

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The United Nations has recognized the importance of taking action to reduce climate change. It developed an effort to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and **degradation** in developing countries. This effort is known as REDD (**R**educe **e**missions from **d**eforestation and forest **d**egradation). In December 2010, the United Nations took another step forward. The new effort, known as REDD+, includes the following actions.

REDD+

Reduce emissions from deforestation

Reduce emissions from forest degradation

Manage forests sustainably

Conserve the carbon contained in forests

Enhance the carbon contained in forests

Under REDD+, developing countries will receive money if they successfully complete one or more of these actions. This money can be used to cover some of their costs.

The United Nations views REDD+ as an investment that will help countries to reduce the impact of climate change.

Recognizing that the carbon held on Earth within forests helps to address climate change has created a number of opportunities and challenges. People now recognize carbon **sequestration** as a benefit of having forests. This is in addition to other forest benefits that we explored in Inquiry 3. When thought of this way, you can see that by holding carbon, forests provide a service that has value. A government or a business may decide that maintaining forests for the carbon they hold is worth more than felling forests for fuelwood, agriculture, or for other reasons.

The United Nations also recognized that when forest managers work sustainably, they help people and forests worldwide adapt to a changing climate. As the climate changes, forest management will play an important role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of the world's citizens.

REFLECTION SECTION:

Countries are beginning to manage some of their forest areas primarily for the protection of soil and water (Inquiry 3). In the same way, do you think countries may begin to manage their forests primarily for the protection of carbon resources? Why or why not?

Look at the list of actions that make up REDD+. Compare the first two with the last three. How are the last three different than the first two?



FACTIVITY:

Two ways to address climate change are to take care of the trees and vegetation we have now and to plant more trees and other plants. Working with your teacher, identify 2 actions that your class can take now to address climate change. You may think of many other actions, such as decreasing the amount of energy you use or writing letters to your community leaders. Set a time line for when these actions will be taken and who will do what.

