

# UN-REDD Programme SEPC: Supporting Document

---

UN-REDD PROGRAMME EIGHTH  
POLICY BOARD MEETING

---

25-26 March 2012  
Asunción, Paraguay



In accordance with the decision of the Policy Board this document is printed in limited numbers to minimize the environmental impact of the UN-REDD Programme processes and contribute to climate neutrality. Participants are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings. Most of the UN-REDD Programmes meeting documents are available on the internet at: [www.unredd.net](http://www.unredd.net).

## Introduction

It is being proposed that the Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (SEPC) are adopted as a guiding framework for the UN-REDD Programme. A guiding framework is one that guides and informs UN-REDD Programme actors in (in this case) addressing social and environmental considerations in REDD+. This document provides further information on how the SEPC provides such a framework for the UN-REDD Programme, and helps it to assist countries in addressing social and environmental considerations as they prepare for REDD+. It also indicates how the framework can guide development of additional tools for these purposes. In addition, by clarifying the SEPC's relationship to other UN-REDD Programme processes and to other initiatives, this document responds to questions that were raised by the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board and during the consultation process. The document concludes with next steps and a proposed way forward.

This document and the refinement of the SEPC have been informed by extensive public consultation, most recently during October 2011 – January 2012, ending with a multi-stakeholder workshop in February 2012, which concluded that the SEPC constitute an appropriate guiding framework as described above, and encouraged the Policy Board to endorse the SEPC, following its revision to take into account the comments from the consultations. The current version for consideration at the UN-REDD Programme Eighth Policy Board meeting in March 2012 (draft 4) takes account of input received throughout the consultation process. The UN-REDD Programme Policy Board is therefore invited to consider endorsing version 4 of the SEPC as a guiding framework for the UN-REDD Programme on social and environmental issues.

## Proposed Application of the SEPC and BeRT

The SEPC can serve as a guiding framework for the UN-REDD Programme to address two specific needs:

- 1) Addressing social and environmental issues in UN-REDD National Programmes and other UN-REDD Programme funded activities.
- 2) Supporting countries in developing their national approaches to REDD+ safeguards in line with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Benefits and Risks Tool (BeRT) is a question-based tool that helps to elaborate on and apply the concepts encompassed in the SEPC. While the SEPC can guide activities that address these needs, each of these areas would require further tailoring of the BeRT and development of other tools to address each need.

To address the first need, the SEPC and related tools can be applied at different stages of the UN-REDD Programme cycle to ensure that social and environmental issues have been properly considered and addressed in the Programme.

- In the *formulation* stage of UN-REDD National Programmes, the SEPC can be used as a framework for discussing social and environmental issues with stakeholders, with the outcomes captured in relevant documentation, including UN-REDD National Programme Documents and their risk management framework.

- In the *review* stage of UN-REDD National Programme Documents, the SEPC and BeRT can be used to guide and strengthen both internal and independent reviews. Further work is required to agree an appropriate approach and develop tools as required.
- The SEPC and the BeRT can be used to inform the subsequent versions of the *planning, monitoring and reporting* frameworks and contribute to guiding programme implementation.

Common to these three stages is the need to adapt the tools that are used in each one. In the first instance, the BeRT has been developed to apply the SEPC in the formulation of UN-REDD National Programmes and initiatives seeking UN-REDD Programme support. It is intended for use by national teams to identify and assess potential risks and opportunities from such programmes and to document this assessment process for internal use, and can help them to identify ways of adjusting programme design to minimize risks and build on opportunities. In future, the BeRT will be tailored to support application of the SEPC in other contexts, including programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

It may also be necessary to adapt these tools for application in other UN-REDD Programme activities, such as UN-REDD Global Programme targeted support.

To address the second need, the SEPC can provide a basis for guidance to countries that are developing national REDD+ safeguards. It can help countries to develop safeguards consistent with the UNFCCC's Cancun Agreement, and that are appropriate to their national circumstances. The BeRT, in an improved format, would provide further detail on the types of questions countries may need to be able to answer in designing their national safeguards systems.

## Links to Other UN-REDD Tools and Guidance

As a guiding framework, the SEPC is closely linked to several existing sets of UN-REDD Programme tools and guidance that also help to support the applications outlined above.

### **Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)**

Following a series of extensive consultations with indigenous peoples and local communities, the UN-REDD Programme developed Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement, which have since been harmonized with guidance from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) on the same topic<sup>1</sup>. These are used in the preparation of R-PPs and throughout the implementation of REDD+ strategies.

The UN-REDD Programme has also developed specific Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), because many of the world's remaining forests in developing countries are located in indigenous peoples' and forest-dependent communities' ancestral and customary lands.

The UN-REDD Programme's Stakeholder Engagement work and FPIC Guidelines are directly linked to the SEPC in that they are a means to support National Programmes to meet the SEPC Principle 1 - Democratic governance - Criterion 4 - Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders; and Principle 2 – Respect and protect stakeholder rights - Criterion 9 – Seek free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent peoples.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement for REDD+ Readiness with a Focus on the Participation of Indigenous Peoples and Other Forest-Dependent Communities.*

**PGA:** The UN-REDD Programme facilitates Participatory Governance Assessments for REDD+ (PGA) through nationally led inclusive and participatory processes. The PGA approach helps countries generate robust information on governance issues related to REDD+, with the view to feed into safeguards information systems and to strengthen accountability systems of both governments and civil society. In the course of a PGA process, the SEPC can provide a starting point to frame multi-stakeholder discussions aiming to identify and prioritize governance issues of highest relevance to REDD+ in a given national context, which will then be the focus of the assessment.

**Multiple Benefits:** Through UN-REDD National Programmes, countries are supported in their efforts to integrate multiple benefits into their REDD+ strategies and development plans. The UN-REDD Programme has produced guidance and tools that support this agenda<sup>2</sup>, with further collaborative work ongoing. The Programme also provides support to countries in their development of national safeguards in response to the Cancun Agreement. The SEPC can effectively underpin this approach and provide a framework for ensuring that potential opportunities and risks from REDD+ are identified and that appropriate action is taken to address them. The BeRT provides countries with additional support in planning for positive outcomes for multiple benefits.

## Links to FCPF processes and the REDD+ SES

There are linkages between the SEPC and the FCPF Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (SES). Here we propose actions to increase coordination and avoid duplication that might place unnecessary burdens on countries.

Overall, there are some differences between existing standards, with regard to both purpose and content. Nevertheless, the adoption of the SEPC with the explicit purpose that they should serve as a 'guiding framework' would enable the UN-REDD Programme to clarify and strengthen the linkages with other initiatives.

The Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) applied by FCPF is a process that helps to ensure compliance with applicable World Bank safeguards, as distinct from compliance with the Cancun safeguards. It is required for FCPF financing and includes an ESMF as a distinct output. UN Agencies that are Delivery Partners for the FCPF are required to use this approach. The SEPC, together with the BeRT, explicitly draws attention to REDD+-specific issues, and can serve to guide what is covered in this process. Countries such as Republic of the Congo have already used the SEPC to inform the SESA process.

There has been a considerable dialogue between those engaged in the drafting of the SEPC and the REDD+ SES initiative. Current understanding is that the links are most relevant in supporting countries on the development of national approaches to safeguards.

In order to move towards greater coherence and to avoid duplication and placing unnecessary burdens on countries, it is proposed that the UN-REDD Programme:

- Seeks to ensure that in joint FCPF/UN-REDD Programme countries, the use of the SEPC and the SESA process are coordinated in a complementary way; and

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un-redd.org/MultipleBenefitsPublications/tabid/5954/Default.aspx>

- Strengthens the discussions with REDD+ SES to seek ways to promote complementarity.

## Next steps/agenda for further work

It is proposed that progress on developing tools using the SEPC for the two principal applications identified above will be made over the coming year through the following areas of action:

- Update current version of BeRT to address revised SEPC
- Further tailor BeRT and develop other tools to support application of the SEPC, as needed
- Testing SEPC and BeRT for different applications (programme development, M & E, etc)
- Develop explicit guidance on joint application of the set of UN-REDD Programme tools described above
- Continue engagement to formalize linkages with FCPF and REDD+ SES

An update on progress will be provided at the UN-REDD Programme's Ninth Policy Board meeting.