

Information brief:

REDD+ SAFEGUARDS IN MONGOLIA

KEY MESSAGES

REDD+ safeguards aim to prevent or reduce potential risks while enhancing the benefits of REDD+ implementation.

With the participation of stakeholders from government, civil society and communities, Mongolia has developed a national REDD+ safeguards framework.

Mongolia's safeguards framework will be applied throughout REDD+ implementation and can be improved over time.

Mongolia is also establishing a Safeguards Information System (SIS), showing how the country is addressing and respecting the safeguards.

What are safeguards?

Safeguards are principles or measures that aim to protect someone or something from harm. Safeguards are used in many sectors to prevent or reduce negative impacts, from hospitals to construction projects to conservation initiatives.

International safeguards requirements for REDD+ have two major goals: to ensure that any social and environmental risks are minimized, and that benefits are enhanced. Although the main purpose of REDD+ is to contribute to global climate change mitigation, it also has the potential to deliver additional social and environmental benefits, and to pose risks. Benefits of REDD+ may include improved livelihoods from forest resources and conservation of biodiversity. Potential risks include reduced access to forests by forest-dependent communities and lack of stakeholder participation in REDD+.

In preparation for REDD+ implementation, the Cancun Agreements¹ of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) call upon countries to address and respect a set of seven safeguards, known as the Cancun Safeguards (Box 1). In addition to the Cancun safeguards, international funders of REDD+ may also require countries to apply other safeguards, such as those of the World

Bank and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). For example, the GCF has adopted, as an interim measure, the International Finance Corporation Environmental and Social Performance Standards as part of its framework for REDD+ results-based payments.

What is a Safeguard Information System?

Under the UNFCCC requirements on safeguards, and in order to be eligible for results-based payments for achieved emission reductions and removals, countries must develop a system for providing information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected. This is called a 'Safeguard Information System' – SIS.

Guidance from the UNFCCC² on SIS recommends that these systems should:

- Provide information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected
- Be implemented at the national level
- Build on existing systems
- Be country driven, considering national circumstances and capabilities
- Be accessible to relevant stakeholders
- Be transparent and flexible, allowing improvements over time.

¹ UNFCCC Decision 1/CoP 16

² UNFCCC Decision 12/CoP 17

Box 1: The Cancun Safeguards

When undertaking [REDD+] activities, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- a) That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
- c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities;
- e) That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the [REDD+] actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits*;
- f) Actions to address the risks of reversals;
- g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

**Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.*

Source: UNFCCC Decision 1/CoP 16

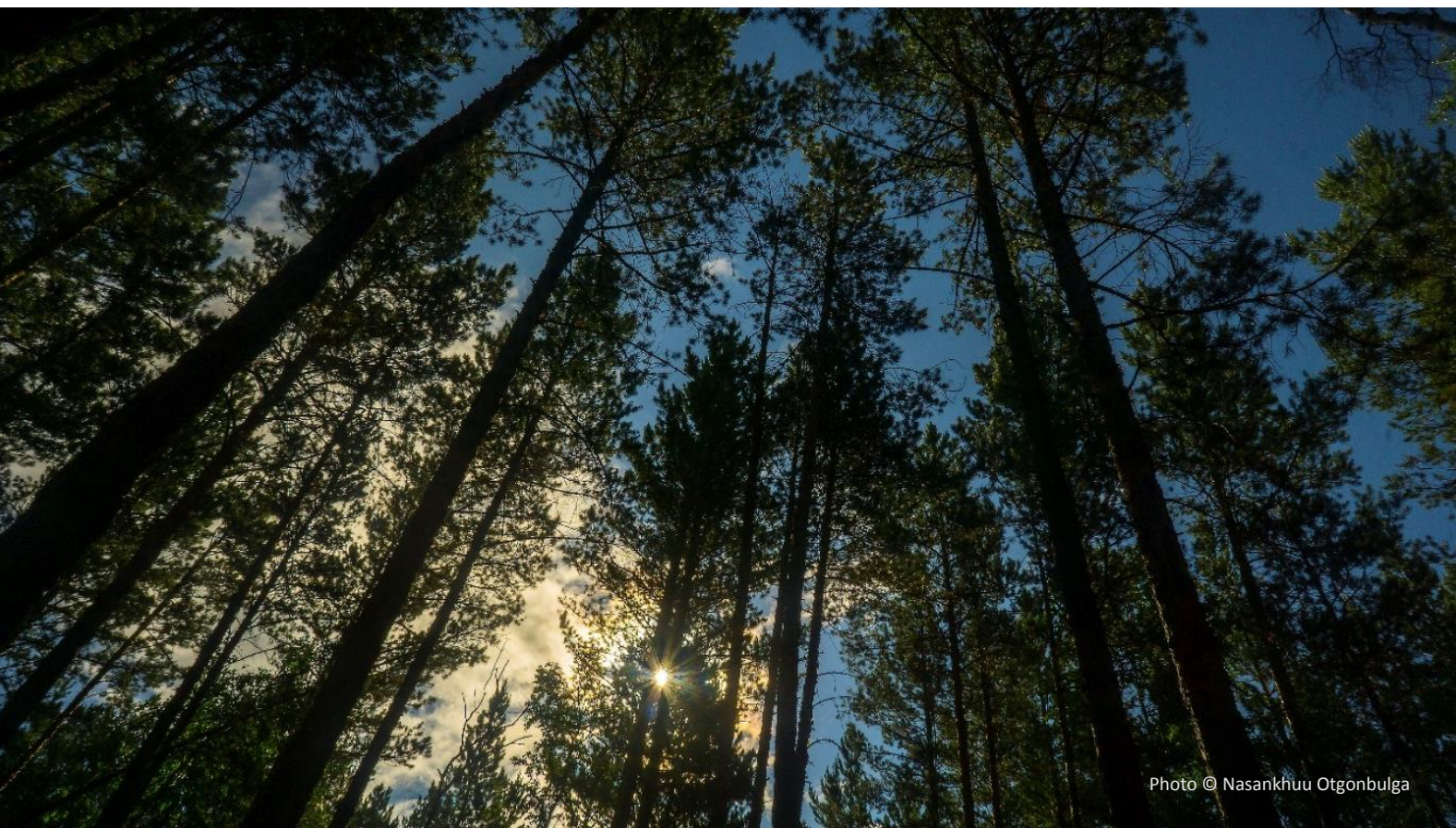


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Mongolia's safeguards framework

Mongolia's framework sets out the national understanding of the REDD+ safeguards, and how the country intends to meet relevant requirements on safeguards.

The national safeguards framework has been developed in a participatory way, with the involvement of a range of stakeholders from government, civil society and communities. This has involved five main steps:

Step 1: Determining safeguards goals and scope

Step 2: Assessing potential benefits and risks of REDD+ Policies and Measures (PaMs) or REDD+ actions

Step 3: Reviewing safeguards-relevant policies, laws and regulations (PLRs)

Step 4: Clarifying the safeguards in the Mongolian context

Step 5: Assessing options for a grievance redress mechanism (GRM)

The outputs of these various steps can be accessed on the [UN-REDD safeguards country resources hub](#), as well as at www.reddplus.mn.



Applying the safeguards framework

The safeguards framework underpins a number of important activities to ensure that the safeguards are addressed and respected throughout REDD+ implementation in Mongolia:

- **Designing the REDD+ National Program:** An understanding of the potential risks and benefits arising from REDD+ has helped Mongolia to design more appropriate and sustainable PaMs. Measures to enhance the expected benefits and reduce the risks have also been built into the REDD+ National Program.
- **Strengthening policies, laws, and regulations:** The process of developing the safeguards framework has highlighted areas where safeguards-relevant PLRs, and capacity to implement them, can be improved. Recommendations for legal reforms have been included in a review of legislation by the Ministry for Environment and Tourism, and capacity building to apply safeguards-relevant PLRs will form a part of the REDD+ National Program.
- **Developing a Safeguard Information System:** Mongolia's SIS is based on the national safeguards framework, with the objective of collecting and sharing information on how the safeguards are addressed and respected, through a set of indicators.
- **Engaging stakeholders:** The implementation of REDD+ should allow for the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders. Monitoring of REDD+ outcomes, including its social and environmental impacts, and validating information on safeguards, will provide important opportunities to involve national and local stakeholders.



Mongolia's Safeguards Information System

The establishment of Mongolia's SIS follows a two-phase approach, with the following objectives being pursued in each phase:

Phase 1 (2019-2020):

- Provide information on how the Cancun Safeguards are being addressed and respected;
- Meet requirements for receiving results based payments for REDD+; and

- Support the implementation of the State Policy on Forest.

Phase 2 (2021-2024):

- Provide information on implementation of the Cancun and other relevant safeguards (e.g. the global fund GCF serving as a financial mechanism for the UNFCCC), and as related to all relevant programmes on climate change adaptation and mitigation in the forest sector (supporting Mongolia's Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement).

A SIS database will be established, including through integration with other relevant databases in Mongolia (e.g. on forest resources, land management, and the Sustainable Development Goals) (see Fig. 1).

Based on a set of indicators, the SIS database will bring together relevant information at the national level from these databases, as well as other data sources (e.g. data collected through the monitoring of REDD+ implementation). The database will include statistics, maps and narrative and/or qualitative information.

Information collected through the SIS will contribute to several key reporting processes and products:

- Summaries of information on the safeguards, which are submitted to the UNFCCC and are one of the requirements to receive results-based payments;
- Regular reporting on REDD+ National Program outcomes at the national level;
- The Mongolia State of Environment reports, which are produced every two years.

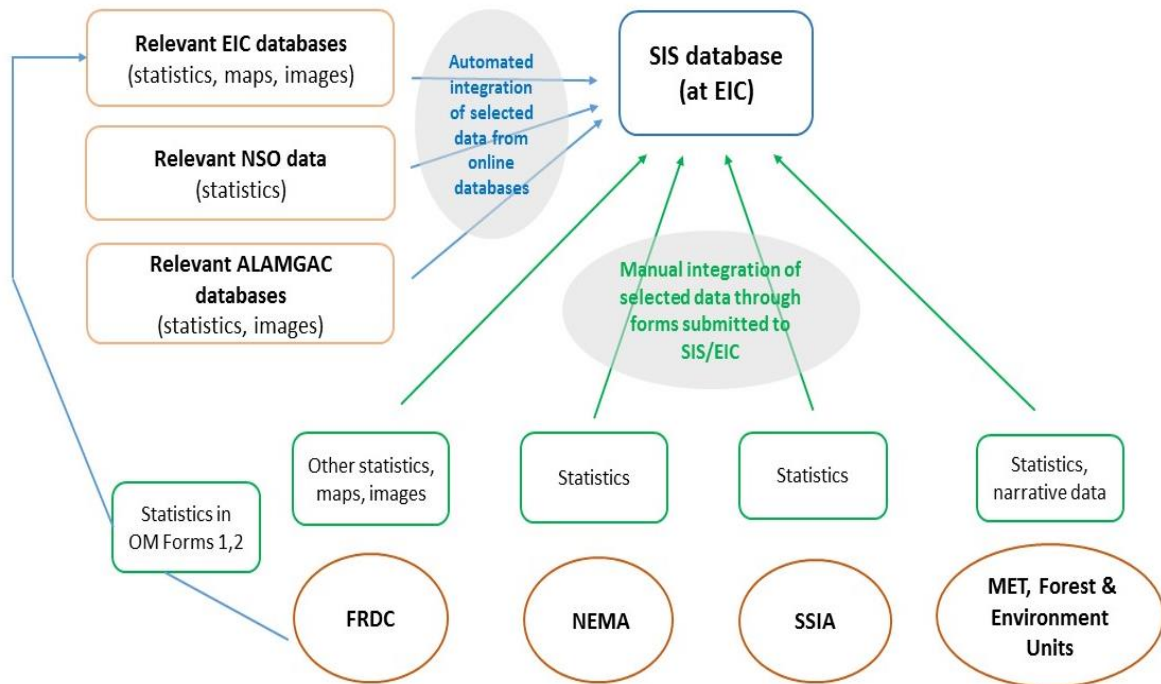


Figure 1. Mongolia SIS arrangements

* EIC: Environment Information Centre; NSO: National Statistics Office; ALAMGAC: Administration of Land Affairs Management, Geodesy and Cartography; FRDC: Forest Research and Development Centre; NEMA: National Emergency Management Authority; SSIA: State Specialised Inspection Agency; MET: Ministry of Environment and Tourism





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*Address: Government Building II, United Nations Street 5/2,
Chingeltei District, Ulaanbaatar 15160, Mongolia*

Tel: +976-7711-7750

Email: info@unredd.mn