

REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards **Draft Principles and Criteria, 9th December 2009**

Need for the standards

While activities that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) and contribute to conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) have the potential to deliver significant social and environmental co-benefits, many have also highlighted the serious risks, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

Recognizing growing awareness at both international and national levels of the need for effective social and environmental safeguards, this initiative aims to define and build support for a higher level of social and environmental performance from REDD and other forest carbon programs.

Role of the standards

This initiative is developing standards that can be used by governments, NGOs, financing agencies and other stakeholders to design and implement REDD and other forest carbon programs that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and generate significant social and biodiversity co-benefits. The standards will be designed to work for the new global REDD+ regime expected to emerge out of ongoing UNFCCC negotiations, that is for government-led programs implemented at national or state/provincial/regional level and for all forms of fund-based or market-based financing. At this stage, the standards are being designed to provide guidance on REDD+ program design and to provide a framework against which the social and environmental performance of the REDD+ program can be reported.

Components of the standards

The standards consist of principles and criteria that define the key issues relating to social and environmental performance:

- **Principles** are the 'intent' level of a standard which elaborate on the objectives of the standard and define the scope. They are fundamental statements about the desired outcome and are not designed to be verified.
- **Criteria** are the 'content' level of a standard which set out the conditions which need to be met in order to deliver a principle. It can be possible to verify criteria directly but they are usually further elaborated by indicators.

A framework for indicators is also under development which will clarify the elements that must be addressed to achieve each criterion. Although the standards are intended to be generic (i.e. the same across all countries), it is anticipated that some country-specific interpretation will be required to define REDD+ program performance at the indicator-level according to each country context. Different options are under consideration for monitoring, reporting and verification processes to balance participation and ownership by stakeholders with enhanced transparency and accountability while also encouraging improved performance.

An inclusive and participatory process for development of the standards

The standards are being developed through an inclusive process engaging governments, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples organizations, international policy and research institutions and the private sector. A Standards Committee representing a balance of interested parties is overseeing the standards development. The majority of committee members are from countries where REDD would be implemented, recognizing that developing country governments and civil society will lead the adoption of the standards. The standards development process is being facilitated by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International.

Preparation of this draft of the standards

This draft version of the standards derives from a multi-stakeholder workshop held in Copenhagen 5-7 May 2009, consultations with government and non-government representatives in Nepal 29 June-3 July and in Tanzania 9-11 September and public comments received during a public consultation period from 2 October to 30 November 2009 including input from consultations in Ecuador 22-26 October. This new version presents the revised principles and criteria to be taken forward to the second round of public comment (mid January to mid-March). The draft released for public comment on October 2nd also included a framework for indicators. Comments received on this framework for indicators will be addressed over the next month so that the new version for the second public comment period also includes a revised framework for indicators.

More information on this initiative is available at: <http://www.climate-standards.org/REDD+/>. Please send any comments to Joanna Durbin (jdurbin@climate-standards.org) and Phil Franks (pfranks@careclimatechange.org).

Principle 1: Rights to lands, territories and resources¹ are recognized and respected.

- 1.1 The REDD+ program² effectively identifies the different rights holders³ (statutory and customary⁴) and their rights to lands, territories and resources relevant to the program.
- 1.2 The REDD+ program respects and recognizes both statutory and customary rights to lands, territories and resources which Indigenous Peoples or local communities⁵ have traditionally owned and occupied or otherwise used or acquired.⁶
- 1.3 The REDD+ program requires the free, prior and informed consent of rights holders for any activities affecting their rights to lands, territories and resources.
- 1.4 The REDD+ program identifies and uses a process for effective resolution of any disputes over rights to lands, territories and resources related to the program and does not proceed with any activity that could prejudice the outcome of the dispute resolution process.
- 1.5 Where the REDD+ program enables private ownership⁷ of carbon rights⁸, these rights are based on the statutory and customary rights to the lands, territories and resources (as identified in 1.1) that generated the greenhouse gas emissions reductions and removals.

Principle 2: The benefits of the REDD+ program are shared equitably⁹ among all relevant¹⁰ rights holders and stakeholders.¹¹

- 2.1 The projected costs, potential benefits and associated risks¹² of the REDD+ program are identified for rights holder and stakeholder groups at all levels using a participatory process.
- 2.2 Transparent, participatory, effective and efficient¹³ mechanisms are established for equitable sharing of benefits of the REDD+ program among and within rights holder and stakeholder groups taking into account costs, benefits and associated risks.
- 2.3 There is transparent and participatory monitoring of the costs and benefits of the REDD+ program, including any revenues, and their distribution among stakeholders.

Principle 3: The REDD+ program contributes to long-term livelihood¹⁴ security and enhances well-being of Indigenous Peoples and local communities with special attention to the most vulnerable people.¹⁵

¹ 'Resources' is understood to include ecosystem services provided by these resources.

² The REDD+ program comprises objectives, policies and measures developed for the program and other relevant policies that support it.

³ Including holders of individual rights and Indigenous Peoples and others who hold collective rights.

⁴ 'Customary rights' to lands and resources refers to patterns of long-standing community land and resource usage in accordance with Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' customary laws, values, customs, and traditions, including seasonal or cyclical use, rather than formal legal title to land and resources issued by the State.

⁵ Including individual and collective rights.

⁶ In particular, recognizing that Indigenous Peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those that they have otherwise acquired.

⁷ Ownership of carbon rights may be individual or collective.

⁸ For the purposes of these standards, 'carbon rights' are defined as the rights to enter into contracts and transactions for the transfer of ownership of greenhouse gas emissions reductions or removals and the maintenance of carbon stocks.

⁹ 'Equity' and 'equitable' are defined as just, impartial and fair to all parties.

¹⁰ 'Relevant' rights holder and stakeholder groups are identified by the REDD+ program in accordance with criterion 6.1.

¹¹ 'Rights holders' are those whose rights are potentially affected by the REDD+ program and 'stakeholders' are those whose interests are potentially affected by the program.

¹² All analysis of costs, benefits and risks should include those that are direct and indirect and include social, cultural and economic aspects. Costs should include opportunity costs. All costs, benefits and risks should be compared against the reference scenario which is the most likely land-use scenario in the absence of the REDD+ program

¹³ 'Efficient' is defined as achieving the target with minimum cost, effort and time.

¹⁴ 'Livelihoods' are based on social, cultural, human, financial, natural, physical and political capabilities/assets.

¹⁵ 'The most vulnerable people' are those with least secure access to the assets on which secure livelihoods are built (social, cultural, human, financial, natural physical and political) and/or high exposure to external stresses and shocks, including climate change, that may affect these assets and peoples' ability to use these assets. This category specifically includes individuals or groups that are disadvantaged by gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status etc.

- 3.1 The REDD+ program is generating additional, positive impacts on the long-term livelihood security and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, with special attention to the most vulnerable people.
- 3.2 The relevant Indigenous Peoples and local communities determine the way in which the REDD+ program improves their long-term livelihood security and well-being through an inclusive and transparent process.
- 3.3 There is participatory assessment of positive and negative social, cultural and economic impacts of the REDD+ program including both predicted and actual impacts.
- 3.4 The REDD+ program is adapted based on predictive and ongoing impact assessment to mitigate negative, and enhance positive, long-term livelihood security and well-being impacts.

Principle 4: The REDD+ program contributes to broader sustainable development and good governance¹⁶ objectives.

- 4.1 The REDD+ program contributes to achieving the objectives of sustainable development policies and strategies¹⁷ established at national and other relevant levels.
- 4.2 The REDD+ program is coherent with relevant policies and strategies at all relevant levels.
- 4.3 There is strong government commitment to the REDD+ program in their country.
- 4.4 There is effective coordination between government and other agencies/organizations responsible for the design, implementation and evaluation of the REDD+ program and other relevant government agencies/organizations.
- 4.5 The REDD+ program leads to improvements in governance of the forest sector and other relevant sectors.

Principle 5: The REDD+ program maintains and enhances¹⁸ biodiversity and ecosystem services^{19,20}.

- 5.1 Biodiversity and ecosystem services affected by the REDD+ program are maintained and enhanced.
- 5.2 The positive and negative environmental impacts of the REDD+ program are assessed including both predicted and actual impacts.
- 5.3 The REDD+ program design addresses maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystem service values.
- 5.4 The REDD+ program is adapted based on predictive and ongoing impact assessment to mitigate negative, and enhance positive environmental impacts.

Principle 6: All relevant²¹ rights holders and stakeholders participate fully²² and effectively in the REDD+ program.

- 6.1 The REDD+ program identifies and characterizes the rights and interests of all rights holder and stakeholder groups and their relevance to the REDD+ program.

¹⁶ The elements of good governance include accessibility, people's participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, predictability, justice and sustainability.

¹⁷ e.g. poverty reduction strategies/targets, national budgets, national biodiversity strategies, national climate change strategies, national adaptation plans etc.

¹⁸ Impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services are relative to the reference scenario which is the most likely land-use scenario in the absence of the REDD+ program.

¹⁹ 'Ecosystem services' in this context refers to services other than greenhouse gas emissions reductions or removals

²⁰ Including biodiversity and ecosystem service values identified in existing national biodiversity strategy and action plans (NBSAP), gap analyses supporting the Convention on Biological Diversity 2010 targets or application of frameworks aligned with these efforts such as multilateral development bank safeguards (World Bank OP 4.04, IFC Performance Standard 6), key biodiversity areas, high conservation value areas and other relevant systematic conservation planning approaches.

²¹ The 'relevant' rights holder and stakeholder groups are identified by the REDD+ program in accordance with criterion 6.1.

²² 'Fully' means throughout the process.

- 6.2 All relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups that want to be involved in REDD+ program design, implementation²³ and evaluation are fully involved through effective consultation or more active participation.
- 6.3 Rights holder and stakeholder groups determine, in a verifiable manner, the process by which they will be consulted and represented, taking account of statutory and customary institutions.
- 6.4 Rights holder and stakeholder group representatives ensure effective involvement of and accountability to the people they represent and assist with consensus building.
- 6.5 Rights holders and stakeholder groups have a good understanding of the key issues related to the REDD+ program and the capacity to participate effectively.
- 6.6 Design, implementation and evaluation of the REDD+ program builds on and supports rights holders and stakeholders' knowledge, skills and management systems including those of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- 6.7 Mechanisms are in place to receive and resolve grievances and disputes relating to the design, implementation and evaluation of the REDD+ program.
- 6.8 Rights holders and stakeholders have access to legal advice and understand relevant legal implications and processes.
- 6.9 The REDD+ program makes sufficient resources available to ensure full and effective participation of rights holders and stakeholders.

Principle 7: All rights holders and stakeholders have timely access to appropriate and accurate information to enable informed decision-making and good governance of the REDD+ program.

- 7.1 Adequate information on the REDD+ program is publicly available to promote general awareness and promote good governance.
- 7.2 Rights holders and stakeholders have the information that they need, provided in an appropriate and timely way, to participate fully and effectively in program design, implementation and evaluation, including information about potential social, cultural, economic and ecological risks and opportunities, legal implications, and the global and national context.
- 7.3 Rights holder and stakeholder group representatives collect and disseminate all relevant information from and to the people they represent in an appropriate and timely way.
- 7.3 Information is available and disseminated in time to enable rights holder and stakeholder feedback to their representatives and respecting the time needed for inclusive decision making.
- 7.4 The REDD+ program makes sufficient resources available to provide and collect information in a timely and appropriate manner.

Principle 8: The REDD+ program complies with applicable local²⁴ and national laws and international treaties and agreements.

- 8.1 The REDD+ program complies with local law, national law and international treaties and agreements ratified or adopted by the country.
- 8.2 Where local or national law is not consistent with the standards, a review process should be undertaken that results in a plan to resolve the inconsistencies.
- 8.3 Relevant²⁵ rights holders and stakeholders have the capacity to implement and monitor legal requirements.

²³ 'Implementation' is understood to include on-going planning/decision-making as well as the implementation of the activities.

²⁴ Local laws include all legal norms given by organisms of government whose jurisdiction is less than the national level, such as departmental, municipal and customary norms.

²⁵ Relevant rights and stakeholders refers in this criterion to those with responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of legal requirements.