Country Approach to Safeguards Tool (CAST)
User's Guide

Background

A country approach to REDD+ safeguards can be understood as having two key components: (1) a set of policies, laws and regulations (PLRs) through which safeguards are addressed and respected and (2) a safeguard information system (SIS), which may be defined as a systematic approach for collecting and providing information on how REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout REDD+ implementation. There is no fixed, linear approach to developing a country-level safeguards approach, as it will depend significantly on what is already in place in the country, as well as what the government defines as the overall objectives of this approach, including the objectives for its SIS. In line with this flexibility to account for national circumstances, it is recommended to develop the country approach to safeguards in the context of the national REDD+ strategy, in order to ensure that safeguards are considered against the specific REDD+ options and interventions identified by a given country.

The [UN-REDD Programme Framework for Supporting the Development of Country Approaches to Safeguards](#) provides guidance to countries as they determine how to respond to the UNFCCC decisions on safeguards and SIS. This Framework outlines the main components of a country approach to safeguards as well as steps to consider during its development. It also indicates for which step(s) and activity(ies) UN-REDD Programme tools and guiding documents may be considered most relevant and useful.

The Country Approach to Safeguards Tool (CAST) has been developed as a practical evolution of this Framework, in order to provide countries with an interactive tool to plan and review the development of their approaches to safeguards. As compared to the contents of the framework document described above, the list of tools and guiding documents included in the CAST has been updated and expanded to include a more comprehensive library of resources, including those developed by other key programmes and initiatives in addition to those of the UN-REDD Programme.

What is CAST

CAST is a tool developed by the UN-REDD Programme to be voluntarily applied by REDD+ countries in order to support their planning efforts for activities related to REDD+ safeguards and SIS, so that these may be responsive to the relevant UNFCCC decisions. It is *not* an evaluation tool and it does not aim to assess country performance.

Using CAST can support countries to:
* Identify and prioritize activities (and/or review activities undertaken to date) to develop or further develop their approach to safeguards in the context of the national REDD+ strategy;
* Identify tools, guidelines and resources available to support each activity or area of work;
* Clarify how the processes and tools of various safeguards approaches, including those of the FCPF[1]'s Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and the CCBA-CARE[2] REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES), correspond to generic steps and activities to plan and implement a country approach to safeguards.

⚠ CAST is purposefully designed to be broadly applicable to the full scope of activities related to REDD+ safeguards and SIS in a country, rather than limited to UN-REDD Programme supported activities. Given this generic design, CAST may be applied by any REDD+ country, whether a partner country of the UN-REDD Programme or not.

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[1] Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank
[2] Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International

The structure of CAST

CAST is an Excel-based tool, organized into five inter-connected sections:

Part 1: Identifying	Survey questions to identify safeguard-related activities.
Part 2: Information resources	Auto-generated responses including references to available tools and guiding documents to support the activities.
Part 3: Prioritizing	Selection of the time frame and definition of priority activities.
Part 4: Planning	Available in two (2) formats: a. As an Auto-generated plan for next steps in the development of the country approach to safeguards; and/or b. As an Auto-generated plan with an optional feature to further tailor the plan with specific country activities and cost estimates.
Part 5: Applying information resources	Descriptions of the relevance and specific utility of the available information resources indicated in the Part 2 results.

⚠ The tool is most effective when the sections are filled out in sequence.

How to use CAST

CAST is an Excel-based tool that may be <u>downloaded</u> directly from the UN-REDD Programme website. It does not require an internet connection to run. Completing the tool from beginning to end takes approximately 1 to 3 hours.
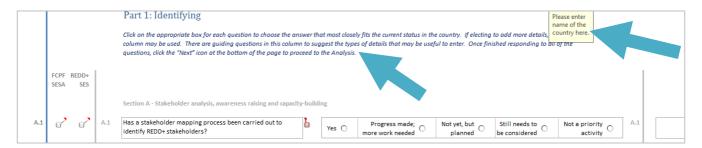
It is recommended to apply CAST as a multi-stakeholder group exercise, engaging stakeholders across relevant agencies, institutions and organizations that are familiar with the state of the country's approach to safeguards. If this guidance is followed, additional equipment needs include a projector and/or additional computers, as it may be decided to work in smaller breakout groups during such a multi-stakeholder session.
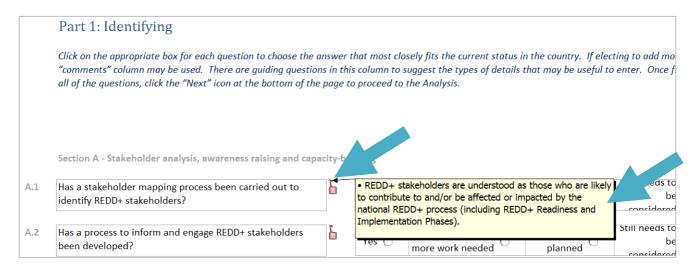
When to use CAST

As a planning tool, CAST will prove useful in the early stages of the development of the country approach to safeguards. However, if a country chooses to do so, CAST may also be used to assess progress, and it can be revisited over time for this purpose.
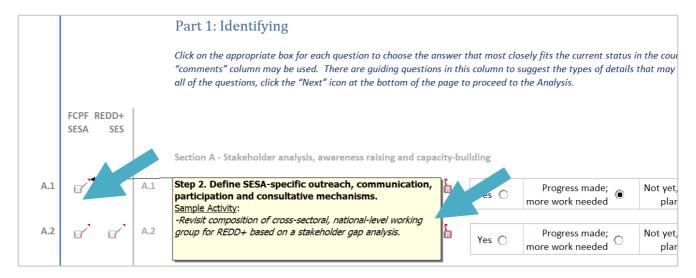
Tips for CAST users

Please take a minute to consider the instructions provided at the top of each section in the CAST tool itself. These instruction headers provide useful information on how to make best use of all the features of the tool.
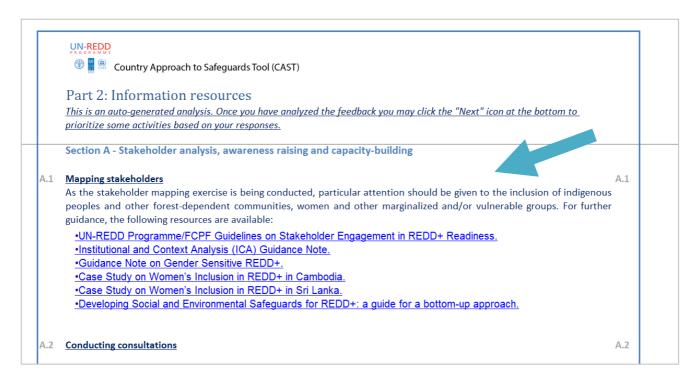

When placing the cursor on the red icons (🔒) on the right of survey questions ("**Part 1: Identifying**"), boxes will open with additional considerations related to the question.
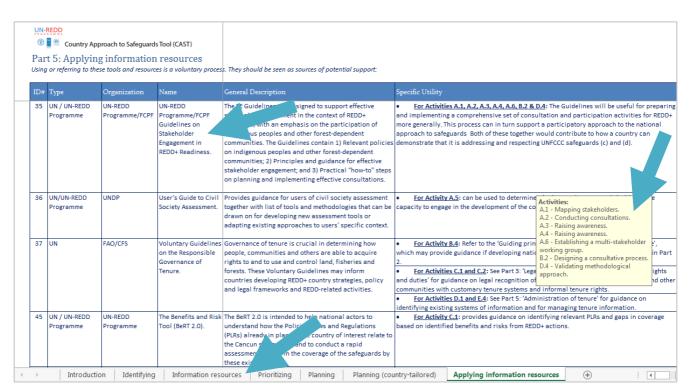

"Part 1: Identifying" also includes two columns on the left, named FCPF SESA and REDD+ SES respectively, with grey icons (🖊). Placing the cursor on the grey icons will open boxes with corresponding activities under the FCPF SESA and the REDD+ SES approaches (if any).

"**Part 2: Information resources**" includes references to available tools and guiding documents to support safeguard-related activities. Clicking on one of these information resources will lead the user to the corresponding description and hyperlink in "Part 5: Applying information resources".
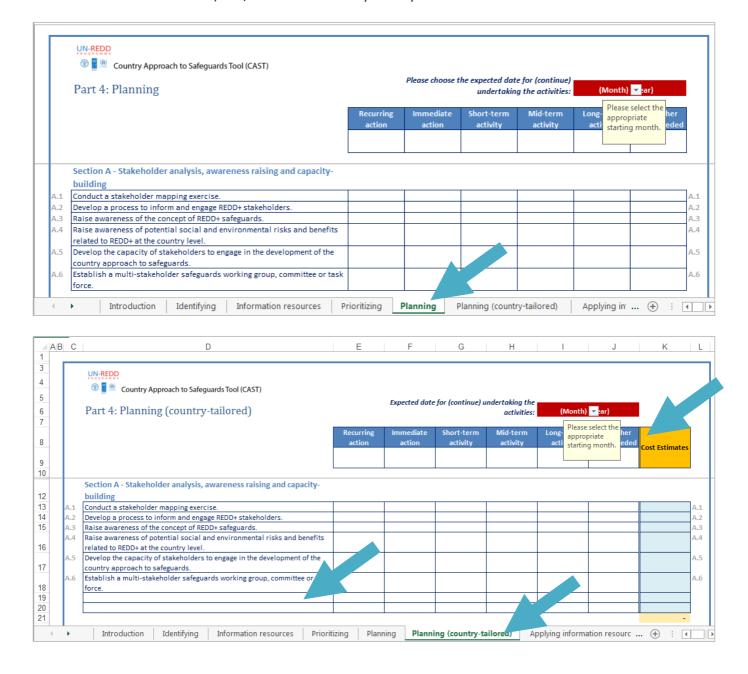

In order to return to Part 2 to continue to review the outputs and lists of relevant tools and resources, the user should click on the "Information Resources" tab at the bottom left.

Update as of April 2015

CAST is a dynamic tool which the UN-REDD Programme aims to improve over time, based on the feedback received when using it at country level.

In this version, countries have the option to select either "Part 4: Planning" or "Part 4: Planning (country-tailored), or both. If deciding to conduct the optional exercise in "Part 4: Planning (country-tailored), the country may further tailor the auto-generated plan, by adding new country-specific activities under each section (with no limit on number of new activities added) and/or cost estimates by activity.

How to provide feedback on CAST

The UN-REDD Programme welcomes feedback on the structure and content of the tool. Please send any comments to cast@un-redd.org preferably using this template.