

UN-REDD Programme Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria

Draft for Consultation – 30 June 2011

Introduction and Purpose

The UN-REDD Programme is working with partners and REDD+ countries to develop tools and guidance to enhance the multiple benefits of, and reduce risks from REDD+. As part of this work, a set of Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (P&C) are being developed, which consists of broad principles, within which more detailed criteria describe important issues to be considered in developing REDD+ programmes.

The Principles and Criteria will serve:

1. To provide the UN-REDD Programme with a framework to ensure that its activities promote social and environmental benefits and reduce risks from REDD+. In particular, the P&C will be used by the UN-REDD Programme:
 - as an aid in formulating national REDD+ programmes and initiatives that seek UN-REDD funding
 - in the review of national programmes prior to submission for UN-REDD funding
 - to assess national programme delivery
2. To support countries in operationalizing UNFCCC agreements on safeguards for REDD+. Countries can use these P&C for various purposes, such as:
 - to promote, apply and build on the Cancun safeguards¹
 - in devising a national system for information on how the UNFCCC safeguards are being addressed and respected in REDD+ implementation
 - in demonstrating their achievements beyond carbon, for example in reference to efforts on poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation

Process:

The draft Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria have been developed in collaboration between UNDP and UNEP, under the UN-REDD Programme. The P&C were presented at the UN-REDD Policy Board meeting in March 2011 ([‘UN-REDD Programme Social & Environmental Principles and Criteria, version 1’](#); UNREDD/PB6/2011/IV/1), and comments invited. Based on the valuable inputs received, the current document has been prepared as a basis for the UN-REDD Programme to work with key stakeholders and individual countries in testing and further refining the P&C. This process will support the initial operationalization of the Cancun guidance and safeguards, as will the use of other UN-REDD Programme tools and approaches. A finalised version of the P&C will be produced for presentation to the Policy Board in October 2011. Approval of the P&C for the purposes outlined above will be sought from the Policy Board at this time.

¹ Paragraphs 69, 71d, 72, 76 and Appendix I in the UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 : The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (Decisions adopted by the UNFCCC on its sixteenth session, held in Cancun, Mexico from 29 November to 10 December 2010). **Referred to in this document as the ‘Cancun safeguards’.**

In addition to these general principles and criteria, a Risk Identification and Mitigation Tool is being developed to assist national REDD+ teams in developing national programmes in accordance with the Cancun safeguards. It may also support development of practical indicators for the social and environmental effects of REDD+ at the national level. A first version was presented to Policy Board 5 in November 2010. In collaboration with the countries involved in testing the P&C, the tool will now be broadened to include an environmental component and the positive effects of REDD+ activities as well as the risks. A new version will be available subsequent to UNFCCC COP 17 (28 November – 9 December 2011) in Durban.

Further guidance is being developed on the use of both the P&C and the Risk Identification and Mitigation Tool.

Context

The Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria are coherent with and draw from the Cancun safeguards, and emerge from the existing rich body of knowledge and literature on safeguards, standards and certification. They seek to address the major potential opportunities and risks from REDD+ and to assist countries in promoting and supporting the safeguards in the implementation of their REDD+ activities as well as in identifying the information needed to report on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected, as called for in the UNFCCC Cancun decision ([FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1](#); 69, 71d, 72, Appendix 1, Appendix 2).

The P&C are also intended to help countries to meet their commitments under Multilateral Agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International Labor Organization Convention 169, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The framework reflects the UN-REDD Programme's responsibility to apply a human rights based approach, uphold UN conventions, treaties and declarations, and apply the UN agencies' policies and procedures (for example, UNDP's Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change prescriptive policy, UNEP's Framework for Ecosystems Management, and FAO's Environment and Social Impact Procedures). The Principles and Criteria are consistent with the readiness support offered by the UN-REDD Programme (UN-REDD Framework Document 2008) and reflect the Programme's issue-specific Operational Guidance.

The Cancun agreement provides broad guidance and a framework for safeguarding and enhancing the multiple benefits of REDD+; national approaches for promoting and supporting these will need to be developed.

The draft Principles include two on social issues, one on social and environmental policy coherence, and three on environmental issues. They do not include procedural criteria such as monitoring and reporting. These Principles and associated Criteria are shown in Table 1. In Annex 1, the Principles are related to the relevant text in the Cancun Decision.

Table 1: Proposed Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (version 2; update to Table 1 of UNREDD/PB6/2011/IV/1)

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| Principle 1 – Comply with standards of democratic governance |
| Criterion 1 – Ensure the integrity and transparency of fiduciary and fund management systems |
| Criterion 2 – Develop and implement activities in a transparent, accountable, legitimate and responsive manner |
| Criterion 3 – Ensure the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders in policy design and implementation, with special attention to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups |
| Principle 2 – Respect and protect stakeholder rights |
| Criterion 4 – Promote and enhance gender equality and women’s empowerment |
| Criterion 5 – Seek free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities |
| Criterion 6 – Avoid involuntary resettlement as a result of REDD+ |
| Criterion 7 – Respect and protect cultural heritage and traditional knowledge |
| Principle 3 – Promote and enhance sustainable livelihoods |
| Criterion 8 – Ensure equitable and transparent benefit distribution among relevant stakeholders |
| Criterion 9 – Respect and enhance economic, social and political well-being |
| Principle 4 – Contribute to coherent low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sound development policy, consistent with commitments under international conventions and agreements |
| Criterion 10 – Ensure consistency with and contribution to national climate policy objectives, including mitigation and adaptation strategies and international commitments |
| Criterion 11 – Address the risk of reversals including potential future risks to forest carbon stocks and other benefits to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of REDD+ |
| Criterion 12 – Ensure consistency with and contribution to national poverty reduction strategies and other sustainable development goals |
| Criterion 13 – Ensure consistency with and contribution to national biodiversity conservation, other environmental and natural resource management policy objectives, national forest programmes, and international commitments |

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| Principle 5 – Protect natural forest from degradation or conversion to other land uses, including plantation forest |
| Criterion 14 – Ensure that REDD+ activities do not cause the conversion of natural forest to other land uses, including plantation forest, and make reducing conversion due to other causes (e.g. agriculture, timber and fuel wood extraction, infrastructure development) a REDD+ priority |
| Criterion 15 – Minimise degradation of natural forest by REDD+ activities and make reducing degradation due to other causes (e.g. agriculture, timber and fuel wood extraction, infrastructure development) a REDD+ priority |
| Principle 6 – Maintain and enhance multiple functions of forest to deliver benefits including biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services |
| Criterion 16 – Ensure that land use planning for REDD+ explicitly takes account of ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation in relation to local and other stakeholders’ values, and potential trade-offs between different benefits |
| Criterion 17 – Ensure that new and existing forests are managed to maintain and enhance ecosystem services and biodiversity important in both local and national contexts |
| Principle 7 – Minimise indirect adverse impacts on ecosystem services and biodiversity |
| Criterion 18 – Minimise harmful effects on carbon stocks of forest and non-forest ecosystems resulting from displacement of changes in land use (including extractive activities) |
| Criterion 19 – Minimise harmful effects on biodiversity and other ecosystem services of forest and non-forest ecosystems resulting from displacement of changes in land use (including extractive activities) |
| Criterion 20 – Minimise other indirect impacts on biodiversity, such as those resulting from intensification of land use |

Glossary

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| Carbon stock: The quantity of carbon contained in a “pool”, meaning a reservoir or system which has the capacity to accumulate or release carbon, such as above-ground biomass or soil; also the total carbon contained within all the component pools of an ecosystem. |
| Conversion: The replacement of forest by other land uses. |
| Cultural heritage: The legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations ² ; in a REDD+ context, this especially includes cultural values associated with specific forests or landscapes. |
| Degradation: Reduction in the capacity of a forest to provide goods and services. |
| <p>Democratic governance: Democratic governance goes beyond the efficiency of institutions and rules, and aims for these to be fair and developed through democratic processes in which all people have a real political voice. Democratic governance emphasizes process and political legitimacy and promotes human development.</p> <p>UNDP’s “A Guide to UNDP Democratic Governance Practice” outlines democratic governance as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fostering Inclusive Participation - Strengthening Accountable and Responsive Institutions - Grounding Democratic Governance in International Principles <p>UNDP Practice Note “Supporting Country-led Democratic Governance Assessments” identifies four principles of democratic governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accountability - Participation - Transparency - Legitimacy |
| Displacement of land use change: Occurrence of land use change, such as conversion to agriculture or pasture, or development of infrastructure or extractive activities, in a different location than that where it would have occurred in the absence of REDD+ intervention. |
| <p>Economic, social and political well-being:</p> <p><i>Economic well-being</i> is embodied by access to and secure control over financial and material assets, land and territories, in particular those that are the basis for economic gain, income, food security, access to resources including water and timber, opportunity of employment and economic gain.</p> <p><i>Social well-being</i> is embodied by status within the community, social networks and opportunities, and social security.</p> <p><i>Political well-being</i> is embodied by empowerment and influence on decision-making within the community and beyond. It furthermore includes the freedom to express opinion without the fear of negative consequences.</p> |
| Equitable: Dealing fairly, justly and impartially with all relevant stakeholders. |
| Fiduciary and fund management risks: Risks associated with the transfer, management and distribution of funds and assets. |
| Forest: An area of land spanning more than 0.05 hectares with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10 percent with trees with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2-5 meters at maturity in situ (FRA 2010). |
| Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): The collective right to give or withhold free, prior and informed consent, which applies to all activities, projects, legislative or administrative measures and policies that |

² Mesik, J. (2007). Community Foundations – A Tool for Preservation of Cultural Heritage, *World Bank Social Development Notes* <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCHD/Resources/430063-1250192845352/sdn108-CommFoundations-web.pdf>

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| take place in or impact the lands, territories, resources or otherwise affect the livelihoods of indigenous peoples ³ . Free, prior and informed consent is founded in the rights articulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and further elaborated by the International Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent . Please see the draft UN-REDD Programme Guidelines for Seeking the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples and other Forest Dependent Communities (insert hyperlink when draft is circulated for consultation) for further information. |
| Full and effective (stakeholder) participation: Stakeholders are those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities. They include relevant government agencies, formal and informal forest users, private sector entities, civil society, indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities. Guidance for their full and effective participation is provided by the UN-REDD Programme and FCPF Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ . |
| <p>Indigenous peoples: The terms “indigenous peoples,” “indigenous ethnic minorities,” and “tribal groups” are used to describe social groups that share similar characteristics, namely a social and cultural identity that is distinct from dominant groups in society. United Nations human rights bodies, ILO, the World Bank and international law apply four criteria to distinguish indigenous peoples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) indigenous peoples usually live within (or maintain attachments to) geographically distinct ancestral territories; (b) they tend to maintain distinct social, economic, and political institutions within their territories; (c) they typically aspire to remain distinct culturally, geographically and institutionally rather than assimilate fully into national society; and (d) they self-identify as indigenous or tribal. <p>Despite common characteristics, there does not exist any single accepted definition of indigenous peoples that captures their diversity as peoples. Self-identification as indigenous or tribal is usually regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining whether groups are indigenous or tribal, sometimes in combination with other variables such as language spoken and geographic location or concentration.</p> |
| Indirect land use change: Occurrence of land use change, such as conversion to agriculture or pasture, or development of infrastructure or extractive activities, in a different location than that where it would have occurred in the absence of REDD+ intervention. |
| Involuntary resettlement: Displacement or relocation without the displaced person’s informed consent or power of choice, or where the consent or choice is being exercised in the absence of reasonable alternative options. |
| Land use change: A change in the use or management of land by humans, which may lead to a change in land cover. Land cover and land use change may have an impact on the albedo, evapotranspiration, sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, or other properties of the climate system and may thus have an impact on climate, locally or globally. |
| Low carbon: Low carbon systems minimise carbon dioxide emissions from human activity. |
| Most vulnerable and marginalized groups: Relevant stakeholder groups that are lacking assets for secure livelihoods and/or lack influence over decision-making processes. |
| Multiple functions of forests: Production of goods, protection of soil and water, conservation of biodiversity and provision of socio-cultural services (FAO Definitions). |
| Natural ecosystems: Ecosystems composed primarily of indigenous species, not established by human intervention and with limited human impact. |
| Natural forest: A forest composed primarily of indigenous trees not established by planting or/and seeding in the process of afforestation or reforestation. |
| Other forest dependent communities: The draft UN-REDD Programme Guidelines for Seeking the Free, |

³ Synthesized from UNDRIP articles enumerated below, in particular Art 1, 19, 12, 32.

Prior, and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples and other Forest Dependent Communities [\(insert hyperlink when draft is circulated for consultation\)](#) extends the right to free, prior and informed consent to indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities, defined as follows “Directly or indirectly affected indigenous peoples, tribal groups, ethnic minorities and other forest dependent communities have the right to give or withhold their consent, through their own representative institutions and following their own decision-making processes, regarding activities, proposals, legislative and administrative measures, and policies that may affect their land, territories, resources or livelihoods. All customary and formal rights holders should be represented in the decision-making process (including men, elders, women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, and the poor).”

Plantation: Forest/Other wooded land of native or introduced species, established through planting or seeding ([FAO Definitions](#)).

Relevant stakeholders: Stakeholders are defined as those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities. They include relevant government agencies, formal and informal forest users, private sector entities, indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities ([UN-REDD Programme and FCPF Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+](#)).

Traditional knowledge: “...the manifestations of [indigenous peoples] sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts” ([UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)).

Annex 1: Relationship of Proposed Principles with UNFCCC LCA Decision (update to Exhibit 2 of UNREDD/PB5/2010/INF/4)

| Principle | Relevant section of Cancun Agreement , Annex I |
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| Principle 1 – Comply with standards of democratic governance | 2(b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty 2(d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities (...) |
| Principle 2 – Respect and protect stakeholder rights | 2(c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| Principle 3 – Promote and enhance sustainable livelihoods | 2 (e) That actions are (...) used to (...) enhance other social and environmental benefits (...) Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries . . . |
| Principle 4 – Contribute to coherent low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sound development policy, consistent with commitments under international conventions and agreements | 2(a) Actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements 2(f) Actions to address the risk of reversals |
| Principle 5 – Protect natural forest from degradation or conversion to other land uses, including plantation forest | 2(e) Actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that actions (...) are not used for the conversion of natural forests but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services (...) |
| Principle 6 – Maintain and enhance multiple functions of forest to deliver benefits including biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services | 2(e) Actions (...) incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services (...) 2(e) Actions are (...) used to (...) enhance other social and environmental benefits |
| Principle 7 – Minimise indirect adverse impacts on ecosystem services and biodiversity | 2(e) Actions that are consistent with the conservation of... biological diversity... 2(g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions |