



WWF submission on methodological guidance for activities relating to REDD+

WWF welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of SBSTA by sharing our views on the issues identified by SBSTA at its thirty-fourth session, recorded in document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/L.14.

This submission is in two main parts, corresponding to two issues identified by SBSTA:

1. Guidance on a system for providing information on how **safeguards**, as referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16, are addressed and respected; and,
2. Guidance on modalities related to **forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels**.

For REDD+ to succeed, WWF believes that the following fundamental questions must be answered:

1. Is REDD+ demonstrably contributing to significant and permanent greenhouse gas emission reductions, with national goals working toward a global objective?
2. Is REDD+ maintaining and/or enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services?
3. Is REDD+ contributing to sustainable and equitable livelihoods, by addressing the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation?
4. Is REDD+ recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, implemented with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, including their Free, Prior, & Informed Consent of actions affecting their lands, territories and resources?
5. Is REDD+ mobilizing immediate, adequate and predictable resources for action in an equitable, transparent, participatory and coordinated manner?

While question 5 needs to be urgently addressed in the next session under the AWG-LCA and COP17, **WWF encourages SBSTA to use the first 4 questions as a basis for the development of guidance for the COP.**

Efforts under the REDD+ mechanism are at risk of not providing expected results. Without addressing international drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, the REDD+ mechanism will fail to reverse the trend of global forest loss. In Cancun, COP encourage(d) **all** Parties to find effective ways of reducing human pressure on forests that results in greenhouse gas emissions, including undertaking actions to address the drivers of deforestation. **WWF strongly recommends that SBSTA urgently initiates a process to address the national and international drivers of deforestation**, for agreement at COP18.

For further information on this submission, please contact:

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Gerald will be attending the UNFCCC climate talks in Panama and Durban.



1. Guidance on a system for providing information on how safeguards, as referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16, are addressed and respected:

WWF calls on parties to define a **common framework** under the UNFCCC, in which information provided by *national systems* follows a common international structure and is using common generic indicators.

a) Characteristics

Transparency: Information should be collected and reported in a transparent manner.

Comparability: Information provided should be comparable. Generic indicators should be used (common framework).

Consistency: Information provided should be consistent over time to enable tracking of ongoing application of safeguards. It should be complete and comprehensive, covering all actions undertaken to address both social and environmental safeguards.

Accuracy: Accuracy of the information should be maximized through independent verification and stakeholder participation.

Participation: The system should ensure full and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities. It should also consider gender equity and engage non-governmental organisations and experts.

b) Design

Harmonization: The information system should be harmonized with other related monitoring systems, such as information provided to the UNCBD. Parties should provide clarity on how guidance developed by SBSTA will be harmonized with guidance developed by multilateral REDD+ finance institutions such as the FIP, FCPF, UNREDD and the GEF .

Participation: The design of the system, including determination of the types of information to be collected and relevant indicators, should be undertaken with the full and effective participation of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities. A process for independent review and verification of the information should be provided.

Information quality – step wise approach: The system should be built upon existing information and include incentives for continuously moving towards higher quality information over time

c) Provision of information

Guidance is needed on both **WHAT** information should be published and **HOW** information should be provided.

1. **WHAT information should be published?**

- An assessment of how safeguards are addressed and respected;
- Information on the action(s) undertaken to address and respect each safeguard;
- Information to track outcomes related to the safeguards;
- Information to assess the reliability of this data, such as:
 - the type of information;
 - the source of information (e.g. collected remotely, through field research, stakeholders etc.), at least in general terms;
 - the steps taken to verify the information or ensure its accuracy
 - any additional underlying information that documents the steps taken.
- Actions taken in response to the outcomes of the information assessment.



2. HOW should information be provided?

- Information must be easily accessible and presented in a way that meets the needs of various stakeholders (e.g. in-country stakeholders, donors etc.)
- Information must be provided at regular intervals, potentially in coordination with other related monitoring systems; the frequency of reporting must support tracking how safeguards are implemented over time.
- A common template should be provided to allow easy assessment. Standardized information should be complemented with more detailed information not contained in the common template.
- The information should be made publicly available.

d) Potential barriers, including barriers, if any, to providing information on addressing and respecting safeguards

e) Other relevant issues

- A number of Parties already went through significant processes to address this issue on a national or sub-national level. SBSTA is encouraged to base its recommendations on lessons learned from these processes.

2. Guidance on modalities related to forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels:

WWF believes that REDD+ RLs and RELs are two very different, but related, issues. The key questions for the COP are:

1. What are the appropriate **RL/RELs to track emission reductions** to ensure that REDD+ effectively and demonstrably contributes to significant and permanent greenhouse gas emission reductions, with national goals working toward a global REDD+ objective?
2. How can different **RL/REL schemes be used to define incentives** for developing countries to achieve REDD+, including the conservation of existing forest carbon stocks?

WWF strongly encourages SBSTA to base its discussion on setting RL/REL on an acknowledgment of these two different issues.

Regarding comments following the required structure on scope and purpose, characteristics and process for communication, WWF associates with the vast majority of recommendations formulated by other civil society organizations¹.

However, WWF strongly encourages **SBSTA to align its discussion on modalities to principles** in order to pave the way for a REDD+ system that equitably rewards countries whilst ensuring

¹ See submission to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice by CAN International (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/smsn/ngo/319.pdf>) and by Amazon Environmental Research Institute, Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, Rainforest Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, Union of Concerned Scientists, Wildlife Conservation Society Woods Hole Research Center and World Vision International (http://unfccc.int/parties_observers/ngo/submissions/items/3689.php)



environmental integrity and the attainment of significant emissions reductions through the conservation of forests.

Proposed principles are:

1. Ensure Additionality

RLs should ensure “real” reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that would not have occurred in the absence of a REDD+ mechanism (i.e. ensure additionality).

2. Avoid Displacement, Leakage and Double-counting

RLs calculated at the **national level** are key to confirming the additionality of REDD+ efforts (i.e. based on an assessment of emissions from a country’s entire forest stock). National RLs are also important to addressing leakage and displacement risks within a country. In special circumstances, where **sub-national** RLs are used, it is vital that collectively they are nested in a way that avoids fragmentary data or double-counting.

3. Use Historic Data

In line with decision 4/CP.15, additionality is best addressed if RLs are based on historic data (i.e. the average national historic deforestation rate translated into emissions). This is the only yardstick that allows one to measure real, absolute emission reductions. A historical RL can still be forward looking, in that the past is usually a good predictor of the short-term future. Moreover a RL/REL equal or close to historical figures has a strong appeal in that it is a simple and transparent calculation.

4. Provide incentives, particularly for countries with low deforestation rates, to conserve existing forest carbon stocks

This can be achieved by methods that combine payments based on historical RL and payments based on other yardsticks – e.g. the country’s forest size, or the world average deforestation rate, or other aggregate indicators.

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