



Update on Social and Environmental Principles

UN-REDD PROGRAMME 5th POLICY
BOARD MEETING

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Rationale

Reducing emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and carbon stock enhancement (REDD+) can have substantial benefits in addition to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. These include positive impacts on biodiversity and other non-carbon forest services, as well as on sustainable development, including poverty reduction and Indigenous Peoples' rights. If due care is not taken, there are also potential risks from the implementation of REDD+ measures, for example:

- The conversion of natural forests to plantations and other land uses of low biodiversity value and low resilience;
- The loss of traditional territories, natural resource rights and ecological knowledge;
- The loss of traditional and rural livelihoods;¹
- Social exclusion and elite capture in the distribution of benefits from REDD+;
- The creation of contradictory or competing national policy frameworks;
- The other benefits of forests are traded-off at the expense of maximizing the carbon benefits.

In many cases, those most exposed to the impacts of these risks are marginalized and vulnerable social groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, other forest dependent communities, the poor and women. The need for effective measures to manage the risks and increase the likelihood of optimal benefits is recognized.

The UN-REDD Programme is developing a comprehensive social and environmental framework to provide guidance in the development of UN-REDD National Programmes – and national readiness processes more generally. As well as recognizing there are important social and environmental safeguards which need to be in place for national REDD+ systems to ensure that negative impacts are assessed, identified and managed, the framework reflects the UN-REDD Programme's responsibility to apply a human rights based approach, uphold UN conventions, treaties and declarations, and to 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 framework also provides guidance as to how the potential environmental and social multiple benefits of REDD+ can be enhanced and optimized.

The framework encompasses two components:

1. *A minimum standard risk assessment and mitigation framework:* UN-REDD Programme funded interventions should take a risk-based approach to ensuring that they follow a set of widely agreed environmental and social principles.
2. *An assessment of impact magnitude:* Both environmental and social impacts of REDD+ can be expected to be significant in magnitude. Contributions to sustainable development include but are not limited to improved health, provision of services including those from ecosystems and availability of cash to start new enterprises, generate jobs and alleviate poverty.

For the purposes of the UN-REDD collaborative partnership, each component can be split into two parts: environmental aspects (led by UNEP) and social aspects (led by UNDP). As such, the UN-REDD Social and Environmental Principles Framework comprise four sub-components (see Exhibit 1) that will be developed over time.

¹ The first three bullet points are taken from the Co-Chairs Summary of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Expert Workshop on Biodiversity Benefits of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EWREDD-01>

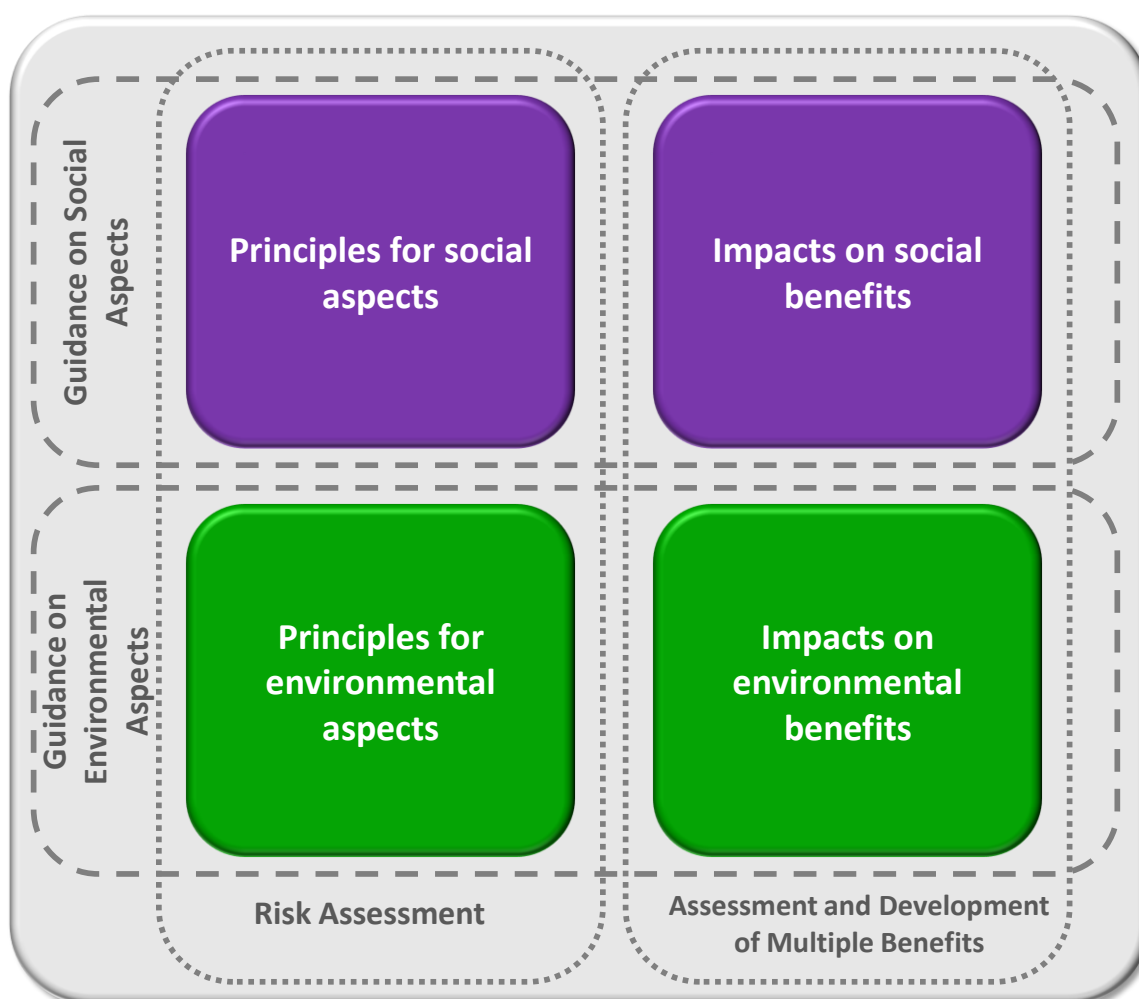


Exhibit 1: Four components of the UN-REDD Programme Social and Environmental Principles

To date, UNDP has focused on defining the risk assessment and mitigation measures for social aspects, *which is the core of this paper*. Furthermore, UNDP will work towards conceptualizing an approach to assessing social and other livelihood benefits.

UNEP is currently piloting an approach on environmental safeguards that meets the twin goals of international acceptance and country relevance. UNEP is also developing guidance to enhance or optimize environmental benefits, so that REDD+ can do the most good it can. This will involve consultations with stakeholder at various scales and a consideration of international best practice and country circumstances.

The UN-REDD programme will work to ensure that the environmental and social tools are developed cohesively and coherently.

Basis for the social and environmental principles

The social and environmental principles (i.e. the right-hand column of Diagram 1) are being developed on the basis of the UN's rights-based approach to development and the application of international standards recognised through relevant conventions, treaties and declarations. The draft REDD-Plus text developed under the UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (LCA-Text)² explicitly requires the implementation of social and environmental standards in any REDD+ activities.

LCA text	Principle
That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements	Principle 3 – Coherence with broader policy framework
Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty	Principle 1 - Good governance
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 2 – Stakeholder livelihoods
Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, including in particular indigenous peoples and local communities (...)	Principle 1 - Good governance
Actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that actions referred to in paragraph 3 below 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, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits	Under preparation (UNEP)

Exhibit 2: Relationship of Proposed Principles with UNFCCC LCA Text

The principles have also been developed in coordination with the Community, Climate and Biodiversity Alliance that has led the development of the [REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards \(SES\)](#), to ensure as much consistency as possible with relevant existing approaches on social and environmental assessments. In addition a recent workshop by the Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Expert Workshop on Biodiversity Benefits of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation articulated a number of key recommendations in developing environmental standards and enhancing potential benefits of REDD+. These and other outputs are being used to develop a set of initial principles to ensure that, at the minimum, REDD+ will 'do no harm' and so enable countries to address the social and environmental risks of REDD+ strategies and pilot projects.

² UNFCCC: FCCC/AWG/LCA/2009/17, 5 February 2010

Principles for social aspects

An additional update is provided here on the work to date on the principles for social aspects. Three principles are proposed. Within each principle, a set of criteria describes the dimensions to be considered (see Exhibit 3).

Principle 1 – Good governance: The program complies with standards of good governance³.	
Criterion 1 – Integrity of fiduciary and fund management systems	The program has assessed and addressed fiduciary and fund management risks
Criterion 2 – Transparency and accountability	Program administration and REDD+ readiness activities are carried out in an accountable and transparent manner.
Criterion 3 – Stakeholder participation	a) All relevant stakeholders are identified and enabled to participate in a meaningful and effective manner; b) Special attention is given to most vulnerable groups and the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.
Principle 2 – Stakeholder livelihoods: The program carefully assesses potential adverse impacts on stakeholders long-term livelihoods and mitigates effects where appropriate.	
Criterion 4 – Avoidance of involuntary resettlement	The program is not involved and not complicit in involuntary resettlement.
Criterion 5 – Traditional knowledge	The program is not involved and not complicit in alteration, damage or removal of any critical cultural heritage or the erosion of traditional knowledge.
Criterion 6 – Social and political well-being	Social and political implications are carefully assessed and adverse impacts on social and political structures mitigated. Benefits are shared equitably.
Principle 3 – Policy coherence: The program coheres with and complements sustainable development strategies and priorities, forestry plans and other relevant policies and treaties.	
Criterion 7 – Low emission, climate resilient development policy coherence.	The program coheres with relevant strategies and policies at all levels of government.

Exhibit 3: Proposed Social Principles and Criteria

The Risk Assessment Tool for social principles

The most assured way to avoid adverse impacts from any intervention is to take an inclusive approach to project/program design that is built on the participation of all relevant stakeholders and is developed 'bottom-up' rather than prescribed 'top-down'.

Objective

UNDP is developing a tool that assists in flagging potential risks areas and developing commensurate risk mitigation strategies. As such, it can be seen as a tool that assists in the detection and improvement of program weaknesses and enhances overall program rigor, support and sustainability.

The tool should fulfil the following objectives:

- i) Improve program design and increase program's sustainability: The tool enables program developers to take social aspects into consideration early in the process and to design the program in a way that minimizes the risk of adverse impacts and includes commensurate risk mitigation strategies where appropriate. It furthermore enables stakeholders to verify compliance with social considerations and hence enhances the program's long-term credibility and legitimacy.
- ii) Prioritization of programs: The tool may assist in prioritizing programs for UN-REDD participation and in efficiently managing resources for further due diligence work.

³ Governance is defined as the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences

Tool applicability – how and when to use it?

The risk assessment and mitigation tool presents a series of risk identification questions organized under each of the above criteria. The tool leads the user through a matrix of risk identification questions that can be answered on a YES/NO basis and provide an indication for whether or not the program has the potential to create social risks in the areas of good governance, stakeholder livelihoods and policy coherences. Where risks are identified, the tool recommends risk mitigation actions to be taken by the program.

The recommended risk mitigation actions identify both the steps that should be taken to address the identified risk and at which point in the program development and implementation process that the steps should be taken. For example, recommended risk mitigation actions include:

- All stakeholders should be identified during program formulation;
- The program elaboration should include an accessible and impartial recourse mechanism;
- Program formulation and implementation must follow Operational Guidance.

Rather than presenting a rigid one-time assessment, the tool may be applied to a different extent and iteratively throughout the program design, implementation and monitoring. The risk assessment screens should be used as a guide for program formulation so as to avoid risks from the outset, where risks are unavoidable the risk assessment tool will inform the population of the program document 'risk log' – where risks and associated risk mitigation measures are listed for the purpose of monitoring. Recommended risk mitigation measures should be undertaken during program elaboration, inception, and implementation, as appropriate. The risk log and risk assessment tool should be accessible to program stakeholders for their reference. As such, the tool serves as guidance to improve program rigor and sustainability over time.

Tool applicability – who uses it?

The tool may be used by different actors with varying objectives. In the first applications of the tool, UN-REDD Programme agency staff may apply the tool in early stages to screen for major risk areas and include these in considerations for program country prioritization. Program developers may use the tool to specifically look out for areas where they can improve program design to minimize the risk of adverse social impacts. Stakeholders may apply the tool to better understand their rights and opportunities for participation.

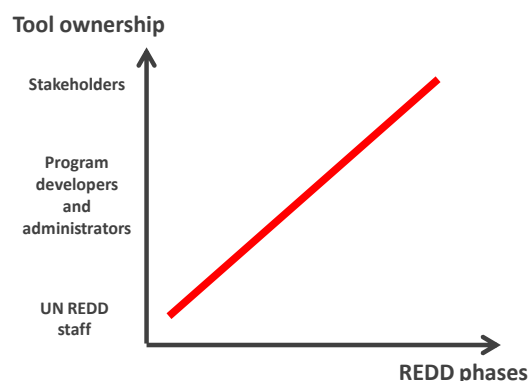


Diagram 2. Tool ownership

It can be expected that the tool ownership will shift over time from UN-REDD agency staff conducting initial high-level assessments, to stakeholders and program administrators monitoring ongoing compliance.

The draft version of the tool is available at:

http://www.unredd.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=3357&Itemid=53

This link is being updated as new drafts of the tool are available. Please check again before the Policy Board meeting. Comments on the tool are welcome and can be provided after the meeting to tim.clairs@undp.org

Next Steps

This summary is provided for the Policy Board's information and to seek comments and guidance. The intention is to then undertake a broader process of engagement and development.

The Social and Environmental Principles Framework and the Risk Assessment Tool will be rolled out via the following process:

1. Integrate environmental standards (Dec 2010 – Jan 2011)
2. Consult across the UN-REDD Programme partnership (Jan 2011 – March 2011)
 - Policy Board members and observers
 - Indigenous peoples and civil society regional networks and Independent Advisory Group on Rights, Forests and Climate Change
 - Workspace members & other key partners
 - Lessons from pilot countries processes
3. Coordinate with the FCPF (Jan 2011 – March 2011)
4. Pilot application of the risk assessment and mitigation tool and sustainable development impact assessment in select countries (March 2011 - June 2011).
5. Public comment period via the UN-REDD Programme website and REDD+ networks (Aug - Sept 2011)
6. Roll out of the social and environmental principles risk assessment and mitigation tool and sustainable development impact assessment with the framework of the UN-REDD Programme (end-2011).