



National Workshop on Development of an operationalisation plan for the REDD+ Safeguards Information System (SIS) in Myanmar

Workshop Report

Nay Pyi Taw, 27-28 February 2020

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AAC	Annual Allowable Cut
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CHRO	Chin Human Rights Organization
CITES	Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organisation
ECD	Environmental Conservation Department
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FD	Forest Department
FFI	Flora and Fauna International
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FOW	Friends of Wildlife
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FRA	Forest Resource Assessment
FREDA	Forest Resource Environment Development and Conservation Association
FRI	Forest Research Institute
GAD	General Administration Department
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
IPEN	Myanmar Indigenous Peoples/Ethnic Minorities Network
MEA	Ministry of Ethnic Affairs
MERN	Myanmar Environmental Rehabilitation-conservation Network
MOALI	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
MONREC	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
MOPF	Ministry of Planning and Finance
MSDP	Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PaMs	Policies and Measures
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, plus the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and the sustainable management of forests
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management

SIS	Safeguards Information System
ToR	Terms of reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
TWG-SES	Technical Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement and Safeguards
UAGO	Union Attorney General's Office
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNEP-WCMC	UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD Programme	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1. Introduction

Countries wishing to participate in REDD+ are requested by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address and respect a set of seven social and environmental safeguards - commonly referred to as the Cancun Safeguards, throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. By applying the safeguards, countries can enhance the positive impacts of REDD+ and prevent or mitigate any potential adverse impacts. In addition to addressing and respecting the safeguards, countries implementing REDD+ under the UNFCCC are required to: a) develop a system for providing information on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected, i.e. a Safeguards Information System (SIS); and b) provide regular summaries of information (Sol) to the UNFCCC on how all the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities.

Myanmar has made significant progress in relation to the safeguards and SIS, guided by a national Technical Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement and Safeguards (TWG-SES), including:

- the assessment of potential social and environmental benefits and risks of REDD+ policies and measures (PaMs);
- review of policies, laws and regulations relevant to the safeguards;
- the preparation of a safeguards clarification;
- the design of the Safeguards Information System (see Annex 1 for more information); and
- the development of a final draft summary of information¹ (Sol).

The next steps in the process are now underway, in particular the development of a plan for how to make the SIS operational. This operationalisation plan will set out the elements that need to be in place for a functioning SIS, as well as estimate the resources and next steps needed to support them. A needs assessment has been conducted to assess the technical, financial and capacity needs for the SIS, based on the proposed SIS indicators, the updated REDD+ PaMs in Myanmar and other important design elements. The assessment also looks at how to put into practice institutional arrangements for collecting information for the SIS, i.e. the mechanisms of sharing data and procedures for how the host institution will access, manage and store the data, as well as the frequency of updates. It includes further assessing and defining efficient linkages between the SIS, National Forest Inventory (NFI)/National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and REDD+ Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) as well. Initial development of metadata and baselines for potential SIS phase (1) indicators is also taking place.

A national workshop on 'Development of an operationalisation plan for the REDD+ Safeguards Information System in Myanmar' was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 27-28 February 2020, in order to inform these processes.

2. Workshop objectives

The objectives of the 'Workshop on Development of operationalisation plan for Safeguards Information System in Myanmar' were to:

- Discuss the assessment of the proposed indicators, including the prioritisation and feasibility of the indicators, data collection methods, and any gaps
- Discuss needs/options for:
 - SIS online platform;
 - SIS establishment and maintenance costs and financing;

¹ A Summary of Information (Sol) on safeguards is a report to the UNFCCC that sets out how a country is addressing and respecting the safeguards, throughout REDD+ implementation. A Sol must be submitted to the UNFCCC before a country can begin to receive results-based payments for REDD+. Information from the SIS is usually a key input for the development of a Sol.

- Human resource and capacity building for agencies involved in SIS
- Share updates on the draft National Safeguards Approach document and the final draft Summary of Information (SOI)

3. Workshop content and participation

The workshop was held over two days and covered the following topics:

1. Summary of the work carried out on safeguards, SIS design and the SOI in Myanmar
2. Presentation on a regional SIS exchange in late 2019 and sharing experiences of other countries in the region with designing and operating their SISs
3. Presentation of SIS operationalisation needs
4. Collection of inputs on Myanmar's SIS Phase 1 indicators, their feasibility, relevant information sources and needs for gap filling
5. Presentation of the plans for monitoring & evaluation (M&E) for REDD+ in Myanmar, and envisioned links with the SIS
6. Presentation of SIS institutional roles and responsibilities, as set out in the SIS design
7. Collection of feedback on options for meeting the financial, staffing, technical and capacity needs for each role and options for an SIS database and SIS online platform.
8. Update participants on the status of the draft National Safeguards Approach document and final draft Summary of Information (SOI)
9. Update participants on next steps for REDD+ in Myanmar and envisioned format of a National REDD+ Coordination Unit and re-imagined Technical Working Groups

The workshop focused on group work exercises to collect inputs from participants. The results of the group work were shared in plenary and discussed by all. The input will be reflected in the SIS table – which is foreseen to eventually be used as an input to the SIS database – and the SIS operationalisation plan.

The workshop agenda can be found in Annex 1.

Over the two days, a total of 44 people (21 women and 23 men) participated in the workshop, representing government, non-government organisations and international organisations. Most participants were members of the TWG-SES.

The participant list can be found in Annex 2.

4. Key discussion points and results



Photo: Group photo of workshop participants on Day 1 © UN-REDD Myanmar

On the first day of the workshop, opening remarks were given by Dr. Thaug Naing Oo, Director of the UN-REDD National Programme, Forest Research Institute, Forest Department. Mr. Franz Arnold (Chief Technical Advisor, FAO, for the UN-REDD Programme and National Forest Inventory) followed with short welcoming remarks. Daw Khin Hnin Myint (National Programme Coordinator, Myanmar UN-REDD National Programme) then gave an overview of the expected outcomes of the workshop and went over the agenda. This was followed by an 'ice-breaker' exercise in which participants shared their expectations for the workshop.

Kristin DeValue (Forest and Land Use Governance Specialist, FAO) provided an overview of safeguards requirements for REDD+ and countries' progress on developing SISs and SOIs, as well as a recap of Myanmar's progress on safeguards for REDD+, its SIS design and next steps for operationalising the SIS, noting that the immediate next step is development and of the SIS operationalisation plan.

U Ngwe Thee (Chair of the TWG-SES and Deputy Director, Forest Department (FD)) gave a detailed presentation on topics covered at the sub-regional SIS exchange in Hanoi in December 2019, including lessons from Viet Nam and Cambodia on designing and operating their SIS. Following his presentation, Daw Chaw Sein (National Consultant, SIS, FAO) introduced the process for assessing SIS operationalisation needs and presented on the criteria used to screen proposed SIS indicators to prioritise Phase 1 indicators, as well as development of the SIS table for Phase 1 indicators, which includes indicator metadata and information sources, and which will require indicator baselines to be filled out in the near future.

After the lunch break, Daw Khin Hnin Myint presented the M&E Plan for REDD+ implementation, including overall components for a functional M&E System, foreseen roles of the proposed National REDD+ Coordination Unit, and possible areas of synergy between REDD+ M&E and the SIS.

In the afternoon, participants were split into four groups focusing on different thematic areas: 1) Environment, Wildlife and Biodiversity, 2) Forestry, Agriculture and Land use, 3) Human Rights and Stakeholder engagement, 4) Finance and Planning. Each group was provided with a version of the SIS table specific to the SIS Phase 1 indicators on their topic. Each indicator was presented in one row, with columns including, inter alia, initial baseline data for the indicator where available, information sources

that have been identified, and questions that need to be clarified as well as suggested next steps to fill gaps and define institutional responsibilities in order to analyse the indicator regularly. The indicators and information sources were identified in past Stakeholder Engagement and Safeguards Technical Working Group meetings.

For each indicator, the groups discussed:

- Whether the suggested information sources for each indicator are relevant (i.e. cover the right type of content) and suitable (considering issues such as scale, frequency of updates, institutional capacity, ease of analysis, database vs. paper-based)
- Which, if any, roles/responsibilities require clarity in order to collect and analyse information for the indicator, and suggestions for what institution should take on the responsibilities
- Any methodological issues that require clarity in order to report against the indicator, and suggestions for resolving them
- Whether any additional needs for analysing the Phase 1 indicators have not been identified

The groups each undertook the following tasks:

Step 1: Choose a note taker & rapporteur. Make sure everyone in the group understands the safeguard and the criteria.

Step 2: Discuss the above main points for each indicator.

Step 3: Short report back from each group.

As each group presented their feedback on the indicators, other groups asked questions and provided additional inputs in plenary. Participants from the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) shared that the National Indicators Framework (NIF) for the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), which covers approximately 250 indicators, is near finalisation. It was agreed that complementarities could be sought out; relevant indicators in the NIF, in particular, could potentially be used for the SIS.

On the second day of the workshop, Kristin DeValue and Chaw Chaw Sein provided a brief review of the first day's presentations and discussions. Participants were asked to share what they thought were the most important 'take-aways' of the first day.

Based on their responses, and some questions, clarification was provided on the 'phased approach' to the SIS, and the 'stepwise' approach to improving the SIS that many countries are taking. It was clarified that Myanmar plans to have a Phase I SIS from 2019-2021 and a Phase II SIS from 2022-2025: the Phase I SIS will have a more limited number and scope of indicators, and an interim webpage is foreseen to provide information on the safeguards. Phase I may also include piloting of collecting information on some indicators, from different government ministries and/or for site level information. Phase II of the SIS is expected to have a database established, will be able to provide more information on REDD+ implementation and would have a more detailed website, in accordance with a stepwise approach to improvement.

It was also clarified that the SOI should be submitted to the UNFCCC *at least* every 4 years, but may be submitted more often, and that updates to the SIS could be scheduled to inform the SOI, or be conducted more frequently in order to identify and respond to any problems in a timely manner.



Photo: Working groups reviewing SIS institutional arrangements and needs/options © UN-REDD Myanmar

Following this discussion, Chaw Chaw Sein presented the basic content of the SIS operationalisation plan, with a focus on institutional roles and responsibilities for operating the SIS. Given that there are two main institutions related to the SIS - the Forest Department (FD) and the Central Statistical Organisation (with CSO as the proposed host, pending further discussion and official confirmation), participants opted to split into two groups. Each group reviewed a table outlining the different key functions and institutional roles / responsibilities associated with SIS operationalisation, as proposed in the SIS design document, based on previous consultations with the TWG-SES, government and NGOs. The table had room for inputs on the needs for implementing each SIS function in terms of staffing, capacity development and technological needs, as well as costing of those needs.

The groups discussed:

- The identified staffing, capacity development and technological needs for each SIS function;
- Whether any tasks or institutions were missing for any of the SIS functions;
- The estimated cost of staffing, capacity development or technological needs for each SIS function.

The groups each undertook the following tasks:

Step 1: Choose a note taker & rapporteur.

Step 2: Discuss the above main points for each indicator.

Step 3: Short report back from each group.

Each group presented their feedback, and discussions were held in plenary. It was emphasized that a formal decision still needs to be made with regards to what institution will host the SIS. In addition, there was active discussion about hardware and software needs for the SIS, and the cost of these; government departments cannot usually use cloud storage for data and use of an existing server and software license may be difficult based on how existing information is stored and updated, or how existing licenses are allocated. More discussion is needed on the potential size of datasets, and

expected arrangements for hosting/management of an SIS database, although the SIS information is not expected to be very large, nor to require software for advanced analysis. The composition and capacities of the National REDD+ Coordination Unit and proposed SIS Technical Working Group (more targeted than the TWG-SES) will also need to be clarified.

Following the discussions, Charlotte Hicks (Senior Technical Officer, UNEP-WCMC) and U Paing Htet Thu (Myanmar Environmental Rehabilitation-conservation Network, MERN) gave a presentation about the National Safeguards Approach document (which sets out the key elements of Myanmar's national approach to addressing and respecting the safeguards), and an update on the process to develop Myanmar's first Summary of Information as well as its content. The final draft of the Summary of Information is awaiting final approval by the Government of Myanmar and submission by MONREC to the UNFCCC. Following its submission, it will be easier to use SOI text as an input to narrative for the SIS and to share Myanmar's progress on safeguards.

Finally, the workshop ended with thanks to all the TWG-SES members for all of their active participation and work over the course of the past few years and closing remarks from Mr Timothy Boyle (Chief Technical Advisor, Myanmar UN-REDD National Programme).

Annex 1. Workshop Agenda

Day 1 – 27 Feb		
Time	Session	Presenter/facilitator
8:30 am	Registration	
Session 1 : Welcome and Introduction		
9:00 – 9:15 am	Opening words	Dr. Thaug Naing Oo (UN-REDD National Programme Director)
9:15 – 9:20 am	Welcoming remarks	Franz Arnold (FAO)
9:20 – 9:25 am	Workshop agenda and expected outcomes	Khin Hnin Myint (UN-REDD National Programme Coordinator)
9:25-9:40 am	Ice-breaker / introductions: Introduce yourself to other people at your table. Each table should come up with one agreed answer to a question	Min Soe (UN-REDD Stakeholder Engagement Specialist)
9:40 – 10:00 am	Recap on safeguards, Safeguards Information System and Summary of Information requirements for REDD+, and progress in Myanmar Q&A	Kristin DeValue (FAO)
10:00 – 10:30 am	<i>Photo and Tea Break</i>	
Session 2: SIS Operationalisation: Phase 1 Indicators		
10:30 – 10:55 am	Report back from the SIS exchange in Hanoi last December	U Ngwe Thee (Chair, TWG-SES)
10:55 – 11:05 am	Video: SIS exchange participant interviews	
11:05 – 11:20 am	Q&A	
11:20 am – 12:00 pm	Development of SIS operationalisation plan (Part 1: Indicators for Phase 1 SIS) Q&A	Chaw Chaw Sein (SIS National Consultant)
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
1:00 – 1:15 pm	Monitoring & Evaluation plan for REDD+ PaMs	Khin Hnin Myint
1:45 – 3:30 pm	Group Work: Review SIS Phase 1 indicators and information	Participants, group facilitators
3:30 – 3:45 pm	<i>Tea Break</i>	
3:45 – 4:45 pm	Report back from groups and discussion	Group rapporteurs, all
4:45– 5:00 pm	Announcement Agenda for Day 2 and closing of Day 1	Khin Hnin Myint
Day 2 –28 Feb		
Time	Session	Presenter/facilitator
Session 2: SIS Operationalisation: Institutional arrangements and needs/options		
9:00 – 9:20 am	Recap from Day 1 and Overview of Day 2	Chaw Chaw Sein & Kristin DeValue, participants
9:20 – 9:50 am	Development of SIS operationalisation plan (Part 2: Institutional arrangements and needs/options)	Chaw Chaw Sein
9:50 – 10:00 am	Q&A / discussion of options	
10:00 – 10:20 am	<i>Tea Break</i>	
10:20 – 12:00 pm	Group Work: Options for SIS operationalisation	Participants, group facilitators
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Report back on groups & discussion	Group rapporteurs, all
2:00 – 2:45 pm	Update on national safeguards approach document and Summary of Information	Charlotte Hicks (UNEP-WCMC) and MERN
2:45 – 3:00 pm	Q&A	
3:00-3:15 pm	Next steps and closing remarks	Tim Boyle (UNREDD National Programme)

Annex 2: Participants list

No	Name	Designation	Org/Ministry	Gender
1	U Htein Lin Aung	AD	GAD	M
2	Dr. Thin Thin Aung	AD	DOP/ MOPF	F
3	Daw Thant Zin Maw	SO	GIS/FD	F
4	Daw Nyein Nyein Aye	AD	Department of Small Scale Industry	F
5	Daw Hnin Hin Han	AD	Central Statistical Organization	F
6	Daw Naing Naing Tun	SO	Central Statistical Organization	F
7	Dr. Toe Toe Aung	AD	Watershed Division/FD	M
8	U Min Lwin	DD	Planning, DOA	M
9	U Tet Nay Tun	SO	Extension Division, FD	M
10	U Phone Thant	SO	Central Statistical Organization,	M
11	U Aung Chein Hlaing	SO	DALMS	M
12	Daw Kay Khine	RO	Training and Development Division, FD	F
13	U Ngwe Thee	DD	Planning and Statistics Division, FD	M
14	Daw Khin Yimon Hlaing	SO	Natural Forest and Plantation Division, FD	F
15	Dr. Thaung Naing Oo	Director	FRI,FD	M
16	Dr. Yu Ya Aye	AD	FRI, FD	F
17	U Ze Ya Htwe	AD	Survey Department/MONREC	M
18	U Hein Htet Aung	DSO	ECD	M
19	Daw Khin Su Hlaing	DD	MOEA	F
20	Daw New Ni Mg	AD	Department of Ethnic Rights	F
21	Daw Aye Aye Win	Director	UAGO	F
22	Daw Moe Nwet Nwet Aung	Deputy Director	Finance Dept/MOPF	F
23	U Saw Jumip	CEC	IP/EN	M
24	U Nay Lin Oo	Forest Project Officer	WWF	M
25	Daw Ei Thinzar Aung	Program Coordinator	BANCA	F
26	U Saw Peter Thein Htut	Program Manager	Hsar Mu Htaw	M
27	U Saw Nay Htoo	Finance	Hsar Mu Htaw	M
28	U Hla Doi	Program Coordinator	POINT	M
29	U Ye Htet Bo		ECCDI	M
30	U Moses Kyaw Htun	LO	CHRO	M
31	Daw Wint Wint Tun	DD	Department of Fisheries	F
32	U Paing Htet Thu	Senior Program Assistant	MERN	M

33	U Lwin Moore Aung	Sr. Program Assistant	FREDA	M
UN-REDD				
34	U Min Soe	Stakeholder Engagement Officer	UN-REDD	M
35	Kristin DeValue	Snr Technical Officer	FAO	F
36	Daw Khin Hnin Myint	National Programme Coordinator	UN-REDD	F
37	Charlotte Hicks	Snr Technical Officer	UNEP-WCMC	F
38	Franz Arnold	Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)	FAO	M
39	Chaw Chaw Sein	National Consultant	FAO	F
40	Timothy Boyle	CTA	UN-REDD	M
41	Thinn Thitsar Kyaw	Programme Specialist	FAO	F
42	Kyaw Min Aung		FAO	M
43	Sandar Min Wai	Program Assistant	UN-REDD	F
44	Thit Thit Han	Communication Officer	UN-REDD	F