



PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

Principle 1: Rights to lands, territories and resources¹ are recognized and respected² by the REDD+ program

- 1.1 The REDD+ program³ effectively identifies the different rights holders⁴ (statutory and customary⁵) and their rights to lands, territories and resources relevant to the program.
- 1.2 The REDD+ program recognizes and respects both statutory and customary rights⁶ to lands, territories and resources which Indigenous Peoples or local communities⁷ have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.⁸
- 1.3 The REDD+ program requires the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities 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 ownership⁹ of carbon rights¹⁰, these rights are based on the statutory and customary rights to the lands, territories and resources¹¹ that generated the greenhouse gas emissions reductions and removals.

Principle 2: The benefits of the REDD+ program are shared equitably¹² among all relevant¹³ rights holders and stakeholders.¹⁴

- 2.1 The projected costs, potential benefits and associated risks¹⁵ of the REDD+ program are identified for relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups¹⁶ at all levels¹⁷ using a participatory process.
- 2.2 Transparent, participatory, effective and efficient¹⁸ mechanisms are established for equitable sharing of benefits of the REDD+ program among and within relevant 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 relevant rights holders and stakeholders.

Principle 3: The REDD+ program improves long-term livelihood¹⁹ security and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and local communities with special attention to the most vulnerable people.

- 3.1 The REDD+ program generates 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 There is participatory assessment of positive and negative social, cultural, human rights, environmental and economic impacts of the REDD+ program for Indigenous Peoples and local communities including both predicted and actual impacts.
- 3.3 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 for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Principle 4: The REDD+ program contributes to broader sustainable development, respect and protection of human rights and good governance²⁰ objectives.

- 4.1 The REDD+ program contributes to achieving the objectives of sustainable development policies, strategies and plans²¹ established at national and other relevant levels.
- 4.2 The REDD+ program leads to improvements in governance of the forest sector and other relevant sectors.
- 4.3 The REDD+ program contributes to respect and protection of human rights.
- 4.4 There is strong government commitment to the REDD+ program in their country.
- 4.5 The REDD+ program is coherent with relevant policies, strategies and plans at all relevant levels and 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.

Principle 5: The REDD+ program maintains and enhances²² biodiversity and ecosystem services.²³

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

Principle 6: All relevant²⁴ rights holders and stakeholders participate fully and effectively²⁵ in the REDD+ program.

- 6.1 The REDD+ program identifies and characterizes the rights and interests of all rights holder and stakeholder groups²⁶ and their relevance to the REDD+ program.
- 6.2 All relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups that want to be involved in REDD+ program design²⁷, implementation²⁸ and evaluation are fully involved through culturally appropriate and effective participation.
- 6.3 The relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups determine, in a verifiable manner, the process and mechanism by which they will participate and be represented in relation to the REDD+ program, taking account of statutory and customary institutions.
- 6.4 The relevant rights holders and stakeholder groups have a good understanding of the key issues related to the REDD+ program and the capacity to participate effectively.
- 6.5 Design, implementation and evaluation of the REDD+ program builds on, respects and supports rights holders' and stakeholders' traditional and other knowledge, skills and management systems including those of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- 6.6 Mechanisms are in place to receive and resolve grievances and disputes effectively relating to the design, implementation and evaluation of the REDD+ program.
- 6.7 Rights holders and stakeholders have access to legal advice and understand relevant legal processes, and legal and financial implications related to the REDD+ program.

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 about the REDD+ program is publicly available to promote general awareness and good governance.
- 7.2 Rights holders and stakeholders have the information that they need about the REDD+ program, provided in a culturally appropriate and timely way, to participate fully and effectively in program design, implementation and evaluation, including information about potential social, cultural, economic and environmental 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 about the REDD+ program from and to the people they represent in an appropriate and timely way.
- 7.4 Information is available and disseminated about the REDD+ program in time to enable rights holder and stakeholder feedback to their representatives and respecting the time needed for inclusive decision making.
- 7.5 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 local²⁹ and national laws and international treaties, conventions and other instruments.³⁰

- 8.1 The REDD+ program complies with applicable local law, national law and international treaties, conventions and other instruments 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 Relevant³¹ rights holders and stakeholders have the capacity to understand, implement and monitor legal requirements related to the REDD+ program.

Goal of the REDD+ SES Initiative

Effective social and environmental standards for REDD+ programs make a substantial contribution to human rights, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation goals while avoiding social or environmental harm.

Glossary

Carbon rights are defined as the rights to enter into contracts and national or international transactions for the transfer of ownership of greenhouse gas emissions reductions or removals and the maintenance of carbon stocks.

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

Country-specific interpretation refers to interpretation at the level of jurisdiction leading the REDD+ program.

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.

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.

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

Effectiveness of the REDD+ program is defined as the extent to which the emissions reductions and other goals of the program are achieved.

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

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

Framework for indicators identifies key elements for each criterion. There is a process for country-specific interpretation to develop a set of indicators that are tailored to the context of a particular country/state/province.

Full and **fully** as used in full and effective participation means throughout the process.

Full and effective participation means meaningful influence of all relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups who want to be involved throughout the process, and includes consultation and free, prior and informed consent.

Good governance includes accessibility, people's participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, predictability, justice and sustainability.

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

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative parameters which can be achieved and verified in relation to a criterion.

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

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.

Marginalized people or groups are those that normally have little or no influence over decision-making processes. Marginalization may be related to gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and/or religion. The REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards explicitly adopt a differentiated approach that seeks to identify and address marginalization in all its forms.

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.

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

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

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.

Standards consist of principles, criteria and indicators that define the issues of concern and the required levels of social and environmental performance.

Vulnerable people or groups are those lacking secure access to the assets on which secure livelihoods are built (social, cultural, human, financial, natural, physical and political) and/or having high exposure to external stresses and shocks, including climate change, that may affect these assets and peoples' ability to use these assets. Forest dependency may be an important factor affecting vulnerability particularly where the REDD+ program itself may change access to forest resources. In many situations marginalization exacerbates vulnerability, e.g. marginalization by gender.

Endnotes

- 1 'Resources' is understood to include ecosystem services provided by these resources.
- 2 'Respect' is taken to include not undermining or prejudicing rights.
- 3 The REDD+ program comprises objectives, policies and measures developed for the program and other relevant policies that support it.
- 4 Including holders of individual rights and Indigenous Peoples and others who hold collective rights.
- 5 '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.
- 6 Including individual and collective rights.
- 7 Wherever the term Indigenous Peoples and local communities is used through these standards it is implicit that particular attention will be paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups within these communities
- 8 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.
- 9 Ownership of carbon rights may be individual or collective.
- 10 'Carbon rights' are defined as the rights to enter into contracts and national or international transactions for the transfer of ownership of greenhouse gas emissions reductions or removals and the maintenance of carbon stocks.
- 11 'The statutory and customary rights to the lands, territories and resources and the rights holders relevant to the REDD+ program' are identified in accordance with criterion 1.1.
- 12 'Equity' and 'equitable' are defined as just, impartial and fair to all parties including marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- 13 'Relevant' rights holder and stakeholder groups are identified by the REDD+ program in accordance with criterion 6.1.
- 14 '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.
- 15 All analysis of costs, benefits and risks should include those that are direct and indirect and include social, cultural, human rights, environmental and economic aspects. Costs should include those related to responsibilities and also 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.
- 16 'Relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups' are identified in accordance with criterion 6.1.
- 17 At local, national and other relevant levels.
- 18 'Efficient' is defined as achieving the target with minimum cost, effort and time.
- 19 'Livelihoods' are based on social, cultural, human, financial, natural, physical and political capabilities/assets.
- 20 The elements of good governance include accessibility, people's participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, predictability, justice and sustainability.
- 21 E.g. poverty reduction strategies/targets, national/government budgets, biodiversity strategies, conservation policies and regulations, climate change strategies, adaptation plans etc.
- 22 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.
- 23 'Ecosystem services' in this context refers to services other than greenhouse gas emissions reductions or removals.
- 24 The 'relevant' rights holder and stakeholder groups are identified by the REDD+ program in accordance with criterion 6.1.
- 25 'Full and effective participation' means meaningful influence of all relevant rights holder and stakeholder groups who want to be involved throughout the process, and includes consultation and free, prior and informed consent..
- 26 Groups of rights holders or stakeholders who have a similar rights or interests with respect to the REDD+ program.
- 27 Including the development of land use and forest management plans related to the REDD+ program.
- 28 'Implementation' is understood to include on-going planning/decision-making as well as the implementation of the activities.
- 29 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.
- 30 Including, but not limited to, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Labor Organization Convention 169.
- 31 Relevant rights and stakeholders refers in this criterion to those with responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of legal requirements.

To learn more about the REDD+ SES initiative go to www.REDD-standards.org or contact the international secretariat:

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