

REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards

Social and environmental standards for REDD and other forest carbon programs

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 other forest-dependent communities. Recognizing growing awareness at both international and national levels of the need for effective social and environmental safeguards, this initiative aims to define and build support for a higher level of social and environmental performance from REDD and other forest carbon programs.

Role of the Standards

This initiative is developing standards that can be used by governments, NGOs, financing agencies and other stakeholders to design and implement REDD and other forest carbon programs that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and generate significant social and biodiversity co-benefits. These standards are being designed to work for the new global REDD+ regime expected to emerge out of ongoing UNFCCC negotiations, that is for government-led programs implemented at national or state/provincial/regional level and for all forms of fund-based or market-based financing.

If these standards are successful, they will:

- help the early adopters to build support for their programs both nationally and internationally, for example enabling preferential access to funds;
- encourage improved social and environmental performance for REDD and other forest carbon programs in other countries and sub-national states/provinces;
- build enhanced global support for effective and equitable REDD+ action.

Components of the Standards

The standards will consist of principles, criteria and indicators that define the issues of concern and the required levels of social and environmental performance. A process for monitoring, reporting and verification will also be defined to ensure the quality of assessments.

To learn more about the development of the REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards please contact:

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Goal of the Standards

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

Principles, Criteria and Indicators

A set of principles are the main framework for the standards and provide the key objectives that define good social and environmental performance of REDD+ programs. For each principle, a series of criteria define the minimum requirements that must be demonstrated related to processes, impacts and policies. Indicators provide the information to show that the criteria are met.

Participants at a workshop on the standards in Copenhagen in May 2009 identified the following principles:

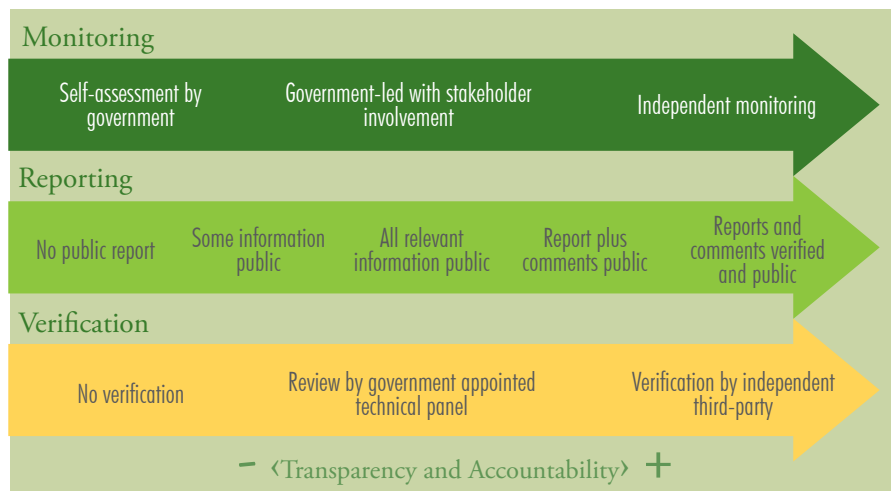
1. Rights to land, territories and resources are recognized and respected.
2. The benefits of the REDD+ program are shared equitably among all stakeholders and rights holders.
3. The REDD+ program contributes to sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation for forest-dependent peoples.
4. The REDD+ program contributes to broader sustainable development and good governance objectives.
5. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are maintained and enhanced.
6. All relevant stakeholders and rights holders are able to participate fully and effectively in the REDD+ program.
7. All stakeholders and rights holders have timely access to appropriate and accurate information to enable good governance of the REDD+ program.
8. The REDD+ program complies with applicable local and national laws and international treaties and agreements

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

Different options are under consideration for monitoring, reporting and verification that balance participation and ownership by stakeholders with enhanced transparency and accountability. The best approach will depend on the aims of the standards and the interests of the users. For example, the standards could be used to:

- Define best practice guidelines for REDD+ policies and measures;
- Assess the process of development of REDD+ policies and measures;
- Assess the quality and impacts of implementation of REDD+ policies and measures.

Options for Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification



An inclusive and participatory process for development of the standards

The standards are being developed through an inclusive process engaging governments, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples organizations, international policy and research institutions and the private sector. A Standards Committee representing a balance of interested parties is overseeing the standards development and approves each draft of the standards. The majority of committee members are from countries where REDD would be implemented recognizing that southern governments and civil society should lead the adoption of the standards. The standards development process is being facilitated by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International.

The following steps have been planned for Phase 1 of standards development:

A multi-stakeholder workshop in Copenhagen to provide initial input for the design and content of the standards	May 2009
Draft principles and criteria circulated to interested parties, stakeholders and advisors for comments	Jun-Aug 2009
Consultation meetings with diverse stakeholders in 3 pilot countries interested in early adoption (Ecuador, Nepal and Tanzania)	Jul-Sep 2009
A draft version of the standards posted on-line for public comments during 60 days	Oct-Nov 2009
Comments addressed in a new draft version of the standards for presentation at UNFCCC COP15	Dec 2009
A second public comment period and consultations with a further 2 pilot countries interested in using the standards (TBD)	Jan-Mar 2010
Standards finalized for testing	Mar 2010

Testing the use of the standards in pilot countries is planned for Phase 2 starting in April 2010.