

**Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity**  
**Eleventh meeting (COP11)**

Hyderabad, India, 8-19 October 2012

***Agenda Item 11.1: Advice on REDD+***

**Summary**

WWF commends the CBD on their hard work in developing advice on the application of REDD+ safeguards. The findings presented in document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 are a good step forward in addressing the biodiversity aspects of REDD+ safeguards and in providing advice to parties to the CBD and UNFCCC for implementing REDD+ activities. Overall, WWF considers UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 to be comprehensive guidance to address the biodiversity aspects of REDD+ safeguards. We are particularly pleased to see clear attempts to harmonise REDD+ safeguards under CBD with work under the UNFCCC.

1. **WWF calls on COP to:** Adopt SBSTTA recommendation XVI/7 with suggested text changes as outlined in the Annex below;
2. Request the Executive Secretary to summarize the key findings of document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 and promote them in relevant national, regional and international fora;
3. Clarify that the proposed set of indicators in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8 are not intended to fully represent all safeguards as decided at UNFCCC COP 16 (1/CP.16.), but rather aim to provide a framework for monitoring and informing on safeguards relevant to achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
4. Invite the UN-REDD, FCPF and the REDD+ SES safeguard initiatives as referred to in paragraph 17 of UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 to maximize synergies and encourage coordination and the alignment of safeguard frameworks;
5. Invite UN-REDD and the FCPF and other relevant REDD+ safeguard initiatives to make use of the REDD+ SES framework for monitoring and reporting of safeguards;
6. Encourage bi-lateral and multi-lateral REDD+ finance mechanisms to apply investment criteria according to the safeguard initiatives referred to in paragraph 17;

7. Encourage parties to support and promote credible commodity production standards and certification systems such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as meaningful and complementary instruments to support the application, monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD+ safeguards;
8. Encourage parties that are planning and implementing REDD+ activities to further raise cross-sectoral awareness and capacity to develop and apply national and sub-national level REDD+ safeguards;

Encourage developed country Parties to provide technical and financial support to REDD+ implementation countries to develop and apply national and sub-national level REDD+ safeguards that ensure that benefits for biodiversity and for indigenous and local communities are achieved and their participation and engagement in this processes guaranteed, based on UNFCCC decisions.

Specific text changes are outlined in the Annex to this position paper.

*A full set of WWF position papers is available on [www.panda.org/cop11](http://www.panda.org/cop11)*

## **Background and Rationale**

### **Forests are more than carbon**

REDD+ offers the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from forests while simultaneously providing additional “co-benefits,” including biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods, governance and in certain circumstances, support for climate change adaptation. But adequate social and environmental safeguards are required to ensure that REDD+ does not have negative impacts on these very areas.

Accurate implementation and transparent information on environmental and social safeguards, including information on the impacts of safeguards as well as clearly defined compliance mechanisms, are essential for the long-term success of REDD+ activities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

### **How to define safeguards?**

WWF strongly recommends that safeguards should ensure the following:

9. REDD+ activities provide real and sustainable benefits to the atmosphere, people, biodiversity and ecosystems and support improved governance and where possible, climate change adaptation;
10. REDD+ programmes are effective, additional and reduce the risk of leakage / displacement and non-permanence;
11. There is transparency, full participation and accountability, all of which are crucial to understanding the effectiveness and impacts of REDD+ activities;

Safeguards should not be defined only as a mechanism to avoid or minimize risks of REDD+ activities.

### **WWF comments and recommendations on UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8 and UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24**

12. The findings presented in the document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 comprise good methodological attempts in addressing the biodiversity aspects of REDD+ safeguards, however, further guidance is needed to develop a comprehensive and efficient methodology to operationalize safeguards at the national, sub-national and project level to ensure that they are monitored and reported in a manner that provides full transparency, maximizes accuracy of data and information and ensures full and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities; and that a complaint mechanism based on a full, effective and participatory mechanism of monitoring the safeguards exists.
13. WWF is pleased to note that social safeguards are included as an integral part of the REDD+ safeguards framework. WWF feels that it is important to emphasise the role of local communities and Indigenous People in REDD+ in order to ensure the success of REDD+ and ultimately achieve the desired biodiversity outcomes.

14. The proposed set of indicators in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8 are a good step forward for monitoring REDD+ contributions to achieving the objectives of the convention on biological diversity, but they are not sufficient to monitor and inform on all REDD+ safeguards as decided at UNFCCC COP 16 (1/CP.16.). This should be made explicitly clear by COP. In addition, COP should ensure that the indicators are sufficiently flexible to be adapted to national circumstances and local conditions.
15. The REDD+ SES provides a solid and coherent starting point framework for monitoring and reporting and thus can act as a useful reporting framework for UN-REDD programmes and activities financed by FCPF, particularly where there is a desire or need to report on the positive outcomes as well as compliance with safeguards. In order to facilitate Party's reporting on safeguards, COP should invite the UN-REDD and the FCPF and other relevant REDD+ safeguard initiatives to make use of the REDD+ SES framework for monitoring and reporting of safeguards. Lack of consistency and homogeneity amongst safeguards' standards will most likely increase difficulty and uncertainty for States aiming to comply with reporting duties.
16. Different options are under consideration for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) that balance participation and ownership by stakeholders with enhanced transparency and accountability while also encouraging improved performance. As with the indicators, the MRV process will be country-specific. COP should encourage Parties to support and promote credible commodity production standards such as the Forest Stewardship Council Principles and Criteria as complementary meaningful instruments to support the application, monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD+ safeguards.
17. WWF welcomes that the CBD Secretariat considered the findings that Gardner, T.A. et al draw out in the research paper "A framework for integrating biodiversity concerns into national REDD+ programs"<sup>1</sup>. This approach does allow the integration of biodiversity safeguards into national REDD+ programs allowing a step-wise approach which can be improved over time regarding the strategic planning and assessment of biodiversity safeguards on national level. COP should encourage REDD+ countries to apply a gradual, phased approach for integrating biodiversity concerns into REDD+ programs as proposed by Gardner, T.A. et al.
18. As mentioned in the document, enhanced collaboration between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) related to the implementation of REDD+ and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 is important and would be mutually beneficial. COP should encourage Parties that are planning and implementing REDD+ activities to further raise cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral awareness and capacity to develop and apply national level REDD+ safeguards.

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<sup>1</sup> Gardner, T.A. et al. (2011), A framework for integrating biodiversity concerns into national REDD+ programs. In: Biological Conservation. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2011.11.018>

19. Paragraph 15 of UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24 refers to “the granting of prior and informed consent (PIC)”. WWF suggests that COP adopts and promotes “*free*, prior and informed consent (FPIC)” as the generally accepted standard in line with relevant REDD+ safeguards.
20. In paragraph 20 (d) of UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24, WWF suggests that COP add an additional clause (vi) on engaging local communities wherever possible in afforestation, reforestation and forest restoration activities, including in planning, identification of priority areas; nursery management and planting.

### **Background Information**

**The REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES)** have been developed to support the design and implementation of government-led REDD+ programmes that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and generate significant social and environmental benefits. The standards have been explicitly designed to go beyond laying out minimum safeguards, and to identify and elaborate benefits. The REDD+ SES provides a framework for monitoring and reporting and thus can act as a useful reporting framework for UN-REDD programmes and activities financed by FCPF. At principle and criteria levels the REDD+ SES standards are generic (i.e. the same across all countries), at the indicator level, there is a process for country-specific interpretation to develop a set of indicators that are tailored to the context of a particular country. To guide this process of country-specific indicator development, a generic “framework for indicators” has been developed.

**UN-REDD** has developed a set of Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria based on UN obligations and commitments. In addition, the UN-REDD social and environmental risk assessment tool, provisionally named the “UN-REDD Programme: Social and Environmental Principles Due Diligence Approach” defines minimum standards with which all UN-REDD programmes have to comply at all program phases of REDD readiness, program design, implementation and operation but has not been designed to be a standard to report against. Moreover, the complementarities between UN-REDD Social and Environmental Standards’ Principle and Criteria and REDD+ SES facilitate setting for the later as a more consolidated system of principles, criteria and indicators.

All activities financed by the **FCPF** and the Forest Investment Program (FIP) and supported by the World Bank are subject to World Bank safeguard policies but since these were mainly developed with project-based lending in mind rather than strategic planning processes it is challenging to apply them to all REDD+ phases, particularly on national processes.

**FSC** is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. The FSC Principles and Criteria cover the production of wood and non-timber products, conservation, protection, ecosystem services and other uses. Such ecosystem services include the sequestration and storage of carbon which contributes to the mitigation of climate change. The robust social and environmental standards

within FSC Principles and Criteria and the certification by FSC accredited certification bodies of forest management can ensure social and environmental safeguards and assist other relevant safeguard mechanisms. SBSTTA should invite parties to support and promote other credible commodity production standards and certification systems such as the Forest Stewardship Council as meaningful instruments to support the application, monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD+ safeguards.

### **CBD's mandate and UNFCCC decisions**

#### **CBD COP Decision X/33**

The Executive Secretary has been requested to

- (i) further develop provide advice, for approval by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting, on relevant REDD+ safeguards for biodiversity, and
- (ii) identify possible indicators and mechanisms to monitor and assess the impacts of REDD+ on biodiversity.

#### **UNFCCC Safeguards adopted at COP 16 in Cancun, 2010**

1. National policy coherence and consistency with the objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements
2. Transparent and effective national forest governance structures
3. Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities
4. Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities
5. Conservation of natural forests and biological diversity
6. Actions to address the risks of reversals
7. Actions to reduce displacement of emissions

#### **UNFCCC COP 17 decisions in Durban 2011**

21. Recognizes that REDD+ actions can promote poverty alleviation and biodiversity benefits, ecosystem resilience and the linkages between adaptation and mitigation, and should promote and support the safeguards as adopted in Cancun 2010
22. Agrees that, regardless of the source or type of financing, REDD+ activities should be consistent with the safeguards
23. Agrees that systems for providing information on how the safeguards are addressed and respected should provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis; be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time.

## Annex

### Suggested text changes to SBSTTA 16 recommendation XVI/7 (from UNEP/CBD/COP/11/3)

Text that WWF feels is important is **in bold** and new text proposed by WWF is **in bold and underlined**.

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice *recommends* that the Conference of the Parties adopt a decision along the following lines:

#### *The Conference of the Parties*

1. *Noting* the potential for synergies in implementing efforts for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+), and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, *urges* Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations to ensure that they are implemented in a coherent and mutually supportive way;

2. *Noting* that the indicative list of indicators to assess progress towards the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as contained in recommendation XV/1 of the Subsidiary Body, could be useful for assessing the contributions of REDD+ activities for achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

3. *Noting* that relevant technical guidance for achieving biodiversity and indigenous and local community benefits in the context of REDD+ activities is available or under development at national, regional and international level;

4. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations to continue and strengthen their efforts to promote the contribution of REDD+ activities towards achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and provide benefits for biodiversity and to indigenous and local communities, with particular attention to:

(a) Building synergies between national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national REDD+ strategies and action plans; in particular by indicating how REDD+ activities can contribute to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;

(b) Further strengthening existing technology transfer and capacity-building processes for the inclusion of relevant indicators in national forest monitoring systems;

(c) **Applying the** indicative list of indicators in the annex of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8, as appropriate, to promote biodiversity safeguards, **with the understanding that these indicators are not sufficient to monitor and inform on all REDD+ safeguards as adopted by UNFCCC COP 16**;

[5. *[Approves][Takes note of][Welcomes]* the advice on relevant country-specific biodiversity safeguards for REDD+ contained in annex I,\*\* as guidance focused on national implementation;]

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\*\* Annex I will be based on document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8, revised in accordance with the request to the Executive Secretary in part B of this recommendation.

6. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations to consider the information in annex I\*\* when planning and implementing REDD+ activities and when preparing national reports and other submissions on progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020, and, where applicable, for other relevant submissions under other processes;

7. Noting its relevance to addressing REDD+ safeguards and multiple benefits, *reaffirms* its guidance on ecosystem based approaches to climate change mitigation and on reducing biodiversity impacts of mitigation measures in decision X/33, paragraphs 8 (m)-(q), (s), (u), (v), (y) and (z);

8. *Invites* Parties and other Governments, according to national circumstances and priorities, as well as relevant organizations and processes, in order to reduce the risks of the displacement of deforestation and forest degradation and other risks to biodiversity and to indigenous and local communities, to:

(a) Undertaking comprehensive land-use planning at the appropriate spatial scale, applying the ecosystem approach and its operational guidance, when planning and undertaking REDD+ activities (decisions V/6 and VII/11);

(b) Promoting broad participation in all phases of REDD+ at the national and, where appropriate, at the subnational levels, including the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, **non-governmental organizations** and other relevant stakeholders **including encouraging the promotion of community-based monitoring where appropriate;**

(c) Ensuring the monitoring of changes in biodiversity across all main terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, in the framework of monitoring achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi targets; and promote regional collaboration for monitoring and assessment.

9. With reference to the safeguards adopted in UNFCCC decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 2, *encourages* Parties that are planning and implementing REDD+ activities to develop and apply national level REDD+ safeguards that ensure that benefits for biodiversity and for indigenous and local communities are achieved, and to share their experiences and lessons learned from national and, ~~where appropriate~~, subnational implementation;

**9 bis Encourages Parties to support and promote credible commodity production standards and certification systems such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Principles and Criteria as meaningful and complementary instruments to support the application, monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD+ safeguards**

**9 ter Encourages bi-lateral and multi-lateral REDD+ finance mechanisms to apply investment criteria according to the safeguard initiatives referred to in paragraph 17 of UNEP/CBD/COP/11/24.**

10. *Noting* that there ongoing safeguard initiatives related to REDD+, -invites -Parties, other Government and relevant organizations involved in these initiatives to share their experiences and lessons learned, as a contribution to the development and implementation of national, and where appropriate sub-national safeguard frameworks, considering paragraphs 7 and 8 above; and invites **developed country Parties and relevant** organizations to provide further support to developing countries in addressing biodiversity concerns and in achieving multiple benefits in REDD+ activities at national and, where appropriate, sub-national level **that ensure benefits for biodiversity and indigenous and local communities;**

**10 bis Encourages Parties that are planning and implementing REDD+ activities to further raise cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral awareness and capacity to develop and apply national level REDD+ safeguards**



**10 ter Invites UN-REDD, the FCPF and other relevant REDD+ safeguard initiatives to make use of the REDD+ SES framework for monitoring and reporting of safeguards to maximize consistency and homogeneity amongst safeguards' standards and avoid difficulty and uncertainty for Parties aiming to comply with reporting duties.**

11. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to compile information from Parties on experiences regarding how the potential effects of REDD+ activities for the traditional way of life and related knowledge and customary practices of indigenous and local communities are being addressed, and to submit this information to the Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions for its consideration, and invites the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions to consider this information when undertaking their broader work, as appropriate;

12. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Enhance collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest (including is Global Forest Expert Panel on Biodiversity, Forest Management and REDD+), as well as with the REDD+ Partnership, to further support Parties' effort to help ensure that REDD+ contributes to the implementation of the Convention, and that relevant activities under the Convention contribute to the implementation of REDD+, including by offering further capacity-building activities, subject to the availability of funds;

(b) Compile information relevant to the application of REDD+ safeguards for biodiversity, and make it available through the UNFCCC REDD web platform, the clearing-house mechanism, and workshops, prior to the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting;

(c) Collaborate with relevant organizations involved in the development of REDD+ safeguard initiatives to further integrate biodiversity concerns in the safeguards initiatives and to facilitate relevant capacity-building and implementation activities;

and report on progress of such efforts to the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting.

13. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to further develop advice on issues included in the paragraph 9 (h) of decision X/33, based on further views from Parties and in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Forest, and report to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the [twelfth][thirteenth] meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

B. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice invites Parties the Governments, and relevant organizations to provide to the Executive Secretary views on the advice on relevant country-specific biodiversity safeguards for REDD+ contained in section II of documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8, and requests the Executive Secretary to provide a revised version of the advice, based on the views received, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting.

A full set of WWF position papers is available on [www.panda.org/cop11](http://www.panda.org/cop11)

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