing to results of investigations to prompt official response.
• Analysing/advocating demand-side policies keyed to illegality including traceability of products.
• Facilitate and advocate law enforcement and improved governance in the forest sector
• Providing alternative livelihoods for poor populations and especially vulnerable groups that have been involved in illegal logging
• Campaigns stressing the negative effects of corruption and illegal logging

4 http://www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Environmental-crime/Projects/Project-Leaf
4. **International Consensus on REDD+**

For targeted developing countries to be able to implement REDD+ policies, there must be international agreement on REDD+ as well as financing available. International consensus on REDD+ is a core tool in the global effort to prevent dangerous levels of climate change. Civil society may shape important aspects of REDD+ internationally and can contribute with real-world examples of what has worked to date. Credible approaches to lift the REDD+ issue on the political agenda in key developing, emerging and developed countries and/or articulate feasible options for achieving sufficient and sustainable mid-term REDD+ finance is important.

Examples of possible projects within this thematic area:

- Contribute to forest countries signaling commitments to include ambitious deforestation and/or forest restoration targets in their post-2020 climate contributions. This may include ambitious pledges of their own actions as well as additional mitigation measures subject to international REDD+ incentives.

- Advocate for developed countries commitment to include provisions for REDD+ demand in their post-2020 climate contributions. In addition, they may make commitments to provide REDD+ incentives before 2020 and to eliminate deforestation from public procurement.

- Support the efforts of leading states and provinces from tropical forest countries in advancing sustainable land-use strategies, actively supported by indigenous peoples and local communities.

The lists of examples under each thematic area are not exhaustive. Projects with other concepts than the ones mentioned as examples are also welcomed.

**The application process**  
**General conditions and considerations**

The application process is carried out in two stages. In the first stage, the applicant presents a concept note. In the second stage, a selected number of applicants are invited to submit a full project document.

Applications must be submitted electronically, and will not be accepted later than **6 January 2015 at 12 noon (CET)**.

The applicant must demonstrate significant relevance and competence to one main thematic priority, but cross-thematic proposals may also be considered. Normally, concept notes that do not fall within any of the above thematic areas will not be considered.

Concept notes must describe which of the outcomes it will contribute to and how.
**Who can apply?**
Priority will be given to civil society actors working within the field of reduced deforestation and forest degradation in targeted developing countries. Inter-governmental organisations outside the UN may in exceptional cases receive support. Independent competence centers or think tanks with an idealistic, non-commercial purpose may also receive support.

**Geographic priorities**
The geographic priorities for this grant are aligned with the targeted developing countries with which Norway and multilateral channels that receive funding from NICFI cooperate actively on REDD+ issues. Exceptions from this may be made if the project as a whole is assessed as being of particular importance to the objectives of this scheme. Applicants are also advised to consider the Norwegian policy of concentration of aid recipients. See list of recipient countries for 2015 (In Norwegian only).

All projects must demonstrate an added value to REDD+ in the relevant country or region and relate to national REDD+ policies and programs when relevant.