

REDD+ Safeguards Information System

Lowering Emissions, Enhancing Forests (LEEF) in Nagaon, Assam



Lowering Emissions, Enhancing Forests (LEEF) in Nagaon, Assam

**REDD+ Safeguards Information Systems and Benefit
Sharing Mechanism**

**Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation
&
IORA Ecological Solutions**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	4
LIST OF TABLES.....	4
ABBREVIATIONS.....	5
INTRODUCTION.....	7
WHAT ARE REDD+ SAFEGUARDS.....	7
SAFEGUARD INFORMATION SYSTEM	9
METHODOLOGY.....	11
PROCESS OF DEVELOPING SIS FOR LEEF.....	13
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT	17
CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR SAFEGUARDS.....	17
MONITORING SAFEGUARDS.....	19

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: UNFCCC DECISIONS RELATED REDD+ SAFEGUARDS AND SIS	9
FIGURE 2: KEY ELEMENTS OF REDD+	10
FIGURE 3: INSTITUTIONS TO BE ACTED AS REDD+ STAKEHOLDERS FOR IMPLEMENTING SAFEGUARDS AND ESTABLISHING SAFEGUARD INFORMATION SYSTEM	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 4: CRITERIA AND INDICATORS ADDRESSING REDD+ SAFEGUARDS	19
FIGURE 5: GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF INDICATORS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 6: TYPES OF BENEFITS FROM REDD+ (BROAD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 7: TYPES OF REDD+ BENEFIT SHARING	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 8: FUND HOLDING SYSTEM OF JFMC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 9: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL BENEFIT SHARING (ADAPTED FROM ELLIS-JONES)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 10: FLOW OF FUND FOR GOVERNMENT FORESTS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 11: FLOW OF FUND FOR PROTECTED FORESTS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FIGURE 12: OPTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFIT AT LOCAL LEVEL.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTING CANCUN SAFEGUARDS	12
TABLE 2: RELEVANT EXISTING POLICIES FOR LEEF NAGAON WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH CANCUN SAFEGUARDS	14

ABBREVIATIONS

APFBCS	Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Society
BSM	Benefit Sharing Mechanism
CAMPA	Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
C-ECON	Economic Criteria
C-ENV	Environmental Criteria
C-PROC	Procedural Criteria
C-SOC	Social Criteria
C&I	Criteria and Indicators
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GIM	Green India Mission
DoEF	Department of Environment and Forests, Government of Assam
HCV	High Conservation Value
IORA	IORA Ecological Solutions
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IWMP	Integrated Watershed Development Programme
JFMC	Joint Forest Management Committee
LEEF	Lowering Emissions, Enhancing Forests
MAB	UNESCO's Man and Biosphere
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NAP	National Afforestation Programme
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRLM	Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods Mission
PCRs	Preservation of Physical Cultural Resources
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SES	Social and Environmental Safeguards
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIS	Safeguard Information System
TPP	Twenty Point Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNFCCC	United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nation Forum on Forest
WTO	World Trade Organization

DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

Assam Project on Forest Biodiversity Conservation Society (APFBCS) under the Department of Environment and Forests (DoEF), Government of Assam with technical assistance from IORA Ecological Solutions (IORA) is developing a Jurisdictional Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) project, called Lowering Emissions, Enhancing Forests (LEEF) in Nagaon district of Assam. The objective of LEEF is to decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the forests of the district by deploying effective intervention instruments to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The resultant carbon benefits and co-benefits will be quantified under the project.

Co-benefits include biodiversity conservation, access to cleaner cooking devices, improved standard of living, better options for livelihood, enhanced climate resilience etc., which are also an integral part of any REDD+ project. A well-designed REDD+ project benefit sharing mechanisms will support the effectiveness of forest management and increase the efficacy of the project. Although primarily a climate change mitigation project, LEEF has safeguards built-in to ensure that community and/or environmental interests are not compromised in the design of the project or in its implementation. These safeguards are to be monitored during the life of the REDD+ project.

By linking the climate change mitigation benefits, and the social and environmental co-benefits, the State of Assam will attempt to access national and/or international incentive mechanisms on climate change. These benefits, can either be monetary or be in other forms (e.g.: direct transfer of cooking devices), and it is the prerogative of the project developer to design a functional benefit sharing mechanism.

This report details two major elements of the REDD+ project:

1. Safeguards Information System (SIS), which will be in place to monitor whether community and environmental interests are appropriately adhered to during the implementation of the REDD+ project, and
2. Benefit Sharing Mechanism (BSM) on how the benefits accrued through the project will be shared with the stakeholders.

WHAT ARE REDD+ SAFEGUARDS

REDD+ is not only about forest carbon stocks and carbon business, it is also about protecting the environment and lives of forest dependent communities, their culture and heritage. A significant basis of the success of REDD+ will be the continued development and implementation of safeguards. REDD+ safeguards confirm its implementation in a comprehensive and transparent manner. It aims to ensure that REDD+ actions do not cause negative social or environmental impacts and cover a range of issues, including respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, transparent national forest governance structures, effective participation of stakeholders, and the conservation of natural forests and biodiversity. It also mitigates the potential negative impacts of displacement, loss of livelihoods and possible conflicts caused by unequal distribution of and poor access to benefits from REDD+ initiatives. The mechanisms developed here are in context of local development programs and integrated with existing systems to avoid any discrepancies or confusions.

It is important to develop country-level REDD+ approaches that enable us to respond to requirements outlined in the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreements, which aim to ensure that social and environmental risks are minimized and benefits enhanced. Although the UNFCCC decisions provide comprehensive guidance on country-level safeguards, substantial work is desirable in order to decode this into safeguard approaches within countries and REDD+ projects within each landscape.

Safeguard is a *measure taken to protect someone or something or to prevent something undesirable*¹. Safeguards are procedures and approaches that can help to ensure that REDD+ activities do no harm to people or the environment, mitigate the risk of adverse environmental and social impacts of REDD+ activities, and promote benefits beyond carbon emission reductions. It is regularly used with reference to measures, such as policies or procedures, intended to avoid adverse outcomes of actions or programmes. Safeguards can be an effective risk management policy.

International efforts in environmental safeguards in programs can be traced to the United Nations' Stockholm Convention (1972) where Principle 12 of the Stockholm Declaration affirms the need to develop environmental safeguards into developmental planning. Parties to the UNFCCC have adopted broad guidance and safeguards for REDD+ activities in Cancun in 2010 (Paragraph 2 in the Appendix I) at the 16th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. Paragraph 72, decision 1/ CP.16 requests developing country Parties, when developing and implementing their national REDD+ strategies, to address the safeguards detailed, ensuring the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, inter alia indigenous peoples and local communities.

Set of seven safeguards agreed to under the UNFCCC, which should be promoted and supported when undertaking REDD+ activities also known as Cancun Safeguards are given in Box 1.

Box 1

Cancun Seven Safeguards are:

1. Actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
2. Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
3. 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;
4. Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, including, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities;
5. Actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that actions 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;
6. Actions to address the risks of reversals;
7. Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

An important element of REDD+ safeguards, which is being negotiated under the UNFCCC, is systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected. A decision at the climate change meetings in the 17th Conference of the Parties held at Durban (2011) agreed to work on safeguard information systems (SIS) and to “build upon existing systems, as appropriate” (UNFCCC, 2012).

In order to ensure that social and environmental risks are minimized and benefits are enhanced, we should have a country-level Safeguard and SIS approaches as outlined in UNFCCC decisions. A brief of these decisions are given in Figure 1 below.

¹ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/safeguard>

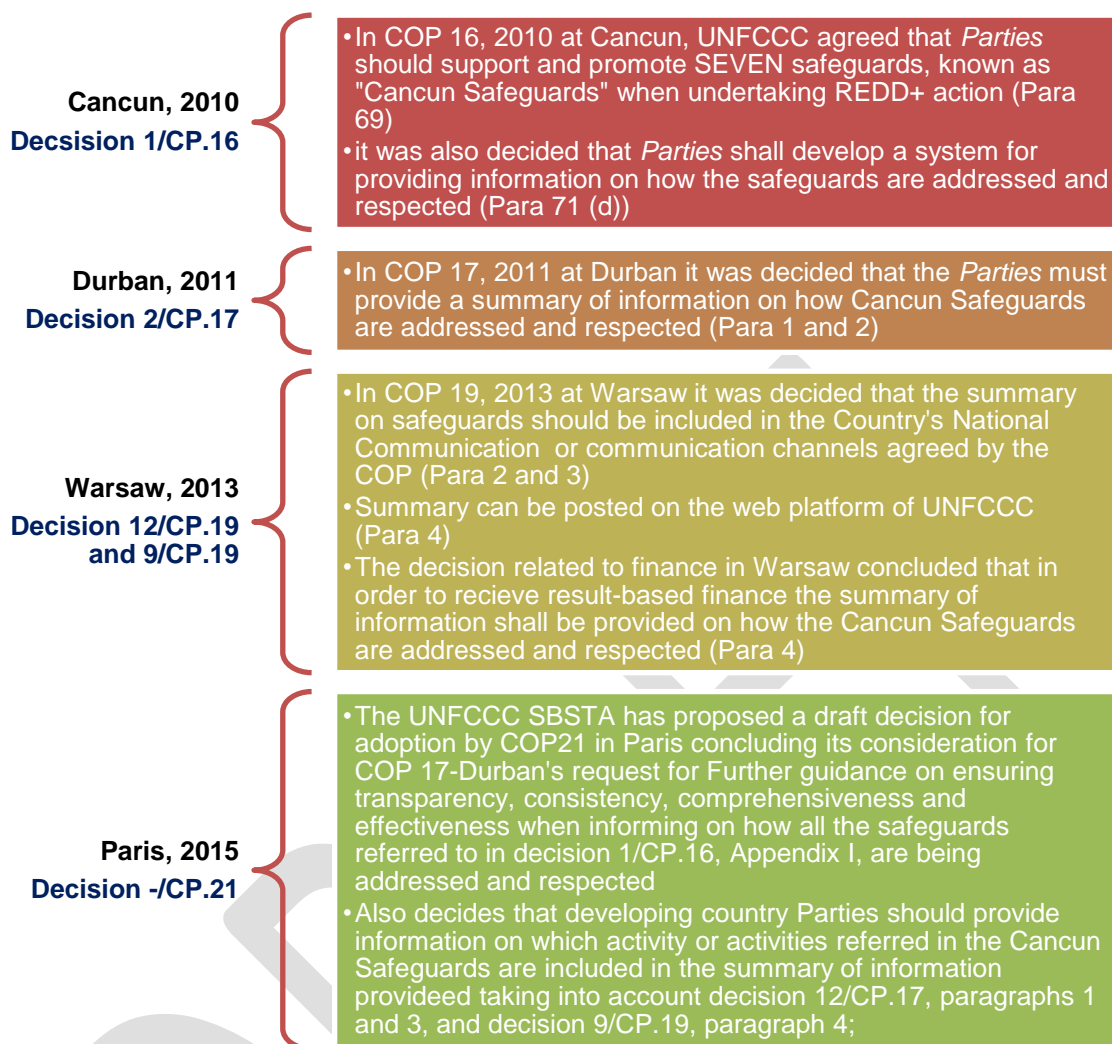


FIGURE 1: UNFCCC DECISIONS RELATED REDD+ SAFEGUARDS AND SIS

SAFEGUARD INFORMATION SYSTEM

SIS provides a systematic approach for collecting and providing information on how REDD+ safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the REDD+ implementation (UNFCCC). It is a system to provide information on how all Cancun Safeguards are addressed. Effective systems to share information will help promote transparency, guard against unintended social and environmental harms, and provide information on the impact of REDD+ actions.

SIS can be understood as "the set of institutions and processes through which information is collected, verified, assessed, published and fed back to relevant institutions." Development of an SIS does not require establishment of an entirely new system. It is likely to be more cost effective, in the long term, to develop an SIS from a combination of existing information systems, sources and institutional arrangements to meet desired SIS objectives. SIS is also one of the key elements of REDD+ referred to in the Warsaw Framework (Figure 2).



FIGURE 2: KEY ELEMENTS OF REDD+ IN WARSAW FRAMEWORK

Most countries consider REDD+ focal points as the logical entity for reporting to the UNFCCC, being that they are well placed to access and coordinate information using existing lines of communication (Box 2). SIS criteria, functions and institutional arrangements can all be adjusted in line with progress or revisions to the country's policies/programs and adoption of the Cancun Safeguards in the country-specific context. Such a process of incrementally refining the design of an SIS is anticipated and expected under the UNFCCC, which notes that an SIS should "be flexible to allow for improvements over time". In the Asia-Pacific region, for example, a number of countries have indicated that their SIS should be aligned to national policy agendas related to the environment, forest management as well as sustainable development goals (SDGs). In order to ensure that social and environmental risks are minimized and benefits are enhanced, country-level Safeguard and SIS approaches are being developed². Landscape and project-based safeguards are the stepping stone towards building such national level safeguards.

Box 2

Safeguards systems across the world:

- Indonesia has evolved data collection to the provincial level, with the national focal point rolling up information and reporting internationally.
- Tanzania has institutional processes in place that allow Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and REDD+ project implementers to feed information on REDD+ projects to the national level, and are exploring using these avenues for conveying safeguard information.
- The project-level MRV system in the Philippines that assesses emissions and safeguards is providing lessons and input to the national level.
- Ethiopia, informed by Participatory Forest Management experiences, stresses the importance of community-level involvement in safeguard reporting, including data collection, monitoring and measurement.
- Tanzania and Vietnam's work to develop an SIS has included multi-stakeholder working groups.
- The Philippines' experience shows the importance of stakeholders, particularly CSOs in filling capacity gaps.

² Peskett L and Todda K. Putting REDD+ Safeguards and Safeguard Information Systems Into Practice. UNREDD+ Policy Brief

METHODOLOGY

Only some details and guidelines are available on how Parties address and respect Cancun Safeguards. The guidelines however emphasize that it should be in line with national and local circumstances, respective capabilities, recognizing national sovereignty and legislation, relevant international obligations, agreements, and should respect gender considerations. Therefore, the project SIS mechanism in its approach shall reflect its unique needs and situation for a Jurisdictional project and the range of socio-economic issues prevalent in the State of Assam and in Nagaon district which are to be recorded and analyzed in order to reduce and reverse the rate of deforestation and forest degradation. The data collection design can be scaled-up to State level.

Key to assessment and reporting of safeguards is establishment of robust datasets and inclusion of feedback loops, including continuous review of risk areas, as these may change over time. Stepwise approach for safeguards operationalization and the setup of SIS for LEEF in Nagaon include:

- Conduct risk assessment to identify priority areas in the REDD+ design
- Develop safeguard criteria and indicators through analysis of available data
- Review of legal frameworks and identification of gaps
- Identification of existing information sharing systems
- Analysis of existing practices and lessons

Based on the above study, the goal and the scope of the safeguards system is decided.

Set the safeguards goal

Are we going to restrict for Cancun Safeguards or any other safeguards standard chosen by the State or will follow the funder safeguards

Set the safeguards scope

Determine which Jurisdictional REDD+ actions will be used to which the shortlisted safeguards will be applied

For developing Safeguard standards for information collection and monitoring, the following REDD+ measures were considered:

- Environmental factors—biodiversity, Forest ecosystem services, High Conservation Value (HCV) species
- Socioeconomic factors—poverty reduction, job creation, improved well-being, benefits sharing
- Social factors—impacts on indigenous peoples and marginalized groups; gender impacts
- Economic—distribution of costs and benefit
- Governance—law implementation, law enforcement, legal situation of land, land and resource tenure
- Sustainable production of goods and services
- Capacity building of people

Parameters to accurately quantify indicators are finalized to monitor the indicators of the SIS. The indicators could be process indicators (e.g. to illustrate whether or not an output has been achieved) or impact indicators (e.g. linked to actual social or environmental impacts), and the associated parameters to monitor as finalized.

TABLE 1: GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTING CANCUN SAFEGUARDS

Safeguard no.	Description of safeguard	Understanding and Implementing the safeguard
Safeguard (a) (i)	REDD+ actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant national and state level forest policies including labor law, indigenous people rights, programs, governance structure and law enforcement practices National as well as State level forest, environmental, labor, indigenous people rights, laws and policies should be considered and respected in the design of LEEF actions.
Safeguard (a) (ii)	REDD+ actions complement or are consistent with relevant international conventions and agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant international law to which India is a Party. Examine the extent to which the REDD+ action address and respect the identified international policies. The action plan for LEEF should be in line with international policies. The project should respect the international social, environmental, cultural, labor and commercial treaties to which India is signatory
Safeguard (b)	Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the current forest governance and institutional structure in the State. Identify relevant international, national and state level laws and policies against corruption and for transparency. The project manager shall make all its information available to the public for free, both in Assamese and English languages. Periodic auditing of information trail and functioning of information platforms. Promote anti-corruptions measures through robust M&E system. Information related financial reporting and benefit sharing shall be transparent and freely available Develop a comprehensive grievance redressal mechanism.
Safeguard (c)	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 United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the state, national and international laws and policies related to protection of indigenous communities and respect to traditional knowledge. The project's design shall incorporate statutory, customary and cultural rights of the indigenous and local communities including United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Recognize and respect local and traditional knowledge without any discrimination. Land ownerships and rights shall be respected without any discrimination.
Safeguard (d)	The full and effective participation of relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant legal and regulatory framework which respect and promote effective participation of

Safeguard no.	Description of safeguard	Understanding and Implementing the safeguard
	stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision	<p>stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective participation of stakeholders in particular indigenous peoples and local communities throughout the project cycle and they can take part in decision making processes including benefit sharing • Establish a mechanism to promote information sharing, awareness generation and active participation in the project development and implementation process • Consult the stakeholders in particular indigenous and local communities and obtain their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) on the project actions and interventions.
Safeguard (E)	That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify state and national policies, laws and rules related to forest conservation and protection of biological diversity • The project shall be consistent with conservation and protection of natural forest and biodiversity • Avoid invasive and exotic species for plantation. • Promote plantation of native trees. • Endangered, threatened and HCV species shall be identified and conserved/will not be harmed in any way through the REDD+ project.
Safeguards (f) and (g)	<p>Actions to address the risks of reversals</p> <p>And</p> <p>Actions to reduce displacement of emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project shall provide alternative livelihood opportunities in order to avoid leakage or displacement of emission. • Proper leakage management plan shall be designed and implemented in order to avoid displacement of emission.

PROCESS OF DEVELOPING SIS FOR LEEF

Stepwise approach for safeguards operationalization and the setup of SIS for LEEF Nagaon are as follows:

- Conduct risk assessment through multilevel stakeholder consultation with all relevant stakeholders to identify priority areas in district specific REDD+ design.
- Develop safeguard criteria and indicators through analysis of available data.

Review of REDD+ discourses to identify:

- Objectives for REDD+ Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES).
- Legal frameworks and identification of gaps.

- Analysis of existing SES practices and lessons.
- Identification of existing information sharing systems.

We have followed the Durban Declaration (See Box 3) which sets the background for SIS development in the context of REDD+ for developing SIS for LEEF in Nagaon

For developing SIS, the following important factors were considered:

Box 3
Durban Decision 12/CP.17 Guidance on developing SIS:

- Be consistent with guidance in decision 1/CP.16, Appendix 1, Paragraph 1
- Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis
- Be transparent and flexible to allow improvements over time
- Provide information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected
- Be country-driven and implemented at national level
- Build upon existing systems, as appropriate

- Existing international, national and state laws, policies, regulation, programmes
- Environmental factors – biodiversity, forest ecosystem services ,HCVs
- Socioeconomic factors – poverty reduction, livelihood opportunities, improved well-being,
- Social factors – impacts on indigenous peoples and marginalized groups; gender impacts, traditional and local knowledge of forest conservation and protection
- Cultural impacts
- Economic – distribution of costs and benefit
- Governance – transparency and effectiveness, law implementation, law enforcement, legal situation of land, land and resource tenure, corruption and fraud management, grievance redressal, adequate information sharing mechanism

- Benefits sharing
- Drivers of deforestation and forest degradation
- Sustainable management of forest goods and services
- Existing capacity and capacity building of institutions, individuals.
- Risk of reversal and displacement of emissions
- Monitoring and Reporting mechanisms.

In order to collect information on whether safeguards are being addressed and respected, indicators had to be developed. The first step involved reviewing all existing national and state level policies which can have direct or indirect influence on forests and safeguards the interests of stakeholders. These policies can help in two aspects: i) Form the guiding post in developing REDD+ relevant safeguards ii) Allow existing system to be building blocks of safeguards for REDD+ and in that way use an existing system instead of 'reinventing the wheel'. The table below details the policies and schemes which have been reviewed for developing the SIS for LEEF in Nagaon.

TABLE 2: RELEVANT EXISTING POLICIES FOR LEEF NAGAON WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH CANCUN SAFEGUARDS

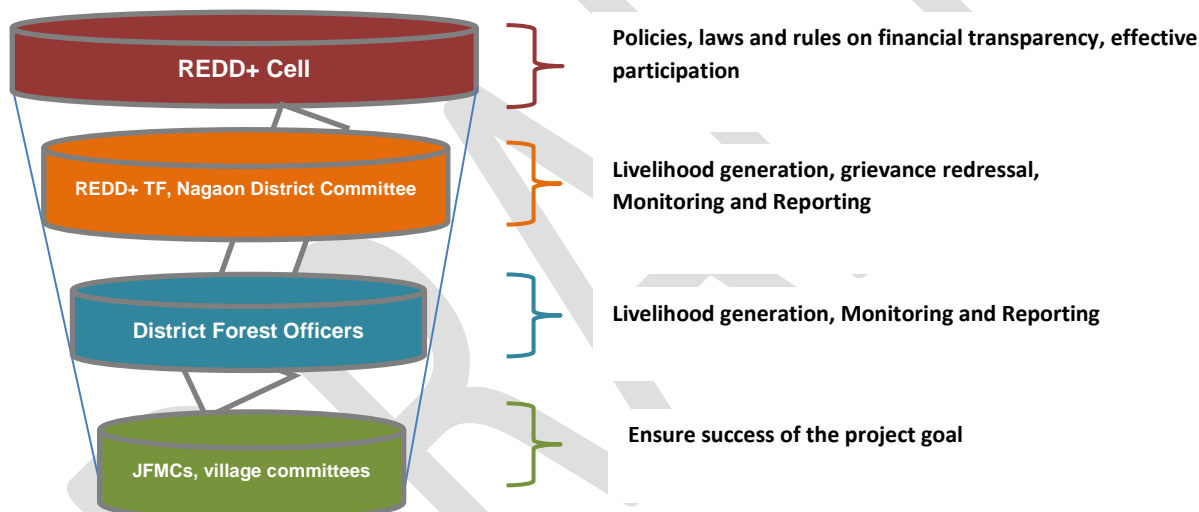
Safeguard No.	Description of safeguard	Existing policies which address and respect Cancun Safeguards
Safeguard (a) (i)	REDD+ actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programme	<p>National Level Law, Policies and Programmes - National Forest Policy 1988, Indian Forest Act 1927, Wild life Protection Act, 1972, Forest Conservation Act, 1980, Environment Protection Act, 1986, Forest Conservation Rules, 2004, Biological Diversity Act, 2002, National Environmental Policy 2006, National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Green India Mission (GIM), Twenty Point Programme (TPP), Finance Commission Outlay, National Agroforestry Policy, 2014, Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWMP), Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Aajeevika National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005, Labor Act 2016, Draft National REDD+ Policy, 2014</p> <p>State Laws and Policies - Assam Forest Policy, 2004, Sylhet Jhumland Regulation, 1891, The Assam Rhinoceros Preservation Act 1954, Elephant Preservation (Assam Amendment), Act 1959, The Assam National Park Act 1968, Assam Forest Regulation, 1891 including Assam Forest Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1995, Assam Forest Protection Force Act 1986, The Assam Forest (Removal And Storage of Forest Produce) Regulation Act, 2000, Assam Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1994, Assam Compensatory Afforestation Fund Rules, 1994, Assam Wood Based Industries (Establishment & Regulation) Rules, 2000, Assam Revolving Fund(Forest Department) Rules, 2000, Assam (Control of Felling & Removal of trees from Non-forest Land) Rules, 2002, Assam Forest (Rewards) Rules, 2002, Assam Joint Forest Management Rules ,1998, Bamboo & Cane Policy, 2005, Jhum (Swidden) Cultivation</p>
Safeguard (a) (ii)	REDD+ actions complement or are consistent with relevant international conventions and agreements	Stockholm Declaration of the United Nations Conference in Human Environment (1972), United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992, United Nation Forum on Forest (UNFF), 2000, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1973, RAMSAR Convention, 1971, World Trade Organization (WTO), 1995, UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB), 1971, International Labor Organization Conventions (107 and 169), 1989
Safeguard (b)	Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty	National Forest Policy 1988, Indian Forest Act 1927, Wild life Protection Act, 1972, Forest Conservation Act, 1980, Biological Diversity Act, 2002, National Environmental Policy 2006, Assam Forest Policy, 2004, The Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, Draft National REDD+ Policies, 2014, National Agroforestry Policy, 2014, Assam Forest Policy, 2004, Assam Forest Protection Force Act 1986, Assam Joint Forest Management Rules, 1998
Safeguard (c)	Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous	National Forest Policy 1988, Indian Forest Act 1927, The Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, National

Safeguard No.	Description of safeguard	Existing policies which address and respect Cancun Safeguards
	peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	Agroforestry Policy, 2014, Draft National REDD+ Policy, 2014, Forest Conservation Rules, 2004, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, UNFCCC, 1992, CBD, 1992, UNFF, 2000, Assam Forest Policy, 2004, Bamboo & Cane Policy, 2005, Assam Joint Forest Management Rules ,1998
Safeguard (d)	The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision	National Forest Policy 1988, Indian Forest Act 1927, The Right to information Act, 2005, The Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, Draft National REDD+ Policy, 2014, Assam Forest Policy, 2004, Bamboo & Cane Policy, 2005, Assam Joint Forest Management Rules ,1998
Safeguard (e)	That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision 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	National Forest Policy 1988, Indian Forest Act 1927, Wild life Protection Act, 1972, Forest Conservation Act, 1980, Environment Protection Act, 1986, Forest Conservation Rules, 2004, Biological Diversity Act,2002, National Environmental Policy 2006, NAP, GIM,TPP, Finance Commission Outlay, National Agroforestry Policy, 2014, IWMP, CAMPA, MGNREGS, NRLM, Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005, Labor Act 2016, Draft National REDD+ Policy, 2014, Assam Forest Policy, 2004, Assam Joint Forest Management Rules ,1998
Safeguards (f) and (g)	Actions to address the risks of reversals	Draft National REDD+ Policy, 2014 and REDD+ Reference Document, 2015, MoEFCC

Safeguard No.	Description of safeguard	Existing policies which address and respect Cancun Safeguards
	And Actions to reduce displacement of emissions	

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The Assam State REDD+ Cell set up under the Office of the Chief Secretary will oversee the finalization of the SIS for REDD+ in the State. The REDD+ Task Force under the Office of the PCCF (HoFF) and the District REDD+ Committee will implement the system, and will also play a key role in monitoring, reporting, collation and verification of the safeguards through the life of the LEEF project. The district forest officers will coordinate and guide LEEF actions at every point and engage with the range level forest officials and other institutions to collect, process, and manage all relevant information and data relating to forest carbon accounting and related safeguards.



The monitoring of safeguards will be done in the same way monitoring of project parameters will be done. Flow of information shall be from the JFMCs to the district forest officials, the district committee, REDD+ Task Force and the REDD+ Cell. However, all the information will be collated by the DoEF before the same is presented to the REDD+ Task Force and the REDD+ Cell. In case of any changes in the data/parameters, the same may be decided with the permission of the REDD+ Task Force and information to the Nagaon District REDD+ Committee. The Nagaon district REDD+ Committee will also be responsible for any capacity development of community and CBOs on monitoring and reporting of parameters on safeguards.

CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR SAFEGUARDS

Chapter 11, Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (also known as the Earth Summit) in 1992, called for the identification of criteria and indicators (C&I) for evaluating progress in national and regional efforts to practice Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). As a result, several international organizations have developed country or region-specific C&Is, including the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Pan-European (or Helsinki) Process, the Montreal Process and the Dry Zone Asia and Dry Zone Africa Processes, which have each generated sets of C&I.

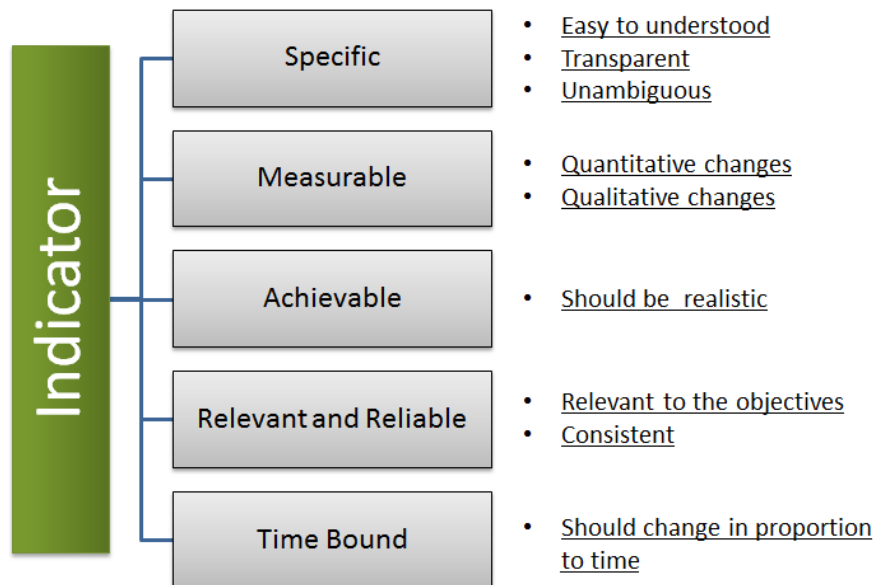


FIGURE 3. SMART INDICATORS FOR REDD+

Criteria are the standards that define the goals to be met through implementing a REDD+ project. A criteria of analyzing safeguards should have SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) and simple indicators with clear institutional mandates and sufficient operational budgets for the compilation of information over time³.

³ UN-REDD Programme 2015c

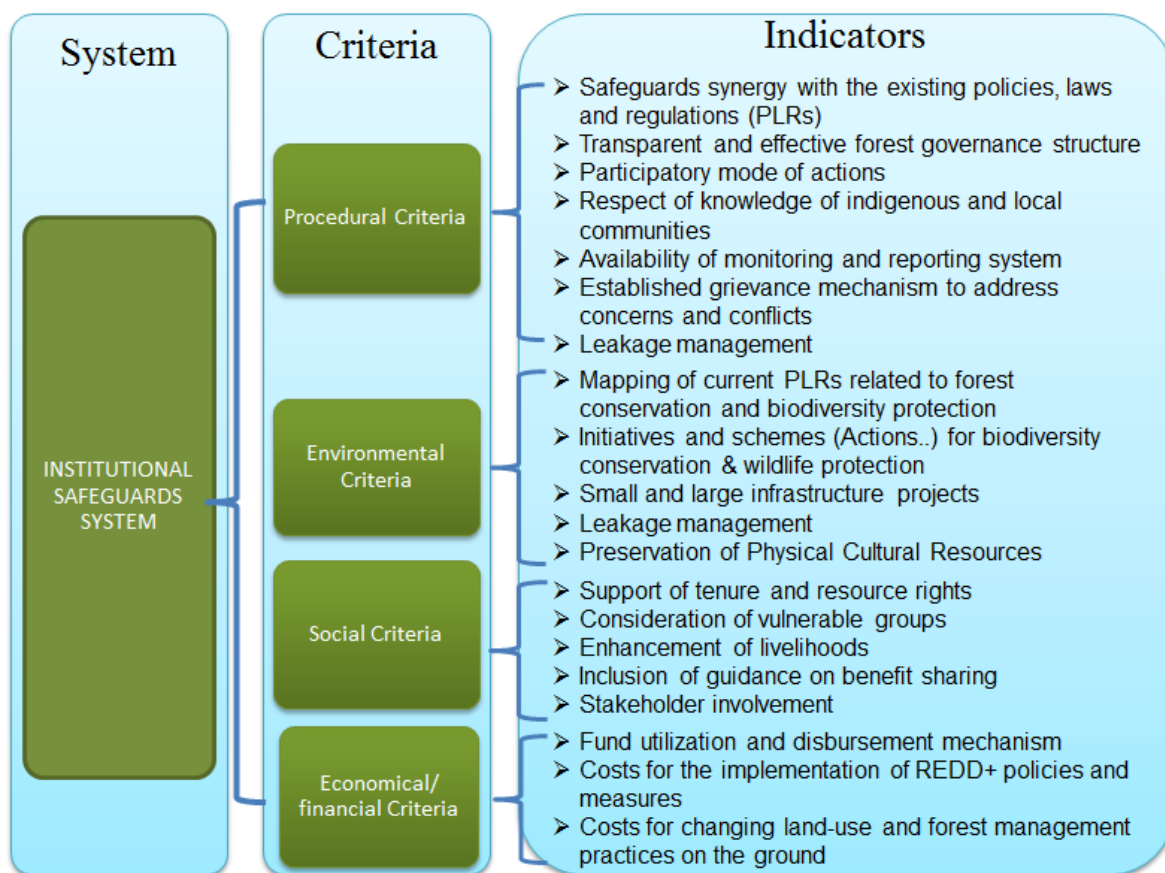


Figure 3: Criteria and Indicators addressing REDD+ safeguards

MONITORING SAFEGUARDS

PROCEDURAL CRITERIA

Procedural criteria are governance issues that relate to the proper functioning of national level, sub-national level and forest sector decision making and management. This criteria is focused to address the issues related to the integration of REDD+ into policies, laws, and regulations; transparency; stakeholder participation; and grievance mechanisms, which can be referred to either as “safeguards” or as procedural standards depending on the initiative. Seven indicators are designed to address procedural criteria of the project.

Indicator No.	C-PROC 1
Name of the Indicator	Safeguards synergy with the existing policies, laws and regulations (PLRs)
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	Cancun safeguard 1
Parameter	No of actions divergent or against to existing policies, laws, regulations and international treaties
Description of parameters	It will be ensured that LEEF actions do not conflict with state and national law or international agreements.
Unit of measurement	Number
Source of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing PLRs - state portals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project reports • Project verification reports
Methodology of collection of data	Through literature survey for PLRs and project implementation report
Measuring/recording frequency	Shall be reported for compliance at the formulation stage and reported at every monitoring.
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	NA
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-PROC 2
Name of the Indicator	Transparent and effective forest governance structure
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	Cancun Safeguard 2
Parameter	Existing and newly formed village level committees in the project area for effective implementation of the project
Description of parameters	<p>Transparency is an important component for ensuring accountability in governance. It will help to ensure transparency and access to information, and effectiveness and efficiency of systems for feedback, oversight and accountability.</p> <p>By requiring that information on REDD+ policies, programs and projects be available to the public, identified delivery partners and government stakeholders are held responsible for finance as well as successes and failures of a program or project.</p> <p>It will address transparency in implementation, execution, benefit sharing, information sharing, gender equality, implementation of PLRs, monitoring etc.</p>
Unit of measurement	Number
Source of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project records • Project verification reports • Government reports
Methodology of collection of data	Through consultation and field monitoring as well from secondary sources
Measuring/recording frequency	Annually
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of committee formed at the district level • Number of committee formed to the total villages in the project area
Additional comments	Uploading information on online portals or databases (APFBC or DoEF websites) should be encouraged to make information easily available and up to date. Availability of information in local languages can help increase accessibility.

Indicator No.	C-PROC 3
Name of the Indicator	Participatory mode of actions
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	Cancun safeguard 4
Parameter	<p>Extent of participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committee meetings for LEEF activities 2. Implementation and other project activities 3. Negotiation and benefit sharing 4. free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)

Description of parameters	This indicator has potential to strengthen recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, including the right to FPIC. It will ensure active participation of all the stakeholders in REDD+ activities.
Unit of measurement	Percentage participation
Source of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings, consultations and PRAs attendance sheets • Record books
Methodology of collection of data	Through record books, meetings and consultations Minutes of Meetings, invitation letters and attendance list.
Measuring/recording frequency	Annually
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Enumeration of total participation
Additional comments	Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders at all stages of project development is a critical component of good governance and important in strengthening public institutions, transparency and promoting democratic processes ⁴ .

Indicator No.	C-PROC 4
Name of the Indicator	Respect of knowledge of indigenous and local communities
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	Cancun safeguard 3
Parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of micro plans in the project area • In the absence of micro plan, No. of PRAs, focal group discussions, resource mapping • Effective consultation without discrimination • Capacity building support for indigenous and local peoples • Appropriate steps taken to protect and fulfil rights and culture of indigenous peoples
Description of parameter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of micro plan prepared by communities in the LEEF will be evaluated. • In the absence of micro plan, total number of PRA exercise, FGDs and resource mapping carried out will be evaluated. • Number of Capacity building programs conducted and steps taken to improve and strengthen local communities rights and interests under the project activities
Unit of measurement	Number
Source of data	Micro plans, Minutes of the meeting,
Methodology of collection of data	Review of micro plans and/or reports/ peer reviewed papers
Measuring/recording frequency	At least every 5 years
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	NA
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-PROC 5
Name of the Indicator	Availability of monitoring and reporting system
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 2
Parameters	To monitor progress and device compliance

⁴ FCMC. REDD+ Social Safeguards and Standards Review. Forest Carbon, Markets and Communities Program (FCMC) for USAID (p. 9). 2013

Description of parameter	Information on how data are stored and shared and how safeguards are being addressed and respected has to be collected and reported in a systematic way throughout the project process
Unit of measurement	Qualitative (Yes/No)
Source of data	Annual report and consultation/ meetings, sample surveys
Methodology of collection of data	Project records, project verification reports, etc.
Measuring/recording frequency	Annually
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	NA
Additional comments	Uploading information on online portals or databases should be encouraged to make information easily available and up to date. Availability of information in local languages can help increase accessibility.

Indicator No.	C-PROC 6
Name of the Indicator	Established grievance mechanism to address concerns and conflicts
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 3
Parameters	To address concerns in cases where REDD+ projects cause conflicts or when safeguards are not applied.
Description of parameter	It involved verifying the existing grievance and redress mechanism and comparing with the international standards. Parameters like conflict resolution mechanism available, number of grievance recorded and solved, availability of redressal mechanism etc. to be evaluated. This mechanism will provide a way for local communities to have a voice and a channel for resolution and redress
Unit of measurement	Yes/No
Source of data	Annual report, conflict register, Grievance redressal cells, complain register etc.
Methodology of collection of data	Verification reports, project records, grievance redressal cells, conflict register, registered complaint in grievance redressal cells and complaint resolved etc.
Measuring/recording frequency	At least every 5 years
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	N/A
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-PROC 7
Name of the Indicator	Leakage management
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 6 and 7
Parameters	To monitor shift in drivers from project area to non-project areas
Description of parameter	A procedural requirement to identify possible leakage displacement from the project in the jurisdiction.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative (tons)
Source of data	Annual report
Methodology of collection of data	Project records and verification reports
Measuring/recording frequency	At least every 5 years
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Amount of CO ₂ equivalent in tons.

Additional comments	Analyze the CO ₂ leakage, Random checks/site audits/interviews of key personnel etc. to validate the quantity of leakage.
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ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

Environmental criteria mandates that biodiversity and ecosystem services possibly affected by the LEEF project are identified, prioritized and mapped, and the project maintains and enhances the identified biodiversity and ecosystem service. Further, the project should not lead to the conversion or degradation of natural forests or other areas that are important for maintaining and enhancing the identified biodiversity and ecosystem service priorities. Five indicators are designed to address procedural criteria of Jurisdictional REDD+ project in Nagaon:

Indicator No.	C-ENV 1
Name of the indicator	The mapping of current policies, laws and regulations related to forest conservation and biodiversity protection
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Safeguard 1
Parameters	To monitor implementation of PLRs
Description of the indicator	These policies have been developed after extensive consultations with stakeholders over the years. It will be evaluated how these PLRs have been implemented and operationalized in the jurisdiction.
Unit of measurement	Qualitative
Source of Data	Policy documents at state and national level, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazette of India • Human Development Reports • Other relevant documents
Methodology of data collection	Desk study of relevant policy documents
Measuring/Recording Frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method (where applicable)	N/A
Additional Comments	This will help to ensure LEEF actions do not conflict with national law or international agreements.

Indicator No.	C-ENV 2
Name of the indicator	Initiatives and actions for biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection at the state and national level
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Safeguard 5
Parameters	To analysis impacts of conservation initiatives undertaken.
Description of the indicator	Evaluation of the success of these initiatives on the ground. There will be assessment of factors like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of poachers arrested/no. of weapons seized • Mode of surveillance and spatial distribution of surveillance instruments • Information from field surveys/camera trapping studies/tagging (if any)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of ex-situ and in-situ conservation measures for rare, endangered and endemic species in the project area <p>This will help to incentivize protection and conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, and their services and other benefits.</p>
Unit of measurement	Contingent on information presented.
Source of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk-based studies Field studies Information from other state departments Project records Verification reports
Methodology of data collection	Data collection will be based on the reconciling of results from desk-based studies, periodic reports of field studies and the procurement of relevant information from other state departments wherever applicable.
Measuring/Recording Frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method (where applicable)	Total number of activities/incidence took place per annum.
Additional Comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-ENV 3
Name of the indicator	Small and large infrastructure projects, including the construction of hydro projects, dams and roads.
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Safeguard 6
Parameters	Loss of forest cover due to infrastructure projects
Description of parameter	An assessment of the small and large infrastructure projects currently under development in state, which have a potential for reversing benefits through the loss of forest carbon biomass. This will help ensure REDD+ activities result in long-lasting positive changes.
Unit of measurement	Nos.
Source of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of Cabinet meetings and State Assembly Annual Reports of state government departments, including Agriculture, Water Resources, Rural Development, Home Affairs, Horticulture, Finance.
Methodology of data collection	Government annual reports and other records.
Measuring/Recording Frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method (where applicable)	Calculation of the benefits lost through the loss of forest carbon biomass in terms of emissions, based on extent of forest and tree cover lost to given developmental activity.
Additional Comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-ENV 4
Name of the indicator	Initiatives towards Pest and Fire Management

Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Safeguard 6
Parameters	Incidence of fire and pest attack
Description of the indicator	Ensuring that the environmental risks associated with pests and forest fires are minimized, and that safe and environmentally-sound pest and forest fire management techniques are promoted. This will help ensure LEEF activities result in long-lasting positive changes.
Unit of measurement	Total land area affected due to fire and paste attack
Source of Data	Working Plans and other periodic subject-specific reports
Methodology of data collection	Field study and desk-based analysis of pest and fire management techniques currently underway in the jurisdiction.
Measuring/Recording Frequency	Annual
Calculation/analysis method (where applicable)	Calculation of the benefits lost through the loss of forest carbon biomass in terms of emissions, based on extent of forest and tree cover lost due to fire or disease.
Additional Comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-ENV 5
Name of the indicator	Preservation of Physical Cultural Resources (PCRs)
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Safeguard 3
Parameters	To avoid or mitigate, adverse impacts on cultural resources from development projects.
Description of parameter	Evaluation of PCRs using field surveys by experts, to document the presence and significance of these PCRs, including sacred groves. This will ensure that the project draws upon the knowledge of local communities on local forest conditions and appropriate actions.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of Data	Field-based sample surveys
Methodology of data collection	Data collection will involve field based sample surveys, including village-level discussions and consultations with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panchayat leaders and JFMC members. • Social Welfare Department of the jurisdiction. • Prominent civil society activists.
Measuring/Recording Frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method (where applicable)	Percentage of resources depleted/impacted per annum.
Additional Comments	Nil

SOCIAL CRITERIA

To ensure fully and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders especially indigenous communities and peoples five indicators are designed to address procedural criteria of the LEEF project.

Indicator No.	C-SOC 1
Name of the Indicator	Support of tenure and resource rights
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 3 and 4

Parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total land allotted to indigenous communities and total number of beneficiary households. • What are the kinds of rights they have under FRA in the jurisdiction?
Description of parameter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on prevailing customary land and resource rights, • Steps taken to strengthening tenure security, • Implementation of FRA and number of beneficiaries
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report, FRA online portal, land record book etc.
Methodology of collection of data	Data will be collected through primary and secondary sources including published reports, record book and online portal.
Measuring/recording frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Percentage of beneficiaries to the total populations
Additional comments	Addressing land tenure and rights is highly complementary to the overall goals of Jurisdictional REDD+ because forest communities with stronger land tenure have also been shown to be better stewards of sustainable resource use and conservation of forests ⁵

Indicator No.	C-SOC 2
Name of the Indicator	Consideration of vulnerable groups
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 3 and 4
Parameters	Involvement of vulnerable groups in REDD+ activities
Description of parameter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of indigenous peoples, women, religious or ethnic minorities in various LEEF activities as per project guidelines. • Activity wise involvement of vulnerable communities in decision making.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report, Activity register, FRA online portal, etc.
Methodology of collection of data	Data will be collected from record books and published literatures
Measuring/recording frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Percentage of involvement to the total populations
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-SOC 3
Name of the Indicator	Enhancement of livelihoods
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 4 and 5
Parameters	Existing program implemented in the project area to support livelihood and capacity development of forest dependent communities
Description of parameter	Address alternative income sources as well as capacity building and knowledge transfer mechanism adopted to enhance livelihoods of the community.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report and activity register, sample survey

⁵ Gregersen, H et al. The Greener Side of REDD+: Lessons for REDD+ from Countries where Forest Area is Increasing. Rights and Resources Initiative. 2011.

Methodology of collection of data	Data will be collected from annual report and activity register
Measuring/recording frequency	Annual
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Percentage of beneficiaries to the total populations.
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-SOC 4
Name of the Indicator	Inclusion of guidance on benefit sharing
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 5
Parameters	Availability of standard benefit sharing mechanism
Description of parameter	To ensure that benefits are distributed equitably among all stakeholders including local communities, government, and concession holders, as well as project developers and facilitators in the jurisdiction, if applicable. It will address vertical and horizontal transfer of benefits (both direct and indirect) arising from LEEF project.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report, activity register and audit report
Methodology of collection of data	Data will be collected from annual report, activity register and audit report
Measuring/recording frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Percentage of beneficiaries to the total populations.
Additional comments	Benefits are usually considered in terms of cash, but may also come in the form of capacity building, infrastructure, and social and environmental services ⁶ .

Indicator No.	C-SOC 5
Name of the Indicator	Stakeholder involvement
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 4 and 7
Parameters	Effective involvement of all stakeholders
Description of parameter	Involving all relevant stakeholders (local communities, wood producers, wood processing industries, governments, NGOs etc.) for Joint long-term planning on resource availability and utilization. It will help in ensuring long term sustainability and also minimizing the risk of displacement of emissions (leakage) from LEEF project.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Government reports and published literatures
Methodology of collection of data	Data on involvement of various stakeholder on different REDD+ activities will be accessed from government reports and literatures available.
Measuring/recording frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Total number of stakeholder per village/village community area.
Additional comments	Stakeholders will have a significant impact on the regional trade in forest products which affects national emissions.

⁶ Climate Focus (2013). Safeguard Standard Review.

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

In order to ensure economic or financial security of the LEEF project, a transparent fund utilization and disbursement mechanism should be ensured and cost benefit analysis of the project shall be undertaken. Three indicators are designed to address economic criteria of the project.

Indicator No.	C-ECON 1
Name of the Indicator	Fund utilization and disbursement mechanism
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 2
Parameters	To evaluate fund disbursement and utilization mechanism.
Description of parameter	This will ensure transparency in the system. It could help to ensure relevant stakeholder groups can access necessary information, and that decision-makers are held to account for meeting REDD+ targets and goals that have been set.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report, audit report, Ledgers maintained at JFCM/VFC/EDC level
Methodology of collection of data	Data should be collected through study of existing annual report, audit reports and Ledger book.
Measuring/recording frequency	Annual
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Total fund utilized/disbursed (INR)
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-ECON 2
Name of the Indicator	Costs for the implementation of policies and measures of LEEF project
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 6
Parameters	To analyses implementation cost of REDD+.
Description of parameter	This indicator will help in feasibility study through cost-benefit analysis. It will ensure REDD+ results in long-lasting change for the good of the climate.
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report, audit report, Ledgers maintained at JFCM/VFC/EDC level
Methodology of collection of data	Data should be collected through study of existing annual report, audit reports and Ledger book.
Measuring/recording frequency	Annual
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Expenditure (INR) per annum
Additional comments	Nil

Indicator No.	C-ECON 3
Name of the Indicator	Costs for changing land-use and forest management practices on the ground.
Synergy with Cancun Safeguards	1/CP.16 Cancun safeguard 6
Parameters	To analyses expenditure for changing land-use and forest management practices.
Description of parameter	This indicator will help in cost-benefit analysis. This will help in analyzing suitability of the system
Unit of measurement	Quantitative
Source of data	Annual report and audit report

Methodology of collection of data	Data should be collected through study of existing annual report, audit reports. It will ensure LEEF project results in long-lasting change for the good of the climate.
Measuring/recording frequency	At each monitoring
Calculation/analysis method where applicable	Expenditure per annum
QA/QC	Random checks/site audits/interviews of key personnel etc. to validate how effective the involvement is.
Additional comments	Nil

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