

Government and civil society discuss Myanmar's REDD+ Safeguards Information System



Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) has great potential to deliver environmental and social benefits beyond the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, such efforts may also bring social and environmental risks. In 2010, Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancún, Mexico, agreed on a set of seven social and environmental safeguards for REDD+ - known as the 'Cancun safeguards' to address these risks and promote positive impacts from REDD+. Countries are expected to promote and support these safeguards throughout REDD+ implementation, develop a safeguards information system (SIS) for providing information on how the safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout REDD+ implementation, and submit a summary of information to the UNFCCC at least every four years on how the safeguards have been addressed and respected.

For Myanmar, a country where an estimated 70% of the country's population is living in rural areas and heavily dependent on its 29 million ha of forests for their basic needs, operationalising the country's Safeguards Information System (SIS) is a crucial step on its REDD+ journey. On 27-28 February, representatives from government and civil society organisations met in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, to discuss what actions and resources are needed to achieve this.

Having an SIS in place is one of the main pre-requisites for a country to access REDD+ results-based payments, according to the UNFCCC. Myanmar is well on its way to meeting the other requirements. To date, the country has developed a National REDD+ Strategy and a first safeguards summary of information (SOI), both through consultative processes and pending final clearance. Myanmar has also

submitted a Forest Reference (Emission) Level to the UNFCCC and is in the process of institutionalising a National Forest Monitoring System, another key pillar of REDD+. In order to make best use of the country's existing processes and ensure sustainability, Myanmar will build upon existing systems in order to meet their safeguards information needs.

Guided by the national Technical Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement and Safeguards (TWG-SES), Myanmar has already defined what its SIS should look like but moving from an SIS design to an operational SIS requires the identification and mobilisation of political, financial and human resources.



At the workshop, Myanmar stakeholders examined how to mobilise these resources through the development of an SIS operationalisation plan. In his opening remarks, Dr Thaug Naing Oo, Director of the Forest Research Institute and REDD+ National Programme Director, highlighted the importance of having a SIS Platform and requested feedback and support from different stakeholders involved in the SIS process. Over the course of two days, over 40 participants held lively discussions on the scope and institutional arrangements for managing, hosting and providing technical inputs to the SIS. They provided feedback on key elements of the draft operationalisation plan, including how to operationalise indicators, SIS software and hardware requirements, and capacity building needs.

The SIS operationalisation plan will be finalised based on inputs from the workshop and will guide the further establishment of Myanmar's SIS. The workshop report is available at the following link: xxx. Myanmar's REDD+ work is led by the Forestry Department, in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Useful links:

- Learn more about the design of Myanmar's REDD+ Safeguards Information System in [English](#) and [Myanmar language](#).
- For more information on safeguards work in Myanmar and other countries, please visit the UN-REDD Programme [Safeguards Hub](#).
- For more information on REDD+ in Myanmar, please visit www.myanmar-redd.org and the Myanmar [REDD+ Programme on Facebook](#).

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