

**Conservation International ~ Environmental Defense Fund  
The Nature Conservancy ~ Rainforest Alliance**

SBSTA has been requested to develop guidance on safeguard information systems for consideration by COP 17. Draft text on this issue has not yet been developed. Here we propose language in the form of draft text to provide support to Parties as they discuss these issues, with footnotes to provide explanations where necessary. This proposed language builds off of the report of the expert meeting held in October in Panama and on the submissions provided on this issue.

**Suggested Draft Text for a SBSTA Recommendation on Item 4 regarding guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards for REDD+ activities are addressed and respected**

*November, 2011*

*Recalling* the provisions of Decisions 1/CP.13, 2/CP.13/, 4/CP.15, and 1/CP.16 including Appendices I and II,

*Reaffirming* that, in the context of the provision of adequate and predictable support to developing country Parties, Parties should collectively aim to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss, in accordance with national circumstances, consistent with the ultimate objective of the Convention, as stated in its Article 2,

*Reaffirming* that according to 1/CP.16 §69 the implementation of all REDD+ activities should be carried out in accordance with the safeguards,

*Recognizing* that, according to §76, developed countries are urged to provide support for the consideration of the safeguards as outlined in 1/CP.16 and that the development of information systems on how the safeguards are addressed and respected is to take place in the context of adequate and predictable support as stated in §71,

*Pursuant* to the need for modalities and guidance related to § 71 of Decision 1/CP.16,

1. *Notes* that information systems on how safeguards are addressed and respected aim to support national REDD+ strategies/action plans in defining and delivering expected outcomes and relate to all REDD+ activities as referred to in §70 of Decision 1/CP.16 and §1 of Annex 1.
2. Also *Notes* that the information systems on safeguards aim to provide clear, publicly accessible and reliable information about how the safeguards are addressed and respected, and can serve to identify capacity building and support needs with regard to safeguards implementation.
3. *Urges* developed countries to provide adequate and predictable support for safeguards implementation and related information systems.
4. *Agrees* that the national systems for providing information on safeguards should:
  - a) provide information at regular intervals and at a frequency that allows the tracking of how safeguards are being addressed and respected over time;
  - b) collect and report information in a transparent manner that is publicly available and accessible for relevant stakeholders, and be presented in a way that meets their needs.

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Information should be provided both in electronic (i.e., via the internet) and written format and at all relevant levels (national, regional and local). Efforts should be made to provide information in all relevant languages;<sup>1</sup>

- c) ensure the full and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities. They should also consider gender equity and engage non-governmental organizations and experts as appropriate;
  - d) be comprehensive,<sup>2</sup> addressing all of the safeguards as contained in Appendix I of 1/CP. 16 and, to the extent possible, be comparable across countries. At the same time, guidance for the information systems should be flexible so that the information systems can meet the needs of each country according to its national circumstances, respecting national sovereignty as well as legislation and international obligations;<sup>3</sup>
  - e) build on and be harmonized with existing and related monitoring and information systems, including those developed under international instruments, such as the Convention on Biodiversity, FAO, UNFF, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, and the Convention to Combat Desertification in order to improve reporting, avoid generating additional burden to countries and enhance efficiency in reporting;<sup>4</sup>
  - f) maximize the quality of the information through independent verification and stakeholder participation, including the possibility of adding separate reports or comments from stakeholders .
5. *Agrees* that provided information should be complete, addressing all of the safeguards and adequate, including:
- a) An assessment of how the safeguards are addressed and respected throughout the implementation of all REDD+ activities;
  - b) Information on the action(s) undertaken to address and respect each safeguard;
  - c) Information to assess and evaluate the reliability of those data, such as:
    - 1. the type of information;
    - 2. the source of information (e.g., collected remotely, through field research, etc);
    - 3. steps taken to verify the information or ensure its accuracy; and
    - 4. any additional underlying information that documents these steps that have been taken.
  - d) Information to guide the provision of financial, technical and technological support to ensure safeguards are addressed and respected throughout the implementation of activities referred to in §70 of Decision 1/CP.16.

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<sup>1</sup> All data collection, for purposes of fulfilling national and international safeguard information system obligations, should respect national sovereignty, and rights and customs of indigenous peoples and local communities. It is also encouraged that international and national safeguard systems take into account other relevant international obligations, and adhere to the principles adopted by the UN General Assembly in decisions on the rights of indigenous peoples.

<sup>2</sup> A comprehensive safeguard information system will have a broad scope, be thorough, and will include substantial data and analysis. A “complete” safeguard information system would require an exhaustive strategy, which may exceed some nation state capabilities.

<sup>3</sup> Although data collection through safeguard information systems should be comparable at an international level, this does not require identical national and sub-national strategies. While maintaining consistency in data collection, local strategies should be used to help improve the quality of data collection, encourage greater involvement of local stakeholders, and ensure the safeguards are effective.

<sup>4</sup> In addition, monitoring system should be robust and transparent to ensure developing countries are reducing emissions from forest degradation, conserving forest carbon stocks, sustainably managing forests; and enhancing forest carbon stocks. See §70 of Decision 1/CP.16.

6. *Decides* that a Party aiming to undertake the activities referred to in §70 of Decision 1/CP.16 shall submit information, including on how safeguards are addressed and respected, in its National Communications and biennial update reports.<sup>5</sup>
7. *Requests* the SBSTA, at its 36th session, to provide guidance on the format for submission of information on how safeguards are addressed and respected to the UNFCCC,<sup>6</sup> with a view to recommending a decision on the matter for adoption by the COP at its 18th session.

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<sup>5</sup> Reporting is important to communicate an analysis of the monitoring and a review of performance on the safeguards. §60 b and c of Decision 1/CP.16 requires non-Annex I Parties to “submit their national communications to the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Convention, every four years” and to “submit biennial update reports containing updates of national greenhouse gas inventories, including a national inventory report and information on mitigation actions, needs and support received.”

<sup>6</sup> This guidance should ensure that sufficient information is being provided to the COP and that information is comparable across countries.