



## Designing nationally-specific Safeguard Information Systems; learning from experience

Once a country has decided its approach to interpreting and applying the Cancun safeguards, the next steps are to think about **what information will be collected** for a Safeguard Information System (SIS), **how it will be collected** and **how it will be shared**. This enables countries to understand and communicate how well they are addressing and respecting the Cancun safeguards.

An SIS is a system for providing information on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the REDD+ activities, while respecting sovereignty. Key elements in developing an SIS are identifying **what information systems are already in place** in the country, as well as working to fulfill the **country's overall goals** on safeguards, and the range of purposes to which the information will be put.

### Expectations for an SIS

- Decision 7/CP.16 of the Cancun Agreements requests countries aiming to undertake REDD+ activities to develop an SIS.
- Decision 12/CP.17 of the Durban Outcome states that a SIS should provide information on how all Cancun safeguards are addressed and respected, and that a summary of this should be included in national communications to UNFCCC.
- It also states an SIS should be transparent, accessible to all stakeholders, flexible to allow for improvement, respect gender considerations, provide consistent and regularly updated information, and be country-driven.
- The social and environmental information collected is also likely to be useful for domestic purposes. Some countries are investigating the potential for an SIS to help with communication with stakeholders, adaptive management of the REDD+ programme and provision of safeguards information to financing agencies and donors.



## Key Steps

### 1. Gap Analysis

- 1) A **gap analysis** involves identifying which kinds of data and data collection methodologies already exist, and whether there is a need to collect new information to cover all the safeguards.

Some countries have found convenient overlaps with existing systems, for example for the Forest Resources Assessment, on Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT), and as part of the FCPF's Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment, which addresses many of the Cancun safeguards.

- 2) **Indicators** are a common language through which governments can communicate their progress towards addressing and respecting the safeguards. Many countries have worked with indicators before to assess performance of projects or programmes. The UNFCCC Decisions do not mention indicators, only information.

Countries such as Argentina, Ethiopia, and Ecuador are holding consultative workshops on SIS, to identify the key priorities of different stakeholder groups and support the development of indicators that take these into account. The UN-REDD Participatory Governance Assessments that have been carried out in Viet Nam, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Ecuador can help to identify appropriate indicators for governance, whilst national biodiversity indicators may be developed by many countries as part of Convention on Biological Diversity implementation.

- 3) Defining **methodologies for data collection**, including who collects the data, how often, and at what scale. The aim should be to build on and improve existing in-country capacity. It may be useful to explore whether carbon MRV systems can be built upon for safeguards work.

Data collection options are wide, ranging from documentation of changes to national policy, to interpretation of remotely sensed data on land cover change, to local survey of REDD+ impacts. The UN-REDD Programme has a draft guide to "useful resources for monitoring the impacts of REDD+ on biodiversity and ecosystem services" (<http://goo.gl/PHSiin>).

Ethiopia has worked at the community-level on safeguard reporting. The Philippines is stressing the importance of civil society organizations for fulfilling capacity gaps.

- 4) In the development of the SIS, a key final component is a **framework for provision of information**, detailing how such information will be shared; who are the target audiences. Depending on the audience, it might need to be available in various formats (e.g. posters, websites, reports) and languages.

Indonesia aims to collect data at the provincial level, and collate to national level for provision of information to UNFCCC. DRC aims to develop a single national registry for reference level, MRV and SIS information.

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