

— UN-REDD PROGRAMME

Cross-sectoral policy alignment for lasting REDD+ results

Background note, Session 4 | Tenth Executive Board Meeting

2 October 2026 | Rome, Italy

OBJECTIVE

This session will consider how countries can align policies that affect forests with those that affect food production, livelihoods and development goals, and what support UN-REDD can offer. The Board is invited to identify where cross-sectoral action is most consequential for durable REDD+ results, including at the interface of agriculture, tenure and carbon finance.

Background

REDD+ calls for nationally tailored policy responses, and countries have increasingly put them into practice. The Warsaw Framework recognized that deforestation drivers and countries' capacities to address them differ. National REDD+ strategies and action plans provide a basis for identifying policies and measures, while their selection and implementation remain country-led, with international support envisaged. Countries have advanced measures ranging from forest governance and tenure to sustainable agriculture and benefit-sharing through national initiatives and jurisdictional emission-reduction programmes. Relevant evidence appears across programme documents, national strategies, safeguards information and other reports through the Lima REDD+ Information Hub, and Biennial Transparency Reports.

Effective policy mixes must reach beyond the forest sector. Drivers vary across countries, forest types and time, but agricultural expansion remains a major driver of deforestation globally. Responses may therefore combine forest-sector action with measures that shape agriculture and other land uses, including incentives and safeguards to prevent unintended forest loss from policies pursued for other objectives.

Credible responses to drivers are increasingly relevant to environmental integrity. TREES 3.0 gives this agenda operational specificity: ART Participants must identify ongoing and new drivers, describe the policies and actions intended to address them, report implementation in each Monitoring Report, indicate where activities take place, and explain alignment with national REDD+ strategies or any differences. The revision clarifies these provisions, adds requirements for high-forest, low-deforestation Participants, and streamlines some other reporting requirements. TREES does not require a

demonstration that all government policies are coherent. It does, however, make the link between identified drivers and planned and implemented responses more visible. This raises a broader policy-coherence question: is the policy mix well matched to the scale, location and nature of those drivers?

The TFFF provides a complementary signal. Its performance-based model rewards standing tropical forests, links eligibility and annual payments to forest-cover performance, asks countries to disclose allocation plans, and includes measures to detect displacement into forests outside the eligible biome. Alignment of policies can help turn these incentives into durable national outcomes rather than isolated gains.

Alignment means making development objectives, including food production, food security and livelihoods, work with forest goals in practice. This can involve aligning agricultural credit, subsidies and extension with forest protection; coordinating land-use plans and tenure rules with production targets; and using country-led measures such as deforestation-free labelling, traceability and sourcing standards to shape domestic as well as export markets (FAO, 2025a; FAO, n.d.).

Cross-sectoral policy alignment is an implementation condition for lasting REDD+ results. Forest protection can be undermined or displaced when agricultural expansion incentives, insecure tenure, infrastructure plans, credit, trade rules or public expenditure encourage forest conversion elsewhere or later. The practical question is which interactions matter most in a given country, for whom, and whether institutions can adjust them as circumstances change (Shawoo et al., 2023; Dewi et al., 2024).

How UN-REDD could support this work

UN-REDD's 2026–2030 Strategy places cross-sectoral policy, agrifood systems and governance alongside forest governance, Indigenous and local solutions, and aligned incentives. This builds on experience across the policies that shape land-use decisions. The Programme has supported countries to develop, update and operationalize REDD+ strategies; connect them to financing and implementation plans; review public expenditure and incentives; strengthen deforestation-risk due diligence and traceability in agricultural supply chains; and use integrated land-use and landscape planning. Its work on tenure, safeguards and benefit-sharing also connects policy choices with rights and livelihoods. As countries seek to strengthen existing frameworks, these strands provide a basis for more joined-up support.

On country request, UN-REDD could help identify the policy interactions most consequential for deforestation drivers, examine whether sector goals, instruments and budgets reinforce or undermine one another, and convene the ministries, rights-holders and market actors needed to act on the findings. Support could begin with a process already under way, such as a REDD+ strategy update, public expenditure review, financing plan, agricultural due-diligence initiative or integrated landscape plan, and extend to implementation, monitoring and adjustment. The greater visibility of drivers and responses under TREES 3.0, together with emerging forest-finance opportunities such as TFFF, could add momentum to this work. National priorities would determine the policy mix and UN-REDD's role.

Session flow

The 75-minute session would pair a short framing with a few country or constituency examples to stimulate discussion. Each could show a policy interaction, what was tried, what remains difficult and where support would help.

Minutes	Segment	Purpose
0–5	Opening	Chair frames the purpose and introduces the questions.
5–15	Short framing	UN-REDD connects country-led policy action, agriculture and food systems, tenure and carbon finance, TREES 3.0, and TFFF.
15–35	Illustrative perspectives	A few concise examples from countries and rights-holders show practical policy interactions and unresolved choices.
35–67	Open Board discussion	Moderator invites views on priority interactions and where UN-REDD support could add value.
67–75	Synthesis	Chair reflects back convergences, open questions and possible follow-up.

Discussion questions

1. Which interactions between agriculture, food systems and forest policies most affect durable REDD+ results, and which changes are feasible in national circumstances?
2. Where could UN-REDD best support country-led alignment, from analysis and convening to policy and budget changes or implementation?