

**MINUTES OF KICK-OFF MEETING
SUB-TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
ON ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS**

Venue: Meeting Room 101, Building B9, 2 Ngoc Ha, Ba Dinh, Ha Noi

Time: 13:30 – 16:30. Date: 28 February 2012

[Co-chair comments in square brackets]

Objectives:

- Sub-Technical Working Group on Safeguards (STWG-SG) terms of reference (ToR) agreed
- STWG-SG 2012 annual work plan (AWP), with milestones, agreed
- Second meeting agenda outlined
- Awareness of existing options for national operationalisation of safeguards raised

[All objectives achieved; comments received on ToR and AWP and revised versions will be shared in advance of the second STWG-SG meeting]

Agenda:

Time	Items	Responsible people
13.30 – 13.45	Introduction of participants	All
13.45 – 14.00	Introduction to Cancun safeguards in relation to national REDD+ programme and wider forestry sector policy	VNFOREST
14.00 – 14.15	National options to operationalize safeguards	SNV
14.15 – 14.30	Introduction to HB-REDD+ project in relation to the STWG-SG	SNV
14.30 – 15.00	Presentation of STWG-SG of terms of reference	VNFOREST
15.00 – 15.15	Presentation of STWG-SG 2012 work plan	SNV
15.15 – 16.00	- Discussion and agreement on terms of reference and work plan	All
16.00 – 16.15	- Agreement on agenda items and scheduling of next meeting	All
16.15 – 16.30	Any other business	All

Expected outputs:

- Final agreement on ToR of STWG-SG
[revised ToR to be circulated in advance of second STWG-SG meeting]
- Final agreement on AWP of STWG-SG in 2012
[co-chairs to work with technical partners to elaborate details of AWP steps under results areas]
- Contents and plan for next meeting
[draft agenda for second STWG-SG meeting to be circulated in advance of the meeting]

Key comments:

Safeguard response options

- There is a need to balance innovation with strengthening of existing approaches to underlying forest governance for REDD+ (CERDA/SNV)
- A review of existing and potential safeguard policies and measures that could be undertaken in Vietnam could be a valuable study informing STWG activities
- Presently, Vietnam only has commitment (under UNFCCC) to develop a national REDD+ information system, which should include information on how safeguards are being addressed
- MARD and MoNRE have commitment to formulate a circular on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of the forestry sector, which will review, assess and analyze existing policies as part of a more comprehensive valuation of forest ecosystem services (FES)
- There are both normative ethical (it is the right thing to do) and pragmatic business (risk mitigation) arguments for investing in 'co-benefits' and REDD+ safeguard response(s)

Draft ToR & AWP

- STWG-SG meeting frequency should be every two months; next meeting tentatively scheduled for 19 April
- Responsibilities of individual STWG-SG members should be defined under smaller (environmental and social) expert groups
- *'Sharing information on existing international and national safeguard policy commitments and emerging guidance on safeguard responses'* is an on-going task inherent in all other identified activities
- *'Providing quality technical assistance to all relevant stakeholders in the field of safeguard response actions (policy through to practice)'* is an ambitious commitment for the STWG-SG, but one that the group should aspire to
- STWG-SG membership is voluntary and open to all interested individuals and organisations; no formal process is required for membership registration, although formal letters of invitation can be arranged by VNFOREST chair for other government departments
- STWG-SG should take proactive steps to ensure as inclusive (particularly subnational and local stake-/right-holder) participation as available resources permit (CARE/SNV)
- Regional Forestry Networks under the Forest Sector Support Partnership present a possibility to reach a wider constituency for the STWG-SG and safeguards response processes

- The current AWP is largely based on the SNV-VNFOREST safeguard project, because these are the only secured resources for safeguards work known to co-chairs; the AWP can be modified *ad hoc* as other resources are secured and mobilized (e.g. FCPF, UN-REDD Phase II)
- STWG-SG should take proactive steps to co-ordinate with other STWGs; co-chairs will ensure advanced notification and sharing of materials with co-chairs of other STWGs prior to announcement and circulation within the wider REDD+ Network
- A longer term work plan can be developed in quarter four once a clearer picture of activities and resources has been established
- STWG-SG full title, to be presented on all STWG documentation, should be 'Sub-Technical Working Group on *Environmental & Social Safeguards*, to exclude specific attention to safeguards relating to emissions reductions/enhanced removals leakage and permanence
- Exploring participatory forest monitoring approaches could and should be discussed under other STWGs, particularly Local Implementation
- It is not the responsibility of STWG-SG to identify State agency to endorse STWG activities, processes or outputs; reference can only be made of 'appropriate government agency' and VNFOREST chair will consult with relevant agencies in support of any formal adoption of STWG activities, processes or outputs
- STWG-SG will only commit to technically assisting the development of a draft national REDD+ information system for safeguards within 2012

List of participants:

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