



Need for the Standards

While activities that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) and contribute to conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) have the potential to deliver significant social and environmental co-benefits, many have also highlighted the serious risks, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Recognizing growing awareness at both international and national levels of the need for effective social and environmental safeguards, the REDD+ SES initiative aims to define and build support for a higher level of social and environmental performance from REDD+ programs.

Role of the Standards

The REDD+ SES can be used by governments, NGOs, financing agencies and other stakeholders to support the design and implementation of REDD+ programs that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and generate significant social and environmental co-benefits. The standards are designed for government-led REDD+ programs implemented at national or state/provincial/regional level and for all forms of fund-based or market-based financing. By providing a comprehensive framework of key issues to address with respect to the social and environmental performance of a REDD+ program, the standards provide guidance to assist with program design while also providing a mechanism for reporting on how safeguards are addressed and how social and environmental benefits of REDD+ programs have been delivered.

Development of the Standards

The REDD+ SES were developed through a series of multi-stakeholder workshops engaging a diverse range of stakeholders held from May 2009 in Denmark, Nepal, Tanzania, Ecuador and Liberia, and two public comment periods of 60 days and 90 days culminating with the publication of Version 1 of REDD+ SES in June 2010.

The REDD+ SES:

- Consist of **principles, criteria and indicators** which define the necessary conditions to achieve high social and environmental performance, including governance, rights and social and environmental impacts
- Support the **design, implementation and evaluation** of government-led REDD+ programs
- Provide a consistent and comprehensive **framework for assessment** of social and environmental performance developed through broad international consultation
- Employs a **country-led approach** that includes **tailoring** of the indicators and assessment process **to the country context**
- Based on a **multi-stakeholder** assessment process, engaging government, civil society and the private sector to enhance the quality and credibility of reporting
- Aim to **enhance benefits** as well as **avoid harm**
- Enable countries to **communicate the performance** of their REDD+ programs to national and international stakeholders
- Enable donors and investors to reduce risk and to **recognize and reward higher performance**



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Goal of the REDD+ SES Initiative

Effective social and environmental standards for REDD+ programs make a substantial contribution to human rights, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation goals while avoiding social or environmental harm.

Principles

1. Rights to lands, territories and resources are recognized and respected by the REDD+ program.
2. The benefits of the REDD+ program are shared equitably among all relevant rights holders and stakeholders.
3. The REDD+ program improves long-term livelihood security and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and local communities with special attention to the most vulnerable people.
4. The REDD+ program contributes to broader sustainable development, respect and protection of human rights and good governance objectives.
5. The REDD+ program maintains and enhances biodiversity and ecosystem services.
6. All relevant rights holders and stakeholders participate fully and effectively in the REDD+ program.
7. All rights holders and stakeholders have timely access to appropriate and accurate information to enable informed decision-making and good governance of the REDD+ program.
8. The REDD+ program complies with applicable local and national laws and international treaties, conventions and other instruments.

International Governance of the REDD+ SES Initiative

A Standards Committee representing a balance of interested parties including governments, Indigenous Peoples organizations, community associations, social and environmental NGOs and the private sector oversees the REDD+ SES initiative. The majority of committee members are from countries where REDD will be implemented, recognizing that developing country governments and civil society should lead the adoption of the standards. The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International serve as the international secretariat of the REDD+ SES initiative and Proforest provides technical support.

Using the REDD+ SES at Country Level

The State of Acre in Brazil, the Province of Central Kalimantan in Indonesia, Ecuador, Nepal and Tanzania are currently participating in the REDD+ SES initiative with the following multi-stakeholder approach to using the standards.

Governance

A country-level Standards Committee ensures that a balance of interested stakeholders oversees the interpretation and application of the REDD+ SES in the country. The committee reviews and approves the country-specific interpretation and assessment reports and ensures that a participatory and transparent process is followed for their development. A Facilitation Team composed of government and non-governmental technical experts facilitates the process of interpreting and applying the REDD+ SES.

Interpretation

Country-specific interpretation adapts the REDD+ SES to the country context and through creation of country-specific indicators and design of the country-specific assessment process. The creation of country-specific indicators provides an opportunity to make the international REDD+SES locally-relevant, referencing local terms, stakeholders, governance processes, institutions and legislation. Adaptation of the assessment process to the country context provides an opportunity to promote full and effective participation and ownership by relevant stakeholders while ensuring transparency and accountability.

Assessment

The assessment process involves:

- **Monitoring** - identifying, collecting, and compiling information to evaluate the performance of the REDD+ program for each of the indicators.
- **Reviewing** of the monitoring information by stakeholders to ensure that the assessment is accurate and credible.
- **Reporting** - communicating the analysis of the monitoring and the review of the performance of the REDD+ program against the standards.

To learn more about the REDD+ SES initiative go to www.REDD-standards.org or contact the international secretariat:

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