

Addressing Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Together: A Global Assessment of Agriculture and Forestry Projects - DTU Orbit (08/11/2017)

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Adaptation and mitigation share the ultimate purpose of reducing climate change impacts. However, they tend to be considered separately in projects and policies because of their different objectives and scales. Agriculture and forestry are related to both adaptation and mitigation: they contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and removals, are vulnerable to climate variations, and form part of adaptive strategies for rural livelihoods. We assessed how climate change project design documents (PDDs) considered a joint contribution to adaptation and mitigation in forestry and agriculture in the tropics, by analyzing 201 PDDs from adaptation funds, mitigation instruments, and project standards [e.g., climate community and biodiversity (CCB)]. We analyzed whether PDDs established for one goal reported an explicit contribution to the other (i.e., whether mitigation PDDs contributed to adaptation and vice versa). We also examined whether the proposed activities or expected outcomes allowed for potential contributions to the two goals. Despite the separation between the two goals in international and national institutions, 37 % of the PDDs explicitly mentioned a contribution to the other objective, although only half of those substantiated it. In addition, most adaptation (90 %) and all mitigation PDDs could potentially report a contribution to at least partially to the other goal. Some adaptation project developers were interested in mitigation for the prospect of carbon funding, whereas mitigation project developers integrated adaptation to achieve greater long-term sustainability or to attain CCB certification. International and national institutions can provide incentives for projects to harness synergies and avoid trade-offs between adaptation and mitigation.

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Authors: Kongsager, R. (Intern), Locatelli, B. (Ekstern), Chazarin, F. (Ekstern)

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