

Safeguard Information System

Capacity Building Material

Guidance

The development of a Safeguard Information System (SIS) is one of the three safeguard-related requirements [1] outlined by the UNFCCC and is linked to the delivery of results-based payments [2] from REDD+ Actions.

Although there are no official guidelines on how countries are supposed to set up a system for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected, Parties to the UNFCCC have agreed on some broad guidance on the characteristics of a SIS. Namely, it should[3]:

- Be consistent with the guidance identified in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 1;
- Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis;
- Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time;
- Provide information on how all the safeguards referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16 are being addressed and respected (hereinafter referred to as 'Cancun safeguards');
- Be country-driven and implemented at the national level; and
- Build upon existing systems, as appropriate.

In the absence of more specific guidelines regarding the SIS, the system can be broadly understood as the domestic institutional arrangements - and associated processes - in place for providing information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected in a country throughout the implementation of its proposed REDD+ actions.[4] Therefore, the main element that may need to be put in place is an institutional arrangement for collecting, compiling, aggregating and analysing relevant information as well as preparing and disseminating it to meet the different reporting needs of the relevant national and international stakeholders. The development of the SIS, therefore, involves a process of examination, assessment and tailoring of existing information systems and sources to meet the various safeguard reporting needs of the country.

Notably, equivalent systems are expected for sub-national jurisdictions, which are required to have a sub-national 'reporting system' in place that allows them to report to both the national government and domestic stakeholders on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected at sub-national level.

[1]The other two being: 1) ensuring consistency of the REDD+ PAMs with the Cancun safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+, and 2) the provision of a summary of information demonstrating how the safeguards have been addressed and respected to the UNFCCC.

[2] Decision 2/CP. 17, paragraph 64

[3] UNFCCC Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 2

[4]UN REDD Programme (2016) REDD+ Safeguard Information Systems: Practical Design Considerations. Technical Resource Series. Safeguards Edition 1

Guidelines

As noted above, there are no official guidelines on how countries are supposed to set up a system for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected. Drawing on international best practices from countries in responding to the UNFCCC⁵ guidance, there are several design and operational aspects that need to be considered when setting up an SIS:

- **SIS objectives:** What are the different domestic and international needs to which the system will respond?
- **SIS indicators/metrics:** What are the indicators/metrics needed to ensure a robust and adequate reporting towards the UNFCCC and selected REDD+ standard's requirements? Indicators need to be:
 - In line with the description of the Cancun safeguards adopted by the government. The description of each Cancun safeguard serves to specify how the objectives covered in the broad language of the Cancun safeguards translate into concrete principles and objectives that must be followed in the context of the implementation of REDD+ activities. The SIS indicators serve as a measure to determine the extent to which the description of the Cancun safeguards is being met.
 - In response to the scope and nature of REDD+ actions. SIS indicators are expected to be used to collect information on how each REDD+ action has been implemented in accordance with safeguards. Indicators must therefore be designed and able to adapt to the specific nature of REDD+ actions and to ensure clear and specific reporting.
 - Ensure and be able to demonstrate material equivalence with the TREES indicators (if a Participant of TREES)[5].
- **SIS functions and institutional arrangements:** Which institutions currently have the mandate to compile information relevant for the different safeguards in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ actions? How can these existing responsibilities be linked, coordinated, expanded as needed and built further upon? Who will be responsible for performing the different functions and operating the information system? How will the information be quality controlled and validated? What multi-stakeholder platform is needed to ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders?
- **SIS technological systems requirements:** What are hard- and software requirements for information storage, management and dissemination online? How will the SIS online portal and database be designed?
- **Integration with the REDD+ GRM:** How should a centralized GRM for REDD+ be linked to the SIS (e.g. how stakeholders submit complaints through the SIS website, and the GRM information is to be used for purposes of SIS reporting)?
- **SIS establishment and operational costs:** What are the human resources and associated costs for outlay and operational running of the SIS?
- **SIS capacity strengthening and sustainability:** How will national capacity need to be strengthened to operate the SIS over time?
- **Framework for Summaries of information (SOIs):** What should be the content and structure for the SOI that needs to be submitted periodically to the UNFCCC?

[5]Guidance document TREES- section 3 "Where a Participant has defined national safeguards indicators as part of their country approach to safeguards, the Participant may continue to use its own indicators. The Participant will need to map the relationship between the TREES indicators and the national indicators to ensure substantive material equivalence and demonstrate that all TREES safeguards indicators are met through existing national indicators. Where any TREES indicator is not covered by existing national indicators, the Participant will need to document conformance with the TREES indicator."

Climate Law & Policy

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