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Demonstrating 'Respect' for the UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards: the Importance of Community-Collected Information

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Summary

The UNFCCC has agreed a set of REDD+ safeguards to realise the benefits, and mitigate the social and environmental risks, that could arise from implementing REDD+. Countries undertaking REDD+ are requested to provide information on how these safeguards are being 'addressed and respected', which may present a significant challenge as the relevant information will need to be gathered from multiple stakeholder groups. This paper argues that some of these stakeholder groups – specifically indigenous and local communities living in or directly dependent upon forests – can often offer an important source of knowledge and capacity. This can support data gathering for safeguard information needs, especially in places where existing monitoring systems cannot do so comprehensively. Their involvement is important for protecting their rights, and critical for minimising the risk that REDD+, or the safeguards, could fail to meet their objectives.

Authors

MacFarquhar, C.
Goodman, L.

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