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# MRV of REDD+ Safeguards

Ensuring effective REDD+ with environmental and social co-benefits and strengthened governance



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Forests for GOOD

## Forests are more than carbon

REDD+ has raised questions among many stakeholders about how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from forests while ensuring co-benefits, including biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods and governance. But without adequate safeguards, REDD+ has the potential to undercut those very benefits. Recognising the need to prevent such adverse impacts, Parties in the lead up to Copenhagen reached broad consensus on the need to support and promote seven safeguards when undertaking REDD+ activities, including environmental, social and governance safeguards. To demonstrate delivery of benefits, these safeguards must also be subject to monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) and should be built into REDD+ programmes from the beginning, to ensure that:

- REDD+ provides real and sustainable benefits to people, biodiversity and ecosystems, and supports improved governance;
- REDD+ programmes are effective and to reduce the risk of non-permanence; and
- There is transparency, full participation, and accountability, all of which are crucial to understanding the effectiveness and impacts of REDD+ activities.

## What does MRV of safeguards entail?

- Internationally acceptable principles and criteria for social, environmental and governance safeguards are included in all aspects of REDD+;
- Comprehensive national MRV systems in place by Phase 3 of REDD+ include safeguards;
- MRV of safeguards includes independent, third-party verification; and
- Results of audits are made public, ensuring transparency.

**“MONITORING SYSTEMS THAT ALLOW FOR CREDIBLE AND AFFORDABLE MRV AND MONITORING OF REDD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES AND RELATED SAFEGUARDS ARE AMONG THE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING A REDD MECHANISM.”**

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## How can MRV of safeguards be done in practice?

Existing programmes—both directly related to REDD+ and from the forest sector more broadly—provide lessons on what MRV of safeguards looks like on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis of case studies demonstrating successes and lessons-learned in the MRV of safeguards, please see WWF's discussion paper: [http://wwf.panda.org/what\\_we\\_do/footprint/climate\\_carbon\\_energy/forest\\_climate/publications/?196851/MRV-of-safeguards](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/footprint/climate_carbon_energy/forest_climate/publications/?196851/MRV-of-safeguards)

## Factors for Success

### • Independent, third party validation, made public

- The Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) project standards include independent validation and verification—to date, 26 projects have been validated, most in the southern hemisphere.
- Independent Forest Monitoring (IFM), a programme of Global Witness, is developing Independent Monitoring of REDD (IM-REDD), focused on transparency, accountability, enforcement and governance in the forest sector.
- The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has successfully included safeguards in forest sector activities, built into processes that undergo independent verification. FSC has been applied in 82 countries.

### • Adequate stakeholder engagement

- CCB project standards strive for transparent and participatory monitoring, including tracking revenue streams, stakeholder engagement, and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- The EU's Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative has had success with multi-stakeholder roundtables, established at the outset, to set up national plans to reduce illegal logging.

### • Programmes are performance-based, with financial incentives for compliance with standards

- FLEGT and the CCB project standards have incentivized compliance with standards by offering access to markets and new funding sources.
- Co-benefits are valued more than just carbon alone. According to Bloomberg New Energy Finance, forest carbon offsets validated to both Voluntary Carbon Standard and SOCIAL CARBON (also for voluntary projects) standards sold for US\$ 5.50 more per tonne than offsets only validated to VCS.

### • Costs to verify compliance with safeguard standards can be manageable

- There are not yet examples of full REDD+ MRV system costs but, for example, IFM sustainable forest management reporting and verification costs in Cameroon average US\$0.09 per hectare and the largest FSC group certification in the State of Wisconsin has average annual external audit costs per hectare of less than US\$0.02.

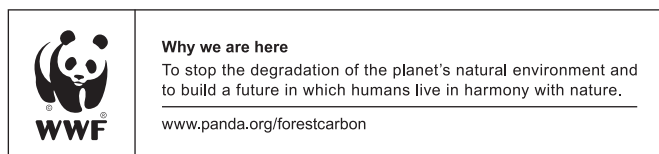
### • Consistent application of principles and goals, with flexibility at the national level

- The FSC Principles and Criteria provide an international standard for responsible forest management but indicators are adapted to national or sub-national conditions to reflect the diverse legal, social, and geographical conditions of forests in different parts of the world.

*Policy guidance, along with adequate international financing, from the UNFCCC is essential to harmonise principles and criteria across institutions and scales of REDD+ implementation and ensure safeguards are adopted and implemented in the major multilateral, bilateral, and national initiatives.*

## Key recommendations for the LCA text:

- In the LCA text (FCCC/AWGLCA/2010/14), paragraph 2 of the text includes important social, biodiversity and governance safeguard language that WWF believes is vital to the long-term success of a REDD+ mechanism – these safeguards need to remain in the text.
- In addition, paragraph 5(c) needs to un-bracket the reference to MRV of safeguards within robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems for REDD+ activities.



### For more information:

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