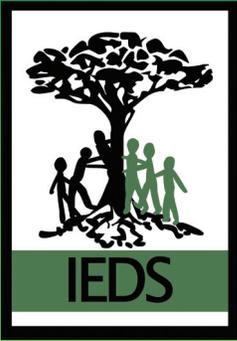


# Case Study: The Development of the REDD Options Assessment Report

Clarifying an emerging policy concept

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*This case study tells the story of the REDD Options Assessment Report (OAR), a document developed through a facilitated process to best capture uncertainties around and recommendations for the policy concept of REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). The Options Assessment Report, and those involved with its development, have been integral to the inclusion of REDD in the United Nations climate change negotiations. Based on detailed interviews and document analysis, the case may be engaging for students interested in the intricacies of international climate change negotiations and the diversity of stakeholder groups and countries involved with moving them forward.*

*The REDD OAR was sponsored by the Government of Norway, supported by the Daniel & Lucille Packard Foundation, and its development was facilitated by the Meridian Institute. The process, participants, and outcomes of the REDD OAR offer important insights into issues and complexities around international climate change negotiations.*



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*Disclaimer: This case has been prepared as the basis for discussion and collective learning rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation.*

## The Author

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## The Institute for Environmental Diplomacy and Security

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## The James Jeffords Center at the University of Vermont

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## Introduction

On a summer evening in 2008 Per Fredrik Islaas Pharo, deputy head of the Government of Norway's International Forests and Climate Initiative, and Daniel Zarin, at that time senior advisor to the David & Lucille Packard Foundation, found themselves discussing ways to ensure that REDD would be included in a post-2012 global climate agreement. Both knew that there were numerous and notable uncertainties and constraints around the policy concept of REDD, which stands for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, but they were motivated by their recognition of a need that was informed by representatives of both developing and developed countries, civil society, and indigenous peoples' organizations. By the end of the night they had designed the framework for an innovative and ambitious process to clarify and promote REDD as a viable climate change mitigation strategy.



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## Background

The UNFCCC is an international treaty that was adopted in 1992 as the basis for a response to global climate change. With 194 member countries, the Climate Change Secretariat and each country's climate negotiators have met annually at the Conference of Parties (COP). Through the UNFCCC the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997 and the 191 countries that ratified the protocol committed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over a five-year period. In recent years, negotiators have worked towards the next comprehensive climate agreement that will be incorporated when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends in 2013 (10,11).

Forests play a major role in climate change mitigation, sequestering carbon dioxide through photosynthesis and storing carbon as biomass. Further, deforestation accounts for approximately 14-17% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and there will be serious implications of a failure to curb global deforestation rates. Yet, the Kyoto Protocol does not include a mechanism to incentivize reductions of

deforestation in tropical countries. According to the *Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, reducing and/or preventing deforestation is the mitigation option with the largest and most immediate carbon stock impact in the short term (2). Recognizing the importance of the inclusion of forests in a post-2012 global climate regime, in 2005 at COP 11 in Montreal the governments of Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica requested a new agenda item on an emerging concept: Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, or REDD (8).

The basic premise around REDD is to essentially make forests “worth more alive than dead” (12). Countries (mostly in the global South) that work towards reducing deforestation and conserving existing forests may be able to sell the carbon credits from those forests to countries (mostly in the global North) that seek to mitigate GHG emissions, or there may be other types of financial support for maintaining and increasing forests’ mitigation services (it has yet to be decided what the standard platform of financing will be). REDD is seen by many as a cost effective way to reduce emissions that also serves to conserve valuable ecosystems and can provide livelihoods for indigenous peoples. As of 2011, the concept is now more commonly referred to as REDD+, which stands for an enhanced form of the concept that also covers sustainable forest management and increasing carbon stocks as well as conservation.

By 2007 at COP 13 in Bali, UNFCCC parties and other stakeholders had begun to engage with the complexities around REDD: policy, monitoring, and a collection of scientific, technical, and methodological issues. The *Bali Action Plan* and *Bali Road Map* were developed at COP 13 and represented a commitment to work towards a new comprehensive climate agreement by COP 15 in 2009. REDD was included in the *Bali Road Map* as a climate change mitigation option, initiating serious consideration of its place in a new climate regime. Over the next year, according to Kenneth Andrasko, senior policy analyst of the World Bank’s Carbon Finance Unit, “that was the time when the first really full discussion of the many different aspects of what REDD was as a policy and what the implications were for various stakeholders and interest groups, including indigenous peoples, really became manifest.”

Leading up to COP 15, said Andrasko, “it looked like it was pretty likely that the U.S. would pass climate legislation and that the other countries would as well and we’d get a global agreement at Copenhagen.” “We had the *Bali Road Map* where REDD was placed firmly on the agenda,” said Pharo, but “on the other hand no one really knew what this meant. There was little common ground about how this was supposed to be done and how the international regime was supposed to be structured.” Further, there were several distinct issues around REDD that were causing widespread confusion, in particular questions around what activities fit under REDD, what the reference levels for estimating carbon stocks would be, how indigenous peoples would be included in the design and implementation of REDD, how REDD projects would be verified and monitored, and what types of financing would be involved. REDD experts knew that in order for the concept to

be adequately situated in a post-2012 climate agreement, these issues needed to be addressed. In 2008 the Government of Norway and the David & Lucille Packard Foundation partnered with the NGO the Meridian Institute and embarked on a quest to do just that.

## Partners

### *Government of Norway*

The Prime Minister of Norway made the inclusion of a mechanism for REDD in a post-2012 climate agreement a policy priority in 2007 at COP 13 in Bali. While Norway implements “an aggressive domestic policy” around GHG emissions reductions, Pharo said, “there was still the feeling that if we’re really going to matter then we’d have to contribute internationally.” As a northern developed country that expects significant impacts from global climate change, REDD is important for Norway as a potential mitigation option. Further, Norway has a history and reputation of supporting diplomacy and humanitarianism and acting as neutral brokers of humanist positions. With REDD, noted Pharo, “a significant chunk of emissions would be theoretically cut rapidly at a relatively low price, meaning that it made a lot of sense from a lot of angles in addition to the fact that there were biodiversity and livelihood concerns.”

Norway’s Prime Minister established the International Forests and Climate Initiative through the Ministry of Environment and it is closely linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The initiative pledges up to 3 billion kroner (approximately \$545 million USD) per year through 2017 towards cost-effective and verifiable efforts to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation in developing countries. The head of the project group that administers the initiative is Ambassador and Special Advisor Hans Brattskar. Per Fredrik Islaas Pharo is a Senior Advisor and acts as the deputy head of the project group (7).

### *The Meridian Institute*

The Meridian Institute (Meridian) is a nonprofit nongovernmental organization that convenes and facilitates neutral and independent dialogues and assessments. With offices in Colorado and Washington D.C. and with a staff of approximately 50, Meridian was founded in 1997 and is internationally recognized for its work as a neutral third-party, helping people, organizations, and institutions solve problems, make informed decisions, and craft solutions to complex and controversial issues. Meridian has worked on over 300 projects and its focal areas include climate change & energy and global stability & security (6).

Meridian had engaged in work on REDD and other climate issues for several years prior to working on this project. Staff members had facilitated workshops on technical and verification issues for negotiators and experts and had done some work on issues around indigenous people and their role in REDD projects. Meridian was officially commissioned by the Government of Norway in late 2008 to facilitate

the development of a document that could objectively explore REDD issues and options for policy.

### *The David & Lucille Packard Foundation*

The David & Lucille Packard Foundation was founded in 1964 and is committed to improving the lives of children, families, and communities and to restoring and protecting the planet. The foundation has a long-standing commitment to climate initiatives, first focusing on addressing tropical deforestation and then in 2008 transitioning its grant-making focus around climate to working to advance climate policy through its Global Tropical Forest Carbon Program. Daniel Zarin was senior advisor to the foundation at that time. In 2010 the David & Lucille Packard Foundation joined forces with the Ford Foundation, the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation, and ClimateWorks to launch the Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA) to strategically focus funding on reducing GHG emissions while benefiting indigenous peoples and other rural communities: Daniel Zarin was hired as CLUA's Director of Programs (1).

## The Development of the OAR

### *Emergent Design*

After Zarin and Pharo's initial meeting about collaborating to clarify issues around REDD they continued to communicate, soon including Michael Lesnick from the Meridian Institute in the dialogue as well. "It became clear to us quite fast," said Pharo, "that we needed a process outside of the negotiations to inform the negotiations . . . we didn't want to have a Norwegian analysis, we wanted an independent analysis to inform, we wanted to draw on experts and negotiators and civil society insights." The trio knew that it was necessary to create a depoliticized, neutral venue for experts and stakeholders to identify and discuss the issues. They also knew that they wanted a final product: a report to disseminate widely that could inform negotiators and other key stakeholders leading into the 2009 UNFCCC meetings. In that respect, according to Lesnick, there needed to be a "set of authors that had credibility with both developed and developing countries who could competently address the issues." Further, they wanted the process and final report to be as objective as possible and for there to be ongoing input and transparency throughout the process.

According to Pharo, they wanted a facilitator for the report and that entity "needed to be trusted in the U.S., which was a core element because it was about getting the U.S. involved in the long term solution . . . needed to help us drive a process that would produce synergized, analytic-based insights on how to grapple with this issue in a way that would frame questions and options . . . and needed an approach to facilitating that would ensure that all key stakeholders would feel included." Based on nearly two decades of experience with facilitation and notable familiarity with REDD and the negotiation process, Meridian was formally commissioned to

develop the *OAR* and Lesnick became the project lead. From the beginning, the report was not intended to present any conclusions or to form consensus, but to promote a better understanding of the substantive issues around REDD, equipping the UNFCCC negotiators and stakeholder groups with the most comprehensive, credible information available. Additional funding for the *OAR* was provided by the David & Lucille Packard Foundation.

### *The Authors*

The first official step of the process was to identify the authors of the report. Said Lesnick, “this was driven by the issues” and was a “deliberate outreach and vetting process” to find knowledgeable, credible, and objective experts on the critical elements of REDD to be covered in the report. Five authors were chosen: Arild Angelson from the Center for International Forestry Research, Sandra Brown from Winrock International, Cyril Loisel from ONF International, Leo Peskett, at that time with the Overseas Development Institute, and Charlotte Streck from Climate Focus. Daniel Zarin took on the role of coordinating author. The authors participated in a series of conference calls in late 2008, managed and convened by Meridian, and developed an annotated outline of what they thought would need to be addressed given their understanding of the status of the negotiations and the existing gaps in knowledge.

### *The Consultations*

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, a diverse group of 35 hand-picked participants representing different stakeholder groups convened in Washington DC for the first of two in-person consultations. Lesnick and the team at Meridian invited influential individuals that could represent the points of view evident at that time on the different issues. Participants were essentially the major thinkers in the area and included UNFCCC negotiators, NGO professionals, indigenous peoples’ representatives, and individuals from UN agencies and the World Bank, all whom attended the meeting of their own capacity and not formally representing their countries.

The initial consultation was designed to introduce the intent of the project, the proposed topics for the report, and the timeline of the project and then to solicit feedback from the participants. The meeting was a full day in duration, and while Meridian had considered incorporating breaking out into work groups, the session was plenary throughout. Pharo began the meeting by issuing a statement on behalf of the Government of Norway that detailed its sponsorship of the *OAR* and emphasized Norway’s objective stance and intentions. Next, Zarin and Lesnick introduced the authors and chapter topics and covered the ground rules for the consultation. The remainder of the meeting was spent going through the proposed content and soliciting big-picture feedback. Each author presented a chapter topic to which he or she had been assigned based on their expertise and then solicited feedback from the participants on that topic. According to Andrasko, “it was a very intense meeting and there was a lot of energy in the room. There were strong decisions advocated, people argued, and it was not a passive meeting. It didn’t feel

confrontational but there were very strong decisions advocated by different parties and there was a lot of debate back and forth.” To conclude the meeting, Lesnick reemphasized the objectives of transparency and accessibility and laid out the timeline for the remainder of the *OAR* development.

The *OAR* authors met for a full day immediately after the first consultation and began to piece together the report. In the weeks following Meridian designed and administered an online consultation, which included a survey that was based on specific questions from the authors. According to Lesnick, “we identified around 100 people from around the world that couldn’t be at the in-person consultations but who were experts” and the responses solicited were incorporated into the draft of the *OAR*, which was complete by the second in-person consultation in Oslo, Norway. This second consultation occurred in February and also had approximately 35 attendees (while there was some overlap from the Washington DC meeting, there were also new participants as well). At the Oslo consultation, the focus was on providing germane feedback on the draft, which was reworked shortly thereafter, translated into French, Spanish, and Portuguese, and officially released in late March 2009.

### *The Final Report*

100 pages in length, the *OAR* is broken into four chapters that address the major contentious and unclear *areas* that were believed to be critical to the inclusion of REDD in a climate agreement: financial incentives, procedures for setting reference levels, methodologies for monitoring, reporting, and verification, and processes to promote the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities. The *OAR* further presents a phased approach to the implementation of a successful REDD regime in any given country to ensure the necessary steps are taken to promote government ownership and commitment from key players. This phased approach has been noted as one of the most useful outcomes of the *OAR* and is detailed as follows:

Phase I: National REDD strategy development, including national dialogue, institutional strengthening, and demonstration activities;

Phase II: Implementation of policies and measures proposed for national REDD strategies; financial instruments established; and

Phase III: Payment for performance on the basis of quantified forest emissions and removals against agreed reference levels (4).

The phased approach was included in the *OAR* as a way to enable a smooth transition from one level of involvement in REDD to the next, incentives that increase with performance, flexibility to accommodate national circumstances, and leveraging of public and private finance. The report was disseminated widely both in print and online and the facilitators and authors attended the 2009 UNFCCC meetings to promote the *OAR* and assist in familiarizing negotiators with its content.

## Participant Perspectives

The list of individuals representing different stakeholder groups that provided insight and shared knowledge with the authors of the *OAR* through the in-person and online consultations is extensive. The facilitation team at Meridian included seven in addition to Michael Lesnick. From the Government of Norway Pharo and Hans Brattskar, Ambassador and Director of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, were most directly involved. As noted before, there were five expert co-authors with Daniel Zarin as the coordinating author.

### *Successes*

For the most part the participants considered the *OAR* and the process around the report to be successful, innovative, and relevant. Co-author Leo Peskett noted that "it was an ambitious initiative which worked closely with key policy makers on some of the major building block of the debate around REDD, so it was a good learning process for people and it provided a forum for detailed discussion." Peskett also identified the *OAR* as a focused effort from the beginning, addressing a specific set of issues, which contributed to the speed and flow of the development process.

One of the factors repeatedly correlated to the success of the *OAR* was the support and sponsorship that it had from the Government of Norway. "Norway had good credibility on the topic of REDD and also had such a strong history of being supportive of the United Nations," noted Lesnick, and Andrasko elaborated, "Norway has a history of playing a strong humanitarian role and diplomatic role internationally and of being neutral brokers of humanist positions." Charlotte Streck, another co-author, and Zarin echoed similar perspectives and Peskett noted that because of this sponsorship, "most of the key figures from the REDD debate were at the meetings. This was important to give it some profile and acceptability within the UNFCCC negotiations. The fact that it wasn't just a meeting led by the main multi-lateral initiatives, which had dominated most of the technical meetings since then, was significant in focusing on the negotiations themselves more than more processes focused on implementation." Norway's integrity and financial commitment through its International Forests and Climate Initiative allowed them to position themselves actively to seek a climate deal through the negotiations; their sponsorship of the *OAR* leading into COP 15 substantially contributed to this effort.

Another characteristic that was frequently identified by participants as a strength was the depoliticized nature of the *OAR*'s development. Peskett noted that "it seemed to maintain a relatively apolitical space for itself; there was concern that this [the *OAR*] might be seen as a competing process to the delicate negotiations, but that doesn't seem to have been a problem." Norway's Per Pharo emphasized the importance of "the use of a facilitator that ran a neutral arean for problem-solving and consensus-building." Meridian clearly played a crucial role in creating this depoliticized atmosphere and its facilitation of the *OAR* was commended.

### *Points of Tension and Room for Improvement*

However, the development of the *OAR* was not without its challenges. Logistically speaking, Lesnick said, “the time schedule was insane. It was just absolutely maddening . . . I think the early and perhaps naïve assumption was that each chapter would be stand-alone,” but the group realized early on that the chapter topics were interconnected and this required the authors to collaborate in unanticipated ways. Combined with the number of in-person and online consultations and the complex subject matter, the fact that the report was written in a period of three months is remarkable. Lesnick also noted that the hardest part of the entire project was getting the correct translations, which was mostly due to the distinct lingo around REDD and the climate negotiations.

An initial challenge identified by some participants was “actually getting people to accept that this was a good idea,” according to Pharo. “Negotiators always meet in a formal setting and their informal interactions are basically limited to the hallways so the idea that you could have a substantial discussion without promoting your country was a bit alien to them” (Pharo). Bringing the negotiators to the table was absolutely crucial and while “it was difficult to keep it [the consultation process] free of politics and ideology” (Peskestt), Lesnick, Zarin, and Pharo worked hard to promote their idea. Both the sponsorship from the Government of Norway and the neutral facilitator were important in this respect. Ultimately, while their approach and certain components of the *OAR* such as the phased-approach to REDD were “slightly controversial, [they] were wisely positioned both by Lesnick and by the authors, so the skeptics were quite easily won over” (Peskestt).

Clarifying the contentious issues around REDD required the involvement of a number of stakeholder groups: negotiators, scientists, international agencies and NGOs, and indigenous peoples needed to be involved in order to incorporate the diverse perspectives about the policy concept of REDD. “Obviously not everybody could be consulted and not everybody was involved,” said Streck, and several participants noted minor participation by indigenous people and developing country negotiators. Zarin spoke at length about the process of deciding who to invite to the consultations and said, “I think that on the whole at that time there were not as many developing country negotiators who had their own well-developed thinking about these issues . . . and when you have a small group you want to get the different voices that are actually thinking about these things, you want the people whose brains have most been engaged in thinking about it.” Zarin, Pharo, and Lesnick agreed that they didn’t feel that they “wholesale missed any important representation” (Zarin), but cited the logistical challenges of bringing indigenous and developing country representation to the in-person consultations. This challenge was partially mitigated through the online consultation process and a number of participants mentioned that as thinking around REDD has evolved since 2009 (and the *OAR* contributed greatly to this), there has been stronger representation from indigenous groups and developing country participants.

More notable than the issue of stakeholder group representation at the consulta-

tions, however, was the representation of the author group. It continues to be an issue that for these types of processes and reports, “it’s basically European and American authors,” said Zarin. For the *OAR* the organizers sought experts that were considered credible and would be able to objectively consider the topics being addressed without advancing a particular agenda and “in many developing countries those people that do have that expertise are then actually the government negotiators” (Zarin).

A specific issue that the group was forced to deal with at the in-person consultations was the perception by some that REDD represents an exchange relationship where developing countries are paid to do something for the developed countries that essentially caused the problem in the first place. Etienne Massard, a representative from Gabon, was crucial in addressing this issue, doing so both eloquently and up front at the first consultation. Massard “emphasized the need for the group to think about REDD as a partnership between developed countries and developing countries,” said Zarin, and “that was really useful and helpful as a theme to carry through the discussions: a global partnership to address a global challenge.”

From the beginning, it was not the intention of the *OAR* to draw conclusions, but to present an assessment of the options around the major contentious issues. This was an important distinction particularly for the topic of finance. The role of finance (and where that finance will come from) in REDD as a means to incentivize forest conservation and reduced deforestation in developing countries has yet to be determined. Zarin explained the tension around the issue and noted, “the overall dynamic around finance and concerns about accountability” was apparent through the consultations. On one side, there was strong opposition from some countries against market mechanisms (carbon credits) and feelings expressed by some stakeholders against the “commoditization of nature.” But on the other hand, there was the idea that market mechanisms would be able to “catalyze mitigation in ways that public sector funding alone would probably not achieve” (Zarin). Continually emphasizing that the *OAR* was not going to make conclusions about financing was an important facilitation piece for Meridian.

### *Thoughts on the Process*

Despite these issues, overall the participants were positive about the final product. According to Peskett, “it was an ambitious initiative that worked on some of the major building blocks of the debate [around REDD], so it was a good learning process for people and provided a forum for detailed discussion.” Andrasko noted, “there are many examples of a donor funding a NGO or an institution to convene a process and bring practitioners, experts, and stakeholders together to discuss a topic and produce a report, but the REDD *OAR* was carried out at a level of detail, of financing and of sophistication that was unusual. It was quite successful and it had a very big impact because of the way it was done.” It was emphasized by several participants that the ultimate value of the *OAR* was not just in the final report but in the process of convening people that were engaged in the major

issues around REDD to have very focused and active discussion of those issues. Pharo commented that the climate change negotiations “crucially depend on this kind of effort because they are so heavily politicized . . . this is a space that would really do with a lot of good, fact-based, analytical, round-table type discussions.”

“So often when we’re having discussions and we come to some sort of challenging thing, everyone says ‘well let’s do another options assessment report,’” said Zarin, “but I don’t think that’s always the most useful thing to do.” The *OAR* development process worked for REDD at that time because of several key factors, including the fact that there was an evident need to clarify specific issues and that, since REDD was such a new concept, the stakeholder groups were generally working in the same direction and interested in learning more than in promoting a specific agenda. Further, people were eager to participate in the consultations because, according to Zarin, there was interest “in actually finding solutions. A lot of the time there really isn’t interest in finding solutions and so sometimes you just need to let time pass and things change until that develops. In this case there was a lot of support for REDD succeeding.” Jonah Busch, a participant from Conservation International, said at the time, “we were all hands on deck and fully supportive of working 110% for REDD. We all sort of felt like we were trying to, you know, save the world.” Issues that aren’t attached to the same level of good will would likely not benefit from a similar process. While there were distinct lessons learned from the development of the *OAR* and pieces that have been used by the partners since, ultimately, said Lesnick, “we believe that each topic, each project really requires its own design, which is hopefully informed by everything we’ve done before.”

## The *OAR* in Action

Interviewees noted widespread reference to the *OAR* in the literature and at UNFCCC meetings since 2009 and Lesnick remarked that “it does seem to have packed the REDD mechanism into something tangible that works and has broad political buy-in.” Jonah Busch, Climate and Forest Economist with Conservation International, said, “I’ve heard it referred back to a number of times and I think that it was very useful in moving things along. Some of the issues in the *OAR* have actually been resolved.” Andrasko remarked, “before then [the development of the *OAR*], only a few countries seemed to have an understanding of what the implications were for them but by the time of COP 15 in Copenhagen . . . there was much more advanced discussion about the general concepts of REDD.”

After the *OAR* was released in the spring of 2009 Meridian and the authors attended the Bonn Climate Change talks, the first of five planned negotiating sessions before COP 15, to introduce and discuss the *OAR* with UNFCCC negotiators and stakeholders. Additionally, Lesnick and the authors met with several country and regional negotiator groups independently, such as the Congo Basin Group and the European Group, to answer specific questions and to build familiarity to “allow people to use the ideas and understand where they came from before the negotiations.” By COP 15 in Copenhagen in December, the *OAR* had been widely

distributed and, according to Zarin, “many countries ended up using the document in the preparation of the submission of their own positions to the UNFCCC.” In a conversation with the Chair of the REDD Working Group (and thus the REDD negotiating track) shortly after COP 15, Zarin asked what reports and documents had been the most useful inside the negotiations to forge consensus and he was told that “far and away, the *OAR* was the most useful report and the only one that was considered something that had been done inside the process rather than an outside report done by an organization that was trying to advance its own agenda.”

While the *Copenhagen Accord*, the agreement drafted at COP 15, was not binding, it does include REDD and, according to Lesnick, “really laid a roadmap. We left Copenhagen knowing what we needed to work on.” Further, Zarin indicated that “though the REDD negotiations weren’t finalized until Cancun, they were essentially done at Copenhagen.” Other participants noted that the *OAR* seems to have been widely used outside of the negotiations and is widely referenced in literature on REDD, helping to clarify policy options and also advancing the acceptance of the phased-approach. Since completing the *OAR*, Meridian has collaborated with the Government of Norway and other partners on other REDD and REDD+ projects, including developing an *Institutional Options Assessment*, a set of reports on REDD reference levels, and convening several workshops and forums (5, 6).

## Moving REDD Forward

In December 2010 at COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico, REDD was adopted into the UNFCCC’s *Cancun Agreements*, which is the closest thing to an extension of the Kyoto Protocol that has come out of the negotiations. The Government of Norway has by far been the largest donor for REDD, not only funding the *OAR* and several other similar efforts with Meridian and other organizations since, but also pledging upwards of \$120 million for the UN REDD program and allocating \$1 billion each to Indonesia and a confederation of Amazonian states to establish REDD projects in recent years (7).

Leading up to up to 2011’s COP 17 in Durban, South Africa, there remained significant unresolved issues with regards to REDD. Meridian and Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative teamed up again to release two reports in 2011 with regards to procedures for setting reference levels, which is one of the four areas identified in the *OAR* as critical to successful implementation of REDD. *Modalities for REDD+ Reference Levels: Technical and Procedural Issues* was introduced at a side event presentation at the 34th session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) in Bonn, Germany in June (a UNFCCC meeting). *Guidelines for REDD+ Reference Levels: Principles and Recommendations* was introduced at a side event presentation at COP 17 in Durban in December. Andrasko noted that these reports had the same general approach as the *OAR*, with Meridian facilitating meetings of expert groups and lead authors incorporating stakeholder comments and feedback into the reports.

COP 17 concluded with an agreement to create a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol (the first commitment period concludes in 2012), which will run to either 2017 or 2020. At that point, a new global climate change agreement will be negotiated, mandated by the *Durban Platform for Enhanced Action*, the decision document that came out of COP 17. Regarding REDD, progress was made on defining reference levels and creating safeguards, indicating that, as Zarin states “a substantial amount of the content of the reports is reflected in the relevant COP 17 Decision.” Discussion around finance and the possibility of market-based mechanisms to support REDD were significant, though Louis Verchot, climate scientist with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), said that “until we have some sort of clarity about how money is going to flow and the size of emissions reductions we expect to achieve with that, it is going to be very difficult to move into full-scale implementation of REDD+” (3). Looking forward, Charlotte Streck indicated in her briefing of COP 17 that “submissions by Parties, a technical paper by the Convention Secretariat, and a possible workshop on REDD + are expected in 2012 with an eye to furthering the discussions at COP 18” (9).

## Appendix I

### *ACRONYMS*

CLUA	Climate and Land Use Alliance
COP	Conference of Parties
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
Meridian	Meridian Institute
OAR	Options Assessment Report
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

## Appendix II

### *ACCOMPANYING TEACHING NOTE*

This case study aims to highlight an innovative process of collaboration and consultation around an emerging GHG mitigation mechanism. Before the *OAR* was written, many climate negotiators were unfamiliar with REDD, how it could be implemented in their countries, and what the implications of REDD would be if included in a post-2012 global climate agreement. The Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative was poised to attempt to address these issues in a variety of ways but ultimately its administrators recognized the value of equipping key stakeholder groups with the most comprehensive information available leading into the 2009 UNFCCC negotiations. Through its collaboration with the Meridian Institute and the David & Lucille Packard Foundation the Government of Norway was able to establish a depoliticized arena for negotiators and other stakeholders to come together to express their concerns, offer clarity on issues, and gain familiarity with the components of a REDD regime. The end result was a comprehensive assessment report and a significantly increased awareness of REDD.

The content of this case study could be useful to higher education students studying a variety of topics, including environmental policy, international relations, and climate change mitigation. The topics covered in the case study, as well as the topics included in the actual *OAR* itself, are contemporary and relevant in conversations around addressing global climate change and/or large scale environmental problem-solving. It is important for students to recognize the complexities around international negotiations and the politics, processes, and challenges involved with reaching consensus on issues that affect overlapping stakeholder groups. Further, many of the policies, initiatives, and situations addressed through the UNFCCC are nascent: global climate change is causing problems that no one has dealt with before. The *OAR* began as a dialogue, evolved with feedback from participants throughout, and its administrators emphasized transparency and objectivity; these are characteristics not often found within the political arena.

#### *Lessons Learned from the OAR Process*

Specific lessons to be drawn from this case study include:

1. *The importance of a neutral facilitator and a depoliticized venue:* there was a general lack of clarity around specific REDD issues at the time and Meridian played a crucial role in creating a space and process where stakeholders could unpack these issues. As a result of this process, negotiators have developed a sense of ownership and empowerment.
2. *Focusing on presenting options, not drawing conclusions:* it was important that the *OAR* built familiarity with REDD topics but did not make concrete recommendations since the way that each country would engage with REDD would be different.

3. *Creating a forum for different stakeholder groups and experts:* convening, debating, and understanding specific individual and country perspectives and concerns was an important outcome of the *OAR* development process that had value beyond the final written product.
4. *Recognition of interconnectedness of REDD issues:* as noted by Lesnick, originally they thought that the issues were stand-alone but quickly realized their interconnectedness and proceeded with a more comprehensive vision for the *OAR*.
5. *Representation by all stakeholder groups is essential:* indigenous groups were notably underrepresented at the *OAR* consultations but Meridian and its partners have focused on involving them more in subsequent meetings and report development processes.
6. *The role of developed countries in furthering REDD:* The Government of Norway has made REDD a policy priority, recognizing the dependence that it as a country will have on developing countries that can implement REDD projects in their forests. Other developed countries that intend to invest in REDD projects to mitigate their GHG emissions can learn from Norway's commitment.
7. Germane to environmental diplomacy and security, this case study prompts consideration of the importance of inclusion of developing countries in global climate change conversations. Without the active participation of these countries, REDD simply will not work. The necessity for both developing and developed countries to have a comprehensive understanding of REDD, its implications, and its value is paramount. The authors of REDD, Meridian, and the Government of Norway recognized this fact but still were faced with challenges around bringing certain developing country representatives and, further still, indigenous groups to the table. Students might consider what those challenges are, how they might be addressed, and what the consequences may be if not overcome.
8. *Building trust is essential:* In particular in settings where trust is rare (such as in climate change negotiations); the combination of a neutral facilitator and a credible government sponsor for the *OAR* laid a foundation of trust for those involved with the consultations and, later, those negotiators that used the report at the Copenhagen meeting and beyond.

#### *Examples of Specific Questions for Students*

1. Most of the interviewees that participated in this case study considered the *OAR* to be a success: what aspects of the report and its development process would you consider particularly successful and why?
2. Conversely, the participants noted that this type of process would necessarily

be the best choice for all issues: what are examples of issues or policies for which this might not work?

3. Regarding the participation of different stakeholder groups, some participants noted the low involvement of indigenous groups and developing countries while the lead author made the point, “when you have a small group you want to get the different voices that are actually thinking about these things to be able to work and it also doesn’t really make sense to do it on the surface of having bodies to represent a region or a particular country.” Do you agree with this statement or do you think that the organizers should have put more effort into bringing more developing countries to the table?
4. Most participants noted that the Government of Norway’s sponsorship of the *OAR* added credibility to the report in the UNFCCC negotiations. However, it could also be perceived that, as a developed country, Norway was advancing its own agenda to ensure means of mitigating and offsetting emissions in the future through REDD projects. In light of the idea of “addressing a problem that was created by developed countries,” how do you feel about the development of the *OAR* and the advancement of REDD as a policy?
5. What do you consider to be the benefits and weaknesses of a process that is not geared towards drawing any consensus or conclusions but is focused on just clarifying uncertainties and doubts? Can you think of any policy issues that would have benefitted from such a process? Why would REDD be an issue for which this type of a process was seen as crucial?
6. Ultimately, REDD is a form of a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme, where a price is put on the services provided by nature. Some consider concepts like REDD to be a “commoditization of nature,” while others see them as ways to mitigate global climate change through incentivizing conservation and emissions reductions. On which side do you stand? On which side do you think that the major stakeholder groups represented in the *OAR* development process stand and what would you expect to be the major tensions around this issue?

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