

REDD+ SAFEGUARDS

FIRST SUMMARY OF INFORMATION FOR GUYANA



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use
BUR	Biennial Update Reports
COP	Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC
ERPD	Emissions Reduction Program Document
ER	Emission Reductions
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessments
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
FRL	Forest Reference Level
FPDMC	Forest Producers Development and Marketing Council
IP	Indigenous Peoples
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GFC	Guyana Forestry Commission
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRIF	Guyana's REDD+ Investment Fund
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
LCDS	Low Carbon Development Strategy
LULUCF	Land-Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRVS	Measurement, Reporting and Verification System
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
OPs	Operational Policies
PAs	Protected Areas
PaMs	Policies and Measures
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
RBF	Results Based Finance
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
RIL	Reduced Impact Logging
RL	Reference Level
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
SIS	Safeguard Information System
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SOI	Summary of Information
UNDRIP	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
UNFCCC	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WFR	Warsaw Framework for REDD+

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the decision established in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) regarding policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+), the Government of Guyana hereby submits its first Summary of Information (Sol).

This Sol presents how Guyana's efforts in implementing the safeguards listed in decision 1/CP.16 appendix I, are being addressed and respected in accordance with decisions 12/CP.17, 12/CP.19, 17/CP.21.

The Sol is structured as follows:

Part I: National Circumstances for Addressing and Respecting Safeguards in Guyana

This section provides an overview on the efforts undertaken by Guyana's Government between 2009 and 2020 in terms of climate change and REDD+ implementation, including on the role of forests and the land sector in the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

Part II: Country's safeguards approach

This section presents progress to date in Guyana in ensuring REDD+ implementation is consistent with Cancun Safeguards. In the final series of decisions on REDD+, agreed in Paris at COP 21, Parties to the UNFCCC developed some further guidance "on ensuring transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected."¹ As part of this guidance, the COP "strongly encourages" developing country Parties, when providing the summary of information on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected, to include, inter alia, "[a] description of each safeguard in accordance with national circumstances."²

In accordance with the above, this section outlines a description of the Cancun safeguards according to the national context and provides an overview on progress and perspectives in the set-up of a system for providing information on how safeguards have been addressed and respected.

Part III: How safeguards have been addressed in Guyana?

Understanding that 'addressing' safeguards requires anchoring Cancun Safeguards to the existing governance arrangements (e.g. policies, institutions, information systems) in Guyana and this being Guyana's first SOI, this section outlines all relevant legal and institutional frameworks in place in Guyana to ensure REDD+ activities are designed and implemented in accordance to the Cancun Safeguards, including those activities currently under implementation in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Guyana and the Kingdom of Norway.

Part IV: How safeguards have been respected in Guyana?

This section constitutes indicators that are being considered in the set-up of the Safeguard Information System (SIS). It is therefore anticipated that subsequent SOIs will provide information on the actual outcomes with regards to conformance with Cancun Safeguards throughout REDD+ implementation, including in the context of accessing to REDD+ results-based payments in application of the methodological framework established in the Warsaw Framework for REDD+.

¹ UNFCCC Decision 17/CP.21, see also UN-REDD [brief on summaries of information](#)

² Ibid, paragraph 5(b) see also UN-REDD [brief on summaries of information for further analysis](#)

Part VI: Operational mechanism to receive and address complaints

This section outlines Guyana's efforts for a dedicated system that will serve to receive, and address concerns and complaints associated with the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

Part VII: Stakeholder engagement

This section will present an overview of the participatory processes undertaken in Guyana in preparation of this summary of information report.

PART I: NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ADDRESSING AND RESPECTING SAFEGUARDS IN GUYANA

With a population of less than 800,000 people, Guyana is rich in natural resources - gold, diamonds, bauxite and timber. Having the world's second largest percentage of rainforest cover -87% of the national territory- and accounting for the second highest carbon stock per capita globally, Guyana is a net carbon sink and therefore forest conservation and sustainable forest management are priorities in the fight against climate change.

This section provides an overview on the efforts undertaken by the Government of Guyana between 2009 and 2020 in terms of climate change and REDD implementation, including on the role of forests and the land sector in the country's NDC under the Paris Agreement

CLIMATE CHANGE AND REDD+ IN GUYANA

Guyana is characterized for its long history of forest conservation, where indigenous peoples have an outstanding role as forest stewards in recognition to the 7000 year long history of conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in the area. Similarly, Guyana's Kaieteur National Park, established in 1929, was the first protected area established in the Amazon Region.

In 1989, Guyana committed to 'lasting ecological, economic and social benefits' for the Guyanese people and the international community by committing to responsibly manage 1 million acres of forests in the Iwokrama Rainforest. Similarly, the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), and its predecessor, has the leadership in managing Guyana's 12.5 million hectare (GFC 2020) State Forest Estate and, with the contribution of civil society organizations and advocates, have managed to maintain one of the lowest deforestation rates.

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) was first formulated in 2008 and aimed to support the country in the pursuit of a '*resilient, low-carbon, socially-inclusive economy*', paving the way for national efforts to reduce emissions in the forest and land use sector.

The Low Carbon Development Strategy set out a vision through which economic development and climate change mitigation will be reconciled through the generation of payments for forest services in a mechanism of sustainable utilization and development (i.e. REDD+). The result is intended to be the transformation of Guyana's economy whilst combating climate change. Guyana's was updated in 2011 and 2013, and will be updated again in 2021.

Guyana's long-term vision is for the payments for forest services to be funded through a market-based or other mechanism agreed within the UNFCCC. Until then, Guyana may enter into voluntary agreements with bilateral partners or voluntary markets that are compatible with REDD+. The first such agreement was with the Government of Norway – with the two countries signing an MOU in 2009 where Norway committed to paying Guyana up to US\$250 million in payments-for-performance, and the two countries agreed to work together on issues 'related to the fights against climate change, the protection of biodiversity and the enhancement of sustainable development.

Guyana's Monitoring Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) for REDD+ was developed as the primary mechanism to measure Guyana's performance against the agreed indicators as set out in the Guyana-Norway Agreement. It is a combined GIS-based and field-based monitoring system developed to track national-level forest change of deforestation and forest degradation. The System seeks to provide the basis for measuring verifiable changes in Guyana's forest cover and resultant carbon emissions from Guyana's forests, which will underpin results-based REDD+ compensation in the long-term, based on international guidance and best practice.

Guyana has submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC, which was supported by a consultative process through an Inter-Agency Task Force, under the Cabinet, and included stakeholder consultations. Guyana's NDC refers to a cross-sectoral and *economically holistic emission reduction commitment* as an overarching premise for policy-based measures to reduce emissions against business-as-usual greenhouse gas emissions.

Guyana's NDC recognizes the land use and forest sector as a key sector for its unconditional and conditional commitments, together with the energy sector. In this regard, Guyana's contribution to the Paris Agreement draws on the LCDS and early REDD+ efforts in order to continue promoting a combination of conservation and sustainable management practices as key climate change mitigation measures. At the national level, unconditional and conditional commitments established in the NDC -together with the National Forest Policy, Codes of Practice for Timber Harvesting for Sustainable Forest Management- established the overarching guiding instruments and systems in Guyana to support country efforts on reducing emissions in the forest sector by 2025.

In anticipation of a REDD+ mechanism or equivalent, Guyana has committed to unconditionally continue to pursue sustainable forest management (SFM), in compliance with applicable Forest Codes of Practice governing timber operations, including continuous efforts on forest monitoring to ensure high levels of timber legality. Similarly, Guyana is preparing and will commence to implement the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) under EU-Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) aiming to provide independent accreditation of forest legality and management practices in the timber industry.

The MRVS was used to inform the design of the commitments of the NDC, by providing information on the effects of the direct drivers of forest change. The MRVS has further been given prominence within the NDC as a conditional contribution, whereby Guyana has committed to the completion and maintenance of building the national MRVS, provided that adequate financial resources are available to do so.

PROGRESS ON REDD+ IN GUYANA

MOU WITH THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY

In such context, in 2009 Guyana signed an MoU with the Kingdom of Norway on what represented the first world's national-scale agreement for payments-for-performance for issues related to climate change mitigation, in particular those concerning reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD-plus), the protection of biodiversity, and enhancement of sustainable, low carbon development. Supported by a national Monitoring Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) for REDD+ and the establishment and/or strengthening of forest governance and institutions improving Guyana's capacity to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, the Guyana-Norway cooperation ultimately supported national efforts to establish an innovative and pioneering LCDS and set a precedent for high forest cover/low deforestation countries in the context of REDD+.

The MoU with Norway was signed well in advance to the definition of the REDD+ methodological framework under the UNFCCC to guide REDD+ results-based implementation and access to results-based payments for mitigation actions fully measured, reported and verified. Such agreement thus represented Guyana's commitment, in cooperation with Norway, to support the multilateral process under the UNFCCC to establish what we now know as REDD+. Moreover, such agreement is a symbol of Guyana's political will towards developing a long term development pathway that incorporates issues on climate change, including mitigation on the forest and land use sector, but also with regards to the protection of biodiversity and the rights and livelihoods of indigenous peoples in the country.

In such context, Guyana's agreement with Norway for early REDD+ implementation triggered in the country a diversity of technical and policy processes; several of which would establish the foundations for ensuring that Guyana's efforts to accelerate REDD+ implementation were conducted in consistency with what we now know as the Cancun Safeguards³.

Amongst the methodological and institutional conditions agreed with Norway to determine the level of financial support to be received -upon Guyana's performance on emissions reductions- Guyana committed to the establishment of institutional arrangements, including a Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee for oversight of implementation of the LCDS, to:

- Ensure the systematic and transparent stakeholder consultations;
- Enable participation of all affected and interested stakeholders in all stages of the REDD+/LCDS process;
- Protect indigenous peoples rights;
- Ensure environmental integrity and the protection of biodiversity;
- Strengthening/improvements in forest governance; and
- Transparency and accountability regarding the financial support received.

In addition to the above, Guyana committed to the application of relevant policies and safeguards in the context of activities to be financed by the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF). All of the above have been established as *enabling activity* indicators to assess Guyana's performance, some of them relevant in the context of REDD+ consistency with Cancun safeguards, as follows:

- **Continuous multi-stakeholder consultation process:** *Institutionalized, systematic and transparent process of multi-stakeholder consultation.* Aims to ensure full and effective participation, particularly of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities. Indigenous peoples can 'choose whether and how to opt in to' the REDD+ or the LCDS processes; if so, free, prior and informed consent according to Guyana's legislation applies.
- **Governance:** Guyana is committed to promote the continued development of a 'transparent, rules-based, inclusive forest governance, accountability and enforcement system' in accordance to relevant legislation and independent assessment of forest governance and logging practices.
- **Rights of indigenous peoples and other local forest communities as regards to REDD+:** In accordance with Guyana's Constitution, the *rights of indigenous peoples and other Guyanese to participation, engagement and decision making* are guaranteed regarding matters that affect their well-being. Such rights will be *respected and protected* throughout Guyana's REDD+ and LCDS's efforts.

Guyana committed to undertake efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, including forest conservation, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in coherence with internationally recognized frameworks for robust and effective REDD+ implementation. The policy framework developed for REDD+ implementation in Guyana has resulted in greater levels of sectoral coordination and more efficient policy formulation and implementation, and Guyana has been able to align efforts to further develop its MRVS, as well as strengthen its institutional capacities for REDD+ implementation. With regards to the methodological framework for REDD+ results-based implementation as agreed under the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, Guyana has developed a National Forest Monitoring System (referred to as the national MRVS), providing data on deforestation and forest degradation at national scale. Likewise, Guyana has established its proposed Reference Level on emissions from deforestation from all causes, and for degradation associated with timber harvesting, for the national level, and for which UNFCCC has completed technical review and assessment.

³ UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix 1 paragraph 2

OVERVIEW THE DESIGN OF A NATIONAL REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION, POLICIES AND MEASURES

The implementation of activities under Guyana's REDD+ Programme, provided Guyana with relevant insights on the economic feasibility of REDD+ results-based implementation and with the tools to continue to sustainably manage, conserve and protect its forest resources, as stated in the country's NDC. Similarly, the refinement of REDD+'s economic feasibility, underscore the need for opportunity costs of REDD+ results-based implementation, required to move beyond traditional natural resource exploitation-based economy, currently supporting the livelihoods of thousands of Guyanese.

In recognition that the bulk of Guyana's forest emissions emanate from mining and logging activities, Guyana's efforts will therefore focus on maintaining, and where applicable, transitioning such activities to more sustainable and efficient operations in line with the country's objectives stated in the NDC.

Guyana was among the countries that submitted its NDC in October 2015. In its NDC, it is noted that *"...Guyana is offering to defer the pursuit of our historic natural resource exploitation-based economy, and offer our huge carbon stocks to the world if, in return, our sustainable human development needs and the cost of deferring business as usual are met by financial support from the international community in a predictable, just and equitable manner."* National commitments were made that targeted the forest and energy sectors, which have produced the majority of emissions, both current and historic. Importantly, sustainable forest management and conservation are highlighted as key to Guyana's fight against climate change, and are in keeping with the national implementation of REDD+ in Guyana. These activities all form the basis for Guyana's contribution to efforts to mitigate climate change up to 2025.

Unconditional contributions for forestry activities have been identified as follows:

- Ensure compliance with the various Codes of Practice to realise sustainable forest management (SFM);
- Forest monitoring will maintain a high level of timber legality. These efforts will maintain a low rate of illegal logging (at less than 2% of production).
- Forest monitoring to maintain a high level of timber legality, including the finalisation and implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) under the EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (EU FLEGT);
- Improve added-value activities locally to assist in creating higher potential for carbon storage in long term wood products and to support linkages to the FLEGT process.
- Strengthen support for indigenous communities as they continue the stewardship of their lands and inter alia the benefits that accrue from any REDD+ activities from these lands

Conditional contributions include:

- Conservation of protected areas through Guyana's National Protected Area System and other effective area-based conservation measures as per Guyana's commitment under the UNCBD, including the protection of conservancies and reservoirs and their watersheds and the watersheds upstream of new hydro-power sites. Existing mangrove forests will be included in this area and the mangrove restoration programme along the vulnerable coast will be expanded.
- Avoided deforestation through the development of an Emissions Reduction Programme that will target:
 - Use of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) with the potential to reduce annual emissions by 13.5%
- Completion and maintenance of building the national MRVS, provided that adequate financial resources are available to do so.

Guyana's MRVS has verified that small scale gold mining resulted in 89% of the deforestation recorded in Guyana over the past three years. To address this, the ERP will include actions by the Guyana Geology

and Mines Commission (GGMC) to implement policies, education programmes, and incentives for integrated planning and management of the mining sector. This will support the transformation of the mining sector and include actions to:

- Implement mineral mapping in the mining districts to identify economically exploitable deposits. This will significantly reduce deforestation by avoiding clearing of forest cover from lands which contain only marginal mineral deposits.
- Implement awareness and incentive programmes to improve the efficiency of technologies and practices in the mining industry.
- Implement policies to institute reclamation and reforestation of mined areas.

The NDC acknowledges Guyana's robust MRVS as one that can ensure the integrity of emission reduction efforts as the country engages with carbon-neutral markets as a means of maximizing the value of national exports and providing internationally attractive, verifiable low carbon products. The MRVS will continue to be strengthened and improved as new international guidance and technologies become available. Further the role of the MRVS will be expanded to inform forest management policy and practice.

Guyana has continued to pursue efforts to have in place all requirements and methodological guidance to support REDD+ implementation as agreed under the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ (WFR), including ensuring the implementation of REDD+ in accordance to Cancun Safeguards and meeting all safeguards-related requirements, as described below and in the subsequent sections.

PROGRESS IN THE DESIGN OF A REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR GUYANA

Aiming to contribute to global efforts to reduce emissions associated with deforestation and forest degradation, Guyana's national REDD+ Implementation Plan will seek to recognise the need for integrated and comprehensive land use planning efforts that inform the efficient and sustainable management and exploitation of natural resources, including through policies and measures, incentive programmes and broadening civil society and private sector participation in efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

Guyana's MRVS has identified mining as the main driver of deforestation, with small-scale gold mining being the major contributor. Guyana's REDD+ Implementation Plan will focus on supporting the transition of these economic activities to more efficient practices, where possible, that reduce deforestation for their operations.

REDD+ implementation in Guyana has a large potential for delivering significant co-benefits. Indigenous peoples comprise about 15% of Guyana's population, and live and depend on forests for their livelihoods. REDD+ implementation has the potential to reduce their vulnerability to climate change. Improving the sustainability of extractive economic activities and identifying alternative economic activities has the potential to result in additional employment opportunities and improving indigenous people's livelihoods. Furthermore, REDD+ implementation could result in biodiversity conservation when considering Guyana's high biodiversity abundance, being one of the richest in mammalian assemblages.

The development of Guyana's REDD+ Implementation Plan will seek to address indirect drivers of forest change by directing actions to creating enabling conditions for REDD+ at a strategic and/or institutional level, and actions with a direct impact on carbon emissions or removals, targeting direct drivers of deforestation or forest degradation. Such an approach to REDD+ results-based implementation seeks to contribute to Guyana's economic growth under the overarching implementation of the LCDS while acknowledging that much of the country's forest loss and degradation takes place within legally designated areas -for instance mining concession areas- and therefore require a combination of strategic policies and measures to reduce or slow deforestation, where possible, from current economic activities from within the sectors' policies and regulations.

Based on the above, Guyana has identified a set of strategic options which aim to guide REDD+ implementation for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation:

Development and implementation of codes of practice to inform effective forest resources management in forest harvesting activities to maintain low rates of deforestation and forest degradation - Given the multiple use nature of Guyana's forests, forest harvesting activities is but one aspect of economic activities undertaken. To this end, sustainable forest management and the accompanying codes of practices are absolutely necessary to ensure the efficient management of the resources. Codes of practice are designed to take into account the various Acts and Legislations that are directly related to forest management. They provide guidelines for best practices in order to ensure that continuing economic returns can be obtained over the long term, while simultaneously fostering overall sustainable utilisation and management of Guyana's forest resources. They are designed to balance commercial and environmental considerations with social values through implementation of the GFC's integrated management system that will improve efficiency and address environmental, quality, and occupational safety and health concerns.

The objective is to encourage the adoption of minimum standards that will act as the driving force to encourage improvement in the current practices of the industry and facilitate maximum benefits for Guyana in the utilization of its natural resources.

Implementation of forest monitoring activities to ensure conformance with sustainable forest management (SFM) guidelines and EUFLEGT requirements- REDD+ encapsulates all aspects of sustainable forest management, including forest monitoring and enforcement. Legality and the activities that accompany attaining same are critical to achieving good governance in the forest sector, in that, principles of sustainable forest management as well as activities under a REDD + agenda cannot be accomplished without this. Forest Monitoring is a critical support component of any REDD+ programme, especially to ensure forest degradation and deforestation is contained and or minimized. Guyana has been implementing a number of forest monitoring schemes, including its Legality Assurance System. Additionally, in 2009, the GoG engaged the European Union (EU) to better understand the requirements of the European Union Forest Law Enforcement Governance & Trade (EU FLEGT) Programme. EU FLEGT is also part of Guyana's REDD+ Programme.

Advance the promotion of value added initiatives within the sector to assist in creating higher potential for carbon storage in long term wood products- Market research and promotion are integral to the supporting REDD+, as the country seeks to minimise the pressure on its forest by finding the most suitable and economic use for the forest resources. Guyana's NDC points out that the use of value added "could also potentially reduce the pressure on forest resources as derivation of a higher value may result in reduced harvest levels."

Strengthen its support for indigenous communities- Community Monitoring Reporting and Verification (CMRV) has been a key aspect of REDD+ activities undertaken to strengthen the capacity of indigenous communities to participate in REDD+ activities. The key objective of CMRV is the participation and empowerment of local people. Guyana views CMRV as a means of augmenting the traditional expert-led process of Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV). The involvement of locals from indigenous communities in the MRV of carbon stocks and other forest-related attributes has many national and community level benefits.

Emission Reduction Programme for Forests

Continued Support to Guyana's National Protected Area System- Guyana's biodiversity provides important ecosystem service functions upon which key economic and livelihood activities are dependent. These include agriculture, forestry and fisheries, payment for forest climate services, and community based economies, particularly in hinterland communities among others. With the passing of the Protected Areas Act, 2011, the Protected Areas Commission (PAC) was established at the end of 2012. The PAC is tasked with the responsibility for establishing, managing, promoting and expanding the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) in Guyana. Guyana's NPAS currently comprises the Kaieteur National Park, Kanuku Mountains Protected Area, Shell Beach Protected Area and Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area, as well as urban parks.

Promote use of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) through training and industry development to contribute to avoided deforestation - Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) is a harvesting system which uses defined rules and regulations to govern timber harvesting. It is implemented through codes of practice and guidelines and is a fundamental component of sustainable forest management. Studies have shown that implementing RIL can reduce the emission of CO₂ from selectively logged forests by as much as 40% compared with conventional logging⁴. Guyana's NDC has committed to addressing the impacts of logging with use of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) as part of an Emissions Reduction Programme. RIL is expected to lead

⁴Butler, R Reduced Impact Logging, July 22, 2012 <http://rainforests.mongabay.com/1011.htm>

to a reduction in annual emissions by 13.5%, or a reduction of about 430,000 tCO₂ per year. RIL further will support the work being undertaken in the continued implementation of REDD+ in Guyana. RIL is not simply one single technology but a practice that allows for the use of a number of technologies including hardware, software and orgware throughout the steps of the harvesting process. Within Guyana, this will allow for transformation of harvesting practices within the sector, making logging activities more sustainable.

Transformation of the mining sector – Guyana's MRVS has identified mining as the greatest cause of deforestation in Guyana, and results in long term deforestation. Large-scale mining effectively reduces all of the carbon stocks of the forest vegetation (live and dead biomass) to zero. Ground excavation activities have a major impact on the soil, removing the top soil, which then often gets buried when overburden is excavated and piled onto the topsoil. The measures outlined for the mining sector seek to transition the current practices to more sustainable and efficient operations that are evidence based.

POLICIES AND MEASURES UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

As a result of early efforts and financial cooperation in Guyana to accelerate REDD+ implementation, including deploying domestic resources and supported by Norway's financial cooperation, and whilst more needs to be done, Guyana has been able to make significant progress in the key areas of the REDD+ Implementation Plan, from policy transformations to monitoring and programmatic implementation, as described below.

Guyana – EU FLEGT Process

Drawing on Guyana's early commitment to REDD+ implementation in the context of the MoU with Norway, and a key enabling indicator under such cooperation, Guyana has undertaken a process to join the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative towards achieving a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the aim of raising the profile of Guyana's timber industry and making it more sustainable. Following a series of stakeholder consultations across the forestry sector, Guyana entered into formal negotiations with the EU for a VPA in December 2012, which aimed to ensure forest exports come from a legal source and improve forest governance and regulations, while promoting broad stakeholder participation in decision-making processes, ultimately contributing to the achievement of sustainable development objectives in Guyana.

While seeking to ensure Guyana's timber products are legally sourced, the EU-FLEGT and the VPA will contribute to further strengthening Guyana's existing policy, legal and institutional frameworks for forest legality and sustainable forest management.

After a series of negotiations between 2012 and 2015, and following the establishment of a National Technical Working Group and the FLEGT Secretariat, key milestones have been achieved, including a broad range of activities including: consultations and capacity building efforts with local stakeholders aimed at improving the understanding on FLEGT; stakeholder engagement to discuss and receive feedback on legality definition and Guyana's Timber Legality Assurance System; studies on impacts scoping regarding the gaps between current regulations and requirements under the VPA; calls for funding proposals for stakeholders.

The Guyana - EU VPA was initialled on the 23rd November, 2018 in Brussels Belgium. The Initialling signalled the commencement of the Pre-Implementation period of the VPA process.

Improve added-value activities locally to assist in creating higher potential for carbon storage in long-term wood products.

Aiming to promote and market the use of lesser known timber species, the Forest Producers Development and Marketing Council (FPDMC) has supported awareness raising efforts with stakeholders in the forestry sector and supported the development of information material on market opportunities. Research and feasibility studies have been conducted to determine the viability of biomass for energy generation and community sawmills, and marketing and promotional efforts have been conducted to support commercialization actions regarding timber products as furniture, crafts or building materials.

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System (MRVS)

Building on Guyana's reporting commitments under the Guyana-Norway Bilateral Agreement in measuring and reporting on the country's performance against the REDD+ Performance Indicators⁵, the country is committed to continue to develop and maintain the MRVS as a platform through which the country can report on Forest change and associated emissions.

Over the past 12 years the MRVS has evaluated and integrated many data streams used to map national-scale forest change, and support the analysis, and has developed datasets suitable to determine the accuracy of the change area mapped. Guyana's approach has evolved over time, to accommodate new technologies, but at its core the MRVS recognises the importance of local management, existing datasets and linking these elements to appropriate Earth Observation (EO) data such as Landsat, RapidEye, Sentinel, Planet Scope and very high spatial resolution aerial imagery. Phase 2 also saw a national scale Forest Carbon Monitoring System being developed and now fully operational, enabling Guyana's move to full emissions reporting and away from REDD+ Performance Measures, for all relevant drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. With the data collected by MRVS Guyana was able to submit its Reference Level for REDD+, and complete its technical assessment, under the UNFCCC.

Reduced Impact Logging (RIL)

A key pillar for sustainable forest management, Reduce Impact Logging entails a set of technologies and practices designed to minimize environmental impacts from timber harvesting operations, which are embedded systematically in the planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating of timber harvesting. In such regard, between 2010 and 2016, Guyana has conducted training sessions of communities and concessionaries -both large and small scale- on the principles of RIL, including directional felling or planning of road infrastructure. Training materials have been also developed aiming to promote improved planning, control and use of extracted timber.

Policy and institutional measures

In anticipation of a REDD+ mechanism or equivalent, Guyana has strengthened its institutional and legal framework in support of REDD+ implementation, including the enactment of forest regulations under the Parliament, which aim to ensure the continued low deforestation and forest degradation rates, including the provision of necessary platforms for the implementation of updated forest legislation.

⁵ Joint Concept Note, 2012

As part of this process, the National Forest Policy Statement and National Forest Plan were revised in 2018. The Policy & Plan reflect a movement away from valuing of forests for simply their wood and trees, and instead treats forests as part of Guyana's national resources, to be managed collectively. They present a set of policies and plans that address the economic, conservation, governance and capacity facets of forest management, while seeking to value the forest for more than the price of the timber

Codes of Practice for the Forestry Sector have also been revised, as supporting guidance regulations to accelerate REDD+ implementation by ensuring low deforestation and forest degradation rates. This includes, for instance, Codes of Practice for Timber Harvesting and Non-Timber Forest Products.

Moreover, with the support from Norway, Guyana has continued the national level assessment programme of forest legality and by 2018, has applied for candidacy under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in order to improve the accountability in reporting and financial payments in extractive industries.

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

A broad range of stakeholder engagement efforts have been conducted by Guyana in the context of all activities described above, particularly regarding the MRVS, the design and operationalization of the EU-FLEGT and VPAs, Sustainable Forest Management and other technical aspects of REDD+ implementation.

Stakeholder engagement efforts and capacity building sessions have included a broad spectrum of stakeholders from community logging associations to Amerindian villages, miners, saw millers, non-governmental organizations, private sector, youth and women. Outreach actions overall were geared towards enabling and further strengthening institutional arrangements and ensuring inclusiveness in the decision-making processes regarding REDD+ implementation, particularly at the community level.

PART II: COUNTRY'S SAFEGUARDS APPROACH

This section presents progress to date in Guyana in ensuring REDD+ implementation is consistent with Cancun Safeguards. This section provides a description of the Cancun safeguards according to the national context and provides an overview on progress and perspectives in the set-up of a system for providing information on how safeguards have been addressed and respected.

GUYANA'S DESCRIPTION OF CANCUN SAFEGUARDS

Parties to the UNFCCC agreed to a set of seven safeguards (broad principles) that are expected to be applied in accordance with national context and circumstances when undertaking REDD+ activities. See Box 1.

Box 1: The Cancun safeguards⁶

When undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- (a) That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- (b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
- (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;
- (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;
- (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;⁷
- (f) Actions to address the risks of reversals;
- (g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

A description of each safeguard in accordance with national circumstances was achieved by identifying the various rights and obligations that are embodied in the Cancun safeguards, and examining how these are reflected in the specific country context in the country's legal framework. Drawing on an analysis of the country's legal framework, this section presents a description of each Cancun safeguard in accordance with national circumstances, which includes a narrative description and breakdown of the core elements of such description/clarification. The purpose of this exercise was to specify how the objectives encompassed in the Cancun safeguards translate into concrete principles and objectives that are to be followed and promoted in the context of the implementation of REDD+ activities in Guyana, and which are anchored in the country's Policies, Laws and Regulations (PLRs).

⁶ UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix 1 paragraph 2

⁷ Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as International Mother Earth Day.

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF SAFEGUARD A (THAT ACTIONS COMPLEMENT OR ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMMES AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS)

Narrative description by Guyana:

The REDD+ activities must be implemented in compliance with the objectives of national forest programmes, and consistent to the provisions of the relevant treaties and international conventions Guyana is Party to.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The REDD+ activities are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes
- b. The REDD+ activities are consistent with relevant and applicable international conventions and agreements

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF SAFEGUARD B (TRANSPARENT AND EFFECTIVE NATIONAL FOREST GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND SOVEREIGNTY)

Narrative description by Guyana:

The rights of access to information, accountability, justice, gender equality, land tenure and fair distribution of benefits will be respected and promoted in the scope of the application of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. Right to access information is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities
- b. Accountability is guaranteed in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities
- c. Right to access justice is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities
- d. Rights over forest land are recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities')
- e. Fair distribution of benefits is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities')

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF 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)

Narrative description by Guyana:

The REDD+ activities will be implemented in accordance and with respect to the rights of recognition of, and respect for the rights of Amerindian peoples and local communities; including the rights to non-discrimination, traditional knowledge and culture, self-determination, benefit sharing and land tenure rights.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are promoted and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.
- b. Traditional knowledge is recognized and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF SAFEGUARD D (THE FULL AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, IN PARTICULAR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES)

Narrative description by Guyana:

The right to participate, in particular for relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities, is recognized and are to be promoted under the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The right to participate in the design and implementation of the REDD+ activities is recognized and promoted.
- b. Relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities have the right to participate in the application of the REDD+ activities.
- c. Right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is recognized and protected in accordance with the relevant legal obligations in the application of the REDD+ activities.

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF 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 DECISION 1 / CP.16 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)

Narrative description by Guyana:

The REDD+ activities will promote the conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, the enhancement of social and environmental benefits, and will not result in the conversion of natural forests.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The conservation of natural forests and biological diversity is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities.
- b. The REDD+ activities will not incentivise the conversion of natural forests.
- c. Enhancement of ecological, biological, climatic, and socio-cultural, benefits is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

GUYANA'S CLARIFICATION OF SAFEGUARD F AND G (ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RISKS OF REVERSALS; ACTIONS TO REDUCE DISPLACEMENT OF EMISSIONS)

Narrative description by Guyana:

Risks of reversals and displacement of emissions of the REDD+ activities are addressed through the MRVS and national forest monitoring system.

OVERVIEW ON A SAFEGUARD'S INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR GUYANA

The UNFCCC does not offer any guidance on what specific functions the SIS should perform, e.g. information compilation, analysis, validation, dissemination, etc., beyond the need to 'provide transparent and consistent information' on how all the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected 'that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis'. The functions of the SIS are closely linked to the institutional arrangements for REDD+, which is why the following core functions for the SIS are considered in Guyana, and explained in more detail below:

- Collection: process of collecting raw data through appropriate means (e.g. information systems and sources).
- Aggregation: process of aggregating, into a central repository/database, the information provided by the relevant sources and systems for the purpose of analysis.
- Analysis: process of undertaking assessment (qualitative and quantitative) of the information in order to determine to what extent the safeguards are being addressed and respected.
- Dissemination of information: process of disseminating, both internally (national level) and externally (international reporting) through appropriate means (e.g. website, reports, meetings with relevant stakeholders, etc.)

FUNCTION 1: COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

This function refers to the process of collecting information on the ground and is linked to the monitoring and reporting responsibilities under the implementation of REDD+ activities.

The collection of information is to be carried out by the REDD+ Implementing agencies as a component of their monitoring and reporting responsibilities under the implementation of REDD+ activities. Part IV of this SOI outlines the indicators to be used to collect information. Information will be collected and reported routinely, that will allow for its analysis and preparation of national reports every 12 months.

FUNCTION 2: AGGREGATION OF INFORMATION

This function refers to the process of aggregating the requested information at national level through an SIS database, with the purpose of being able to report on the application of the safeguards at national level. The Department of Environment and Climate Change within the Office of the President, or designated Office of the Department will be responsible for the aggregation of the information.

FUNCTION 3: ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

The analysis function aims to offer a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the information in order to determine to what extent the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change within the Office of the President, or designated Office, will prepare a draft report and submit it for public comments. The draft report will be posted on the LCDS website, and the public will have 30 working days to submit any written comments to the Department of Environment and Climate Change office.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change, or designated Office, will address feedback received within 30 days of finalizing the public comment period. Based on comments received, the office will issue a responsiveness summary that summarizes all comments and responses to each and will submit the final report for validation and endorsement.

These annual reports should capture the experience with implementation of the Cancun safeguards. The specific objectives of these reports are to provide:

- an assessment of extent of compliance with Cancun safeguards, learn lessons, and determine potential improvements;
- to assess the occurrence of, and potential for, cumulative impacts due to project-funded and other development activities
- A record of progress, experiences, challenges encountered, lessons learnt and emerging issues from year-to-year implementation of Cancun safeguards that can be used to improve performance;

The report shall include the following key information:

- Reporting period;
- REDD+ activities undertaken during the reporting period;
- Progress to date in implementing the Cancun safeguards (un-packed by indicators);
- Challenges encountered;
- Lessons learned;
- Emerging issues;
- Recommendations for improvement;
- Conclusion.

FUNCTION 4: DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

This function refers to the process of disseminating the information produced by the SIS. Although UNFCCC guidance is not detailed in relation to this function, it requested that the SIS should: “Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders.”⁸ This means that there is an expectation that SIS information be disseminated both internally (national level) and externally (international reporting) through appropriate means (e.g. website, reports, meetings with relevant stakeholders, etc.).

At the domestic level, once the Report is approved by the Office of Climate Change it will be published as a final version. Information and updates will be done frequently, and a national report will be published every year. The report will also be sent to the respective UNFCCC focal point in the country, to trigger the reporting to the UNFCCC for the preparation of summary of information.

⁸ UNFCCC Decision 12/CP.17 paragraph 2(b)

PART III: HOW SAFEGUARDS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED?

It is now generally considered by most countries that identifying, assessing, and strengthening existing governance arrangements for safeguards (e.g. laws, institutional frameworks, information systems, etc.) provide a fundamental framework through which they can address and respect the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards throughout the implementation of their REDD+ interventions.

Given that the legal framework of the country generally protects and regulates the substantive and procedural rights enshrined in the Cancun Safeguards, Guyana's relevant legal framework largely determines 'how' the country ensures REDD+ activities are carried out in consistency with these safeguards, including those currently under implementation in the context of the MOU with Norway. This section provides a succinct overview of the legal and institutional framework⁹ outlining the relevant PLRs that are used to ensure consistency with the Cancun safeguards throughout REDD+ implementation.

Information is presented in relation to Guyana's description of Cancun Safeguards.

OVERVIEW ON THE APPLICABLE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN PLACE TO ENSURE REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION IS CONSISTENT WITH CANCUN SAFEGUARDS

CANCUN SAFEGUARD A

The REDD+ activities must be implemented in compliance with the objectives of national forest programmes, and consistent to the provisions of the relevant treaties and international conventions Guyana is Party to.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The REDD+ activities are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes;
- b. The REDD+ activities are consistent with relevant and applicable international conventions and agreements.

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

Guyana's legal framework provides a comprehensive suite of laws governing conservation and the protection of biodiversity consistent with national forest programmes that are applicable to the REDD+ Implementation Plan¹⁰. The National Forest Policy Statement 2018 (NFPS) and National Forest Plan 2018 (NFP) have been developed within the framework of the Guyana Constitution.

Guyana is currently party to thirty-three (33)¹¹ relevant international agreements which have been recognized and are applicable to the REDD+ Strategy. International law and conventions are enforceable when national

⁹ Draft Social and Environmental Management Framework for REDD+ in Guyana (15th October 2019)

¹⁰ The Constitution of Guyana 1980 – Principles and Bases of the Political, Economic and Social System recognises by virtue of section 36- the wellbeing of the nation requires inter alia the preservation of the rich diversity of plants and eco-systems. This is a general aspiration of the nation expressed by the drafters of the Constitution and represent the broad objectives which can be viewed as the foundation for all the subordinate legislation, regulations and policies.

¹¹ Convention on Biological Diversity; Cartagena Protocol on Biodiversity to the Convention on Biological Diversity; CITES; UN Convention to Combat Desertification; Kyoto Protocol; Doha Amendment to Kyoto Protocol; International Plant Protection; Convention International Tropical Timber Agreement 1983, 1994, 2006; UNFCCC; CAT - Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; CAT-OP - Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture; CCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; CED - Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; CERD - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; CESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; CMW - International Convention on the

law gives effect through enactment. The Constitution of Guyana¹² asserts that where a convention has been ratified, such rights shall be respected and upheld by the executive, legislature, judiciary and all organs and agencies of the Government and enforceable in the manner prescribed¹³.

CANCUN SAFEGUARD B

The rights of access to information, accountability, justice, gender equality, land tenure and fair distribution of benefits will be respected and promoted in the scope of the application of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. Right to access information is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- b. Accountability is guaranteed in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- c. Right to access justice is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- d. Rights over forest land are recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities');
- e. Fair distribution of benefits is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities').

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

With regards to access to information

The Access to Information Act gives every Guyanese citizen or person domiciled in Guyana the qualified right of access to information¹⁴. The Amerindian Act 2006 (AA) – refers to proper records and financial accounts to be furnished to the subject Minister. The Protected Areas Act 2011 (PAA) requires the publication of annual accounts of the Protected Areas Commission which is presented to Parliament. It also requires the maintenance of a register identifying protected areas and archaeological sites. The NFP and NFPS address dissemination and distribution of information via capacity building and governance including but not limited to green energy, REDD+ requirements, all aspects of forestry and forest-related activities. The Guyana Forestry Commission Act requires maintenance and dissemination of information.

With regards to Accountability

The Office of the Auditor General is entitled to investigate the financial performance of the government organizations, including details on revenue and expenditure relating to ministries, departments and regions. In

Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; CRC - Convention on the Rights of the Child; CRC-OP-AC - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict; CRC-OP-SC - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography; CRPD - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity Critical Expressions; UN Convention against Corruption, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Geneva Convention; Inter-American Convention Against Corruption; International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships; International Convention relating to Intervention of the High Seas in cases of Oil Pollution Casualties; International Treaty on Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture; Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage; Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; UN Convention against Torture; Convention on Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage; Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer.

¹² Constitution of Guyana, section 39 (2) In the interpretation of fundamental rights provisions in this Constitution a court shall pay due regard to international law, international conventions and charters bearing on human rights.

¹³ Constitution of Guyana, section 154A (1) of Fourth Schedule.

¹⁴ Constitution of Guyana, section 39 (2) In the interpretation of fundamental rights provisions in this Constitution a court shall pay due regard to international law, international conventions and charters bearing on human rights. Section 154A (1) of Fourth Schedule. Access to Information Act 2011 – section 12 Information is defined in the Access to information Act 2011 as any format of information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law.

the forest sector the Forestry Commission Act¹⁵, the PAA and the AA contain provisions mandating independent audits with the State Lands Act¹⁶ providing for rent, fees and other moneys to be paid to the Accountant General. The Criminal Law Offences Act and the Summary Jurisdiction of Offences Act regulate the bribery and corruption by public servant.

With regards to Access to Justice

The Guyana Constitution recognizes the right of access to justice and the right to bring proceedings for the infringement of fundamental rights by arms of the state¹⁷. Alternative Dispute Resolution is available through the Mediation Centre of Guyana supported by the Supreme Court. Forestry sector specific related offences exist with penalties in place¹⁸. The Environmental Protection Act (EPA) section 70 creates offences around bribery¹⁹. The SLA section 32 outlaws bribery by an officer and prescribes the applicable offences.²⁰ Several state agencies are equipped to investigate corrupt allegations. The State Assets Recovery Act created the State Assets Recovery Unit, the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Act 2009²¹ created the Financial Intelligence Unit. Others include- The Procurement Commission, the Guyana Revenue Authority, the Office of the Auditor General and the Office of the Ombudsman. The Integrity Commission Act²² (ICA) section 27 establishes a Code of Conduct for any person engaged in public life.

With regards to rights over Forest Land

The AA, SLA, PAA, GFCA, Mining Act²³, Forest Act (FA) and other sectoral policies recognise statutory and customary ownership and use rights. This suite of forest legislation provides clear legal rules recognizing land and forest land tenure rights. The FA establishes the basis on which public forested areas can be declared State Forests and the basis on which those forests may be acquired²⁴. The PAA (section 30) places an obligation on the subject Minister to investigate existing rights and to settle or terminate rights as permitted by law. The Act allows for the creation of Amerindian Protected Areas on application by a village council. Amerindian communities can either acquire lands through the AA (2006)²⁵, which has procedural framework in place, or through the SLA, which confers upon the President the power to issue land titles to Amerindian communities. Guyana's Constitution²⁶ forbids expropriation as default of any type of right, while requiring compensation for expropriated property and guarantees the person compensated access to the High Court to

¹⁵ Guyana Forestry Commission Act 2007.

¹⁶ State Lands Act Chapter 62:01

¹⁷ Articles 139 and 144 of the Guyana Constitution.

¹⁸ Forestry Commission Act section 27

¹⁹ Section 70 EPA creates a provision titled Ethical Considerations which refers to the commission of an offence(s) where officers demand or accept any fee, perquisite, bribe, gratuity, recompense or reward, whether pecuniary or otherwise, from any person on account of anything done or to be done (or omitted or to be omitted) by such representative, officer or employee in any way relating to his office or employment, or if any representative, officer or employee attempts to make any collusive agreement to neglect his duty or to conceal or connive at any act or omission.

²⁰ The provisions of Anti Money Laundering legislation whilst addressing the complex nature of money laundering does not specifically address the forest sector.

²¹ Act No.13 of 2009

²² Integrity Commission Act 19:12 Laws of Guyana

²³ Mining Act 1989

²⁴ excluding village lands as defined in the Amerindian Act, the Iwokrama Act and the Kaieteur National Park.

²⁵ The Protected Areas Act -Sections 59-64.

²⁶ "No property of any description shall be compulsory taken possession of, and no interest in or right over property of any description shall be compulsory acquired, except by or under the authority of a written law" (Constitution Art. 142(a) 1980 (2001)).

appeal any such decision.²⁷ Some forest sector PLRs offer specific rules on regulating state forest authorisations²⁸.

With regards to benefit sharing

Fair distribution of benefits are addressed in the Low Carbon Development Strategy, and the NFPS and NFP. This includes broad statements as to the regulation of such rights such as specific objective 1 of the NFPS which speaks of promoting sustainable livelihoods, both nationally and in forest dependent communities. The objective stresses the need for equitable benefit sharing not just among current stakeholders, but also between present and future generations. There are several policies and strategies which address the issue of participation and benefit sharing in the context of forest conservation and resource extraction, such as The NFPS and The Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). Guyana's Constitution includes provisions protecting the individual from against discrimination including on the grounds of gender, stating that (a) no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect; and (b) no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority.²⁹ Further protections are provided specifically to women and children³⁰.

Guyana's legal framework guards against all forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of gender.³¹ The Guyana Constitution established the Women and Gender Equality Commission to promote national recognition and acceptance that women's rights are human rights, respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality³².

CANCUN SAFEGUARD C

The REDD+ activities will be implemented in accordance and with respect to the rights of recognition of, and respect for the rights of Amerindian peoples and local communities; including the rights to non-discrimination, traditional knowledge and culture, self-determination, benefit sharing and land tenure rights.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are promoted and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.

²⁷ The Constitution states: "Nothing contained or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of [the above guarantees of compensation and appeal] to the extent that the law in question makes provision for the taking of possession or acquisition of: (i) property of the Amerindians of Guyana for the purpose of its care, protection and management; or any right, title or interest held by any person in or over any lands situated in an Amerindian District, Area or Village established under the Amerindian Act for the purpose of effecting the termination or transfer thereof for the benefit of an Amerindian community" (Art. 142(b)(i)).

²⁸ Forest Act Section 18-Suspension, amendment, and revocation of State forest authorisation- Where the Commissioner believes an offence has been committed he has the power to suspend, amend or revoke a forest authorisation. The holder is given an opportunity to be heard prior to application of powers under section 18.

²⁹ Article 149 of the Guyana Constitution

³⁰ Articles 149(D) 1) The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or equal protection and benefit of the law. 2) The State shall, for the purpose of promoting equality, take legislative and other measures designed to protect disadvantaged persons and persons with disabilities. 3) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms guaranteed by or under this Constitution or any other law. Article 149(E) "1) All persons, whether born in or out of wedlock, and whether born prior to the enactment of this article or not, are born equal, have equal status and are entitled to equal rights. 2). Nothing contained in paragraph (1) shall be taken to affect vested rights. Article 149(F) "1) Every woman is entitled to equal rights and status with men in all spheres of political, economic and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of gender or sex are illegal. 2) Every woman is entitled to equal access with men to academic, vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion and in social, political and cultural activity.

³¹ The Guyana Constitution, Equal Rights Act 1990, Prevention of Discrimination Act 1997. Gender discrimination is also addressed in numerous sectoral and other policies and regulations.

³² 212 Q (1)

- b. Traditional knowledge is recognized and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

Several pieces of legislation address the protection of indigenous rights, key among those is the Constitution of Guyana³³. Guyana's PLRs define Indigenous Peoples. The AA is the key piece of legislation which offers a definition of "Amerindian"³⁴. The FA and the PAA refer to Amerindian Community and ascribes to the meaning given to Amerindian in the AA. The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development Act 1996(IA) regulates consultations with the Amerindian community³⁵.

The Guyana Constitution³⁶ defines the right to the protection, preservation and promulgation of their languages, cultural heritage and way of life. This is further elaborated through similar protections of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) implemented into laws recognising and protecting the spiritual relationship which Amerindians have with the land³⁷.

The PAA establishes that the management authority for a national protected area may enter into an agreement with each Amerindian community and Amerindian village which has traditional rights in the national protected area and the agreement may provide for a host of benefits³⁸

The Amerindian Lands Commission Act asserts collective forest ownerships and rights³⁹. The Constitution of Guyana, the FA, the AA and the PAA all address the procedure where rights are susceptible to being extinguished or diminished⁴⁰. The AA empowers the Minister to determine the grant of title, based on investigation which accords recognition and protection of the communal property rights of Indigenous Peoples

³³ Art (149G): Indigenous people shall have the right to the protection, preservation and promulgation of their languages, cultural heritage and way of life.

³⁴ 'Amerindian' means any citizen of Guyana who — (a) belongs to any of the native or aboriginal peoples of Guyana; or (b) is a descendant of any person mentioned in paragraph (a). The Protected Areas Act - The (a) "Amerindian Community" has the meaning assigned to it by the Amerindian Act. According to article 1, paragraph 1 (a), of ILO Convention 169, its scope embraces tribal as well as indigenous peoples. The latter are defined as those peoples who are descended from populations which inhabited the country, or the geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

³⁵ The Forests Act 11(1) community group means person living within and having strong ties with the community..." The Iwokrama Act 6(2).

³⁶ Art 149G

³⁷ The Amerindian Act 2006 contains the mechanisms for implementing Article 8(j) of the CBD.

³⁸ — (a) the use of scientific methodologies to assess the levels at which use is sustainable;

(b) systems for monitoring and recording the exercise of traditional rights;

(c) systems for reporting any threats to traditional rights including any use or extraction of resources which is not authorised under a traditional right or otherwise permitted in the management plan;

(d) recognition of the spiritual relationship which the Amerindian community or Amerindian village has with the national protected area or any part of it;

(e) identification of sacred places and measures to ensure their protection;

(f) the management of any archaeological sites identified under section 79;

³⁹ The Amerindian Lands Commission Act asserts³⁹ ownership and other customary rights. The role of the Commission is to investigate and recommend which tribes and communities shall be given rights of tenure and inter alia the nature of the rights of tenure, beneficial or legal and how vested or conferred.

The Amerindian Act defines which applications are made to and decided by the Minister under a very simplified process. The land claim mechanism encompasses inter alia unorthodox sources such as oral histories, local sketches and drawings.

⁴⁰ For example: The Protected Areas Act sec (30) the Minister shall carry out an investigation to determine what rights and claims exist over the area and may take steps to settle such claims and terminate such rights as permitted by law.

which arise from and are grounded in traditional ownership systems⁴¹. The AA recognises benefit sharing as a key component of the empowerment of indigenous people.⁴²

CANCUN SAFEGUARD D

The right to participate, in particular for relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities, is recognized and is to be promoted under the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The right to participate in the design and implementation of the REDD+ activities is recognized and promoted.
- b. Relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities have the right to participate in the application of the REDD+ activities.
- c. Right to FPIC is recognized and protected in accordance with the relevant legal obligations in the application of the REDD+ activities.

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

The AA, the PAA, the FA⁴³ outline varying levels and processes of public participation. The IA sec 6(2) recognizes and provides for a process of consultancy and involvement of the Amerindian community. The Guyana Constitution established the Indigenous Peoples Commission which has a constitutionally mandated role in enhancing participation and representation of Indigenous people in the decision-making process. The Amerindian Act, the Forest Act, the Forest Policy Statement and Forest Plan, and the Iwokrama Act contain provisions for ensuring participation of stakeholders in the forestry sector.⁴⁴⁴⁵

CANCUN SAFEGUARD E

The REDD+ activities will promote the conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, the enhancement of social and environmental benefits, and will not result in the conversion of natural forests.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The conservation of natural forests and biological diversity is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities.
- b. The REDD+ activities will not incentivise the conversion of natural forests.
- c. Enhancement of ecological, biological, climatic, and socio-cultural, benefits is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

⁴¹ While rights are protected, those rights are limited: the Amerindian Act limits those to only "subsistence rights or privileges," and requires that those rights be "exercised sustainably" in accordance with indigenous peoples' "spiritual relationship" with their lands, which limits enforceability.

⁴² 'The requirement for consent for small and medium scale mining, employment of locals in mining operations and benefit sharing with communities. Moreover, central government is now bound to pay a percentage of royalties from mining on Amerindian lands into a fund for the benefit of all Indigenous villages and communities.'⁴²

⁴³ The Forests Act section 11 speaks of the free and fair opportunity for participation where grants of Community Forest Management Agreements are awarded.

⁴⁴ The Amerindian Act, the Forest Act⁴⁴, the Forest Policy Statement and Forest Plan, and the Iwokrama Act contain provisions on representation in the forestry sector.

⁴⁵ The Amerindian Act section 34 establishes the village general meeting to meet on a quarterly basis. The meetings are open to all villagers and decisions are arrived on a consensus basis, if not mechanisms are in places to so address. Decisions of the general meeting are elevated for consideration by the subject Minister. The Forest Policy Statement and Forest Plan 2018 contain provisions for addressing the issue of capacity building.

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

Guyana's legal framework defines the terms "biological diversity" and "ecosystems services"^{46/47}. The Guyana Forestry Commission has utilised the definition of Forest⁴⁸ as per the Forest Act and operationalised it for mapping purpose so the stipulation of a minimum mapping unit which is 1 hectare is utilized⁴⁹. The PAA establishes the basis for creating protected areas. The AA has limitations in respect of large-scale mining⁵⁰.

Guyana's legal framework regulates protection of wildlife- The Animals Disease Prevention Act 2003, Animal Control of Experiments Act Chp 71:03, the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act contain provisions for the protection of endangered species. Penalties⁵¹ exist for non-compliance in respect of protection, marketing and trade of endangered species. Guyana's PLRs promote conservation research for science-based biodiversity conservation: IA, PAA, WCMA are among the key legislative instruments addressing science-based conservation in addition to policies such as the NFPS and NFP⁵².

CANCUN SAFEGUARD F AND G

'Risks of reversals and displacement of emissions of the REDD+ activities are addressed through the MRVS and national forest monitoring system'.

Relevant PLRs to be used to ensure the implementation of this Safeguard

It will be largely supported by a national forest MRVS.

⁴⁶ The Protected Areas Act and the Iwokrama Act. Protected Areas Act 6(f) "biological diversity" means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial ecosystems, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

⁴⁷ Defined in the act as benefits provided by ecosystems which include provisioning services such as food, water, timber, fiber, and genetic resources; regulating services such as the regulation of climate, floods, disease, and water quality as well as waste treatment; cultural services such as recreation, aesthetic enjoyment and spiritual fulfilment; and supporting services such as soil formation, pollination and nutrient cycling;

⁴⁸ Forests Act- Forest means an ecosystem dominated by woody plants consisting of closed forest formations where trees of various stories and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground; or open forest with continuous vegetation cover in which tree crown cover exceeds 10 percent and includes mangrove forests and any wetlands or open lands within a forest which forms an integral part of the ecosystem, forest produce in the ecosystem; and biological soil and water resources of the ecosystem.

⁴⁹ Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GL&SC) is the main agency responsible for land surveying and administration in Guyana. The Commission, a statutory body, is responsible for the development and management of land information system. It maintains registers of GIS data and maps in Guyana. It is responsible for the purchase and lease of all public lands in Guyana. The Commission engages in projects with the Guyana Forestry Commission to address mapping and verification. A National Land Use Plan was crafted by the GLSC. Its key policy focus is summarized as follows- The National Land Use Plan highlights present land use, potential and constraints and recommendations. Short, medium and long-term priorities for development and land use, especially how to deal with competing land uses in each of the development periods are planned by various Agencies. Planning ultimately analyses the sustainability of activities such as forestry and agriculture against non-sustainable but high-value activities such as mining. The GL&SC has overall responsibility for land use planning. It carries out land surveys, produces maps and stores and distributes geographical information through Guyana Integrated Natural Resources Information System (GINRIS).

⁵⁰ The subject Minister may override the village's consent to large scale mining. The Forests Act contains restrictions on activities in State Forests.

⁵¹ The WCM Act 2018- Unlawful trade and the carrying out of certain activities without authorisation are offences under clause 68. Clause 69 creates an offence to possess, control, offer or expose for sale or display to the public any specimen to which the Act relates without authorisation from the Commission.

⁵² Develop structure and content for biodiversity databases and legal and stakeholder-based processes used to increase forest protection based on protected areas and biodiversity conservation guidelines

Additionally, the Guyana Forestry Commission Act⁵³ and the State Lands Act (SLA)⁵⁴ with their corresponding NFPS⁵⁵ and NFP⁵⁶ apply. The Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting⁵⁷, the Guidelines for Conducting Management-level Inventory and 100%-level Inventory, and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Forest Management Plans and Annual Operational Plans. Additionally the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting is based on the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Model Code of Forest Practice and prescribes inter alia internationally accepted standards for exclusion areas and buffer zones, pre-harvest inventory, road construction and felling. Guyana's legal framework provides measures to tackle reversals and displacement, this is done through the PAA⁵⁸ and the FA⁵⁹, as well as through several policy instruments: NFPS⁶⁰ and NFP⁶¹, LCDS⁶². These efforts include enforcement.⁶³ The FA⁶⁴ addresses the issue of detection and reduction of forest fires.

⁵³ Guyana Forestry Commission Act No 20 of 2007.

⁵⁴ State Lands Act 1903.

⁵⁵ Guyana National Forest Policy Statement 2018.

⁵⁶ Guyana National Forest Plan 2018.

⁵⁷ Code of Practice for Forest Operations 2018

⁵⁸ Protected Areas Act –section 123 Except with the permission of the management authority any person who lights any plant or vegetation. fire or clears, burns or otherwise damages any tree, bush, plant or other vegetation commits an offence.

⁵⁹ Forests Act – section 5-Except in accordance with subsection (2), no person shall (a) enter a State forest, provided that a person may travel through a state forest in the course of his journey and may reasonably occupy or use the forest for the purpose of his journey; cut, damage, or take any forest produce, or carry out any other kind of forest operation in a State forest; carry out any kind of exploratory operation in a State forest;(d) occupy or use any land in a State forest;(e) clear, cultivate, or turn soil in a State forest; or (f) graze or pasture livestock in a State forest. Section 1212. The Commission. after consultation with relevant stakeholders may on agreement. application grant any person an afforestation agreement by entering into an agreement with the person concerned authorising that person to (a) plant specified trees and specified plants in a specified area of State forest; and (b) manage the planted area in accordance with a forest management plan approved by the Commission.

⁶⁰ National Forest Policy Statement - Policy Strategy 2.2.5 Afforestation and Reforestation -The policy promotes the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded landscapes through forest plantation development, enrichment planting, and community forestry. The strategy is to develop systems, and incentive packages, to support reforestation and forest plantation development. Public, private sector and community investment shall be sought, with emphasis on degraded forests, agricultural and mining lands and mangroves. This will require developing and implementing a National Forest Plantation Strategy, based on best practices and updated forest plantation

⁶¹ National Forest Plan- SO 2-Improved rating for Guyana on the global Environmental Performance Index; Real-time quantification of forest cover loss and forest degradation; Reduced numbers of forest fires, disease and pest outbreaks; Sustainable use reserves increases.

⁶² Low Carbon Development Strategy- the Government of Guyana supports a phased approach to REDD+: (i) starting with a fund-based mechanism for REDD+ from 2010, and (ii) gradually merging REDD+ into the carbon market(s). Starting in 2013, a portion of each country's rainforest should be assigned forestry emissions quotas or carbon credits (known as REDD Credits)³¹ as offsets to trade within the carbon markets. Over years, the portion of rainforest for which REDD Credits are assigned should be progressively increased in line with a trajectory which prevents "flooding" the markets.

⁶³ Areas such as the Community Owned Conservation Area (COCA), Konashen, established under the Amerindian Act⁶³, the Kaieteur National Park and Iwokrama Forest have Rangers. The Protected Areas Act further strengthened that approach by committing financial support for Rangers in all protected areas, with The Guyana Forestry Commission tracking illegal logging. The Guyana Geology and Mines Commission⁶³ is the regulatory body for most of the extractive sector.

⁶⁴ Sections 17-18

PART IV: HOW SAFEGUARDS HAVE BEEN RESPECTED?

As this is Guyana's first Sol and considering Guyana's REDD+ Implementation Plan is currently still under development, this section presents the newly adopted indicators to be utilized for collection and analysis of information to demonstrate the REDD+ activities have been implemented in consistency with the Cancun safeguards. It is therefore anticipated that subsequent SOIs will provide information on the actual outcomes, structured in relation to these indicators, in the context of accessing REDD+ results-based payments in application of the methodological framework established in the Warsaw Framework for REDD+.

The following indicators have been developed in accordance with Guyana's clarification of the Cancun safeguards, which includes its core elements.

CANCUN SAFEGUARD A

The REDD+ activities must be implemented in compliance with the objectives of national forest programmes, and consistent to the provisions of the relevant treaties and international conventions Guyana is Party to.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. *The REDD+ activities are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes;*
- b. *The REDD+ activities are consistent with relevant and applicable international conventions and agreements.*

Indicators to consider:

A.1. *Description of how the implementation of the REDD+ activities are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes.*

A.2. *Description of how the implementation of the REDD+ activities are consistent with the objectives of the various international agreements to which Guyana is a Party.*

CANCUN SAFEGUARD B

The rights of access to information, accountability, justice, gender equality, land tenure and fair distribution of benefits will be respected and promoted in the scope of the application of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. Right to access information is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- b. Accountability is guaranteed in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- c. Right to access justice is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities;
- d. Rights over forest land are recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities');
- e. Fair distribution of benefits is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities (including 'Gender equality is promoted in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ activities').

Indicators to consider:

B.1. Description of the application of information sharing/dissemination laws, regulations and procedures tailored to stakeholders.

B.2. Description of REDD+ related financial performance, including details on income, expenditures and benefits within the forest sector, when available down to the sub-jurisdictional level.

B.3. Description of how REDD+ finance (readiness, implementation and results) has been spent, percentage of allocation by gender, sector and location.

B.4. Description of REDD+ related grievances received, process followed to adjudicate and outcomes, including records of any REDD+ related efforts to ensure access to justice in the context of the implementation of REDD+ activities.

B.5. Description of how land tenure and land use rights have been recognized and protected during the implementation of REDD+ activities, in particular land rights of women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups.

B.6. Description of measures taken to ensure equitable sharing of benefits with forest-dependent communities and Indigenous villages, including ensuring gender equity and dealing with social discrepancies.

B.7. Description of how benefit sharing arrangements functioned in practice, their distribution across villages and description of impacts resulting from such benefit sharing arrangements.

CANCUN SAFEGUARD C

The REDD+ activities will be implemented in accordance and with respect to the rights of recognition of, and respect for the rights of Amerindian peoples and local communities; including the rights to non-discrimination, traditional knowledge and culture, self-determination, benefit sharing and land tenure rights.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are promoted and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.
- b. Traditional knowledge is recognized and protected in the context of the application of the REDD+ activities.

Indicators to consider:

C.1. Description of how Indigenous peoples and local communities were included in the design and implementation of the REDD+ activities.

C.2. Number of Indigenous peoples and local communities trained in the implementation and the reporting of the REDD+ activities.

C.3. Description on how vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly women, were not excluded from the benefits of REDD+ or are not left worse off.

C.4. Description of Indigenous peoples, local communities, particularly vulnerable groups, women, youth and the elderly residing in areas affected by REDD+ activities.

C.5. Description of any sacred sites or other sites of cultural significance to communities in areas that may be affected by REDD+ activities.

C.6. If applicable, description of how (if at all) traditional knowledge has been used/has contributed to REDD+ activities implementation and how Indigenous peoples' intellectual property has been protected.

C.7. Number of Indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly women, youth and the elderly, directly involved in traditional use of resources from areas supported by REDD+ activities.

CANCUN SAFEGUARD D

The right to participate, in particular for relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities, is recognized and are to be promoted under the implementation of the REDD+ activities.

Core elements of the clarification:

- a. The right to participate in the design and implementation of the REDD+ activities is recognized and promoted.
- b. Relevant Indigenous peoples and local communities have the right to participate in the application of the REDD+ activities.
- c. Right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent is recognized and protected in accordance with the relevant legal obligations in the application of the REDD+ activities.

Indicators to consider:

D.1. Description of the general categories of stakeholders (women, youth, the elderly, etc.) and how they were involved in the implementation of the REDD+ activities (documentation and mapping of stakeholders, information shared, feedback gathered, in what format was it gathered).

D.2. Description of approaches to participation as well as the outcomes of the participation processes in the implementation of the REDD+ activities (for example how the ideas or comments from relevant stakeholders led to implementation changed/was influenced by considering the views of the relevant stakeholders).

D.3. Description of participation activities (e.g. type of meeting, purpose of meeting and level (regional cluster/sub regional, district council, culturally appropriate information produced, non-technical information produced, capacity building activities, specific meetings organised for vulnerable groups).

D.4. If applicable, description and evidence of how FPIC processes were followed prior to REDD+ activities in areas of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and whether they affected the implementation of REDD+ (REDD+ actions cancelled where FPIC withheld).

D.5. If applicable, number of FPIC processes followed (FPIC granted, FPIC withheld -resulting in intervention not going ahead).

CANCUN SAFEGUARD E

The REDD+ Implementation Plan will promote the conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, the enhancement of social and environmental benefits, and will not result in the conversion of natural forests.

Core elements of the clarification:

- The conservation of natural forests and biological diversity is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ strategy.
- The REDD+ strategy will not incentivise the conversion of natural forests.
- Enhancement of ecological, biological, climatic, and socio-cultural, benefits is recognized and protected in the context of the implementation of the REDD+ Implementation Plan.

Indicators to consider:

E.1. Description of how REDD+ activities include measures to ensure that do not result in the conversion of natural forests.

E.2. Spatial information on the country's natural forest cover before and after REDD+ implementation.

E.3. Spatial information on extent of plantations nationally and rate of change in extent of plantations.

E.4. Description of whether and how the projected ecological, biological, climatic and socio-cultural priorities of REDD+ activities were realised following implementation.

E.5. Description of how the implementation of REDD+ activities has impacted biodiversity in accordance with Guyana's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and other relevant national strategies.

E.6. Description of how the implementation of REDD+ activities has resulted in climate benefits in accordance with Guyana's Nationally Determined Contribution and/or National Adaptation Plan.

CANCUN SAFEGUARD F & G

Risks of reversals and displacement of emissions of the REDD+ interventions are addressed through the MRV and national forest monitoring system.

Indicators:

F&G.1. Description of MRVS designed, maintained and implemented with the appropriate frequency to detect and provide information on reversals and displacement events.

F&G.2. Description of measures undertaken, and financial resources allocated, to support enforcement and ranging efforts.

F&G.3. Description of carbon accounting risk mitigation mechanisms such as buffer pools.

F&G.4. Number of tCO₂ reduced since REDD+ intervention/implementation.

F&G.5. Variation of deforestation rates in neighbouring areas before and after the REDD+ intervention.

PART V: OPERATIONAL MECHANISM TO RECEIVE AND ADDRESS COMPLAINTS

This section presents Guyana's current mechanisms which serve to receive, and address concerns and complaints at the sector level. It is intended that these mechanisms will inform the development of a dedicated REDD+ Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) that will build on existing mandate and structures and not create a new institution.

It is the aim of the Government of Guyana to strengthen internal GRM systems of REDD+ related agencies while promoting an interagency GRM platform that can capture and report on data relating to investigations, dialogue, and resolutions. The platform will provide vital support services related to communication, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation.

EXISTING MECHANISMS

The Table below details the existing mechanisms currently in place to receive and address complaints and issues. These mechanisms allow for complaints to be addressed at various levels.

Level	Legislation	Institution	Characteristics	Type
Local Community Mechanisms	Amerindian Act 2006, Ch.29:01	Amerindian Village & Community Councils	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make Rules 2. Investigate and enforce breaches of Rules 3. Allocate lands and resolve land disputes 4. Negotiate commercial agreements for mining and forestry on Amerindian lands 	Statutory
Sector Specific Mechanisms	GLSC Act, Ch.59:01 State Lands Act, Ch.62:01 State Lands Resumption Act, Ch 62:02 Public Lands (Public Roads) Act, Ch.62:03	Guyana Lands & Surveys Commission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigation and resolution of complaints 2. Enforcement of terms and conditions of leases, license and permissions 	Administrative

	GGMC Act, Ch.65:09 Mining Act, Ch.65:01 & Mining Regulations; Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act, Ch. 65:10	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission	1. Investigation and resolution of complaints 2. Enforcement of terms and conditions of permits 3. Law enforcement	Statutory
	GFC Act, No.20 of 2007 Forests Act, No.6 of 2009	Guyana Forestry Commission	1. Investigation and resolution of complaints 2. Enforcement of terms and conditions of permits	Administrative
	Amerindian Act 2006, Ch.29:01	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs	1. Minister may investigate and remove Toshaos & Village Councilors 2. Minister must determine applications for grants of State lands 3. AVC may appeal from Minister's decision to High Court	Statutory
			1. Amerindian Land Titling Project GRM	Administrative
	Environmental Protection Act, Ch.20:05	Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Assessment Board Environmental Appeals Tribunal	1. Appeals to EAB concerning EPA decisions not to ask for EIA 2. Appeals to EAT against EPA decisions to refuse, or grant conditionally, environmental permits 3. Appeals to EAT against EPA decisions to refuse, grant conditionally, vary or revoke, construction and operation permits and process licenses	Statutory

	Protected Areas Act, No.14 of 2011	Protected Areas Commission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extinction of existing claims/rights in PAs 2. Appeals by AVCs re-creation of PAs on Amerindian lands 3. Consultation and agreement with AVCs re traditional rights and archeological sites in public PAs 4. Public meetings re variation and de-reservation of PAs 	Statutory
	Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, No. 14 of 2016	Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission	Representations by licensees against cancellation of licenses & permits	Statutory
National Law Courts	Summary Jurisdiction Act, Ch.3:05	Magistrate's Courts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small Claims 2. Summary Offences 	Judicial
	High Court Act, Ch.3:02	High Courts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Criminal Prosecutions 2. Civil Litigation 3. Judicial Review 	Judicial
	Court of Appeal Act, Ch.3:01	Court of Appeal	Appeals from lower courts	Judicial
	Caribbean Court of Justice Act 2004, No.16 of 2004	Caribbean Court of Justice	Appeals from Court of Appeal	Judicial
Special	Land Registry Act,	Land Court	Land Adjudication	Judicial
Level	Legislation	Institution	Characteristics	Type

Purpose Fora	Ch.5:02			
	Arbitration Act, Ch.7:03	Arbitrators	Out of Court Settlement of Civil Proceedings	Statutory ADR Process
	Constitution, Ch.1:01 Ombudsman Act, Ch.19:04	Ombudsman	1. Investigation of complaints against government bodies 2. Recommendation of remedial actions 3. Reporting to the National Assembly 4. Publication of reports	Feedback

These operational mechanisms currently address issues highlighted by stakeholders regarding REDD+ implementation and more specifically the implementation of REDD+ Safeguards.

It is the longer term vision for all the avenues through which grievances on REDD+ take, addressed at the legislative/mandated agency level, that these are consolidated, for reporting purposes, within a centralised mechanism. In this, complaints could be made through any of the channels outlined in the Table above and would be collated through this centralised mechanism for reporting purposes.

PART VI: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This section will present an overview of the participatory processes undertaken in Guyana in preparation to this SOI. The workshops were held in June 2019, as follows:

6 June 2019 in Kamarang, Region 7

The workshop was held in Kamarang, an Amerindian village, and targeted villages/communities from the Upper Mazaruni. There were 47 representatives (20 females and 27 males) from the following communities which participated in the workshop: Chinoweing, Jawalla, Kako, Kamarang, Paruma, Phillipai, Quebawang and Waradong.

11 June 2019 in Mabaruma, Region 1

The workshop was held in Mabaruma, which is known to be the Administrative Centre of Region 1 and has recently obtained its status as a town in 2016. The workshop included participation of 23 residents (12 females and 11 males) from surrounding villages of the Mabaruma region namely: Almond Beach; Aruba Mouth; Bumbury Village; Hosororo; Hosororo Stretch; Kamwatta; Khans Hill; Konerima Hill; Lower Koriabo; Mabruma Settlement; Mabruma Thomas Hill; Smith Creek; St Anset; St Dominic; Tobago; Wakerbi Aruka; Wamana Hill; Wauna; White Water and Yarakita.

14 June 2019 in Linden, Region 10

The workshop was held in the township of Linden and had representation of 27 persons of which 11 were female and 16 males. The representatives were from: Rivers View, Port Kaituma, Muritaro, Hururu, Linden, Wikki/Calcuni, Kwakwani, Aroaima, Sandhills, Kimbia, Coomacka, ISLA, Rockstone and Great Falls.

18 June 2019 in Paramakatoi, Region 8

The workshop was conducted in Paramakatoi, an Amerindian village, and included participation of 35 residents (12 females and 23 males) from Kurukabaru, Paramakatoi, Kato, Tuseneng, Bashvale/Yawong, Taruka, Bamboo Creek, Kamana, Shulinab and Port Kaituma.

The workshops sought to identify and prioritize potential social and environmental risks and benefits appropriate to Guyana. A total of more than 150 representatives from government agencies, non-government organizations and indigenous communities participated in the workshops.

Specifically, the workshops' objectives were to have participants:

- Understand REDD+ safeguards for the REDD+ Implementation Plan;
- Review and gather feedback on indicators for reporting on REDD+ safeguard performance;
- Review and gather feedback on proposed institutional arrangements for implementing REDD+ safeguards and collecting and disseminating information on their application.

A key element of the workshops included group activities with participants to enable open interaction and feedback on the safeguards and institutional arrangements. This report captures the discussion of the group activities, the key issues identified and suggestions and recommendations emanating from the discussions.

The workshops were held in the Guyana Forestry Commission's Multiplex Building boardroom over a three day period where Indigenous representatives were invited to the first one-day session on the 14 October; the Government representatives on the 15 October and the third day, 16 October was dedicated to the Private Sector and Civil society groups.

Additionally, continued engagements have been held with stakeholders on related aspects on REDD+ and safeguards and have informed this Summary. These are summarised below:

Summary of REDD+ Outreach Activities Undertaken by GFC

Period Conducted	Areas Discussed	Communities/ Groups Participated	Details
September to November, 2012	Sustainable Forest Management in Guyana; Overview of the revised National Forest Policy Statement, the revised National Forest Plan & Code of Practice for Harvesting Operations, including aspects on REDD+ and FCPF	19 workshops involving communities, associations and regional bodies, such as stakeholders in New Amsterdam, Orealla, Bartica, Mabaruma, Port Kaituma, Moruca, Charity, Anna Regina, Kwakwani, Lethem, Shulinab, Annai, Moraikobai, Kamarang, Linden, Soesdyke, Mahdia, Georgetown.	124 communities/associations and 50 regional stakeholders, totalling 564 individuals attended these workshops.
April to June, 2013	Overview of Guyana's Monitoring Reporting & Verification System (MRVS), REDD+ Activities and the LCDS, & European Union (EU) Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT)	Twelve (12) workshop clusters for communities, forest associations, miners, non-governmental organisations, Government agencies and other stakeholders in Mabaruma, Kwebana, Santa Rosa, Anna Regina, Parika, Annai, Kwakwani, Linden, Kamarang, Soesdyke, Georgetown (NGOs), Georgetown (Govt. Agencies)	90 communities and associations, 10 NGOs and 12 government agencies, totaling 356 individuals attended
May to July, 2014	Overview of Guyana's LCDS, REDD+ Activities and the Monitoring Reporting & Verification System (MRVS)	Communities and regional stakeholders attended cluster workshops in Moraikobai, Mahdia, Lethem, Shulinab, Annai, Kamarang, Mabaruma, Moruca, Charity, Mainstay	352 persons representing 72 communities, 5 associations, and 5 regional bodies attended
April to June 2015	Information on the status of REDD+ implementation in Guyana, including the MRVS and other REDD+ related areas such as Guyana's engagement with the EU FLEGT, the FCPF, establishing links to LCDS	Ten (10) workshops were conducted, 2 in Georgetown and 8 at the community level in Linden, Kwakwani, Georgetown (NGOs), Georgetown (Private Sector), Kamarang, Annai, Bartica, Charity, Moruca, Mabaruma	A total of 250 persons attended comprising 143 males and 107 females

	and other related REDD+ aspects.		
July to October 2018	REDD+ implementation in Guyana and the MRVS	Twelve (12) Dialogue and Capacity Building Workshops were held in Georgetown (3), Bartica, Parika, Linden, Kwakwani, Anna Regina, Mabaruma, Moruca, Annai, Kamarang	Total of 327 participants attended, comprising 208 males and 119 females
November 2020– March 2021	REDD+ implementation in Guyana, and the MRVS and related REDD+ areas.	Sessions taking place in Georgetown (4), Mabaruma, Anna Regina, New Amsterdam, Bartica, Mahdia, Annai (Virtual), Linden, Kwakwani	Final report being compiled

