

Summary of Special Meeting of MRVS STEERING COMMITTEE (MRVS SC)

Presentation by REDD+ for the Guiana Shield Project on Modelling Deforestation in the Guiana Shield

November 30, 2015

A special meeting of the MRVS Steering Committee was held on November 30, 2015 in the Lower Conference Room of the Guyana Forestry Commission. This meeting facilitated the presentation on findings on *Modelling Deforestation in the Guiana Shield*. This modelling was conducted through funding from the REDD+ for the Guiana Shield Project and was led by Mr Camille Dezécache.

The objective of this session was to present the work done, and then to discuss with local stakeholders in Guyana on the best way to build a relevant socio-economic model of deforestation in the country (i.e. to define available socio-economic data which could explain deforestation).

In the model used to predict deforestation in the region, distinction was made between location and intensity of deforestation. It used only geographic variables. The data used for calibration was from 2005-2009, while the validation data was from the period 2010-2014. The end product developed is a deforestation risk map, not a deforestation map. The model assumed that the location of deforestation was driven by geographical factors and that the intensity of deforestation was driven by socio-economic factors.

The model found that while gold-price is a fundamental driver of deforestation (due to gold-mining) in the Guiana Shield, there was no correlation between some countries' deforestation and gold-prices. Local policies play an important role in either favouring or repressing gold-mining. More focus needs to be placed on leakage at regional scale.

For other drivers of deforestation, it was found that no universal drivers of deforestation can be brought out, and contrary to gold-mining, yearly variations are less relevant than longer term trends.

Key areas of discussion included:

- The varying definitions of forest from country to country and how this was addressed- It was explained that all the data is combined to produce a results across the Guyana Shield regardless of definition.
- A related study on this area was conducted by WWF. The comparisons between this Guiana Shield study and the WWF report was discussed in belief at the meeting. The Guiana Shield study included assessment of small scale mining using mainly RapidEye 5m resolution imagery, whereas the WWF study was conducted using data from SPOT and Landsat. Also of note, the Guiana Shield study included assessment of degraded areas which are transitioning to deforestation areas.
- Gold prices and the model- The price of gold is a major determining factor which is interlinked in location and intensity model but is utilized in the intensity model as the major driver of deforestation hence the market price governs the intensity and also scale of gold mining which by extension impacts on the amount of forest loss which would occur.