Guidelines for the use of

REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards at country level[1]

Draft Version 2, 5th April 2012

Introduction to these guidelines

This document provides guidelines on the steps needed to use the REDD+ SES at country level for country-led multi-stakeholder assessment of REDD+ program design, implementation and outcomes, the 'REDD+ SES process', and accompanies a separate document that defines the principles, criteria and the framework for indicators, the 'REDD+ SES content'.

The REDD+ SES content provides 'safeguards' that define principles or conditions that must be in place to ensure that people and the environment are not harmed by but actually benefit from REDD+ programs. Together, the REDD+ SES content and process provide a 'standards system' which is a mechanism that can be used to show whether and how safeguards are being respected, including how multiple benefits are being delivered.

The ten step process for using the REDD+ SES is organized around three core elements (see flow chart Appendix 1):

1. Awareness raising/capacity building meetings and workshops (page 5)

- **Governance:** a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure balanced stakeholder participation in the use of the standards

   2. Establish the facilitation team (page 6)
   3. Create the Standards Committee (page 7)

- **Interpretation:** adaptation of the indicators and assessment process to the country context

   4. Develop plan for the REDD+ SES process (page 10)
   5. Develop draft country-specific indicators (page 11)
   6. Organize consultations on indicators (page 13)

- **Assessment:** collection of information to evaluate performance, review of the draft assessment report by stakeholders and publication.

   7. Prepare a monitoring plan (page 15)
   8. Develop draft performance assessment report (page 17)
   9. Organize stakeholder review of draft assessment report (page 18)
   10. Publish the assessment report (page 19)

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[1] 'Country level' refers to the level of the jurisdiction leading the REDD+ program, which could be national, state, provincial or other level.

The ten steps do not necessarily need to be followed sequentially. Specifically, Step 1. Awareness raising/capacity building meetings and workshops could be undertaken at any stage and even combined with other steps, and Step 3. Create the Standards Committee could be undertaken at any time prior to approval of country specific indicators (Step 6), depending on the country context.

The REDD+ SES process should be integrated with the overall process for design and implementation of the REDD+ program and with any other safeguard mechanisms being implemented in the country (UNFCCC, FCPF, UN-REDD, other multilateral and bilateral donors, national legal and policy frameworks etc.).

- **Guidelines** in this document should be followed to ensure consistency and quality in the use of REDD+ SES in each country.
- **Guidance** provides advice on good practice.

This draft has been developed by the REDD+ SES international secretariat based on the 'Guidelines on the interpretation and application of the REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards at country level' (3 February 2010), 'Guidance on the process for using the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards at country-level' (13 July 2011)' and feedback from pilot countries using REDD+ SES during 2010 and 2011.

Comments are welcomed from 5th April to 4th June 2012 to improve this draft, which will apply to the use of the principles, criteria and indicators of the REDD+ Version 2 currently undergoing public comment (9 February to 9 April 2012). Please submit comments using the form provided at www.redd-standards.org and please contact info@redd-standards.org if you would like more information.

Introduction to the REDD+ SES initiative

The REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES) initiative aims to build support for government-led REDD+ programs that make a significant contribution to human rights, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation. The REDD+ SES system or mechanism consists of

- principles, criteria and indicators which define conditions to achieve high social and environmental performance (REDD+ SES Draft Version 2) and
- a process for using the standards and conducting an assessment (these guidelines).

The principles, criteria and a framework for indicators are defined in REDD+ SES Version 2.

- **The principles** provide the key objectives that define high social and environmental performance of REDD+ programs.

- **The criteria** define the conditions that must be met related to processes, impacts and policies in order to deliver the principles.

- **The indicators** define qualitative or quantitative information needed to show progress achieving a criterion. The REDD+ SES Version 2 separates out:
    - **'essence'** of an indicator - the core idea - from

- '**qualifiers**' - phrases describing key aspects of process or outcome, key conditions, and other specific points that must be taken into account.

Note that the essence and all the qualifiers of each indicator are required to demonstrate high performance. The qualifiers are not optional elements.

At principle and criteria levels the standards are generic (i.e. the same across all countries). At the indicator level, there is a process for country-specific interpretation to develop a set of indicators that are tailored to the context of a particular country. For this reason the international version of the standards includes only a "framework for indicators" that is intended to guide the country-specific interpretation process rather than provide specific indicators that must be used in each country.

Each of the framework indicators aims to assess one aspect that is important to address to achieve the criterion. The indicators can generally be characterized into three main categories:

- **Policy indicators** assess policies, legal frameworks, and institutions related to the REDD+ program that should be in place.
- **Process indicators** assess whether and how a particular process related to the REDD+ program has been planned/established.
- **Outcome indicators** assess the impacts of the REDD+ program.

A combination of these different types of indicators can ensure that the indicators are sufficient to assess effectively the performance of a country's REDD+ program against the principles and criteria. A justification must also be provided for any changes to the indicator type.

A multi-stakeholder process has been developed for using the REDD+ SES at country level that engages government, civil society and private sector in the development, review and approval of country-specific indicators and of reports assessing performance of the REDD+ program against the indicators. This multi-stakeholder approach

- Creates a platform for building consensus and trust between diverse stakeholders
- Enhances the quality and credibility of the multi-stakeholder self-assessment
- Promotes shared ownership by government and civil society
- Increases transparency.

Tailoring of the indicators and the assessment process to the country context through broad stakeholder consultation

- Ensures the standards and assessment process are relevant and meaningful
- Builds understanding and ownership of rights holders and stakeholders.

The REDD+SES can be used to:

1. **Provide good practice guidance** for the design, implementation or evaluation of a REDD+ program;

2. **Provide a framework for countries to report on performance** of their REDD+ programs through a multi-stakeholder self-assessment process;

3. **Assess conformance** of social and environmental performance of a REDD+ program with respect to requirements of the standards (a true standard).

The REDD+ SES Initiative is currently focused on the first and second levels, providing participating countries with a consistent and comprehensive framework for designing and reporting on social and environmental performance, developed through an international multi-stakeholder process. At this stage, the primary means of ensuring quality and accuracy is full and effective participation of rights holders and stakeholders in the assessment process. A formal process of verification – an independent check on the quality and accuracy of the assessment - is not yet included but could be developed.

Although REDD+ SES does not include independent verification of the assessment, the REDD+ SES process used in each country, including the governance, interpretation and assessment process, will be reviewed at the international level to ensure consistency across countries.

The REDD+ SES Initiative is overseen by an International Standards Committee representing a balance of interested parties. 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 process for development and use of the standards is being facilitated by an International Secretariat composed of the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International with technical support from the Proforest Initiative.

Phase 1 of the REDD+ SES initiative culminated in June 2010 with publication of Version 1 of the standards for use in pilot countries. Starting in May 2009, these standards were developed through an inclusive and participatory process including consultations with stakeholders at national and local level in four countries that are developing REDD+ programs. During Phase 2 of the initiative from July 2010 to December 2011, the standards were applied in four pilot countries including the State of Acre in Brazil, Ecuador, Nepal and the Province of Central Kalimantan in Indonesia. From January 2012, a Phase 3 of the initiative involves expansion to include new countries in the initiative including Amazonas State in Brazil, Guatemala, Liberia, Mexico, San Martin Region in Peru and another province in Indonesia, and also integration with other safeguard mechanisms at country level.

> **1. Awareness-Raising / Capacity-Building Meetings and Workshops**
>
> **Who:** relevant rights holders & stakeholders, such as representatives from: government agencies, civil society, indigenous peoples and community-based organizations
>
> **Outputs:** meetings and workshops to raise awareness of the REDD+ program, potential impacts, and REDD+ SES and other safeguard mechanisms

1 .1 Objectives

- To raise awareness of the social and environmental safeguards, including standards, how they are applied and how to promote quality and credibility in their use.
- To raise awareness and get feedback from stakeholders on potential social and environmental impacts (positive and negative) of REDD+.
- To raise awareness of different safeguard mechanisms (UNFCCC, FCPF, UN-REDD, other multilateral and bilateral donors, national legal and policy frameworks) including obligations under UNFCCC to develop a country-led safeguards information system for REDD+.
- To provide information on the REDD+ SES initiative so that the objectives and the multi-stakeholder process are well understood.

1.2 Guidelines

Relevant rights holders and stakeholders for social and environmental aspects of REDD+ should be included in the awareness raising and capacity building meetings, including representatives of government agencies, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples organizations, community-based organizations, private sector and other relevant stakeholders

1.3 Guidance

1.3.1 It may not be advisable to cover all these objectives for all groups at the same meeting. Some of these objectives may have already been covered during earlier consultations/workshops on REDD+ or REDD+ SES in the country.

1.3.2 It may be more appropriate to hold separate meetings or regional meetings with some stakeholder groups such as Indigenous Peoples and local communities. In these cases, the awareness raising/capacity building could potentially be combined with consultations on draft country-specific indicators (see 6. below).

1.3.3 It will be important to ensure that members of any REDD+ planning or advisory group already established in the country are included, which may be more effective through a focused event designed specifically for them. This could be combined with planning for the implementation of the REDD+ SES process.

1.3.4 It is also useful to contact multi-stakeholder groups working on other, related processes such as national or regional land-use planning, forest governance initiatives (eg FLEGT), agricultural sustainability initiatives etc.

1.3.5 These meetings and workshops can also provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the planning process and strategies of the REDD+ program.

Governance

The institutional structures and decision-making processes that govern the use of REDD+ SES in each country ensure the participation of a balance of rights holders and stakeholders:

- A multi-stakeholder Standards Committee provides oversight,
- A joint government and civil society facilitation team organizes the process.

2. Establish the Facilitation Team

Who: government (typically one person) and non-government (typically one or two people)

Outputs: team to organize meetings, prepare drafts, organize consultations, organize data collection, data analysis and compilation and stakeholder review of assessment reports, etc.

2.1 Objectives

Facilitate the process of interpreting and applying REDD+ SES in the country.

2.2 Guidelines

2.2.1 The responsibilities of the facilitation team should include:

- o Organize meetings of the country-level Standards Committee and ensure record keeping, minute taking and circulation of papers to the committee members.
- o Organize consultations with stakeholders and public comment periods and compile comments received.
- o Prepare drafts of the country-specific indicators and responses to comments received during stakeholder consultations, with support of relevant stakeholders or experts potentially through a technical working group as appropriate, for review, discussion and approval by the country-level Standards Committee.
- o Organize the implementation of the assessment process, including collecting and analyzing information on social and environmental performance of the REDD+ program, and preparing drafts of a report of performance against the standards for review by stakeholders and approval by the country-level Standards Committee.
- o Ensure coordination with other relevant processes and safeguard mechanisms.
- o Learn from and contribute to the development of good practice for the use of the REDD+ SES through the participation of at least one member of the facilitation team in all international exchange and learning events of the REDD+ SES initiative.

2.3 Guidance

A facilitation team composed of government and non-governmental technical experts should facilitate the process of interpreting and applying the standards in each country. It is suggested that this be limited to one government staff and one to two non-governmental staff, each allocating a significant part of their time to the REDD+ SES Initiative. The total amount of time required for all the members of the team combined will vary according to the country but is likely to be at least 50-100% of a person. The work of the facilitation team, such as the preparation of drafts of indicators, assessment reports and responses to comments, may benefit from the support of a small technical working group composed of relevant stakeholders or experts.

3. Create the Standards Committee

Who: representatives of interested parties (government departments, indigenous peoples, local communities, NGOs, private sector, etc.). Where appropriate, the same multi-stakeholder committee created for other aspects of REDD+ program or for other safeguards mechanisms.

Outputs: a committee to ensure balanced stakeholder oversight of use of REDD+ SES

3.1 Objectives

To ensure balanced oversight in the use of REDD+SES in the country including review and approval of country-specific indicators, responses to public/stakeholder comments received during consultations, the assessment process and the assessment report.

3.2 Guidelines

3.2.1   The committee membership should include a balance of interested parties including those affected by the REDD+ program and the standards, and those with expert knowledge related to the standards. The categories of key stakeholder groups relevant to the REDD+ program which should participate in the committee include:

o   Government departments (probably including different departments relevant to REDD+ such as economic development, forestry, agriculture, rural development, environment and also potentially including regional/local government),

o   Indigenous Peoples

o   Local communities

- o Civil society non-governmental organisations (including both environmental and social NGOs).
- o Private sector

3.2.2   The role of this committee is to oversee and support the use of REDD+ SES in the country. The responsibilities of the committee should include:

- o Oversee the interpretation and application of the REDD+ SES in the country in question, assisting and guiding the facilitation team and ensuring that the REDD+ SES process in the country is effectively adapted to the country context while also being aligned with the global level strategies of the REDD+ SES initiative.
- o Provide guidance and assist the facilitation team to ensure effective participation of relevant stakeholder groups in the interpretation and application of the REDD+ SES.
- o Review and approve draft versions of the country-specific indicators and assessment process prepared for public comment, the response to comments, and the final versions, ensuring that these are appropriate and sufficient to demonstrate effectively the performance of their country's REDD+ program against the REDD+ SES principles and criteria.
- o Review and approve draft versions of reports on social and environmental performance of the REDD+ program against the REDD+ SES principles, criteria and indicators that are developed for stakeholder review, the response to feedback from stakeholders on the draft reports, and the final version of the report for publication.
- o Promote effective integration of REDD+ SES with other safeguard frameworks/processes being applied to the country's REDD+ program e.g. national REDD+ safeguards, FCPF SESA, UN-REDD and safeguards required by other multilateral and bilateral agreements.

3.2.3   The committee should define and adopt its terms of reference, including internal rules and regulations that cover issues such as the decision-making process, criteria and a process for becoming a member of the committee and the duration of membership. The decision-making process should strive for consensus but also include a voting mechanism that ensures that no group can dominate or be marginalized.

3.2.4   The creation of the committee and all documentation about it should be transparent and accessible to interested people, so the call for nominations, terms of reference and meeting reports should all be made publicly available, for example on an existing government-led or approved REDD+ website. The information will also be posted on the REDD+ SES website (www.redd-standards.org) with links to the relevant documents.
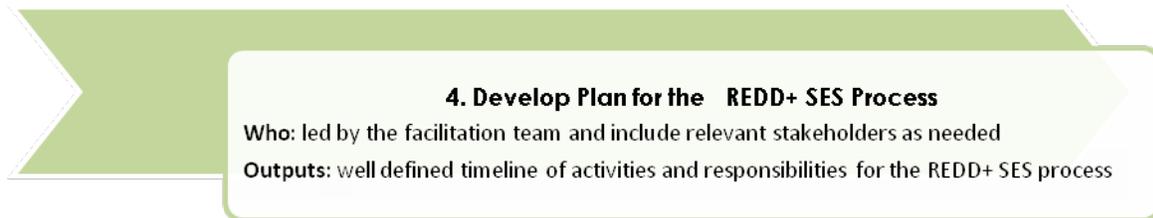
3.3 Guidance

3.3.1 While it is better to create the Standards Committee as early as possible in the process of using the REDD+ SES, in practice, the committee can be created after the launch of the first consultations on the country-specific indicators. It is important that the committee is created in time to approve the final version of the country-specific indicators and the response to comments.

3.3.2 Where appropriate, it is important to build from and integrate with existing structures created for REDD+ planning and implementation or for another safeguards mechanism. Where an appropriately balanced multi-stakeholder body exists, unnecessary duplication of structures should be avoided. In other cases, it will be necessary to establish the country-level standards committee as a separate entity to ensure an adequate stakeholder balance.

3.3.3 It is important to liaise with committees or working groups created for other related initiatives such as land-use planning or forest governance.

3.3.4 There can be some flexibility in categories depending on the specific groups that need to be included in a particular country. Women's interests and rights must be effectively represented, notably within indigenous peoples, local communities and civil society representation. Alternatively a separate category for women may be defined.

3.3.5 In cases where a lot of people from a particular stakeholder group want to be involved, subgroups or 'consultative groups' could potentially be created that nominate a representative or representatives to be on the country-level Standards Committee.

3.3.6 Experience suggests that having only one person representing a commonly-marginalized group is not enough to allow them to engage fully in the debate, so it is recommended to have more than one representative for some categories. It may be the case that some groups would not accept or be comfortable with being represented by others.

3.3.7 In principle, the stakeholder groups should identify their own representatives to ensure legitimacy. In practice, this may require active facilitation by the body that has overall oversight of the REDD+ program, or a multi-stakeholder REDD+ group, or the facilitation team to call for nominations and propose a process for selecting representatives.

3.3.8 Representation will be more effective if an accountability mechanism is defined to ensure that members of the committee report to and receive feedback from the people they represent.

3.3.9 Experience suggests that it helps to ensure continuity if full members have nominated replacements in case a member cannot attend the meeting.

3.3.10 Experience shows that it is hard to manage with more than 20 people involved in a decision-making group so it is proposed that the maximum membership of the country-level Standards Committee should be 25 and preferably it should not exceed 15.

3.3.11 It will probably be necessary to organize capacity-building for the members of the committee to ensure that they can participate effectively and fulfill the responsibilities of the committee.

3.3.12 In order to ensure that no group can dominate or be marginalized in a voting system, organizations commonly divide participants into interest groups (or chambers), and organize voting along these lines[1].

3.3.13 For example, a voting system may require that a majority of the members of each interest group must agree to a proposal. In this case, the proposal cannot be approved if any one interest group does not agree, but the proposal can be approved if a few individuals

Interpretation

Country-specific interpretation adapts the REDD+ SES content and process to the country context, making the international REDD+SES relevant and effective for the country, and includes:

- Creation of **country-specific indicators** (the principles and criteria remain the same across all countries)

- Design of the **country-specific assessment process**

4. Develop Plan for the REDD+ SES Process
Who: led by the facilitation team and include relevant stakeholders as needed
Outputs: well defined timeline of activities and responsibilities for the REDD+ SES process

4.1 Objectives

To define a timeline of activities and responsibilities for the creation of the country-level Standards Committee, development of indicators and the performance assessment, including a process for effective integration of REDD+SES with other safeguard mechanisms where relevant.

4.2 Guidelines

4.2.1 This activity should be led by the REDD+ SES facilitation team, ensuring collaboration with, and input from, other individuals or groups working on REDD+ planning and implementation.

4.2.2 Where REDD+ SES needs to be integrated with other safeguard mechanisms, such as those of FCPF, UN-REDD, other multilateral and bilateral donors, or the national legal and policy framework, then an integrated process should be developed, for example through a working meeting (or workshop) with key people from the other agencies and relevant stakeholder groups..

4.2.3 A decision should be made about the means of communication and dissemination of information, including which language(s) will be used for documents and meetings, to ensure that stakeholder groups are not excluded.

4.2.4 An important part of the development of a country-specific assessment process is the discussion and definition of the extent of public reporting and also the language(s) and means of dissemination.

4.2.5 Once the Standards Committee has been created, it should provide input into and approve the plan and timeline for the use of the REDD+ SES in the country.

4.2.6   The plan and process for using the standards should be made publicly available, for example on an existing government-led or approved REDD+ website or, if such a site is not available, on another relevant site. The information will also be posted on the REDD+ SES website (www.redd-standards.org) with links to the relevant documents.

5. Develop Draft Country-Specific Indicators

Who: technical working group composed of the facilitation team and relevant stakeholders/experts (e.g.. 3-7 people), potentially several groups in a workshop setting

Outputs: draft of indicators that are relevant to the country context

5.1 Objectives

To make the international REDD+SES relevant to the country context, referencing country-specific terms, stakeholders, governance processes, institutions and legislation.

5.2 Guidelines on the process of indicator development

5.2.1   The facilitation team should organize the development of country-specific indicators through an inclusive and participatory process.

5.2.2   A technical working group should be created to develop draft indicators. This should include the facilitation team and other relevant stakeholders/experts. The group is likely to work best with at least three and not more than six to seven people. If there are several good facilitators then several groups could work at the same time on different principles and criteria in a workshop setting. This approach enables broader participation in the drafting process and the workshop can be organized so that each group reviews the work of other groups.

5.2.3   The draft indicators and the consultation process should ideally be approved by the Standards Committee before initiating consultations but this may not be possible if there are delays in creating the committee.

5.2.4   It is very important to encourage transparency at all stages in the indicator development process: e.g. using open calls for participation, posting terms of reference and a timeline for indicator on web sites, advance notice of public consultation periods, posting drafts on web sites, translating documents into all relevant languages, engaging proactively with stakeholder groups to ensure a good level of understanding of the process etc.

5.3 Guidelines on the content of indicators

5.3.1 Principles and Criteria: No changes are allowed to REDD+ SES Principles and Criteria as these must be consistent across all countries.

Note: Any suggested modifications to existing principles and criteria or proposals for new criteria should be raised with the International Secretariat and may be addressed in the next version of the standards.

Indicators: The existing 'framework for indicators' provides a starting point for developing country-specific indicators. Each indicator comprises two parts: the "essence" – the core idea – and qualifiers - phrases describing key aspects of process or outcome, key conditions, and other specific points that must be taken into account.[2]

5.3.2 The indicators (i.e essence and qualifiers) may be maintained as they are, adapted, deleted or added, as follows:

- o **Maintained**: carrying forward both the essence and qualifiers from the existing international "framework for indicators" without change other than translation.

- o **Adapted**: adjusting the essence and/or one or more qualifiers to reflect the country context. E.g. using appropriate technical terms, referencing specific government agencies, using local language. I.e. making the indicator specific to the country but not changing the meaning or intention. This may include merging two indicators.

- o **Deleted**: deleting of an entire indicator or one or more qualifiers if they are found to be redundant due to duplication (in which case they are merged), or where they are not relevant to a particular country/regional context.

- o **Added**: New indicators may be added where needed. They must add value to demonstrating performance against the criterion.

Where adaptations, deletions, and additions to indicators are proposed, a justification must be provided.

5.3.3 A methodology to process the comments and the level of participation needed should be defined before starting the indicator development process.

5.3.4 The country-specific indicators should be developed for both the current phase of the countries' REDD+ program and for future phases, e.g. from readiness through to implementation.

5.3.5 A template for development of country-specific indicators is provided in Appendix 2 including the following information for each framework indicator:

- o **Country-specific indicator** including essence and qualifier(s)
- o **Type of interpretation** – maintained, adapted, deleted or added

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[2] Note that the word 'includes' at the beginning of a qualifier means 'the scope of this indicator includes......'. The word 'including' at the beginning of a qualifier is used when the qualifier should be read as a specific part of the indicator sentence. 'Applies to' at the beginning of a qualifier means 'this indicator applies to......'.

- o **Justification -** should be provided in all cases where an indicator's essence and/or qualifiers have been adapted, deleted or added
- o **Guidance notes** - may be added to provide guidance to local, national and international stakeholders on the indicators. E.g. Explaining the intention behind each indicator, explaining the local context etc.

6. Organize Consultations on Indicators

Who: facilitation team organizes two public comment periods through publication of draft indicators, workshops and other solicitation of comments, revision of indicators and response to comments and Standards Committee approves revision and responses to public comments

Outputs: comments collated, indicators revised and comments responded to

6.1 Objectives

To ensure stakeholder input into the definition of indicators to assess social and environmental performance of REDD+ in their country.

6.2 Guidelines

6.2.1   The facilitation team should organize publication of the draft indicators and a public comment period. This should include publication on an existing government-led or approved REDD+ website if available and the opportunity to submit comments electronically, as well as direct circulation and invitation of comments to relevant stakeholder groups.

6.2.2   It is important to allow adequate time for consultations, providing stakeholders with sufficient time to absorb information, consult among themselves and provide considered feedback. The ISEAL[3] Code of Good Practice for setting social and environmental standards suggests two public consultation periods should be held to facilitate stakeholder and public participation in the indicator development process - the first at least 60 days and the second at least 30 days. The period of the public consultations should enable effective stakeholder participation, reflecting the circumstances of the particular country (for example, considering seasonal impacts on communication).

6.2.3   It will also be important to facilitate consultations with key stakeholder groups, for example through workshops, particularly those that may not have access to internet and email such as indigenous peoples and local communities.

6.2.4   Standards should be published in appropriate languages in order to get feedback from all stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples.

6.2.5   The facilitation team should give advance information of public consultation periods and encourage stakeholder groups to hold workshops or discussions that can provide feedback. This

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[3] International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance www.isealalliance.org

is particularly the case for countries where there are sizeable and significant stakeholder groups for whom commenting on written documents is much less common and less productive than face to face discussion.

6.2.6   All comments received during workshops or through other forms of submission should be collated and published by the facilitation team. A response should be prepared to each comment, explaining how it was addressed through modification of the essence and/or qualifiers of an indicator or why the comment was not relevant.

6.2.7   Any significant differences of opinion should be presented to the country-level Standards Committee for resolution. The Standards Committee should review and approve the response to comments, which should also be published.

6.3 Guidance

6.3.1   The first consultation period may be reduced to no less than 30 days if proactive methods (e.g. facilitated stakeholder meetings) are used to gather feedback from the key stakeholder groups. Such proactive methods are also likely to result in richer feedback.

6.3.2   It may be helpful to organize the comments by Principle or Criterion when compiling and responding to comments

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Assessment

The process for assessing performance of the REDD+ program against the country-specific indicators involves:

- **Monitoring** – A monitoring plan defines what specific information will be collected, where it is found, how it will be gathered and analyzed and who will be responsible.

- **Reviewing -** Consultations are organized to facilitate stakeholder review of the draft assessment report to enhance quality and credibility.

- **Reporting** – After approval by the country-level Standards Committee, the full report of performance against the indicators of the REDD+ SES is made publicly available.

The assessment process should promote participation and ownership by stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability and to enhance the quality and credibility of the assessment. The resulting report should provide a fair and accurate assessment of the performance of the REDD+ program against the principles and criteria of the REDD+ SES that can be used to communicate to national and international stakeholders and to encourage improved performance.

7. Prepare a Monitoring Plan

Who: facilitation team, and possibly a consultant or expert with monitoring and evaluation expertise

Outputs: outline of what information is needed, where to find, how to collect and analyze, by whom

7.1 Objectives

To define, for current assessment period, what information will be collected, where this information is found, how the information will be gathered and analyzed, and who will be responsible.

7.2 Guidelines

7.2.1 The scope of application of REDD+ SES for the current assessment period should be agreed with the Standards Committee - for example defining which component(s) and phases the REDD+ program will be assessed - and then the facilitation team should organize the development of the monitoring plan.

7.2.2 Focusing on the current assessment period, a monitoring plan should be developed defining, for each indicator (the essence and any associated qualifiers):

- **Specific Monitoring Information** defining _what_ information will be used assess performance against the indicators _within the current assessment period_.

- **Source** defining _where_ the information will be found, for example in the results of an existing survey or report (a secondary source) or through direct collection of information through surveys, focus groups etc. (a primary source).

- **Methods** defining _how_ the information will be gathered and analyzed, such as:
    - Secondary source – define process for reviewing existing information
    - Primary source – define an information gathering tool e.g. survey, focus groups
    - Sampling strategy, as appropriate
    - Methods for data analysis

- **Responsibilities** defining _who_ will do what:
    - Who organizes the information gathering process
    - Who actually gathers or contributes the information
    - Who analyses the information

7.2.3   Proposed template for a monitoring plan:

Country-specific Indicator (Essence and qualifiers)	Specific Monitoring Information[4] *(what)*	Source of Monitoring Information *(where)*	Methods *(how)*	Responsibility *(who)*

7.3 Guidance

7.3.1   Where appropriate and relevant information is already collected and reported (e.g. by government) this should be used wherever possible.

7.3.2   The preparation of the monitoring plan is a technical process and requires significant work. This step can start during the consultations on the indicators and the plan can then be adapted based on any modifications to the final indicators.

7.3.3   The development of the monitoring plan will probably benefit from the assistance of a consultant with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) expertise and/or advice from others with knowledge of availability of relevant secondary information or with expertise in the design of collection of primary information.

7.3.4   In principle, all indicators should be assessed, but since REDD+ program development is in the early stages in most countries, it may not be possible to monitor and report on all indicators in the first assessment cycle in 2012. The first monitoring plan should focus on indicators that can be monitored at the current stage of the REDD+ program, thereby reducing the number of indicators that will be used at this stage. The Specific Monitoring Information for each indicator defined in the monitoring plan should be those that are applicable during 2012, i.e. it is not necessary at this stage to develop a monitoring plan for information that will only become available after this phase. In general, it will not be possible to report at this stage on 'outcome indicators', e.g. social and environmental impacts which take time to become measurable.

7.3.5   Where there is interest in ongoing use of REDD+ SES to provide information on the social and environmental performance of the REDD+ program there may be opportunities to integrate data collection into existing or new processes related to REDD+ such as land use planning processes, environmental and social impact assessments or reporting requirements for REDD+ projects.

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[4] Relevant to the current monitoring period.

8. Develop Draft Performance Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team organizes data collection and analysis and compiles draft report, with stakeholders or independent third party as appropriate

Outputs: draft assessment report that includes performance summaries for each criterion, details for each indicator and annexes as appropriate

8.1 Objectives

To identify, collect, and compile 'specific monitoring information' as defined in the monitoring plan and to prepare a draft report of the performance of the REDD+ program for each of the indicators in the REDD+ SES.

8.2 Guidelines

8.2.1 The facilitation team should organize the collection of information and compilation of the draft report. The report should include:
- o A summary of performance at principle level.
- o A summary of the performance with respect to each criterion, i.e. summarizing the information obtained for all the indicators under each criterion ;
- o A more detailed explanation of the performance with respect to each indicator explaining what information or evidence this is based on and providing a reference or link to the source of the information where relevant; and
- o Annexes containing supporting information for some indicators as appropriate.

8.3 Guidance

8.3.1 The credibility of monitoring can be affected by:

- o **The quantity of information collected**. If the indicator relates to outcomes across the REDD+ program the monitoring will be less credible if information is collected from just one site and will be most credible if a process is put in place to monitor all sites. A more practical solution, which can still be credible, may be to collect information from a sample of sites of different types and geographic locations.

- o **The quality of information collected**. Existing information is easier and cheaper to use but can undermine credibility if it is unreliable or contentious/contested. In this case it is better to try to collect primary data provided this can be done properly and effectively. Where reliable sources already exist, these should be used in the interests of cost effectiveness. To check reliability, "spot checks" may be used.

- o **Who collects the information**. Where the performance of an agency is being assessed, there will be more confidence in the monitoring if other stakeholders have had the chance to contribute to information collection or if the information is collected by an independent third party. While independent monitoring may increase credibility, it will probably also be more costly. Taking responsibility for monitoring in collaboration with other stakeholders can also be an important way to encourage adaptive management by the agency responsible for designing and implementing a REDD+ program.

8.3.2 A summary of performance against the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards can also be included in the assessment report, compiled from the performance with respect to the relevant principles and criteria in REDD+ SES.

9. Organize Stakeholder Review of Draft Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team organizes consultations and Standards Committee approves revision and responses to comments (similar process to the consultations on indicators)

Outputs: comments collated, report revised and comments responded to

9.1 Objectives

To facilitate stakeholder input to the report prior to finalization to improve the quality and credibility of the report.

9.2 Guidelines

9.2.1   Review of the draft assessment report should be undertaken through stakeholder consultation.

9.2.2   The review should be organized through at least one 60-day public comment period, which could be reduced to 30 days if there is active facilitation of the consultations. The consultations should include facilitated consultations with key stakeholders, for example through workshops, following a similar process to the consultations on the indicators (6. above).

9.2.3   As a second stage in the review process the Standards Committee should review the draft report and how stakeholder comments on the report have been addressed, prior to giving their formal approval of the final report.

10. Publish the Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team organizes publication and dissemination of the final report following approval by Standards Committee

Outputs: full report of performance against criteria and indicators of the REDD+ SES publicly available

10.1   Objectives

To make a full report of performance of the REDD+ program against the principles, criteria and indicators of the REDD+ SES publicly available.

10.2   Guidelines

10.2.1 Countries participating in the REDD+ SES Initiative should define a reporting plan, making a full report of performance against the indicators publicly available and, in the interests of maximizing credibility and transparency, countries should also make comments received about the report publicly available.

10.2.2 The final report should be made publicly available in the official national language, for example on an existing government-led or approved REDD+ website. A link will also be provided on the REDD+ SES website (www.redd-standards.org).

10.2.3 At least the summary of the report at principle level should be available in languages and formats which make it relatively accessible to all stakeholder groups.

Appendix 1. Flow chart of the ten steps to use REDD+ SES at country level

Country-level Process for Using REDD+ SES

1. Awareness-Raising / Capacity-Building Meetings and Workshops

Who: relevant rights holders & stakeholders, such as representatives from: government agencies, civil society, indigenous peoples and community-based organizations

Outputs: meetings and workshops to raise awareness of the REDD+ program, potential impacts, and REDD+ SES and other safeguard mechanisms

Step 1 could be undertaken at any stage

Governance

2. Establish the Facilitation Team

Who: government (typically one person) and non-government (typically one or two people)

Outputs: team to organize meetings, prepare drafts, organize consultations, organize data collection, data analysis and compilation and stakeholder review of assessment reports, etc.

3. Create the Standards Committee*

Who: representatives of interested parties (government departments, indigenous peoples, local communities, NGOs, private sector, etc.). Where appropriate, the same multi-stakeholder committee created for other aspects of REDD+ program or for other safeguards mechanisms.

Outputs: a committee to ensure balanced stakeholder oversight of use of REDD+ SES

Step 3 could be undertaken at any stage prior to step 6

Interpretation

4. Develop Plan for the REDD+ SES Process

Who: led by the facilitation team and include relevant stakeholders as needed

Outputs: well defined timeline of activities and responsibilities for the REDD+ SES process

5. Develop Draft Country-Specific Indicators

Who: working group composed of the facilitation team and relevant stakeholders/experts (e.g.. 3-7 people), potentially several groups in a workshop setting

Outputs: draft of indicators that are relevant to the country context

6. Organize Consultations on Indicators

Who: facilitation team organizes two public comment periods through publication of draft indicators , workshops and other solicitation of comments, revision of indicators and response to comments and Standards Committee approves revision and responses to public comments

Outputs: comments collated, indicators revised and comments responded to

Assessment

7. Prepare a Monitoring Plan

Who: facilitation team, and possibly a consultant or expert with monitoring and evaluation expertise

Outputs: outline of what information is needed, where to find, how to collect and analyze, by whom

8. Develop Draft Performance Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team organizes data collection and analysis and compiles draft report, with stakeholders or independent third party as appropriate

Outputs: draft assessment report that includes performance summaries for each criterion, details for each indicator and annexes as appropriate

9. Organize Stakeholder Review of Draft Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team origanizes consultations and Standards Committee approves revision and responses to comments (similar process to the consultations on indicators)

Outputs: comments collated, report revised and comments responded to

10. Publish the Assessment Report

Who: facilitation team organizes publication and dissemination of the final report following approval by Standards Committee

Outputs: full report of performance against criteria and indicators of the REDD+ SES publicly available

21

Appendix 2. Template for development of country-specific indicators

Principle 1: Rights to lands, territories and resources are recognized and respected by the REDD+ program

Criterion 1.1 The REDD+ program effectively identifies the different rights holders (statutory and customary) and their rights to lands, territories and resources relevant to the program.

Framework for indicators		Country-specific indicators		Type of interpretation[5]	Justification	Guidance notes
Essence	Qualifiers	Essence	Qualifiers			
1.1.1 A process is established to inventory and map rights to lands, territories and resources relevant to the REDD+ program.	i. The process is participatory. ii. Includes statutory and customary rights. iii. Includes tenure/use/access/management rights. iv. Includes rights of marginalized and/or vulnerable groups. v. Includes overlapping or conflicting rights.					
1.1.2 Land-use plans used by the REDD+ program identify the rights of all relevant rights holders.	i. Includes forest management plans. ii. Includes overlapping or conflicting rights. iii. Includes statutory and customary rights. iv. Spatial boundaries of rights are mapped. v. Applies to rights holders relevant to the REDD+ program identified in accordance with criterion 6.1.					

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[5] Maintained, adapted, deleted or added