

Editor's Dialogue on Forest and Climate Change

Towards Transparency (TT) and Transparency International-Secretariat (TI-S) in collaboration with the Media Training Centre (MTC), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), organised an Editor's Dialogue on Forest and Climate Change on 6 March 2012, in Hanoi. The dialogue kicks off a two-month long Media Engagement Series co-hosted by TT, TI-S, CIFOR and IUCN, which seeks to strengthen the critical role played by the media in informing public perceptions and influencing policymakers on environmental issues.

The meeting was attended by editors and managers of 15 major newspapers from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, representatives from local and international non-governmental organisations and the Department of Science and Technology under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. With media coverage on environmental issues currently limited, the dialogue sought to increase and improve the quality of media coverage on specific environmental issues, particularly the implementation of REDD+ in Vietnam.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is an incentive mechanism which compensates developing countries for preserving forests. Vietnam is one of nine countries identified to pilot the REDD+ programme. However, the arena of REDD+ developments is relatively new and complex, with corruption potentially posing a major challenge.

Editors at the dialogue emphasized the need to improve journalist's technical understanding on REDD+ and the corresponding corruption risks, so that information can be reported in an accurate and timely manner. The dialogue

consequently helped to build a bridge between media agencies and non-governmental organisations, creating valuable opportunities for future collaboration to increase public oversight to improve transparency in REDD+ mechanisms.

As part of the Media Engagement Series, the Editor's Dialogue will be followed up with two training workshops for journalists in Hanoi and Da Nang.