Safeguard information systems:

Requirements, design considerations and lessons so far

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PART I - UNFCCC requirements

- "a *system for providing information on how the* [Cancun] *safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of* [REDD+] *activities*"
  - key requirement for REDD+ under the UNFCCC

- Can be a challenging piece of REDD+ architecture
  - usually undertaken in the more advanced stages of the readiness process
  - only one country to date has claimed to have a fully operational SIS

UNFCCC Guidance on SIS

Decision 12/CP.17 (Durban)

a) ***Be consistent with the guidance*** **[for policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to REDD+]**

b) ***Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis***

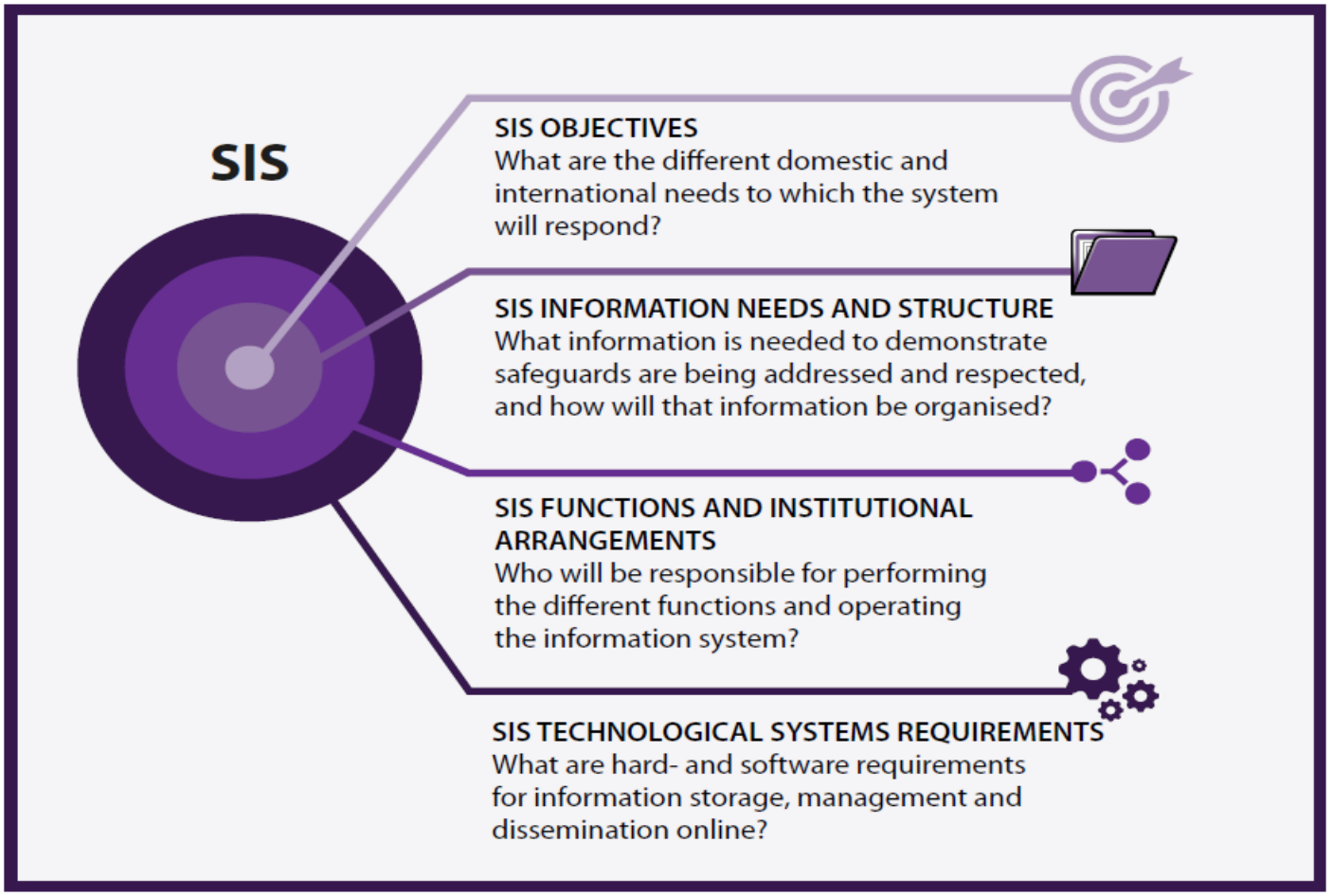
c) ***Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time***

d) ***Provide information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected***

e) ***Be country-driven and implemented at the national level***

f) ***Build upon existing systems, as appropriate***

PART II - design considerations



SIS objectives

- Default - meeting UNFCCC requirements to obtain payments for results under REDD+

- But information on how the environment and society are being safeguarded could contribute to a range of other domestic objectives:
  - Funding accessed
  - Improved NS/AP implementation
  - Greater legitimacy of REDD+
  - Evidence-based national policies reform
  - Other international reporting requirements met

SIS information needs, availability and structure

1. What specific information is *needed?*
   a) in relation to the specific benefits and risks of proposed REDD+ actions
   b) in relation to national clarification of the Cancun safeguards
   c) to demonstrate appropriate PLRs are in place (addressing safeguards) and are being adequately implemented (respecting safeguards)

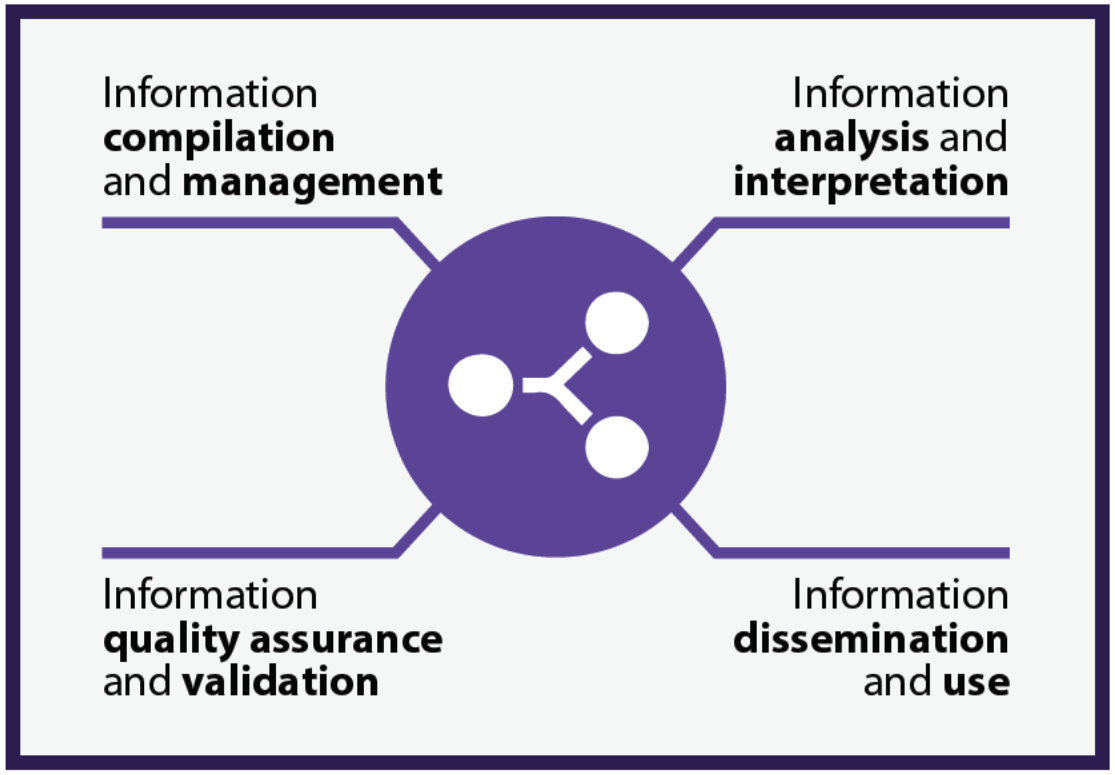
2. What information already exists that could meet the needs of the SIS?

3. How will information be organised in the SIS?

- **Principles** (P) – broad aspirational statements of intent
- **Criteria** (C) – more specific statements of thematic content
- **Indicators** (I) – detailed information used to demonstrate change

SIS functions and institutional arrangements

- Identify any relevant *existing institutions* with the mandate, procedures and capacity to carry out key functions
- New institutional arrangements, e.g. information sharing arrangements, may be needed
- Institutions are likely to be government but could also include other stakeholders – civil society, private sector, local people, etc.



SIS technological systems requirements

REDD+
Safeguards Information System
(Beta version)

http://redd-sis.sysdb.site/Home/

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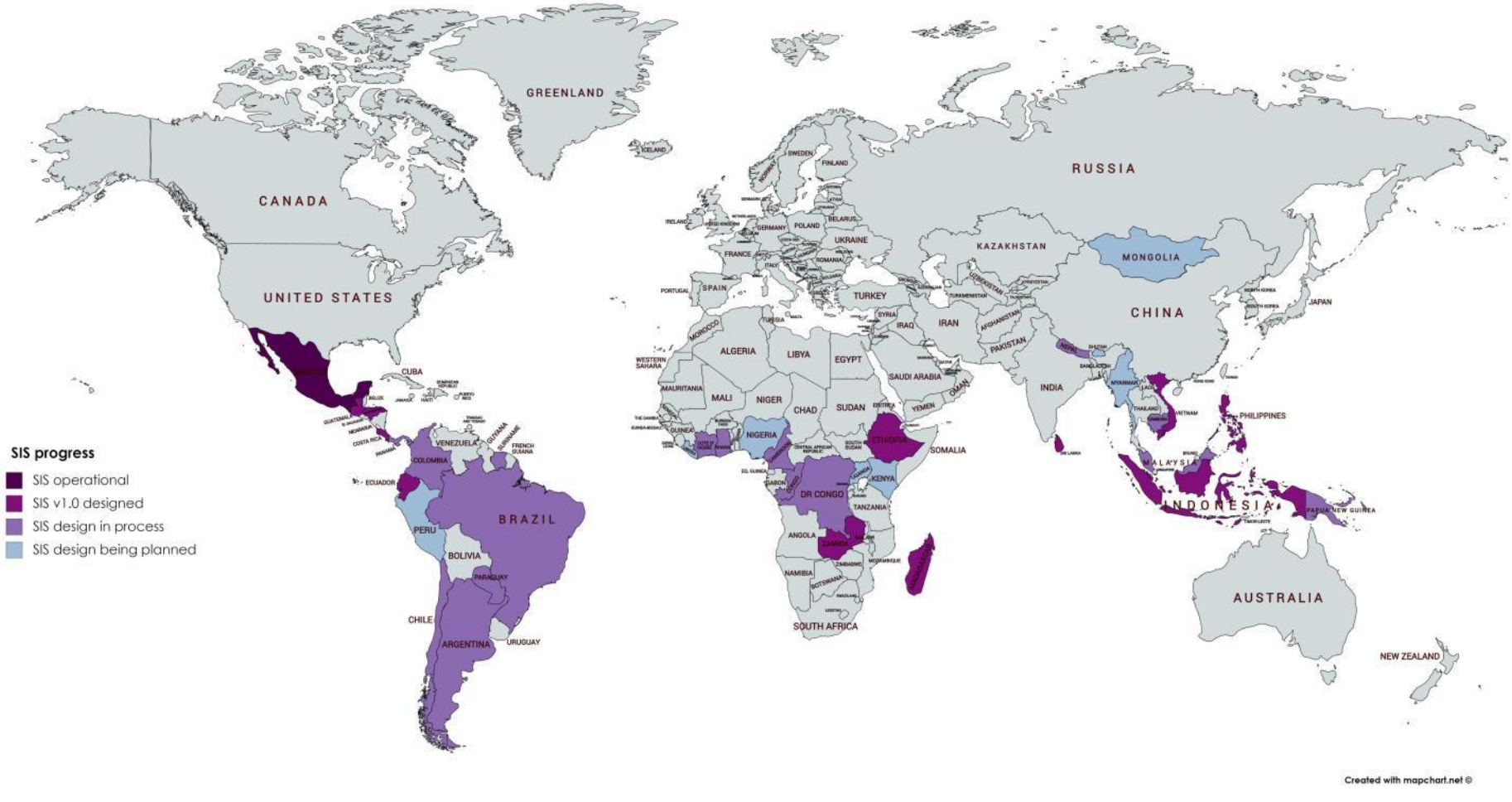
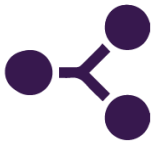
PART III – Lessons so far



Indicative process



Objectives

- default UNFCCC requirements: 1) demonstrate safeguards are addressed/respected; 2) produce summaries of information
- others, e.g. accessing funding for REDD+ actions, improved implementation of NS/APs, greater legitimacy of REDD+ among domestic stakeholders, etc.

Needs and structure

- identify information needs based on national interpretation, benefit/risk assessment of REDD+ actions and PLR assessment
- develop information structure based on hierarchical principles, criteria and indicators and/or narrative summary information at different scales

Functions and institutions

- conduct detailed assessment of existing systems and sources of information
- assign functions to different institutions (consider role of non-state actors)
- identify existing/new inter-institutional information sharing-arrangements
- identify capacity needs

Systems requirements

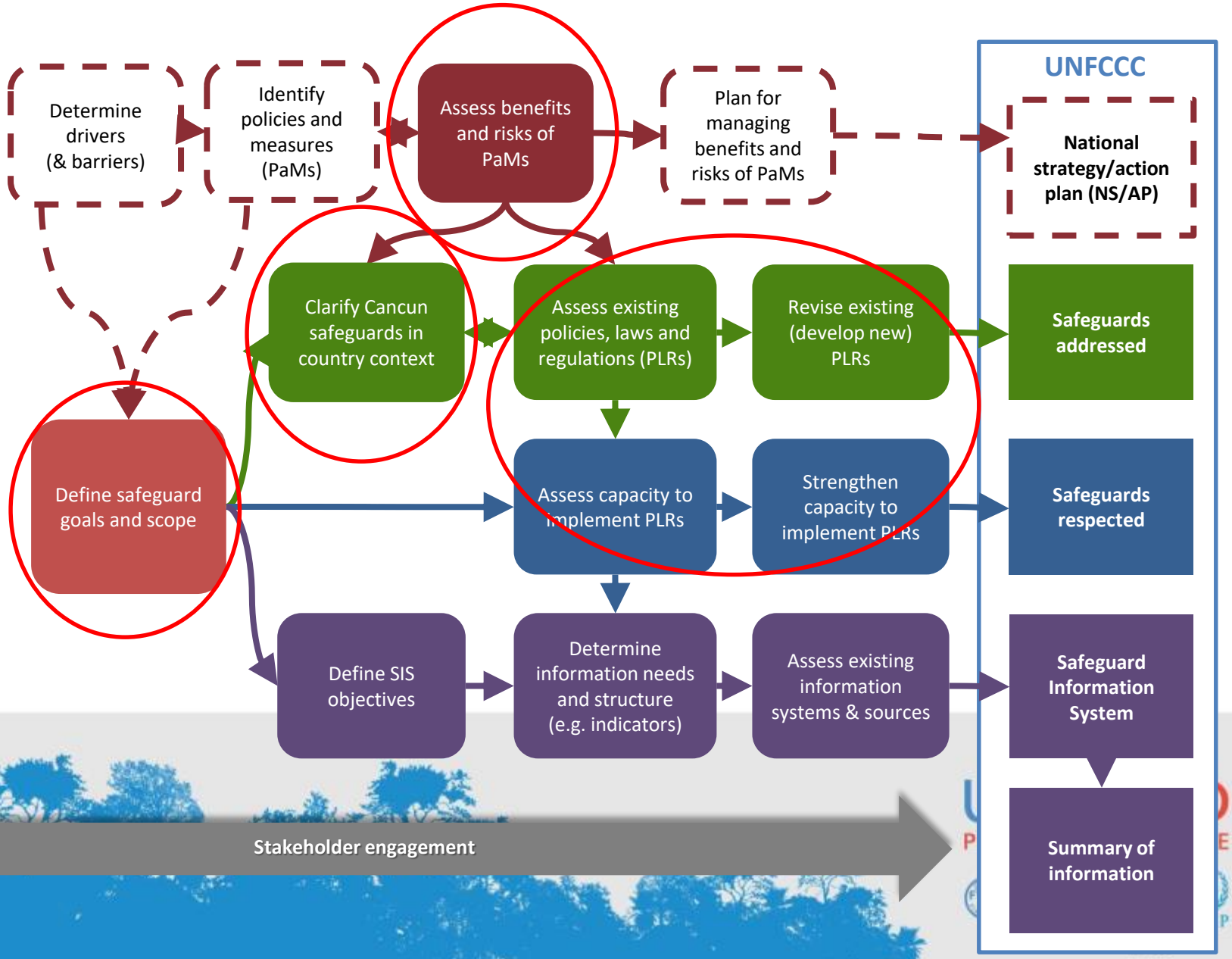
- determine technological solutions for storing, managing, disseminating information
- establish hard- and software system requirements for end-user needs, variable access interface requirements, information workflows, database design, etc.
- identify any NFMS-SIS linkages (information provision and dissemination)

Challenges

- Design
  1. limited operational guidance from UNFCCC
  2. designing SIS before clarity on PaMs (parallel process with NS/AP)
  3. (too many) principles, criteria, indicators alone ≠ SIS
  4. online platform alone ≠ SIS
  5. making functional links between SIS NFMS and PaMs M&E

- Operations
  1. limited political ownership
  2. building/strengthening inter-agency information sharing agreements
  3. need for institutional capacity development
  4. REDD+ implementation across multiple scales
  5. costing SIS capital outlay and operational running costs neglected

Upstream steps in a country approach to safeguards



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Thank You

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