

Indigenous Peoples in ART Primer and Frequently Asked Questions

TREES 2.0 creates a new opportunity for Indigenous Peoples – who provide a critical global service as effective forest stewards – to contribute to and benefit from large-scale programs to protect and restore forests.

Background

Indigenous Peoples are essential guardians of many of the world’s forests; they play an important role in climate action through forest protection and management. Indigenous and community-owned lands include at least 1.2 billion acres of forest. In the Amazon Basin alone, indigenous territories comprise 28 percent of the region, yet account for only 2.6% of deforestation. However, according to a study commissioned by Rainforest Foundation Norway, in the last 10 years, less than 1 percent of total climate funding addressed Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ tenure and forest management. Carbon markets have not yet succeeded in providing Indigenous Peoples access to financial benefits from the protection of the carbon in their forests. Traditional market approaches reward reduced deforestation, but not the effectiveness of Indigenous Peoples’ forest protection efforts that result in low historical deforestation rates in Indigenous territories.

TREES 1.0

Ensuring the recognition, respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) is one of ART’s immutable principles. Through its robust [safeguards](#), TREES requires that all stakeholders – including private landowners, project developers, IPLCs and others – participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of programs to protect and restore forests. TREES 1.0 focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. These approaches do not reward Indigenous Peoples for the protection of intact forests. An effective and equitable global incentive system for improving climate action in the forest sector should not only incentivize historical emitters to reduce deforestation, but also historical protectors, such as Indigenous Peoples, to continue to keep forests standing.

TREES 2.0

The public consultation version of TREES 2.0 outlined multiple potential pathways for Indigenous Peoples participation in ART. The significant stakeholder feedback received helped identify the pathway most likely to enable such participation. The feedback highlighted several factors constraining the participation of indigenous territories, including inability to meet the minimum area threshold and the lack of incentives for “high forest, low deforestation” (HFLD) jurisdictions.

Under TREES 2.0, recognized Indigenous Peoples territories are eligible to aggregate with other recognized Indigenous Peoples territories and/or with subnational jurisdictions as part of a national submission to ART to meet the required subnational accounting area scale eligibility threshold (2.5 million hectares of forest).

Indigenous Peoples territories are also eligible to qualify as “high forest, low deforestation” (HFLD) and therefore use TREES 2.0’s (optional) HFLD crediting approach, which may better reflect and reward their historical performance in protecting their forests. Taken together, these innovations give Indigenous Peoples who wish to participate in ART a significant new pathway to collaborate with each other and with their national governments to access the carbon market and its finance streams.

FAQs

1. Can Indigenous Peoples participate in ART?

TREES 2.0 creates a new opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to benefit from markets for jurisdictional REDD+ credits. TREES 1.0 allows subnational jurisdictions that wish to aggregate to meet the scale threshold to do so through an agreement to establish a subnational accounting area under a national submission. In TREES 2.0, this option has been expanded to also allow for Indigenous Peoples’ territories to participate in aggregate and/or join with one or more non-indigenous subnational jurisdictions through an agreement to establish a subnational accounting area for a national submission. In this manner, ART creates a new opportunity for Indigenous Peoples territories of any size to contribute to and benefit from the carbon market. In addition, in TREES 2.0 Indigenous Peoples territories are eligible to qualify as “high forest, low deforestation” (HFLD) and therefore use the (optional) HFLD crediting approach, which may better reflect and reward their historical performance in protecting their forests.

2. Do TREES safeguards protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples?

Yes. Ensuring the recognition, respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities is one of ART’s immutable principles. Consistent with the UNFCCC Cancun Safeguards, TREES requires that participating jurisdictions:

- Identify Indigenous Peoples and local communities, or equivalent
- Respect and protect traditional knowledge
- Respect, protect, and fulfill rights of Indigenous Peoples and/or local communities, or equivalent.

Each of these themes includes structural, process and outcome indicators that will need to be validated and verified.

3. Does TREES require stakeholders like Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to be involved throughout the process, and not just in the initial planning?

Yes. TREES requires that IPLCs and other stakeholders participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of the REDD+ activities. This ensures these stakeholders participate at every step including implementation, gathering data, and assessing the success of the programs, providing additional opportunities for input and feedback. Specifically, TREES requires that participating jurisdictions:

- Respect, protect, and fulfill the right of all relevant stakeholders to participate fully and effectively in the design and implementation of REDD+ actions
- Promote adequate participatory procedures for the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, or equivalent.