REDD+ politics in the media: A case study from Vietnam

T.T. PHAM, M. DI GREGORIO and M. BROCKHAUS
What is REDD+?

... policy approaches and positive incentives for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

UNFCCC Decision 2/CP.13–11
CIFOR’s Global Comparative Study (GCS-REDD+)

- To support REDD+ policy arenas and practitioner communities with
  - information
  - analysis
  - tools
- so as to ensure 3E+ outcomes:
  - effectiveness
  - efficiency
  - equity and co-benefits
Media discourse analysis

- Different social actors negotiate environmental policy decisions, including those on REDD+ with competing interests (Di Gregorio et al. 2013, Boykoff and Boykoff 2007).

- Policy actors also use the media to signal their positions to policy opponents as well as to potential allies, to build coalitions and impact policy decisions (Andsager 2000).

- Media is used to frame actors’ positions, and depending on the political system might represent the diverse positions of multiple state and non-state actors or emphasise those of more powerful state actors.
**Research Questions**

- How are REDD+ debates framed in the media?
- Who is represented in the media discussing REDD+ and what concerns and claims do they express?
- What space is given in the media to the interests of non-state actors on REDD+?

**Methods**

1. Newspapers selection
2. Selection of newspaper articles and coding
3. Coding and analysis of newspaper content
4. Interviews with journalists
5. Consultation workshops
Media coverage on REDD+

FIGURE 1  Frequency of articles referring to ‘REDD+’, ‘PES’, or ‘PFES’ by year, 2005–2013

*REDD+ remains of margin interest compared to the broader theme of climate change*
Main REDD+ themes

- Policy making frames urged for better implementation of payments for forest protection and discussed the challenges in scaling-up PFES and REDD+ across the country.
- Economic concerns referred to PES and REDD+ providing payments as potential pathways to address poverty reduction and improve the livelihoods of local people.
Who are represented?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor type</th>
<th>Optimistic</th>
<th>Pessimistic</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>No outlook</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National level state and bureaucratic actors</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental Organizations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic business</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign government and bureaucratic actors</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National research centre/think tank/ educational institution</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Optimistic outlook for future of REDD+
- State actors have mixed/different views → politics within state
- while state actors dominate REDD+ media frames, some limited space is present for some non-state actors’ interests, but only domestic business and international organisations discussing equity issues are represented.
Policy actors’ concerns with effectiveness, efficiency and equity of REDD+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Efficiency</th>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Other co-benefits</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National level state and bureaucratic actors</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental Organization and Bodies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic business</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business association</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign government and bureaucratic actors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National research centre/think tank/educational institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The dominant concern of policy actors was with effectiveness (66%), followed by concerns over equity (21%)
- Effectiveness in REDD+ is discussed by policy actors = better law enforcement = traditional command and control planning modalities
Key messages

- REDD+ received relatively little attention

- Key issues of REDD+ (Benefit sharing mechanism, land tenure, carbon rights) and controversial and critical issues (e.g. leakage or indigenous rights) are not featured

- State was the dominant voice + little political space is given to non-state actors but only businesses and international orgs.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is part of the policy component of CIFOR’s global comparative study on REDD (GCS). The methods and guidelines used in this research component were designed by Maria Brockhaus, Monica Di Gregorio and Sheila Wertz-Kanounnikoff. Parts of the methodology are adapted from the research protocol for media and network analysis designed by COMPON (‘Comparing Climate Change Policy Networks’).

Case leaders: Naya Paudel and Pham Thu Thuy (Nepal), Pham Thu Thuy & Moira Moeliono (Vietnam), Pham Thu Thuy and Guillaume Lestrélin (Laos), Daju Resosudarmo & Moira Moeliono (Indonesia), Andrea Babon (PNG), Peter Cronkleton, Kaisa Korhonen-Kurki, Pablo Pacheco (Bolivia), Mary Menton (Peru), Sven Wunder & Peter May (Brazil), Samuel Assembe & Jolien Schure (Cameroon), Samuel Assembe (DRC), Salla Rantal (Tanzania), Sheila Wertz-Kanounnikoff (Mozambique), Hermann Kamb & Houria Djoudi (Burkina Faso), Arild Angelsen (Norway). Special thanks to our national partners from REDES, CEDLA, Libelula and DAR, REPOA, UEM, CODELT, ICEL, ForestAction, CIEM, CERDA, Son La FD, UPNG, NRI-PNG, and UMB.

Thanks to contributors to case studies, analysis and review: Levania Santos, Tim Cronin, Giorgio Indrarto, Prayekti Murharjanti, Josi Khatarina, Irvan Pulungan, Feby Ivaterina, Justitia Rahman, Muhar Nala Prana, Caleb Gallemore (Indonesia), Nguyen Thi Hien, Nguyen Huu Tho, Vu Thi Hien, Bui Thi Minh Nguyet, Nguyen Tuan Viet and Huynh Thu Ba (Vietnam), Dil Badhur, Rahul Karki, Bryan Bushley, Naya Paudel (Nepal), Daniel McIntyre, Gae Gowae, Nidatha Martin, Nalau Bingham, Ronald Sohe, Abel Simon (PNG), Walter Arteaga, Bernado Peredo, Jesinka Pastor (Bolivia), Maria Fernanda Gebara, Brent Millikan, Bruno Calixto, Shaozeng Zhang (Brazil), Hugo Piú, Javier Perla, Daniela Freundt, Eduardo Burga Barrantes, Talla Postigo Takahashi (Peru), Guy Patrice Dkamela, Felicenc Kengoum (Cameroon), Felicien Kabamba, Augustin Mpoj, Angelique Mbelu (DRC), Demetrius Kweka, Therese Dokken, Rehema Turkai, George Jambiya, Riziki Shemdoe, (Tanzania), Almeida Sitoe, Alda Salomão (Mozambique), Mathurin Zida, Michael Balinga, Suwadu Sakho-Jimbira (Burkina Faso), Laila Borge (Norway), Rob Cole (Laos).

Special thanks to Cynthia Maharani, Efrian Muharrom, Sohi Mardiah, Bimo Dwisatrio, Christine Wairata, Juniarta Tjajadi, Ria Widjaja-Adhi, Levania Santos, Cecilia Luttrell, Frances Seymour, Lou Verchot, Markku Kanninen, Elena Petkova, Arild Angelsen, Christopher Martius, Anne Larson, Martin Herold, Nikki de Sy, Rachel Carmenta, Marianneke Vijge, Robert Ochieng, Kaisa Korhonen-Kurki, Grace Wong, Jan Boerner, and many others…