



# Redeeming REDD: Policies, Incentives and Social Feasibility for Avoided Deforestation

By Michael I. Brown

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It is now well accepted that deforestation is a key source of greenhouse gas emissions and of climate change, with forests representing major sinks for carbon. As a result, public and private initiatives for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) have been widely endorsed by policy-makers. A key issue is the feasibility of carbon trading or other incentives to encourage land-owners and indigenous people, particularly in developing tropical countries, to conserve forests, rather than to cut them down for agricultural or other development purposes.

This book presents a major critique of the aims and policies of REDD as currently structured, particularly in terms of their social feasibility. It is shown how the claims to be able to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as enhance people's livelihoods and biodiversity conservation are unrealistic. There is a naive assumption that technical or economic fixes are sufficient for success. However, the social and governance aspects of REDD, and its enhanced version known as REDD+, are shown to be implausible. Instead to enhance REDD's prospects, the author provides a roadmap for developing a new social contract that puts people first.

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### Editorial Review

Review

**"Michael Brown recognizes that there can be *no environmentalism without representation* – especially local representation. If there is salvation for REDD, this book may be looked upon as the benediction that brought it around. By presenting the case for social protections in accessible language, Brown gives REDD a redeeming chance." – Jesse Ribot, Professor of Geography, University of Illinois, USA**

**"Recent years have seen the emergence of REDD and its variants which have provided great hope in avoiding deforestation, coupled with combined livelihood and biodiversity benefits. It has become a pervasive and persuasive paradigm, beguiling policy-makers, academics and practitioners alike. Despite the international attention on REDD, it seems to have been accepted with very little critical analysis. In this book, Michael Brown challenges the very essence of REDD and REDD+, particularly from the social and institutional perspectives. His analysis is detailed, revealing, and timely; asking many questions of the REDD mechanism that have thus far been largely, and perhaps conveniently, ignored. This book should guide the real policies behind REDD and how local communities and indigenous people engage in its possible implementation. It is a welcome counter to the largely positive and unquestioning way in which REDD has entered our collective consciousness." – Terry Sunderland, Principal Scientist, Forests and Livelihoods Programme, Center for International Forestry Research, Bogor, Indonesia**

**"... Brown is passionate about what he sees as the solutions to encourage a socially responsible reduction in deforestation, and indeed he makes good sense." - Peter Thomas, Bulletin of the British Ecological Society**

**"The *Redeeming REDD* volume is written by an author who is extremely well informed on the subject, because Michael Brown has been involved in REDD issues since its beginning, and because he has reviewed a remarkable amount of references on the subject. This is reflected in the many details that are covered in the 11 chapters of the book." – Wil de Jong, Center for Integrated Area Studies, Kyoto University**

About the Author

**Michael I. Brown** is the founder and President of Satya Development International LLC ([www.satyadi.com](http://www.satyadi.com)), a consultancy based in Washington DC. He has over 30 years experience in Africa and other regions working with non-governmental organizations and for-profit groups primarily on USAID-funded projects across diverse development sectors and in conservation.

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