

Guidance

In order to receive results-based payments, countries must present their most recent summary of information demonstrating how the safeguards have been addressed and respected (usually referred to as the summary of information or SOI)[1], which must be consistent with the guidance from the UNFCCC[2] and international best practices.

Sub-national governments are also expected to have submitted to the appropriate national government entity a safeguards report at the respective scale that is consistent with national reporting to the UNFCCC for any year where results-based payments are sought.

The safeguards information system (SIS) and the SOI are directly related. While the SIS is intended to serve as a tool for each country and jurisdiction to gather, compile, and provide information as to how the safeguards are being addressed and respected while implementing REDD+ activities; the SOI is the means by which national and sub-national governments will communicate internationally how they are addressing and respecting the safeguards and, over time, is likely to be a product of the national SIS[3]. In this regard, the SOI is intended to serve as a mechanism to report the actions related to at least three elements:

- How safeguards have been adopted to the country context,
- How safeguards have been addressed, and
- How safeguards have been respected.

The UNFCCC provides some guidance on the content of the SOI[4]. The SOI should include the following elements, where appropriate:

1. Information on national circumstances relevant to addressing and respecting the safeguards;
2. A description of each safeguard in accordance with national circumstances;
3. A description of existing systems and processes relevant to addressing and respecting safeguards, including the information systems referred to in decision 12/CP.17, in accordance with national circumstances;
4. Information on how each of the safeguards has been addressed and respected, in accordance with national circumstances;

The UNFCCC also encourages to provide any other relevant information and to improve the information provided, taking into account the stepwise approach.

The UNFCCC decision also specifies[5] that the SOI should be provided after the beginning of implementation of REDD+ activities with the national communications, or on a voluntary basis including via the Web Platform of the UNFCCC, or any other means agreed by the COP.

[1] UNFCCC Decision 9/CP.1, Paragraph 4; Decision 2/CP.17, Paragraph 63 and 64; Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 3 and 4.

[2] UNFCCC decision 17/CP.2, requires the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, inter alia indigenous peoples and local communities; when developing and implementing national strategies or action plans, to address, inter alia, the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, land tenure issues, forest governance issues, gender considerations and the UNFCCC safeguards.

[3] Braña Varela, J., Lee, D., Rey Christen, D., and Swan, S. 2014. "REDD+ Safeguards: Practical Considerations for Developing a Summary of Information." Prepared with support from the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Available at www.merid.org/reddsafeguards.

[4] UNFCCC Decision 12/CP.17

[5] FCCC/SBSTA/2013/3/Add.1

Guidelines

In alignment with UNFCCC guidance, the international best practices^{[6], [7]} over the content and structure of the SOI consider the following components:

- **Introduction:** this section can set out the scope of the report, including the applicable safeguards commitments that inform the formulation and dissemination of this report, the specific objectives of this report, and it associated reporting period.
- **National context and REDD+ overview:** this section can provide a clear overview of the scope, scale and stage of design and implementation of the of the REDD+ actions that are subject to this period of reporting.
- **Description of each safeguard:** this section can explain how each of the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards is understood by the country, according to the country's context and specific circumstances. A large number of countries have developed their description as part of their approach to safeguards. The description of safeguards can be presented as a narrative text with several elements; or a set of principles and criteria defined for each safeguard. This section may be included in the first SOI, and in subsequent SOI if subject to any updates.
- **Conformance with REDD+ safeguards:** this section can provide information over how the seven safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the REDD+ actions, for each specific results period. Generally, this section would include information about the jurisdictions' governance arrangements (e.g. policies, laws, regulations) in place to guarantee the application of the safeguards, and what are the associated outcomes (e.g. how the REDD+ safeguards have been respected when implementing REDD+ actions). This section may also identify challenges (if any) in ensuring conformance with the safeguards throughout the implementation of the REDD+ actions, and identify potential measures for improvement.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** this section can include information related to the stakeholder engagement process for the preparation of this report, how their inputs were integrated into this report.

[6] Braña Varela, J., Lee, D., Rey Christen, D., and Swan, S. 2014. "REDD+ Safeguards: Practical Considerations for Developing a Summary of Information." Prepared with support from the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Available at www.merid.org/reddsafeguards.
[7] UN-REDD programme infobrief. Summaries of Information: Initial experiences and Recommendations on International redd+ Safeguards reporting. Available at https://www.un-redd.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/InfoBrief_Summaries_of_information_30Sep%20%28735777%29.pdf

