Country Approach to Safeguards and Design of Safeguard Information System: Summary of Decision Areas and Actions

In order to comply with the multiple international safeguard requirements under the UNFCCC and other relevant initiatives (e.g. FCPF), PNG is adopting a Country Approach to Safeguards (CAS). ‘Country approaches to safeguards’ is a general term used (but not definitively delineated) by this brief to describe the conceptual framework and coordinated processes undertaken by countries to meet safeguard requirements for REDD+ under the UNFCCC, and other relevant initiatives and institutions. Country approaches are characterised by the identification, application and improvement of existing relevant governance arrangements— which include policies, laws, and regulations (PLRs); institutional arrangements; and information systems and sources; conflict resolution and enforcement mechanisms - to meet the different safeguards requirements a country may choose to adopt.

Country approaches typically aim to ensure, *inter alia*, that¹:

- safeguards are *addressed* through the existence of relevant governance arrangements, including policies, law and regulations through which the rights and obligations embodied in the safeguards are to be recognised, protected and promoted throughout the implementation of the proposed REDD+ actions (regardless of their type of funding source);
- safeguards are *respected* through the implementation and enforcement of those relevant governance arrangements, by government and (where relevant and appropriate) non-government actors, throughout the implementation of REDD+ actions (regardless of their type of funding source);
- a Safeguard Information System (SIS) is in place to provide information that is accessible to all stakeholders on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected; and
- summaries of information on safeguards are submitted periodically to the UNFCCC and other applicable donor or funder (e.g. FCPF).

In 2015 and in the context of the adoption a CAS for REDD+ in PNG, a scoping exercise was undertaken to evaluate and assess the safeguard related activities previously undertaken in PNG. Based on this scoping exercise, it was concluded that the following outputs and activities should be carried out:

1. Draft REDD+ safeguards gap analysis and roadmap for Papua New Guinea,
2. Updated terms of reference (TOR) for the TWG-SES (under review with CCDA),
3. Tool-kit for REDD+ safeguards capacity building,
4. A revision and strengthening of the legal analysis, including the development of matrix and legal gap analysis report for Papua New Guinea,
5. Draft clarification of the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards in accordance with PNG’s national context and circumstances,
6. Preliminary identification of information needs associated with demonstrating how safeguards are being addressed and respected in Papua New Guinea,
7. Draft identification of information systems and reporting mechanisms in PNG, relevant for the design of the safeguard information system, and
8. Recommendations for the design of a safeguard information system (SIS) in PNG.

This ‘CAS and SIS Policy Brief’ aims to facilitate discussion on the progress achieved and what actions remain to be taken to set-up the SIS and to ensure the UNFCCC safeguards are addressed and respected. We also note discussions around the CAS and SIS should be linked to the adoption of a National REDD+ Strategy and the REDD+ actions.

Most of the reports above are ‘living’ documents as they need to be widely consulted amongst relevant stakeholders and need to be validated. In particular, we highlight the following aspects in relation to the above mentioned reports:

1) Draft REDD+ safeguards gap analysis and roadmap for Papua New Guinea

**Actions to be taken:**
- CCDA and TWG-SES to discuss, agree and adopt the recommendations and time-frames outlined in the roadmap document, as they determine pertinent. Several recommendations need to be considered in light of what is the most approach and processes for the country.
- Additionally, it is important to consider and ensure adequate coordination (particularly the time-frames being considered) of the CAS with the adoption of the National REDD+ Strategy.

2) Tool-kit for REDD+ safeguards capacity building

**Actions to be taken:**
- As outlined in the roadmap document, it will be important for CCDA and TWG-SES to determine immediate capacity building activities for 2016-2017.

3) Legal gap analysis

**Actions to be taken:**
- CCDA and TWG-SES to discuss and validate legal gap analysis. This should in any case be considered a living document, as provisions in the legal framework of the country are constantly updated.
- It is important to consider this document will serve as a key input to outline how safeguards are to be 'addressed' when the REDD+ Policies and Measures (PaMs) are determined.
- It is also important to consider that the Legal Gap Analysis provided the basis to clarify the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards in accordance with PNG’s national context and circumstances, and then to identify information needs associated with how safeguards are addressed and respected in PNG.

4) Draft clarification of the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards in accordance with PNG’s national context and circumstances

**Actions to be taken:**
- CCDA and TWG-SES to discuss and validate the draft clarification prepared in 2016.
- It is important to consider that the clarification is intended to ‘specify’ what the Cancun safeguard broad goals/objectives/principles mean to the country context. In other words, the clarification is expected to contextualize the general principles outlined in the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards into specific principles and objectives the country commits to fulfilling in the context of the application of the REDD+ actions. We must note that the specific objectives/goals/principles are largely determined and informed by the existing legal obligations of the country.
- It is also important to consider that the clarification is one of the foundations of the SIS as it is key to determining the ‘information needs’ (i.e. types of information that are to be gathered by the SIS); and it is central to the preparation of the summary of information, as it helps to determine the information that should be provided to the UNFCCC to demonstrate how the safeguards are being addressed and respected.
5) Information needs associated with demonstrating how safeguards are being addressed and respected in Papua New Guinea

Actions to be taken:
- CCDA and TWG-SES to discuss and validate the draft information needs prepared in 2016, taking into account that they are intended to determine 'what type' of information the country will provide to demonstrate whether the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected.
- Once the REDD+ PaMs are adopted, the information needs should be adapted and linked to the respective PaMs.
- It is important to note that the identification of information needs assisted in determining the 'type of information' needed to provide in the SIS as well as identify the existing information systems and sources for REDD+ SES within core government agencies in PNG.

6) Identification of information systems and reporting mechanisms in PNG, relevant for the design of the safeguard information system

Actions to be taken:
- CCDA, TWG-SES and government agencies in charge of identified information systems and sources to discuss and validate the report.
- Once the information needs are adopted, this report should be expanded to offer an analysis of the extent to which these existing and relevant information systems and sources can be used for SIS purposes.

7) Recommendations for the design of a SIS in PNG

Actions to be taken:
- CCDA and TWG-SES to discuss the SIS design document in a dedicated workshop. A preliminary identification of the SIS scope, functions and
- It is important to consider that the scope of PNG’s SIS will be dependent on the final outcome of a National REDD+ Strategy in terms of the types of REDD+ activities, scale of implementation and the corresponding policies and measures to be developed.