



**Asesoramiento
Ambiental
Estratégico**



**CENTRE FOR APPLIED
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

Development of the Safeguards Information System (SIS) for the REDD+ Readiness Project in Belize

Prepared by Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico, AAE,
and the Centre for Applied Development Studies, CADS

December 17th, 2021

Table of content

Executive summary	5
SECTION 1 – Introduction and key concepts	11
1. The need for a National REDD+ Safeguards Information System (SIS)	11
2. Objectives of the Integrated Report	12
2.1. The consultation process related to Belize’s SIS design and implementation	13
SECTION 2 – National REDD+ Safeguards Interpretation	14
3. What, why and how	14
4. Options for structuring the national safeguards interpretation.....	16
5. National REDD+ safeguards interpretation document	18
5.1. Introduction	18
5.2. Inputs from multi-stakeholder participation	19
5.3. National safeguards interpretation (NSI).....	20
SAFEGUARD A	20
SAFEGUARD B	20
SAFEGUARD C	21
SAFEGUARD D	22
SAFEGUARD E.....	22
SAFEGUARD F.....	23
SAFEGUARD G	23
SECTION 3 – Designing Belize’s REDD+ SIS.....	24
6. Key aspects for the SIS’ design.....	24
6.1. Objectives	24
6.2. Reporting needs and rules	25
6.3. SIS functions and institutional arrangements proposed	27
6.4. Technological systems requirements	29
7. Identification and assessment of existing Sources of Information and suitable Compliance Indicators for Belize’s REDD+ SIS	30
7.1. Sources of Information	30
7.1.1. Selected Sources of Information	34
7.2. Compliance Indicators	34
7.2.1. Methodology for the identification of the Compliance Indicators	34
7.2.2. Compliance Indicators selected.....	34
8. Procedure to produce and report the SIS information.....	35

8.1.	General procedure to produce the SIS content.....	35
9.	Design and implementation of Belize’s REDD+ SIS website	37
9.1.	Step-by-step planning for Belize’s REDD+ SIS website design and programming	37
9.2.	Interface, content structure and technical specifications	38
9.2.1.	Interface and content structure	38
9.2.2.	Technical Specifications.....	39
9.2.3.	Capacity building for website update and management	40
9.3.	Website User Manual	41
9.4.	Validation and publishing of the website	42
9.5.	Resources and budget needed for the functioning of the SIS.....	42
SECTION 4 – Multi-stakeholder participation process conducted for the design of Belize’s REDD+ SIS		
.....		44
10.	Stakeholders levels, modalities and milestones for consultation	44
10.1.	Stakeholders groups	44
10.2.	Participation modalities.....	45
11.	Recommendations.....	48
ANNEXES		0
Annex 1. SIS Technical Counterpart Team (SIS-TCT) directory		0
Annex 2. Schedule of activities		2
Annex 2.1. Workplan.....		2
Annex 2.2. Report of relevant participation events for Belize’s REDD+ SIS design		3
Annex 2.3. Feedback Matrix for the SIS web content and “touch and feel”		3
Annex 3. Multi-stakeholder input analysis matrix for the National Safeguards Interpretation.....		5
Annex 3.1. SIS National Webinar.		5
Annex 3.2. Considerations for the IPs’ Consultation Methodology for the National REDD+ Safeguards Interpretation Process		5
Annex 3.3. Multi-stakeholder input analysis matrix for the NSI.....		5
Annex 4. Information needs, sources of information and compliance indicators		6
Annex 4.1. Assessment of International conventions reports as Sources of Information		6
Annex 4.2. Domestic Sources of information identified.....		7
Annex 4.3. SIS Reporting Matrix		9
Annex 4.4. SIS Template for Information Providers		1
Annex 4.5 Project level reporting template.....		2
Annex 5. SIS website report content on safeguards address and respect		4

Annex 6. Guidelines and recommendations to elaborate the country’s 1st UNFCCC Summary of Information on Safeguards	5
Annex 7 - Website User Manual	10

List of tables

Table 1. UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards	9
Table 2. Component activities and state of implementation	10
Table 3. Template of the national REDD+ safeguards interpretation	16
Table 4. Multi-stakeholder participation events for the National Safeguards Interpretations	17
Table 5. Key design considerations for REDD+ safeguards information systems.	22
Table 6. SIS Roles	25
Table 7. Procedure to produce the SIS content	32
Table 8. Stakeholder groups	41

List of graphs

Graph 1. Methodology for Sources of Information	28
Graph 2. Structure and navigation of the SIS website	35
Graph 3. Website sections that would need to be updated	38



Acronyms

AAE	Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico
LAC	Latin America and Caribe
APAMO	Association of Protected Areas Management Organizations
BENIC	Belize National Indigenous Council
BLPA	Belize Livestock Producers Association
BNN	Belize Network of NGOs
BSI-ASR	Belize Sugar Industries-ASR Group
CADS	Centre For Applied Development Studies
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITO	Central Information Technology Office
CMS	Content Management System
CNS-REDD+	Comité Nacional de Salvaguardas REDD+ de Guatemala
CO ₂ toneq	Carbon dioxide equivalent ton
COP	Conference of the Parties
ENS	National Safeguards Approach
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FGRM	Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FREL	Forest Reference Emission Level
FRL	Forest Reference Level
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCI	Grupo de Coordinación Interinstitucional
GHG	Greenhouse gas emissions
IP	Indigenous peoples
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MAE	Ministry of Environment Ecuador
MM	Mitigation Measures
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NAVCO	National Association of Village Councils
NCCO	National Climate Change Office
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NGOs	Non-government Organizations
NREF	National Reference Emission Levels
NSI	National safeguards interpretation
OP	Operational Procedures
PACT	Protected Areas Conservation Trust
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SES	Social and Environmental Safeguards
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SIS	Safeguard Information System
SOI	UNFCCC Summaries of information on Safeguards
TCT	Technical Counterpart Team
UBERI	University of Belize Environmental Research Institute
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Executive summary

Introduction and context

The Cancun Safeguards for REDD+

REDD+ is a mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to provide incentives for countries to reduce forest-related GHG emissions and guide the sustainable management of forests and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. The implementation of REDD+, like all environmental public policies or projects, might also have negative consequences on forest-dependent communities and natural ecosystems. To avoid and mitigate those unwanted impacts, country Parties to the UNFCCC agreed to adopt the Cancun Safeguards, a pack of seven environmental and social measures and objectives that indicate how REDD+ activities ought to be designed and implemented. These safeguards cover basic rights and measures to protect people and the environment, such as indigenous peoples' (IPs) rights, the right of access to information, grievance redress mechanisms, or the protection of natural ecosystems, among others.

Safeguards Information System (SIS) and its importance

In 2010, the member countries to the UNFCCC agreed to a package of measures structuring the elements of the REDD+ mechanism. Within the so called "Cancun Agreements" it was established that all countries interested in accessing REDD+ results-based payments under the UNFCCC must undergo a Readiness Phase in which at least the following four REDD+ elements need to be developed:

- A National REDD+ Strategy;
- A Forest Reference Level/Forest Reference Emission Level (FRL/FREL);
- A National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS); and,
- **A Safeguards Information System (SIS).**

A SIS is a system designed to provide information on how REDD+ safeguards (Cancun safeguards) are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. It is a prerequisite to access results-based payments from REDD+, both under the UNFCCC and its funding arm – the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Belize's REDD+ SIS

Belize's REDD+ SIS aims to provide the country's vision on REDD+ implementation and to demonstrate how the Cancun Safeguards for REDD+ are being addressed and respected throughout the REDD+ design and implementation process, which is aligned with the UNFCCC requirements and the relevant national and international legal framework. It is worth mentioning that Belize also intends for its SIS to be a method for strengthening its right-based approach to REDD+, the management of potential environmental and social risks, and to present its efforts in the forestry sector to all Belizean citizens and the international community in a transparent manner.

Key aspects of Belize's SIS design

The process for Belize's SIS consisted in the following aspects outlined below:

1) SIS Objectives: Belize's REDD+ SIS was developed according to a "step-by-step" approach, starting by reporting the Cancun safeguards in the context of its National REDD+ Strategy, with a reference (alignment) to the World Bank's Operational Procedures (OP). According to this, this first SIS version was designed to provide information on safeguards at the national level, as required by the UNFCCC. However, thanks to the website's design, it allows for reporting at the project level at a later stage, once Belize achieves the REDD+ implementation phase.

2) Reporting needs: refers to the information that needs to be reported through the SIS, and it is based on the SIS objectives referred above. To identify such needs, it is necessary to understand how safeguards are interpreted in the national context. To do so, a **National Safeguards Interpretation** process and document was developed, as was a multi-stakeholder participatory process for the analysis of the Cancun Safeguards, complemented with technical and legal inputs from experts, in the context of the implementation of a national REDD+ strategy. This process allowed to:

- 1) Specify and reflect on what the Cancun Safeguards mean for the country's REDD+ stakeholders, in accordance with their own specific circumstances;
- 2) Identify how the Cancun Safeguards for REDD+ are understood and reflected in the country's policies, laws and regulations (PLRs);
- 3) Serve as a basis for identifying suitable information on how the Cancun Safeguards are addressed and respected in subsequent steps of the SIS development process.

Considering the above, the *reporting needs* of Belize's SIS were identified through the risks identified in the SESA and the correspondent mitigation measures (MM) proposed and Compliance Indicators in the ESMF, which were later paired with the National Interpretation of the Cancun Safeguards. Among other outcomes, this procedure permitted the identification of those aspects that are most important to focus on, considering their risks, potential impacts, implications for the protection of rights, and the REDD+ strategy's goals, among others. Only the most relevant, easiest to report and suitable Compliance Indicators from the ESMF were selected to report on the SIS. A number of tools are provided in this document to help the government in managing its SIS, including a SIS Reporting Matrix (Annex 4.3) and a Template for information gathering from Information Providers (Annex 4.4).

3) SIS functions and institutional arrangements

There are four main roles that shall be developed within the framework of a REDD+ SIS, which are:

The **SIS Secretariat** is the SIS overall coordinator, serving as a link between the different roles of the SIS. The Secretariat is also responsible for gathering information from the selected SIS information providers and for preparing any reports, updates, and communication related to the SIS reporting activities. According to the country's REDD+ operative, REDD+ CU would be the most suitable entity to perform this role.

The **SIS Board** will be integrated by the main entities politically and technically responsible for the National REDD+ Strategy implementation. This intersectoral board is responsible for the general overall guidance of the SIS. According to feedback received in different workshops and other exchanges with the government, some of the institutions represented in this Board could be:

- NCCO;
- Forest Department;
- Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Affairs;
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The **Information Providers** are those entities in charge of managing and updating selected SIS Sources of Information, in charge of supplying the data regarding the selected Compliance Indicators, according to the requirements previously established in relation to content, periodicity, etc. A number of them are identified in Annex 4.3 and some further might be added.

The **Safeguards Advisory Committee** aims to strengthen the transparency and confidence of the entire Belize's REDD+ SIS and REDD+ Program by allowing the participation of multiple stakeholders with monitoring and advisory roles within the process to update the information reported through the SIS. To do so, this Committee should include/consist of representatives from IPs and local communities, private sectors, academia, NGOs, and other interested sectors not included in the SIS Secretariat or Board. Some potential members could be the University of Belize Environmental Research Institute (UBERI); Belize National Indigenous Council (BENIC); Belize Livestock Producers Association (BLPA); Belize Network of NGOs (BNN); the National Garifuna Council; and Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT).

Regarding the **SIS Host**: considering the SIS website could be updated by non-technical personnel thanks to the interface used (Webflow), REDD+ CU could be a candidate to perform this function, with help from the E-Governance Ministry if needed.

SIS Website

The SIS website (www.sis.ncco.gov.bz) was designed according to the following criteria:

- **Easy to handle**: the site was developed and hosted on *Webflow* (<https://webflow.com/>), a web development tool that contains a Content Management System (CMS) and hosting;
- **Easy to update**: information necessary to update is concentrated in a few sections, some being linked to existing websites to avoid doubling efforts when updating information provided in the National REDD+ official website or similar;
- **Easy to understand**: we employed a clear and minimalistic interface design in order to make it easier for navigation and updating the content;
- **Aligned with UNFCCC requirements & best regional practices**: Especially regarding to the SIS section, the website interface and content was designed attending to:
 - Meet the UNFCCC requirements on SIS;
 - Apply a step-by-step approach, starting with available information at a national scale, but providing a structure for including a project-level approach, depending on the Government's will and opportunities to implement REDD+ in the future. Similarly, compliance indicators from the ESMF were included to improve the information on how safeguards are respected in the future;



- Additionally, in order to provide transparency to the SIS, the site provides information on how the SIS works, how information is produced (“SIS Reports”) and a specific section to present and explain the role of the National Safeguards Committee.
- **Design consistency:** we have maintained the design line of the other official REDD+ sites of the Government of Belize. Some website references that were considered for the SIS website design are:
 - REDD+ Belize (<https://reddplus.ncco.gov.bz/>);
 - Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism - REDD+ (<https://fgm.gov.bz/>);
 - National Climate Change Office (<https://ncco.gov.bz/>).

It is worth mentioning that as a result of this consultancy, the country has an operative SIS in place, working and fulfilling the UNFCCC requirements. Additionally, most of the decisions taken regarding the SIS, its website, and particularly the National Safeguards Interpretation were developed following an extensive multi-stakeholder participatory process, both online and in person, and always in line with the limitations posed by COVID-19. These were 11 events, consisting of online webinars and in-person workshops, with IPs and other stakeholders.

Recommendations

The main recommendations provided throughout this document are summarized in the list below:

- 1) Decisions and agreements on the SIS functioning:** carry out training and coordination workshops with the different institutions that will have a role in the SIS (i.e. as Information Provider, members of the Safeguards Committee, SIS Board, etc.) to decide, communicate and build capacities in aspects such as periodicity to submit information on the Compliance Indicators, focal points, or how to use the SIS Information Template.
- 2) Improve, design and share a SIS Information Template document with all the entities reporting to the SIS (Information Providers):** the template proposed should indicate the information required with specific instructions. Using multiple-choice, grid-in sections or similar might be a good option when possible. The same goes for sections with brief descriptions and qualitative and quantitative information.
- 3) Formalize the tasks for the SIS Secretariat:** the Secretariat plays a central role in the SIS, as it will be the coordinator for the other SIS roles, produce and report the SIS information, and maintain the website updated, among other tasks. Therefore, it is recommended to consider the importance and the various activities that this might involve, and to clearly establish written duties, people in charge and periodicity of activities. If possible, it would be advisable to establish the same for the rest of the SIS roles.
- 4) Formalize a process to elaborate, review and validate the SIS content:** as part of the recommendation above, it is recommended to establish simple but clear protocols to produce, review and validate the information to be published on the SIS website, especially that related to how safeguards are respected. This would help to provide efficiency to the SIS, and also transparency and quality to the information provided. Section 8.1 outlines how this



could be done according to a “SIS Report” elaboration procedure with the intervention of all the SIS roles proposed in the chart of title 8.1.

- 5) **Formalize the Safeguards Advisory Committee:** an entity with faculties to monitor, validate and complement the information to be published on the SIS as recommended would be a great asset for Belize's REDD+ SIS and the entire REDD+ policy. A multi-stakeholder working group can be invaluable in coordinating various stakeholder inputs to the validation process, and ensuring equitable representation from all stakeholders, particularly representatives of IPs and local communities, private sector, and academia. A gender and vulnerability approach should be promoted in the selection of representatives (i.e. consider establishing minimum quotas for women). However, as previously stated, establishing this Committee is optional and does not have implications for the proper functioning of the SIS procedure.
- 6) **Maintain the SIS website up-to-date:** the SIS will only work as an asset to Belize's REDD+ policy if it is presented as a dynamic, transparent and up-to-date system of information. To achieve this, it is advisable to:
 - Assign clear roles to maintain the SIS (who, when and how?);
 - Ensure the payment of the server for a certain period of time (see below).
- 7) **Compliance Indicators and Sources of Information selected:** Compliance Indicators are subject to changes in the future, especially if the SIS operator finds it difficult to obtain suitable information to report them. It is recommended to include realistic and dynamic Compliance Indicators to make sure the SIS website can be easily updated and improved.

Sources of Information need to be very precise to feed the Compliance Indicators selected for the SIS. As it can be seen in the analysis of international conventions matrix of section 7, existing sources of information do not generally provide the level of detail that Compliance Indicators require. Nevertheless, these international instruments might serve as useful sources for narrative information to feed to the UNFCCC Safeguards Summary Report (See Annex 7), or to update the SIS website, for example. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the one with more potential as a SIS Source of Information, nevertheless this will depend on if its indicators, that are supposedly under development for the upcoming report, are designed in a compatible manner with the SIS indicators referred to in the Matrix of Annex 4.1. It is recommended to include indicators that might also be useful to feed the SIS. This should be agreed by the REDD+ CU and the corresponding CBD focal point, the National Biodiversity Office, that would serve as a SIS Information Provider.
- 8) **SIS Reporting levels:** on its first version, the SIS reports information on safeguards at the national level, as the UNFCCC requires. Once REDD+ is under implementation on the ground, the SIS website will provide the necessary structure to also report at project-level. At this stage, coordination agreements, templates and guidelines for the sharing of information will be needed to ensure consistency and the flowing of information between the REDD+ Secretariat and project executors in charge of providing information of how safeguards are being respected on the ground. To help with that procedure, Annex 5.3 provides a template to report information at the national level to update to the website.

- 9) **Hosting payment:** in order to ensure the SIS website is available online in the long-term, it is advisable to pay the hosting for a term of 4-5 years at least, in order to avoid dealing with this



issue every year. Possible certain funds from international projects/programs could be suitable to cover this cost.

10) UNFCCC Summary of Information on Safeguards: when it comes to safeguards-related commitment assumed by countries within the UNFCCC, together with ensuring safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+ and establishing a SIS, the countries willing to access to REDD+ result-based payments under the Convention shall also submit a Safeguards Information Summary periodically. Considering that Belize has not yet submit its first report it is worth mentioning that all the suitable Sources of Information selected for the SIS and included in the SIS Reporting Matrix of [Annex 4.3](#) will serve to report about safeguards during the REDD+ readiness phase, therefore it will serve as the Summary of Information on Safeguards.

SECTION 1 – Introduction and key concepts

1. The need for a National REDD+ Safeguards Information System (SIS)

In December 2010, the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun agreed on the so called “Cancun Agreements”, which establish key aspects related to REDD+ readiness, including a set of seven environmental and social safeguards* to support REDD+ implementation (hereafter referred to as the “Cancun Safeguards”, see Table 1)¹. These safeguards outline a global framework of social, environmental and governance principles for REDD+ implementation. By following this framework, countries can minimize risks posed by REDD+ activities and maximize the potential for realizing REDD+ benefits—both carbon and non-carbon benefits (Rey, D., Roberts, J., Korwin, S., Rivera, L., and Ribet, U., 2013).

The UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards

“When undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision” (REDD+), “the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- (a) Actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programs 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 actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision;
- (e) Actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forest and biological diversity, ensuring that action 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. (Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests

¹ “69. Affirms that the implementation of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 below should be carried out in accordance with appendix I to this decision, and that the safeguards referred to in paragraph 2 of appendix I to this decision should be promoted and supported.

71. Requests developing country Parties aiming to undertake the activities referred to in paragraph 70 above, in the context of the provision of adequate and predictable support (...)

- (d) A system for providing information on how the safeguards referred to in appendix I to this decision are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 above, while respecting sovereignty” (Decision 1/CP.16, UNFCCC)

in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day);

(f) Actions to address the risks of reversals; and

(g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.”

(Source: Appendix I - Guidance and safeguards for policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to REDD+, Decision 1/CP.16, UNFCCC)

Table 1. UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards

Additionally, to promote and contribute to the implementation of the Cancun Safeguards, it was agreed in COP 17 that parties undertaking REDD+ activities “should provide a summary of information on how all of the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities” (Decision 12/CP.17, par. 70).

Considering the decisions referred to above, developing states seeking access to the UNFCCC REDD+ Results-Based Payments must comply with the following requirements related to the Cancun Safeguards:

- (i) Ensure that REDD+ activities, regardless of the source and type of financing, are implemented in a manner consistent with the UNFCCC Cancun Safeguards;
- (ii) Develop a system to provide information on how safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities (SIS); and
- (iii) Present a summary with the most recent information on how the Cancun Safeguards are being addressed and respected.

Based on these requirements, countries are faced with the task of identifying a workable approach to compliance. A common first step of such national safeguards approaches is to develop a National Interpretation of Safeguards.

2. Objectives of the Integrated Report

This document aims to produce Component 3 of the overall consultancy, which is described below:

Component 3 – SIS: The purpose of the SIS is to communicate in a clear and concise manner how a country addresses and respects the Cancun safeguards, for the interest of all REDD+ stakeholders nationally, but also internationally, including potential funding agencies for the future phases of REDD+.

As specified in the technical proposal, this Integrated Report sets out the following activities undertaken by the consultant team:

Activity	Document section
3.1: National interpretation of the Cancun safeguards	5. National REDD+ safeguards interpretation document
3.2: Determination of SIS goals and scope	6. Key aspects for the SIS design

3.3: Identification of suitable indicators for inclusion in the SIS	7.2. Compliance Indicators
3.4: Identification and assessment of existing sources of information	7.1.2. Sources of Information selected
3.5: Design of the SIS online portal	9.1 Step-by-step planning for BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS website design and programming
3.6: Presentation and validation of indicators and draft portal	9.3. Website validated and published
3.7: Finalization of SIS portal	9.3. Website validated and published
3.8: SIS handover and training	9.2.3 Capacity building for website update and management

Table 2. Component activities and state of implementation

2.1. The consultation process related to Belize's SIS design and implementation

In order to develop BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS in a participatory manner, the consultant has worked closely with the **REDD+ SIS Technical Counterpart Team (SIS-TCT)**², the REDD+ Coordination Unit (REDD+ CU), and the National Climate Change Office (NCCO), through a number of workshops and a validation session of the products.

Considering the multi-stakeholder representation of the SIS-TCT and the need to approach BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS according to the local context, the participation of these stakeholders was particularly important for the following tasks:

- (i) Provide the first inputs for the national safeguards interpretation;
- (ii) Obtain inputs and validate the main components of BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS, such as the objectives, information needs and sources of information;
- (iii) Provide inputs for identifying the main safeguards information needs and potentially useful sources of information for BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS;

See [Annex 1. SIS Technical Counterpart Team \(SIS-TCT\) directory](#).

² The SIS-TCT was established to:

- Provide input on the separate steps of SIS development, from basic tasks, such as defining safeguard goals and scope, to more advanced ones, e.g. the identification of suitable indicators;
- Participate in workshops;
- Participate in periodic meetings of SIS advisory group (e.g. 1 – 2 per quarter); and,
- Review interim and final outputs.



SECTION 2 – National REDD+ Safeguards Interpretation

3. What, why and how

Considering that the Cancun Safeguards were adopted at an international level using general terms and content, a clear understanding of how the concepts and objectives encompassed in these safeguards are tailored to each specific national context is required for their adoption. To do so, conducting a National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI) is highly recommended (but not mandatory). The NSI is generally employed within first steps in many of the comparative experiences for developing a national REDD+ safeguards approach.

What is the NSI?

The NSI is a multi-stakeholder participatory process for the analysis of the Cancun Safeguards, complemented with technical and legal inputs from experts, in the context of the implementation of a national REDD+ strategy. Therefore, a NSI should be prepared in accordance with the following objectives:

- (i) Specify and reflect on what the Cancun Safeguards mean for a country's REDD+ stakeholders, in accordance with their own specific circumstances;
- (ii) Identify how the Cancun Safeguards for REDD+ are understood and reflected in the country's policies, laws and regulations (PLRs);
- (iii) Serve as a basis for identifying suitable information on how the Cancun Safeguards are addressed and respected in subsequent steps of the SIS development process.

Why is a NSI needed?

A NSI process allows us to understand how the Cancun Safeguards are perceived within the cultural and legal framework of a country, while also functioning as a process of safeguards training and awareness-raising for REDD+ stakeholders. This results in an interpretation that is appropriate to a country's context and that stakeholders can relate to and identify with. Additionally, the NSI process also provides a guide to the thematic issues** from the Cancun Safeguards that are more relevant to the country's context, and other societal and environmental matters need to be safeguarded under the broad framework agreed in Cancun (see the box below for common examples). An NSI process also "presents an opportunity to integrate substantive content of other safeguards frameworks into a single country approach" (Swan & Walcott, 2017).

**** Key elements covered in each Cancun Safeguard**

The following list presents potential aspects that can arise from each Cancun Safeguard. A selection of these elements has been identified in the NSIs for Belize, named as "safeguards aspects", as indicated in options 2 of the table below ("Options for structuring the national safeguards interpretation").

Safeguard A:

- i. Complement or be consistent with the objectives of national forest programs
- ii. Complement or be consistent with the objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements

Safeguard B:

- i. 'Transparency', which is comprised of:
 - a. Right of access to Information
 - b. Accountability



- ii. 'Effective' national forest governance, which is comprised of:
 - a. Appropriate institutional and legal frameworks
 - b. Participation in decision-making processes that affect the environment
 - c. Adequate access to justice
- iii. Taking into account national legislation and sovereignty

Safeguard C:

- i. Defining the following:
 - a. Indigenous peoples
 - b. Local communities
 - c. Knowledge
- ii. The rights of IPs and members of local communities under international law:
 - a. Non-discrimination
 - b. Self-determination
 - c. Rights associated with culture
 - d. Collective land tenure
 - e. Benefit-sharing
 - f. Procedural rights

Safeguard D:

- i. Understanding 'full and effective participation'
- ii. Creating an enabling environment for effective participation
 - a. Adequate access to Information
 - b. Implementing participatory mechanisms
 - c. Conflict resolution mechanisms/access to justice
- iii. Effective participation of IPs and local communities
 - a. Creating an enabling environment
 - b. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Safeguard E:

- i. No conversion of natural forest
 - a. Defining natural forests, biological diversity and ecosystem services
 - b. Prohibiting the conversion of natural forests
- ii. Protection and conservation of natural forests and biological diversity
 - a. General measures to protect natural forests and biodiversity
 - b. Enhancement of other benefits

Safeguard F and G:

- i. Background on the following concepts:
 - a. Reversals
 - b. Leakage
- ii. Monitoring and assessment
- iii. Applicable principles of international law
 - a. Sustainable use of natural resources
 - b. The precautionary principle
 - c. International cooperation

Source: (Rey, D., Roberts, J., Korwin, S., Rivera, L., and Ribet, U., 2013)

How is the NSI carried out?

The NSI process consists of 2 phases:

- 1) The first phase of the NSI is essentially a multi stakeholder process. No matter how many sectors are involved, the NSI will reflect the national point of view by integrating the different perspectives in a more accurate way.

***Important to consider:** the NSI is not a technical process. On the contrary, its main aim is to consider and integrate the country's different perspectives, especially that of women, IPs, local communities and other vulnerable groups. Therefore, such a process shall be conducted in a way and in a language accessible to all. Only if stakeholders can understand and identify with the safeguards' interpretation, will they be able to carefully observe if REDD+ implementation in their country promotes and supports the Cancun Safeguards.*

- 2) Identify and systematize how the Cancun Safeguards are approached by the country's PLR framework ("Safeguards addressed"): this is a technical product that systematizes inputs from the SESA and NSI processes, together with legal analyses led by national and international experts on the field.

4. Options for structuring the national safeguards interpretation

Based on the consultancy team's expertise developing SIS in different countries, three options can be considering for structuring the NSI:

Options for national interpretations*	Description	Pros and Cons	Notes
Narrative	Re-writing the safeguards in a participatory manner, using a simple and broadly comprehensive language (See example 1)	<p><u>Pros:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple; - Suitable for SIS early stages; - Friendly for inclusive participatory processes <p><u>Cons:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not very technical; - Could result in long narratives; - Less suitable for defining compliance indicators than option (ii) 	Approach applied by Colombia ³ and Guatemala ⁴ . Its NSI document does not provide Cancun Safeguards' aspects nor legal framework involved
Narrative with aspects	Based on option (i), each safeguard is further divided by the main topic approached in the	<p><u>Pros:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple; - Suitable for SIS early stages; - Suitable for inclusive participatory processes, but 	Approached applied by LAC countries like Argentina,

³<https://www.unredd.net/documents/un-redd-partner-countries-181/latin-america-the-caribbean-334/colombia-706/16783-interpretacion-nacional-de-las-salvaguardas-sociales-y-ambientales-para-redd-en-colombia.html>

⁴ <http://www.marn.gob.gt/Multimedios/7573.pdf>



	original wording of them. (See example 2)	more challenging than option (i) <u>Cons:</u> - Not entirely technical; - Could result in long narratives; - Less suitable for defining compliance indicators than option (iii)	Chile ⁵ , Mexico ⁶ and Ecuador ⁷ Modality applied (see Section 5)
Criteria and sub-criteria-based interpretation	Each safeguard is technically defined, aligned with compliance indicators (See example 3)	<u>Pros:</u> - Technical definitions; - Suitable for SIS in advanced stages of implementation and development; - Works better with compliance indicators than options (i) and (ii) <u>Cons:</u> - Not suitable for inclusive participatory processes; - Could result in high transaction costs or bureaucracy of the SIS operation;	No SIS were identified with this level of development /complexity

⁵ https://redd.unfccc.int/files/reporte_salvuardas_pc.pdf

⁶

http://www.conafor.gob.mx:8080/documentos/docs/35/7181Interpretacion%20de%20las%20Salvuardas%20OREDD_.pdf

⁷ https://redd.unfccc.int/files/reporte_salvuardas_pc.pdf



* **Examples of the different modalities of national interpretation**

Safeguard D: *The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision;*

Example 1 – (i) Narrative

D) The National REDD+ Strategy is implemented with full and effective participation of all key actors, with a gender and cultural perspective, emphasizing the involvement of IPs and forest-dependent communities

Example 2 – (ii) Narrative with aspects

D) The National REDD+ Strategy is implemented with full and effective participation of all key actors, with an emphasis on:

D.1) Promoting the full and effective participation of Afro-Hondurans and other rural communities (PIAH), with a gender and vulnerability approach;

D.2) Designing a REDD+ benefits distribution mechanism, developed with a participatory and gender approach, adapted to the particularities of PIAH;

Example 3 – (iii) Criteria and sub-criteria based interpretation

D.1) The National REDD+ Strategy is implemented with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Afro-Hondurans and other rural communities, aligned with the principles of ILO Convention 169 (when appropriate);

D.2) Implement a gender approach in a cross-cutting manner in public consultation processes related to the design and implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy;

D.3) Design and implement a REDD+ benefits distribution mechanism with an active and adequate involvement of PIAH and other rural communities.

5. National REDD+ safeguards interpretation document

5.1. Introduction

This is the last phase of the NSI process, in which all the inputs resulting from the consultation modalities referred to above are systematized and enriched with technical information for the production of the country's National REDD+ Safeguards Interpretation (NSI).

A well elaborated NSI document is a crucial input for the national and international community, since it gathers the country's vision on REDD+ safeguards according to the perspectives of many stakeholders. At the same time, it reflects the most relevant legal, policy and institutional frameworks, together with some risks and opportunities related to REDD+ implementation on the ground.

This document is generally published by countries, in some cases as a stand-alone document or as a chapter within the Summary of Information (Sol) Reports presented to the UNFCCC as part of the requirements agreed at the Warsaw REDD+ Framework (CP 19) (see Annex 6).

The table below was the template used to gather and systematize the NSI process:

UNFCCC Safeguard "X"	(According to Cancun Agreements text)		
National interpretation:	(Narrative text resulting from NSI process)		
	Aspect:	Aspect 1:	(Narrative of the Aspect)
		Aspect 2:	(Narrative of the Aspect)
		Aspect 3:	(Narrative of the Aspect)
Legal basis and applicable PLRs // APPROACH			
Aspect 1	(Narrative of the Aspect)		
(Description and reference to most important PLRs for "addressing" this safeguard Aspect)			
Aspect 2	(Narrative of the Aspect)		
(Description and reference to most important PLRs for "addressing" this safeguard Aspect)			
Aspect 3	(Narrative of the Aspect)		
(Description and reference to most important PLRs for "addressing" this safeguard Aspect)			

Table 3. Template of the national REDD+ safeguards interpretation

5.2. Inputs from multi-stakeholder participation

According to the different multi-stakeholder participation modalities indicated in section 1.4 above and the participation activities scheduled in Annex 2, the following events were conducted in order to obtain inputs for drafting Belize's National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI):

Nº	Date	Event	Modality
1	May 14 th , 2021	1 st Virtual workshop with the REDD+ SIS-TCT "Understanding the Cancun Safeguards for REDD+ in Belize: First steps towards developing the Safeguard Information System (SIS)" (See Meeting Report here)	Webinar
2	June 18 th , 2021	1st consultation workshop for SESA and SIS with IPs	In-person
3	June 19 th , 2021	SESA National Workshop, in Southern Maya (Day 2)	In-person
4	June 27 th , 2020	IP Consultation: Barranco Garinagu	In-person
5	June 29 th , 2021	National workshop for SESA and SIS	Webinar
6	July 3 rd , 2021	IP REDD Workshop	In-person
7	July 17, 2021	Environmental and Social Considerations, Benefits and Risks IP Consultation: Garinagu	In-person
8	July 17, 2021	IP Consultation: National Garifuna Council	In-person

9	August 27th, 2021	2nd workshop Consultation with the REDD+ SIS-TCT: “Developing the SIS for REDD+ in Belize: Presentation of progress made and consultation for the SIS reporting and information gathering arrangements”	Webinar
10	September 27th, 2021	The REDD+ Safeguards Information System (SIS) of Belize: Proposal of layout and structure	Webinar

Table 4. Multi-stakeholder participation events for the National Safeguards Interpretations

To obtain inputs from attendees, these participation events followed special group work exercises designed by experts from AAE and CADS with a special methodology for the in-person workshops with IPs and local communities. See [Annex 3](#) for information about main aspects, inputs and other details about the multi-stakeholder events mentioned on the table above.

5.3. National safeguards interpretation (NSI)

Based on the multi-stakeholder participation process especially developed for the NSI, an analysis of the relevant national and international legal framework, a study of comparative experience of other countries in the LAC region, and technical inputs from experts, the Cancun Safeguards in the context of Belize and for the purpose of Belize’s REDD+ SIS are understood as follows (See [Annex 4](#) for the multi-stakeholder input analysis matrix):

SAFEGUARD A

UNFCCC Safeguard A): *That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;*

National interpretation:

The REDD+ programme must be consistent with the national regulatory and policy framework and plans for national forests, environment, sustainable agriculture and land use, together with international conventions related to the environment, biodiversity and forestry to which Belize is a Party.

Aspects:

REDD+ in Belize is designed and implemented:

A1) Consistency with the national regulatory and policy framework and plans for national forests, environment, sustainable agriculture and land use

A2) Consistency with the international conventions related to environment, biodiversity and forestry to which Belize is a party.

SAFEGUARD B

UNFCCC Safeguard B): *Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty*

National interpretation:

Transparency and effectiveness in national forest governance, including multi-stakeholder participation, intersectoral coordination and equal access to justice, is ensured and promoted by the policies and measures for REDD+ in Belize, through implementing and improving:

- Decentralized monitoring system;
- Communication delivered in different languages to include the different peoples and communities;
- Multi-stakeholder participation in forest decision-making process through different appropriate channels, including traditional ones;
- Interinstitutional coordination within environment, forest, agriculture and protected areas sectors;
- Due and equal access to justice, including a specific Grievance Redress Mechanism for REDD+.

Aspects:

REDD+ in Belize is designed and implemented:

B1) Promoting transparency and access to high quality, timely and culturally appropriate information within REDD+'s application scope in Belize;

B2) Supporting effectiveness and intersectoral coordination in national forest governance, land use, agriculture and other policy sectors;

B3) Ensuring and promoting provisions and mechanisms for equal access to justice, including a specific Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM)

SAFEGUARD C

UNFCCC Safeguard C): *Respect for the knowledge and rights of IPs 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 IPs*

National interpretation:

The National REDD+ Strategy is implemented respecting and strengthening the rights of all IPs, including the Mayas (Yucatec, Q'eqchi' and Mopan), Garifunas and local communities that coexist in the Belizean territory. It also emphasizes on their land tenure security, traditional knowledge and livelihoods, respecting their FPIC and traditional decision-making mechanisms, as well as other relevant issues recognized in national and international laws, and in particular the recommendations and rulings by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Caribbean Court of Justice.

Aspects:

REDD+ in Belize is designed and implemented:

C1) Promoting IPs' and local communities' access to transparent and quality information and to take part in decision-making processes and good faith consultations in a culturally appropriate manner,

respecting their traditions, languages and in conformity with national and international standards and best practice;

C2) Respecting and strengthening traditional, national and international rights, procedures and tools for conducting and obtaining the FPIC of the IPs and local communities of Belize;

C3) Promoting access to and safeguarding the lands, territories, environment, and ensuring the social, cultural, and/or economic well-being of IPs and local communities, considering the recommendations of the cases of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Caribbean Court of Justice.

SAFEGUARD D

UNFCCC Safeguard D): *The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular IPs and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision (REDD+ activities)*

National interpretation:

REDD+ activities, policies and measures in Belize ensure and support the full and effective participation of relevant right holders and stakeholders related to sustainable forest and land use, whereby "full and effective" is understood to be considered as:

- Prior access to information for consultations easily and freely accessible to all;
- Ensuring transparency and avoiding bribes and other deviations;
- Prior means before the start of any specific activity or action;
- Inclusion of women, youth, elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups;
- In respect of traditional decision-making processes, authorities and organizations.

Aspects:

REDD+ in Belize is designed and implemented:

D1) Ensuring the full and effective participation of relevant right holders throughout all REDD+ design and implementation activities, policies and measures, and according to domestic and international regulations;

D2) Promoting multi-stakeholder participation processes with a focus on vulnerable groups, i.e. ensuring the inclusion of women, youth, elderly, people with disabilities and others.

SAFEGUARD E

UNFCCC 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 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*

National interpretation:

REDD+ actions, policies and measures are consistent with the conservation and sustainable use of natural forests, mangroves, biodiversity and ecosystems, while improving IPs and local communities' livelihoods and rights to access to environmental, social and traditional goods and services provided by nature, according to their needs and traditions.

Aspects:

REDD+ in Belize is designed and implemented:

E1) Promoting the sustainable management and the conservation of native ecosystems, especially mangroves, wetlands and watersheds, with the aim of strengthening their environmental benefits, including quality of air and drinking water, soil fertility, provision of non-timber goods and other ecosystem services of special importance for Indigenous Peoples and local communities' livelihoods and traditions;

E2) Promoting the enhancement of social benefits provided by native ecosystems, including communal forest governance and rights to traditional agricultural practices and sustainable forestry, among others, while promoting traditional uses of land such as for medicine, food, spiritual practices and other tangible and intangible benefits from forests and nature.

SAFEGUARD F

UNFCCC Safeguard F): *Actions to address the risks of reversals.*

National interpretation:

REDD+ activities, policies and measures include provisions to address the risks of reversals, such as:

- Promoting simplified processes for reporting illegal activities;
- Using technology to monitor risks of reversals;
- Involving and benefitting IPs and local communities in forest monitoring, with empowerment of women and youth;

SAFEGUARD G

UNFCCC Safeguard G): *Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.*

National interpretation:

REDD+ activities, policies and measures in Belize includes provision to address the risks of displacement of emissions, such as:

- Addressing the drivers of deforestation;
- Involving and benefitting IPs and local communities in forest monitoring, with empowerment of women and youth;
- Using technology to monitor risks of displacement;
- Ensuring continuity of incentives for alternative livelihood options and enhancement of living conditions (e.g. education, public health)

SECTION 3 – Designing Belize’s REDD+ SIS

6. Key aspects for the SIS’ design

Based on the experience of the consultant team and the UN-REDD technical inputs (Swan & Walcott, 2017), Belize’s REDD+ SIS was designed with a “step-by-step” approach in mind and with basic functions reporting the needs and information at the national level, as requested by UNFCCC. In later stages, the SIS might be upgraded to reach other international safeguards standards, report safeguards information at project level, and be linked with other public policies, depending on further funding and political will.

According to this, the process for Belize’s SIS consisted in the four aspects shown in the graph below:

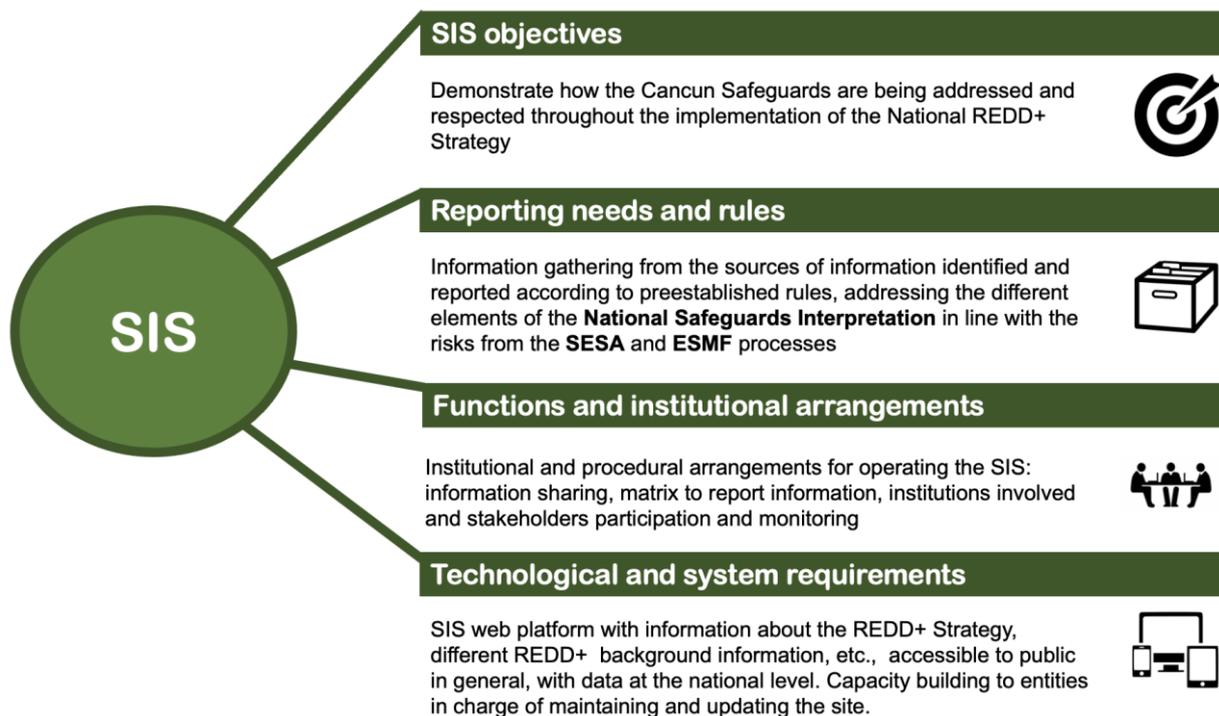


Table 5. Key design considerations for REDD+ safeguards information systems.

6.1. Objectives

The objectives of the SIS pertain to different domestic and international needs to which the system will respond. Initially, a REDD+ SIS should start with its main objective, which is to demonstrate how the Cancun Safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout REDD+ implementation at the national level based on the requirements established by the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements (COP 16) and the activities addressed by the National REDD+ Strategy of the country. However, a SIS can also go further and report on other safeguards schemes, such as the Green Climate Fund or the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework, with the aim of preparing the REDD+ strategy to access certain international funds.



Proposal for Belize's REDD+ SIS

Considering that implementing a SIS at the beginning could be challenging and requires technical and economic resources, and following the experience of most of the countries in the LAC region, Belize's REDD+ SIS was developed according to a "step-by-step" approach, starting by reporting the Cancun safeguards in the context of its National REDD+ Strategy, with a reference (alignment) to the World Bank's OP.

SIS reporting levels: Belize's SIS website was designed to provide information on safeguards at the national level, as required by the UNFCCC. However, thanks to the website's design, it allows for reporting at the project level at a later stage, once Belize achieves the REDD+ implementation phase. At this stage, coordination agreements, templates and guidelines for information-sharing will be necessary to ensure consistency and the flowing of information between the REDD+ Secretariat and project executors. Annex 4.5 provides a template and a proposal of a simple and straightforward manner to include reports at the project level.

6.2. Reporting needs and rules

There are two key aspects when it comes to reporting, which are 1. what is the information to report ("information needs"), and 2. how to do it ("reporting rules")? Such concepts are understood as follows:

- The **reporting needs** are the information that needs to be reported through the SIS, and are based on the SIS objectives covered above. To identify such needs, it is necessary to understand how safeguards are interpreted (National Safeguards Interpretation) and how they interact with the risks associated with the National REDD+ Strategy. This exercise provides a number of aspects that need to be analyzed, monitored and reported to find out how the different elements of the National Safeguards Interpretation are addressed and respected.
- The **reporting rules** refers to how such information is gathered, analyzed, shared and presented by the different institutions involved in the SIS scheme. For this purpose, indicators of compliance are a key tool.

Once the reporting needs are clear, it is necessary to identify where such information can be obtained ("**sources of information**"). The sources of information generally consist of existing systems and different entities/organisms (public, private, national and international) that manage or produce relevant information to report/feed to the SIS.

To consider

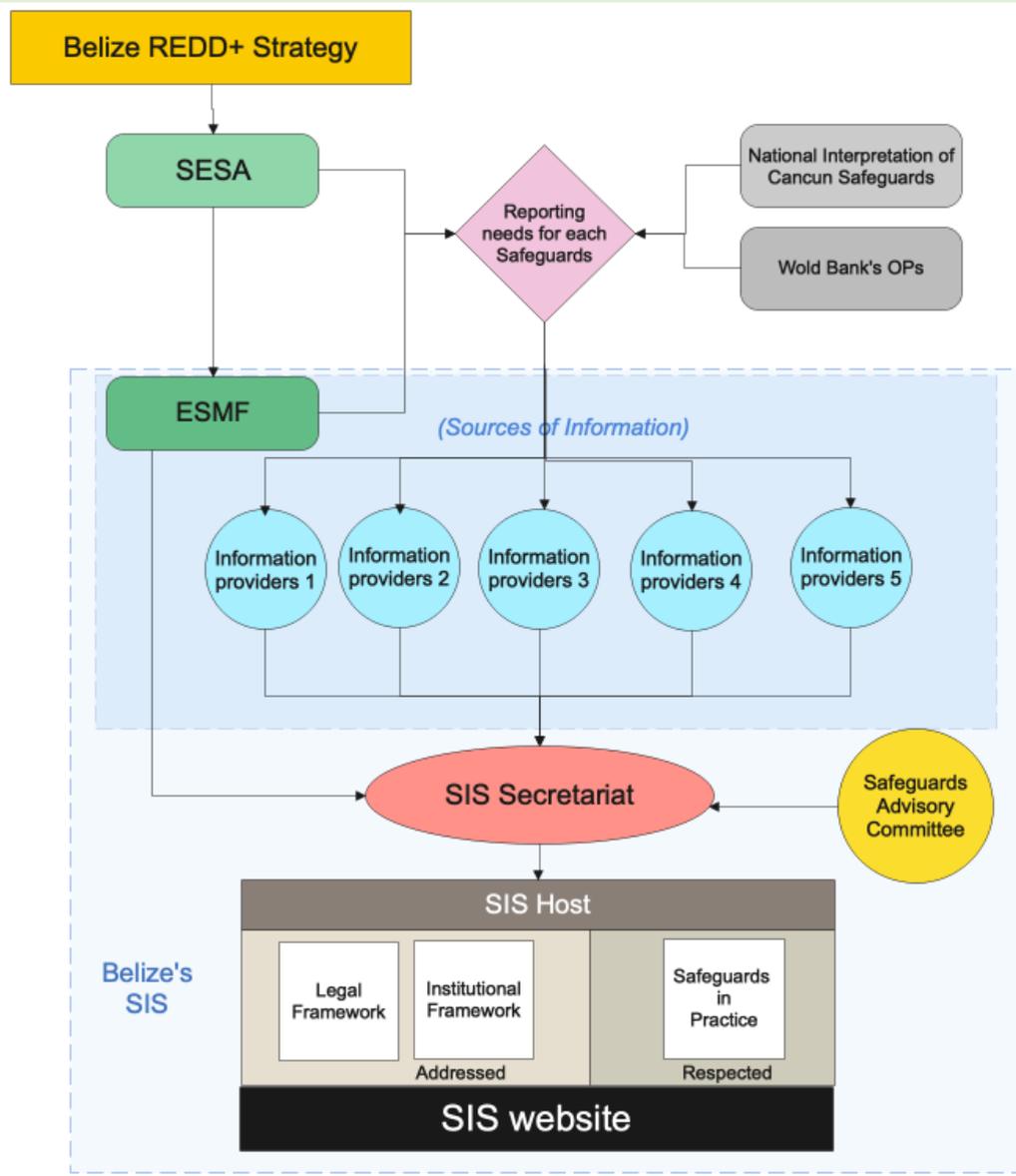
What information needs to be gathered? How is the information gathered and compiled?

"In order to gather safeguards information in an organized manner, guidance is needed to provide orientation to the information providers. A template that indicates what information is required with specific directions could be useful, including sections where few inputs are needed (e.g. multiple-choice or grid-in sections) and other sections for brief descriptions and qualitative information. The template can be built around the countries' national interpretation of the Cancun safeguards and the corresponding key topics or safeguards principles, criteria and indicators. It is important to consider the need to gather gender disaggregated information and information on

how the gender approach was considered in REDD+ implementation and in the policies and actions for addressing and respecting safeguards.” (Suárez, 2021)

Proposal for Belize’s REDD+ SIS

The graph below illustrates the logic and process followed to identify the reporting needs, sources of information and interactions between processes and institutions involved in Belize's REDD+ SIS.



- The **reporting needs** were identified through the following process. The risks identified in the SESA and the correspondent mitigation measures (MM) proposed in the ESMF were paired with the National Interpretation of the Cancun Safeguards. Among other outcomes, this procedure permitted the identification of those aspects that are most important to cover, considering their risks, potential impacts, implications for the respect of rights, REDD+ strategy’s goals, among others. These are Belize's REDD+ SIS “**reporting needs**”.



It is worth mentioning that Belize's REDD+ SIS was designed in a flexible manner so that further requirements for international standards (such as the standards of the World Bank, the GCF, etc.) that may demand other specific reporting needs could be adopted.

- **Indicator of compliance:** once the reporting needs were clear, the next step was to conduct an analysis on which reporting needs the indicators in the ESMF can respond to and which ones cannot. In order to address this, a participatory process was carried out, especially with the public sector, to identify which government institutions are already generating information regarding how the Cancun Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) are being respected in practices related to the REDD+ Strategy (named “**sources of information**” in the graph above). With the aim of building on existing procedures and systems of information, the experts identified, when possible, indicators for other public policies already in use that are directly related to each SES (i.e. indicators in use to report under the Biological Diversity Convention could be directly relevant for Cancun SES “E”), that fulfill or could be adapted to cover the SIS information requirements, such as periodicity, transparency, reportable, etc. See [Annex 4](#) of Information needs, sources of information and compliance indicators.
- **Reporting rules:** the different entities providing information for Belize's REDD+ SIS shall report the information according to a number of reporting rules covering how and when to present the information. For this purpose, a template for information gathering is provided in [Annex 4.4](#).
- **REDD+ Safeguards Secretariat:** this is the person that will be in charge of gathering, systematizing and reporting the information related to how the safeguards are addressed and respected at the national level through Belize's REDD+ SIS web platform.

The **SIS Reporting Matrix** in [Annex 4.3](#) provides a template table to follow the procedure described above, which aims to serve as a tool to produce the necessary information to update the SIS website content.

6.3. SIS functions and institutional arrangements proposed

There are four main roles that shall be developed within the framework of a REDD+ SIS, which are shown in the graph below:

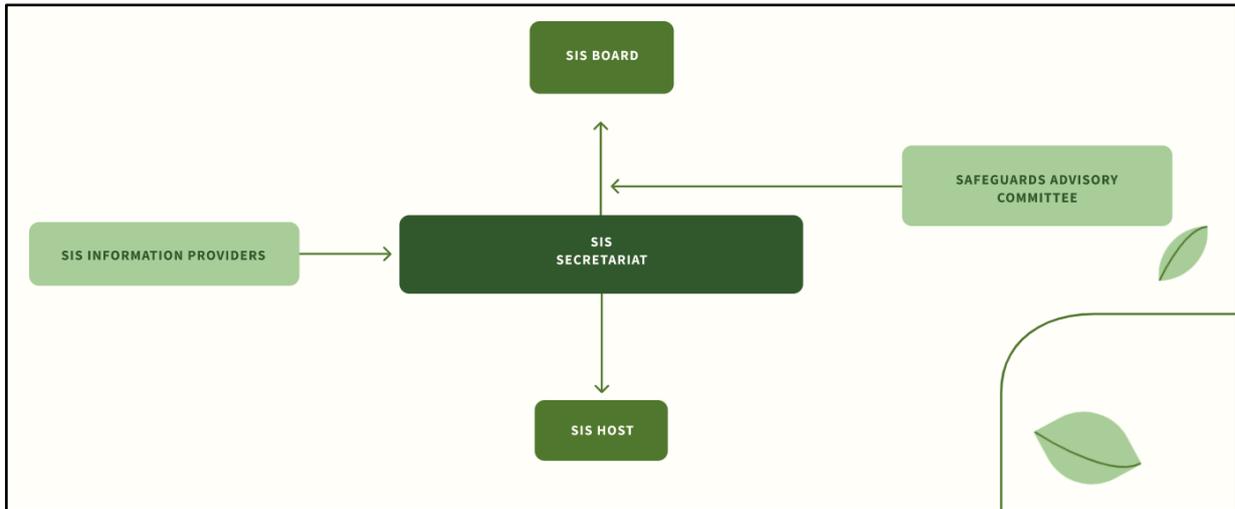


Table 6. SIS Roles

SIS website

This section and the SIS website (Belize’s SIS → How it works) detail roles, instead of institutions, in order to allow flexibility on who will perform the different roles identified to report the SIS information. This approach brings the possibility of easily changing the name of the institutions performing the different roles by just updating the pdf “SIS members and roles”.

The **SIS Secretariat** is the SIS overall coordinator, serving as a link between the different roles of the SIS. The Secretariat is also responsible for gathering information from the selected SIS information providers and for preparing any reports, updates, and communication related to the SIS reporting activities.

The **SIS Board** will be integrated by the main entities politically and technically responsible for the National REDD+ Strategy implementation. It is advisable to limit the SIS Board to no more than 3-4 entities to facilitate its decision-taking procedure. This intersectoral board is responsible for the general overall guidance of the SIS.

In order to obtain the necessary information to report on how the Cancun Safeguards are respected, a number of **Information Providers** have been identified (see matrix in Annex 4.3), who are in charge of managing and updating selected SIS Sources of Information (see Section 7.1). These Information Providers supply the necessary data regarding the selected Compliance Indicators, according to the requirements previously established in relation to content, periodicity, etc. To do so, it is advisable to create protocols and templates for the sharing of information.

The **Safeguards Advisory Committee** aims to strengthen the transparency and confidence of the entire Belize’s REDD+ SIS and REDD+ Program by allowing the participation of multiple stakeholders with monitoring and advisory roles within the process to update the information reported through the SIS. To do so, this Committee should include/consist of representatives from IPs and local communities, private sectors, academia, NGOs, and other interested sectors not included in the SIS Secretariat or Board. The Committee would help to guarantee the quality of the information included in the draft of the SIS Report. Additionally, it provides a space for different non-governmental actors to have their voice heard regarding the implementation of the REDD+ safeguards.

Finally, the **SIS Host** is the entity in charge of hosting the SIS web platform, which includes ensuring the proper performance of the website and the inclusion of the updates entrusted by the SIS Secretariat.

Proposal for the roles of Belize's REDD+ SIS:

According to conversations carried out with the REDD+ CU, and to technical considerations, the SIS roles could be filled by the following institutions:

- ❖ **SIS Secretariat:** according to the country's REDD+ operative, the REDD+ CU would be the most suitable entity to perform this role.
- ❖ **SIS Board:** according to feedback received in different workshops and other exchanges with the government, some of the institutions represented in this Board could be:
 - NCCO;
 - Forest Department;
 - Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Affairs;
 - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, the Environment and Sustainable Development.
- ❖ **SIS Information Providers:** according to suggestions in Sources of Information in Annex 4.2 and others included later with experience working in SIS.
- ❖ **SI Host:** REDD+ CU. It is advisable to assign the role to 1-2 members only.
- ❖ **Safeguards Advisory Committee:** it is advisable to form the Committee by representatives from different sectors potentially interested in REDD+. They could include a wide number of entities, with ad-honorem and non-mandatory participation. Some potential member could be:
 - University of Belize Environmental Research Institute (UBERI);
 - Belize National Indigenous Council (BENIC);
 - Belize Livestock Producers Association (BLPA);
 - Belize Network of NGOs (BNN);
 - National Garifuna Council;
 - Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT).

SIS Host: considering the SIS website could be updated by non-technical personnel (since it was designed using the interface "Webflow" as explained in section [9.2. Interface, content structure and technical specifications](#)), REDD+ CU could also fill this role, helped by the E-Governance Ministry, when needed.

RECOMMENDATION

In order to improve the functioning of the SIS, it is advisable to enter into coordination agreements with the different institutions that will perform one of the roles mentioned above. Moreover, in the case of the SIS Information Providers, it is advisable to define basic reporting rules, such as:

- Periodicity to submit information on the Compliance Indicators;
- Focal points in charge of providing the information;
- Mechanisms and technical aspects (i.e. an specific Excel Sheet is advisable);
- Other rules as deemed necessary.

6.4. Technological systems requirements

Once reporting needs, information requirements and sources of information arrangements have been identified, it is necessary to identify and decide about technological aspects of Belize's REDD+ SIS, related to:

- Technological solutions for storing, managing, disseminating information;
- Hard and software required for end-users, interface requirements, information workflows, database design;
- Identify linkages for information provision and dissemination, etc. (Swan & Walcott, 2017)

Proposal for BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS

In accordance with the UNFCCC Warsaw REDD+ Framework requirements, the **Belize's REDD+ SIS Platform** is comprised of the following sections:

- (i) **Information on how REDD+ safeguards are addressed:** information on the extent to which existing Policies, Laws and Regulations (PLRs) cover the aspects of importance under the safeguards as an indication of the country's ambition to avoid social and environmental risks and impacts. In this case, it is key to maintain the PLRs framework updated;
- (ii) **Information on how REDD+ safeguards are respected:** information on additional efforts made to avoid social and environmental risks and impacts, as could result from REDD+ implementation, or where this is impossible, to minimize and manage them.

To obtain this information, the different sources of information (public entities, project units and others), will send periodically (i.e. annually) the information related to the Compliance Indicators identified for each of the Cancun Safeguards in the SIS/ESMF to the SIS Secretariat, according to previous collaboration agreements. The SIS Secretariat gathers, classifies and analyzes all the information received and publishes it on Belize's REDD+ SIS website periodically.

- **Reporting scale:** information on how safeguards are respected will be generated and presented first at the national level, with the possibility of complementing it later with project level information. For the second scenario, the REDD+ project executioner would be responsible for reporting information to the SIS Secretariat regarding the indicators generated within their initiative.

7. Identification and assessment of existing Sources of Information and suitable Compliance Indicators for Belize's REDD+ SIS

7.1. Sources of Information

The concept of Sources of Information within a REDD+ SIS refers to potential providers of information that can be relevant to report on how safeguards are being respected, which can include a wide range of platforms, reporting mechanisms, monitoring & evaluation (M&E) reports by public and private institutions, NGOs and others.

In other words, the Sources of Information provide the SIS with the required information to report on how safeguards are being respected. For this, it is essential to identify, assess and coordinate with the

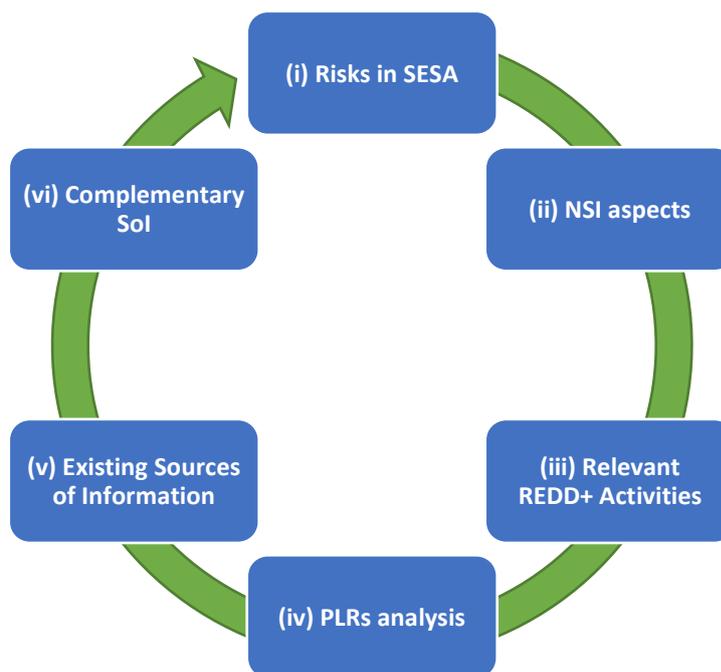
entity responsible for the different Sources of Information in order to ensure that the SIS is providing accurate and up-to-date information.

Some good practices considered in the process to identify the Source of Information:

- Consider the use of different sources of information, including non-public (i.e. from projects, NGOs or others) in order to guarantee the quality of the information;
- Consider inputs from local stakeholders, including women, youth, IPs and local communities; (Cordula, Hicks, Suarez, Swan, & Walcott, 2020, pág. 9); and,
- Assess the potential usefulness of already existing information systems or platforms, especially from international conventions (such as the CBD, the UNFCCC or the 2030 Agenda) and domestic ones, and from regulations, public policies and projects in aspects related to the Cancun Safeguards, in order to build on existing procedures and to avoid duplicating efforts.

7.1.1. Methodology for the identification of Sources of Information

In order to identify Sources of Information for Belize’s REDD+ SIS, the following methodology was employed:



Graph 1. Methodology for Sources of Information

The “reporting needs” in [section 6.2](#) were the basis of the process to find suitable Sources of Information for BELIZE’S REDD+ SIS. At first, the **(i) risks identified in the SESA** were paired with the aspects of the **(ii) National Interpretation (NSI)** of the Cancun Safeguards, which resulted in the **(iii) REDD+ activities**. These REDD+ activities are essential to report, considering their risks, potential impacts and importance regarding the respect of rights of the most vulnerable (such as IPs, women, biodiversity, etc.) and the National REDD+ Strategy. Once such activities were targeted, a search for potential existing Sources of Information was conducted in two ways. First, the SESA’s **(iv) Policy, Laws and Regulations (PLR)** analysis pointed out to different existent instruments in PLRs with potential to

serve as Sources of Information. Secondly, **(v)** through a workshop with the SIS-TCT, a number of inputs and ideas were obtained on existing M&E reports, information platforms, information managed by different public entities, and other sources important for BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS. Finally, the potential Sources of Information identified were technically assessed and **(vi) complemented with other sources** by the expert team, resulting in the consolidated Sources of Information for the first phase of BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS, systematized in the SIS Reporting Matrix in [Annex 4.3](#). These Sources of Information should be complemented and modified with time and the experience acquired in the managing of the SIS.

Existing sources of information (Step "v" above)

Although it is desirable to feed the SIS with existing Sources of Information in order to take advantage of already existing information, it is worth mentioning that existing information, platforms, and M&E and other reports are not always suitable to serve as Sources of Information due to aspects like periodicity, completeness, specificity of the Cancun Safeguards, or confidentiality.

In order to find out whether existing Sources of Information are adequate, an analysis of potential existing sources was conducted, mostly addressing:

- (i) *Regular reports to international conventions;*
- (ii) *National sources of information from public policies;*
- (iii) *Other existing potential sources.*

(i) Reports to international conventions

Belize is part of a number of international treaties and conventions on matters of relevance to the Cancun Safeguards. Some of these instruments impose Parties the duty of providing country progress reports that might serve as Sources of Information for Belize's REDD+ SIS. The table below outlines the most relevant reports:

Treaty or convention	* Overall objective	Reports periodicity	NSI relevant	Topic(s)
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets to be achieved over a period of 15 years. The strategic priorities for Belize by the year 2030 include democratic governance for effective public administration and sustainable development; education; economic resilience and a healthy citizenry and environment.	Voluntary	C - D	Land tenure - benefit sharing - participation of women - access to natural resources and land for women
Convention on Biological Diversity	Biodiversity conservation: to protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices (art. 10 (c)), and to share the results and benefits arising from	5-years	C - E	Traditional knowledge - Benefit-sharing mechanisms

		biotechnologies based upon genetic resources on a fair and equitable basis (art. 19 (2)).			
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands		Intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and adequate use of wetlands and their resources.	Not found	E - C	Mangroves - IP participation
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples		Universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of IPs.	Not reported	C	FPIC – IP rights
Escazu Agreement		To guarantee the full and effective implementation of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in the environmental decision-making process and access to justice in environmental matters.	No reports yet	B - C - D	Transparency - Access to environmental information - Access to justice

* **Relevance level:** High / Medium / Low

As it can be seen in the matrix, existing sources of information related to international conventions are generally not entirely suitable to report in the SIS. They usually do not provide the level of detail that Compliance Indicators require. Nevertheless, these international instruments might serve as useful sources for narrative information to feed to the UNFCCC Safeguards Summary Report (See Annex 7), or to update the SIS website, for example.

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the sources with more potential as a SIS Source of Information. Nevertheless, its suitability will depend on whether its indicators, that are supposedly under development for the upcoming report, are designed in a compatible manner with the SIS indicators (referred to in the matrix in Annex 4.1.).

To consult the entire analysis matrix, please see [Annex 4.1.](#)

- (ii) **National sources of information from public policies:** generally, countries have reporting processes, public or internal, aimed at monitoring and measuring the implementation of certain public policies that could serve as a Source of Information for the REDD+ SIS. In order to identify such sources, the expert team developed the 2nd workshop with SIS-TCT on August 27th, 2021, with a specific group work aimed to identify potential Sources of Information.

National sources of information from public policies identified for Belize's SIS

Some of the key findings from the workshop held on August 27th are the following:

- There are just a few M&E and other existing information platforms and reports that could serve as Sources of Information for the SIS;
- Most of the potential relevant information for the SIS is upon request. There are very few examples of reports regularly published that are suitable for the SIS;



- There are some reports and monitoring plans potentially suitable as Sources of Information; however most of them are under development (i.e. the 2030 Agenda reports on SDG, Plan Belize Medium term development strategy 2021-2025, REDD+ benefit-sharing mechanism and the FCPI protocol);
- Within a REDD+ implementation phase, the REDD+ CU will be in charge of a variety of potential Sources of Information; however they are in very early stages of development or implementation;
- In most aspects related to IPs and local communities, the IP Desk will play a central role as an information provider to the SIS.

To consult the main outcomes of the workshop on Sources of Information, please see [Annex 4.2](#).

- (iii) **Other existing potential Sources of Information:** From the PLR analysis, consultations and research developed by the expert team, some other existent reports and information systems were identified as potential suitable to serve as Sources of Information, and were included in the SIS Reporting Matrix in [Annex 4.3](#).

7.1.1. Selected Sources of Information

All the suitable Sources of Information selected from Annex 4.1 and 4.2 were included in the SIS Reporting Matrix in [Annex 4.3](#). These Sources of Information will serve as the basis to elaborate the country's first Safeguards Information Summary, which is one of the main requirements related to safeguards agreed at the Cancun Agreement of the UNFCCC.

7.2. Compliance Indicators

This section is dedicated to selecting the Compliance Indicators for Belize's REDD+ SIS, which will identify the information needed and the level of fulfillment of the different aspects of the safeguards, according to the National Safeguards Interpretation.

7.2.1. Methodology for the identification of the Compliance Indicators

To identify the initial Compliance Indicators for Belize's REDD+ SIS, the criteria applied was to find indicators that serve at the same time to monitor the implementation of the mitigation measures covered in the ESMF, according to the SESA risks approached and reported by the Sources of Information selected.

Following a step-by-step approach, the first step was to select a few generic indicators to be measured and reported in order to "to start with a manageable number of indicators for which data are available, and adjust or add new ones based on the needs and capacities in a country." (Cordula, Hicks, Suarez, Swan, & Walcott, 2020, pág. 5)

7.2.2. Compliance Indicators selected

Based on the methodology above, 17 Mitigation Measures (MM) and XX Compliance Indicators were selected to report on the SIS website on how the Cancun Safeguards are being.

See Annex 4.3 to consult the SIS Reporting Matrix with all the SESA's risks, ESMF's Mitigation Measures, Sources of Information and the Compliance indicators, among others.

8. Procedure to produce and report the SIS information

8.1. General procedure to produce the SIS content

The chart below illustrates the roles and the linkages between them, in order to show the procedure to gather, produce and publish the content of the SIS and the institutions involved. The overall purpose of this chart is to ensure the efficiency and quality of the information provided in the SIS, together with government and multi-stakeholder participation and their validation.

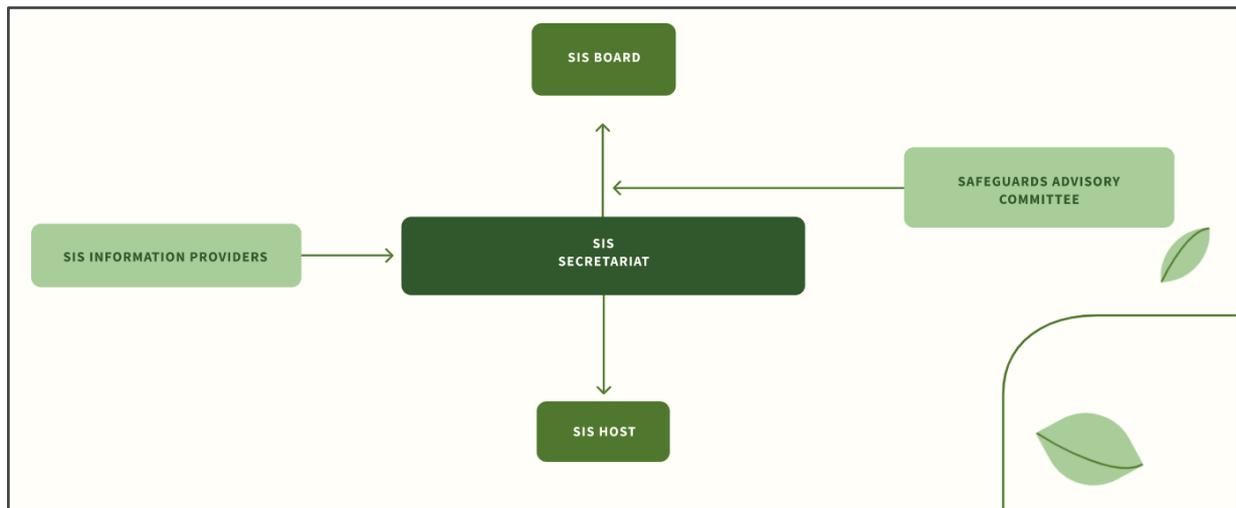


Table 7. Procedure to produce the SIS content

Proposed procedure to elaborate the SIS Content: the “SIS Report”

1. The **SIS Secretariat**, under the guidance of the SIS Board, will be responsible for drafting the **SIS Report**. This will be a document with information on Belize’s approach to addressing and respecting the Cancun Safeguards to be published and periodically updated on the SIS website. The SIS Secretariat will draft the Initial SIS Report Draft, according to the data provided by the SIS Information Providers and other Sources of Information;
2. The **Initial SIS Report Draft** is delivered to the **SIS Board** members to provide feedback on the document;
3. The SIS Secretariat will review and complement the Initial SIS Report Draft according to the step above, and will report to the Safeguards Advisory Committee;
4. With this feedback received, the SIS Secretariat drafts the **SIS Report Draft** and deliver to the SIS Board;
5. The SIS Board will review and approve the **SIS Report Draft** in a plenary session to ensure oversight of politically sensitive aspects;
6. Once the draft is approved by the SIS Board, the SIS Secretariat will prepare the final version of the **SIS Report**;
7. Finally, the SIS Host will upload the SIS Report content onto the SIS website.



It is worth mentioning that this SIS Report can also serve as the basis for the Safeguards Summary of Information to be periodically submitted to the UNFCCC as per the requirements established in the Warsaw REDD+ Framework.

Comparative experience: multi stakeholders committees for safeguards in Guatemala and Honduras

National Committee of Environmental and Social Safeguards of Honduras (*Comité Nacional de Salvaguardas Ambientales y Sociales de Honduras – CONASASH*): consultation body to accompany the process of creating the National Safeguards Approach (NSA) and the design of the SIS (still under construction). It is in charge of monitoring and supervising through a participatory multi-stakeholder approach the respect and implementation of the Cancun Safeguards in REDD+. For this, CONASASH consists of 2 representatives from the following sectors: civil society, private landowners, government, agroforestry communities, academia, professional associations, IPs and afro-hondurans. The Committee has an Operation Manual that establishes its mandate and working procedures.

National Committee for REDD+ Safeguards of Guatemala (*Comité Nacional de Salvaguardas REDD+ de Guatemala – CNS-REDD+*): multisectoral advisory group for the legitimization and monitoring of the implementation process of the national REDD+ safeguards system of Guatemala. The Committee consists of representatives from the central and local government, IPs, forestry organizations, women, academia, environmental NGOs, and the private sector. Its objectives include:

- Accompany the design, construction and implementation of the national system of REDD+ safeguards;
- Disseminate safeguards and their application in REDD+ measures and activities;
- Monitor the approach, respect, and compliance with REDD+ safeguards within the framework of the National REDD+ Strategy and other related processes;
- Serve as a multi-sector communication link to guarantee the full and effective participation of interested parties (Grupo de Coordinación Interinstitucional GCI (MARN, CONAP, INAB, MAGA), 2016).

Comparative experience: SIS in Ecuador

“The responsibilities for quality assurance of SIS information in Ecuador are shared between the information providers, which are REDD+ implementing partners (public, private and civil society), and the Ministry of Environment (MAE), which is the REDD+ National Authority and the institution overseeing REDD+ implementation. The institution providing the information is in charge of following up on information gaps and performing quality control activities. In addition, the MAE reviews the information and verifies that complete reports are provided. The Ministry may follow up if questions or issues are raised during the analysis of the information.” (Epple, Hicks, Suarez, Swan, & Walcott, 2020, pág. 10).

Recommendations for Belize's REDD+ SIS functioning

- To regulate in detail the SIS procedure for drafting, approving and publishing the SIS Report by establishing clear channels of communication, focal points, terms, objectives of each entity, roles involved in the SIS, etc.;
- To design and implement an information-gathering template with all the entities selected as "Information Providers" in order to save time and efforts by promoting standardized reports and procedures. This template should indicate what information is required by each information Provider and give specific instructions on where inputs are needed (e.g. multiple-choice or grid-in sections) and other sections for brief descriptions and qualitative information. Annex 4.3 indicates what information is needed and from whom the information ought to be obtained;
- In the case of Information Providers, it is important to consider the need to gather gender disaggregated information and information on how a gender approach was considered in REDD+ implementation and in the policies and actions for addressing and respecting safeguards (Cordula, Hicks, Suarez, Swan, & Walcott, 2020);
- Establish the Safeguards Advisory Committee with faculties to monitor, validate and complement the information to be published on the SIS. A multi-stakeholder working group can be invaluable in coordinating various stakeholder inputs to the validation process, and ensuring the equitable representation of all stakeholders, particularly representatives of IPs and local communities, private sector, and academia. A gender and vulnerability approach should be promoted in the selection of representatives (i.e. consider establishing minimum quotas for women). Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that establishing this Committee is optional and not needed for the proper functioning of the rest of the SIS procedure.

9. Design and implementation of Belize's REDD+ SIS website

9.1. Step-by-step planning for Belize's REDD+ SIS website design and programming

Designing the SIS website requires the intervention of different actors, including SIS experts, web programmers and government representatives from different sectors. The table below provides the step-by-step procedure followed to design, program and publish Belize's SIS, together with valuable inputs provided by REDD+ CU, which were of particular importance to consider when designing the SIS.

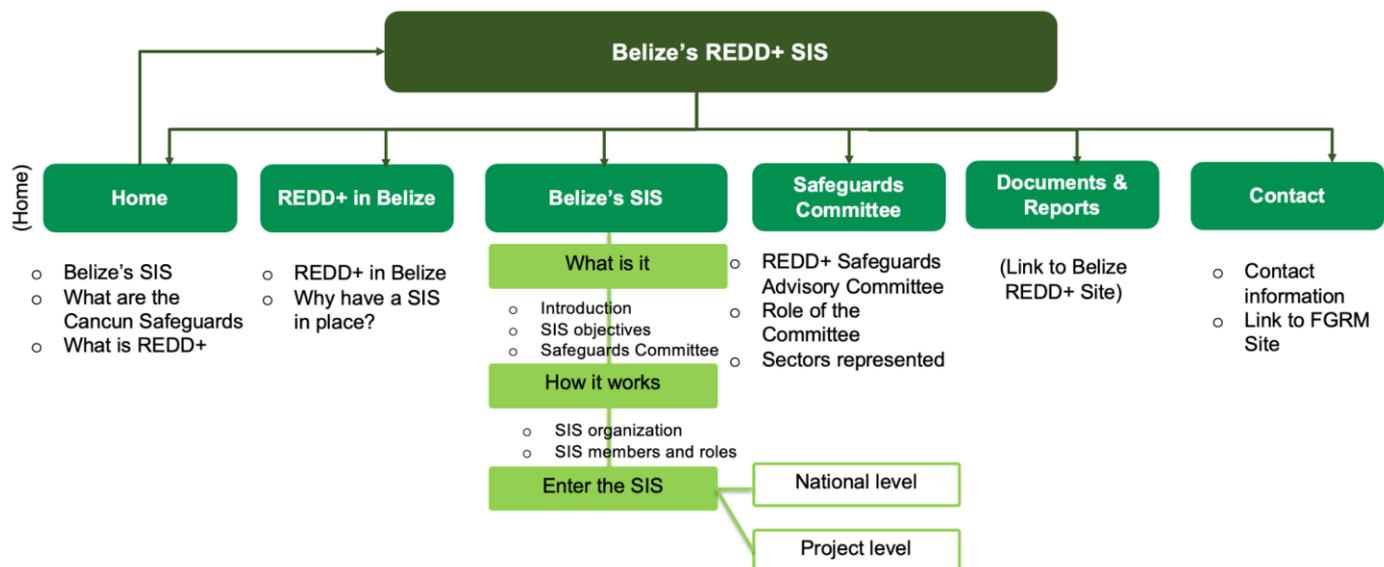
Activity		To consider
8	Web design	Web designer: Blanca Nieto
8.1	Interface and content structure (navigation menu)	<p>SIS report at national level</p> <p>Content-wise reference propose by AAE: Suriname's SIS (http://sis.surinameredd.org/) and Chile's SIS (https://www.enccrv.cl/sis)</p> <p>Website references proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ REDD+ Belize (https://reddplus.ncco.gov.bz/)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism - REDD+ (https://fgm.bz/) ○ National Climate Change Office (https://ncco.gov.bz/)
8.2	Location of the site and other technical issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CITO will provide the host and facilitate all necessary information to set up the website; ○ The Ministry of E-Governance, through Mr. Robateau, has managed the selection/creation of the domain; ○ The REDD+ CU will be in charge of maintaining and updating the website.
8.3	Website domain and hosting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The domain created to upload the web is: www.sis.gov.bz; ○ The host is covered by the consultant team for the term of a year.
9	Web completed	The website and a feedback matrix were shared with Government functionaries (including REDD+ CU and BENIC), together with the ESMF.
10	Capacity building for website update and management	A SIS website handover session was held on the 30 th , November. See section 9.2.3. Capacity building for website update .

9.2. Interface, content structure and technical specifications

9.2.1. Interface and content structure

The following graph illustrates the structure and navigation of the SIS website:



Graph 2. Structure and navigation of the SIS website

The SIS website was designed according to the following criteria:

- **Easy to handle:** Thanks to the use of the Webflow software;



- **Easy to update:** information necessary to update is concentrated in a few sections, some being linked to existing websites to avoid doubling efforts when updating information provided in the National REDD+ official website or similar.
- **Easy to understand:** we employed a clear and minimalistic interface design in order to make it easier for navigation and updating the content;
- **Aligned with UNFCCC requirements and best regional practices:** the website interface and content were designed having the following requirements in mind:
 - Meet the UNFCCC requirements on SIS;
 - Apply a step-by-step approach, starting with available information at a national scale, but providing a structure for including a project-level approach, depending on the Government's will and opportunities to implement REDD+ in the future. Similarly, compliance indicators from the ESMF were included to improve the information on how safeguards are respected in the future.
 - Additionally, in order to provide transparency to the SIS, the site provides information on how the SIS works, how information is produced ("SIS Reports") and a specific section to present and explain the role of the National Safeguards Committee.
- **Design consistency:** we have maintained the design line of the other official REDD+ sites of the Government of Belize. Some website references that were considered for the SIS website design are:
 - REDD+ Belize (<https://reddplus.ncco.gov.bz/>);
 - Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism - REDD+ (<https://fgm.gov.bz/>);
 - National Climate Change Office (<https://ncco.gov.bz/>).

Other considerations in the development the SIS website

The SIS interface, design and content were first presented to the REDD+ CU on September 27th, 2021, to obtain a first impression and feedback of the website's appearance and structure. During the event, it was decided to conduct an in-depth review by REDD+ CU and other participants through a Feedback Matrix (which can be found in Annex 2.3). All the inputs gathered in both cases were included in the final version of the SIS website, backed with this Report.

To read more about the weekly meeting with REDD+ CU in which the first version of the SIS was presented, please see item 9) of Annex 2.2.

9.2.2. Technical Specifications

Software used

The site was developed and hosted on Webflow (<https://webflow.com/>), a web development tool that contains a Content Management System (CMS) and hosting. Webflow works without the need of plugins and with a clean and well-written code, which makes it easier to update.

The Content Management System (CMS) is a flexible and personalized content creator tool that allows to add any type of content (text) in the sections created (in this case, the safeguards “address” and “respect”), as well as to edit all the texts and images on the web without having to modify its structure.

Its navigation is very efficient, with a friendly and fast interface and much more flexible than other web developer programs that require prior programming or design knowledge. For further information on how Webflow works, please see the following introductory video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7moqInkxo4&ab_channel=Webflow

Domain

As it was agreed at the meeting held with REDD+ CU and representatives from CITO on Monday 27th, September 2021, CITO will create the government domain (“.gov.bz”). The complete domain was left to be decided by experts and public functionaries through the SIS Feedback (in Annex 2.3) from the following options proposed:

www.reddsisbelize.gov.bz	
www.reddsis.gov.bz	
www.reddsisbelize.gov.bz	
www.redd-sis.gov.bz	
www.sis.ncco.gov.bz	Option proposed and selected by REDD+ CU

Hosting

The hosting recommended is the Basic hosting, with a cost of USD 192 per year (USD 12/month). This is Webflow’s most economical option and it is recommended for simple websites such as the SIS. This hosting options covers:

- A custom domain;
- 100 pages;
- A maximum of 25,000 monthly visits;
- 50 GB of CDN bandwidth.

For further information on plans and prices, visit: <https://webflow.com/pricing>

It is worth mentioning that the SIS website provided and published by the Consultant Team includes the hosting paid for the term of a year.

The Website User Manual and links to YouTube videos can be found in Annex 7

9.2.3. Capacity building for website update and management

Thanks to the Content Management System (CMS) used by Webflow, the SIS website could be updated by any person without requiring prior programming or design knowledge. To ensure the good performance of the website, an online training session was held on November 30th, 2021, with the following public entities involved in the SIS website’s update and maintenance:

	Recipient	Institution
1	Edgar Correa	Belize Forest Department, Geospatial Monitoring Unit
2	Jasmine Tzul Faber	Project Officer REDD+ CU
3	Florencia Guerra	Forest Department, Sustainable Forest Management Program
4	John Robateau	E-Governance and Digitalization Unit
5	Michael F. Somerville	Environmental & Social - REDD+ CU

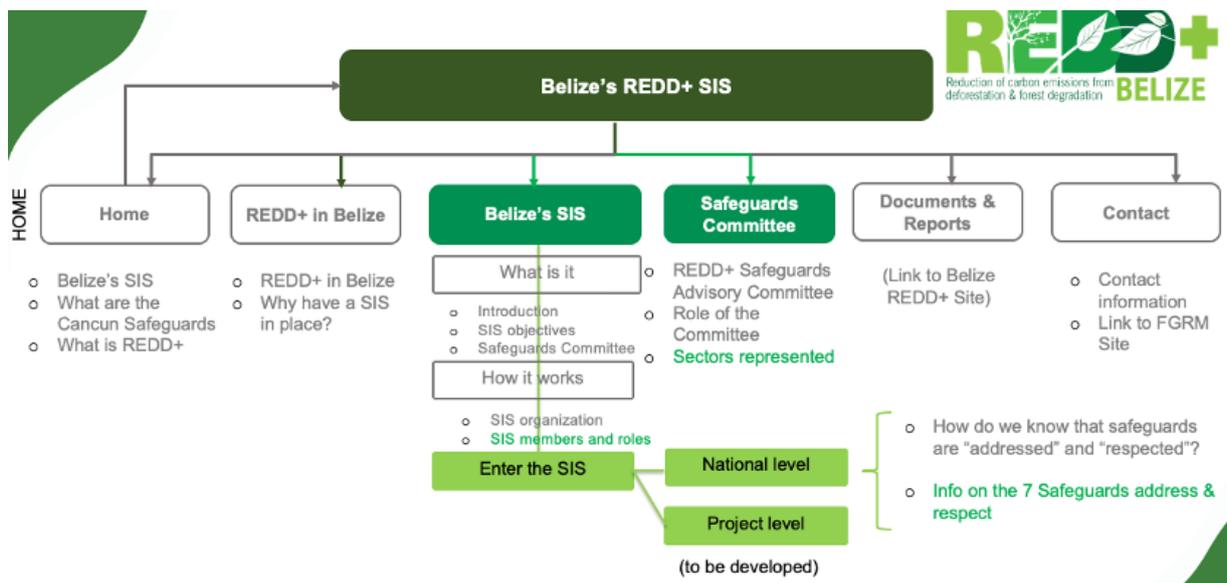
The workshop's agenda and **topics addressed** in the training session were:

Time slot	Agenda item	Responsible
09:00-9:15	Presentation of the SIS website: navigation criteria and aspects to consider	Mariano Cirone AAE
09:15-9:40	Presentation of the SIS website's user manual and technical aspects to consider	Blanca Nieto <i>Web designer</i>
09:40-10:00	Considerations and inputs for the SIS update: priority sections to update, sources of information, compliance indicators and other relevant considerations	Mariano Cirone AAE
10:00-10:20	Questions and answers	AAE Team
10:20-10:30	Closing of the workshop and next steps	Mariano Cirone AAE

9.3. Website User Manual

Annex 7 provides a very straightforward and user-friendly manual for those seeking to update and change the website's content, emphasizing the sections that need more attention to update and maintain the entire SIS, as well as other good practices that are worth considering.

Additionally, the sections in green on the graph below refers to the main sections that would need updating:



Graph 3. Website sections that would need to be updated

9.4. Validation and publishing of the website

Apart from the validation session on design and structure matters indicated in section 9.2 above, owing to the politically sensitive information provided in the SIS (especially on how the safeguards are being respected), a draft version of the SIS content was shared with REDD+ CU, BENIC and other relevant actors on October 29th. The session aimed to obtain feedback on and validation of the content before its publication. The inputs received were mainly related to the formatting of the text, with no changes in the content on how the safeguards are addressed and respected being suggested.

The final version of the website is uploaded to the *Webflow* hosting, at the following:

A record:	CNAME record:
75.2.70.75 99.83.190.102	proxy-ssl.webflow.com

9.5. Resources and budget needed for the functioning of the SIS

To ensure the longevity and proper functioning of Belize’s SIS, the following activities and costs shall be covered in the near future.

Concept	Cost (USD)	Periodicity	Considerations/Recommendations
Hosting	192.00	Annual	The Webflow interface and host server costs vary according to the plan selected. Based on the SIS website's purpose, the most basic option called “CMS” should be sufficient. This option has a cost of USD 16 per month, billed annually. As



			<p>part of the consultancy contract, the website has the first year of the hosting paid under the CMS modality, referred to above.</p> <p>Recommendation: in order to ensure that the SIS website is available online in the long-term, it is advisable to pay for the hosting for a period of at least 4-5 years in order to avoid dealing with this issue every year. Funds from international projects or programs could be considered if they can cover this cost.</p>
Domain	0.00	To determine with CITO	<p>To determine with CITO</p> <p>Recommendation: if possible, asking for a domain that covers a long period of time is recommended due to the considerations referred to above.</p>
SIS Focal Point within the SIS Secretariat	0.00	Not applicable	<p>The SIS organizational chart proposed works over existing entities and in the case the proposed roles demand a full-time job. In the case of the Safeguards Committee, positions are ad-honorem and they would demand very little time for occasional meetings (1-2 per year) and the revision of related documentation.</p> <p>Recommendation: to establish a SIS Focal Point within the SIS Secretariat (initially the REDD+ CU) as the main responsible person for the required activities. This person could also be in charge of the updating of the website.</p>

SECTION 4 – Multi-stakeholder participation process conducted for the design of Belize’s REDD+ SIS

10. Stakeholders levels, modalities and milestones for consultation

10.1. Stakeholders groups

The public consultation of different stakeholders for the construction of the National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI) was conducted by combining specific workshops and virtual meetings, together with some participatory activities for the Strategic Environmental and Social Analysis (SESA).

The participation procedure for the NSI was based on the stakeholder groups identified for the REDD+ strategy and SESA process, with the objective of adapting and adopting different methodologies that better suit each group (i.e. emphasizing capacity building or to obtain inputs). Nevertheless, considering the limitation of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the reduced time available for the consultancy, the public consultation process for the NSI was concentrated on two broader stakeholder groups: (i) public sector and (ii) Indigenous Peoples (IPs).

The table below details the two levels of participation implemented, and outlines its members, participation objectives, priority participation modalities (developed in [Section 4](#) below) and tasks, together with potential difficulties or opportunities considered when designing how to carry out this participation procedure.

Stakeholder group	Participation objectives	Participation process modalities to implement	Opportunities and/or obstacles
Group 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>State stakeholders</i> ▪ <i>Agroindustry stakeholders</i> ▪ <i>Conservation community stakeholders</i> ▪ <i>Long-term Forest Licensees and Exporters stakeholders</i> ▪ <i>Energy sector</i> ▪ <i>TCT Group (Directory in Annex 1)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better understanding of REDD+ safeguards; - NSI elaborated according to different stakeholders’ perspectives 	<p><u>Modality 1: Recorded Sessions:</u> Basic introduction to concepts of REDD+ Safeguards;</p> <p><u>Modality 2: On-line working tables for the NSI:</u> working tables for the seven safeguards;</p> <p><u>Modality 3: On-line meetings:</u> especially from public sector;</p> <p><u>Modality 4: On-line surveys:</u> designed for each group.</p>	<p><u>Pros:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to internet connection; - Possible basic notions on REDD+ acquired in most of the sectors; <p><u>Cons:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulties in obtaining a fluent dialogue due to the number and heterogeneity of in the audience; - High disparity between different actors. Some stakeholders might never have participated in any REDD+-related event.
Group 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Indigenous and community stakeholders</i> ▪ <i>Women’s groups stakeholders</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better understanding of REDD+ and REDD+ safeguards; - NSI elaborated according to different 	<p><u>Modality 1: Recorded Sessions:</u> Basic introduction to concepts of forest and CC; REDD+ and Safeguards; Gender in REDD+;</p>	<p><u>Pros:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cultural and gender approach might work as a facilitator for the participation of this stakeholders’ groups; - Some groups with previous experience on

	stakeholders' perspectives - Participation process implemented with a gender and culturally sensitive approach	<u>Modality 2: On-line working tables for the NSI: working tables for safeguards C) IPs; D) Full and effective participation and E) Co-benefits;</u> <u>Modality 5: Communication materials</u>	REDD+ and/or on international donors' safeguards. <u>Cons:</u> - Possible limited internet access and technical difficulties for virtual video conferences; - Limited previous knowledge on climate change and/or REDD+ and/or safeguards.
--	---	--	---

Table 8. Stakeholder groups

10.2. Participation modalities

Considering the current COVID-19 pandemic situation as well as the characteristics of the stakeholder groups, the consultation process employed five (5) different modalities for stakeholders' engagement, including:

- Modality 1: SIS-TCT online meetings;
- Modality 2: National virtual workshops;
- Modality 3: In-person workshop with IPs and local communities;
- Modality 4: Document sharing;
- Modality 5: Online training for operating Belize's REDD+ SIS system.

The table below provides a brief summary of the basic aspects of each modality.

Description	Sector	Objective(s):	Required material or others
Modality 1: SIS-TCT online workshops			
Online meetings with the REDD+ SIS Technical Counterpart Team (SIS-TCT) in all phases of BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS' design	1 - 2	- Acknowledge the level of understanding of safeguards; - Obtain inputs and socialization of NSI versions; - Identify safeguards priorities and level of implementation; - Identification of Sources of Information and Indicators of Compliance.	- Agendas with list of topics or subjects to be discussed during the meeting; - Report on main findings.
Modality 2: National virtual workshops			
Online workshops addressed to 15-30 members of multiple sectors Group Work especially designed for the process of NSI.	1 and 2	- Obtain inputs and socialization of NSI versions; - BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS inputs from different stakeholder, with an emphasis on safeguards priorities and level of implementation	- Agendas with list of topics or subjects to be discussed during the meeting; - Report on main findings; - See the Group Work procedure in Annex 3.1 .
Modality 3: In-person workshop with indigenous peoples and local communities;			

In person workshops in territory with Indigenous peoples (IP) and local communities, to work on aspects of the SESA, ESMF and the NSI.	2	Workshops conducted by CADS in territory with IPs and local communities with limited access to the internet and/or to obtain a higher quality participation, according to their needs and possibilities.	NSI group work special modality in Annex 3.2 .
Modality 4: Document sharing			
Document shared with specific public institutions.	1	Obtain inputs and socialization of key documents, especially the NSI document and the SIS content report.	Documents shared with REDD+ CU, BENIC, NCCO and others.
Modality 5: On-line training for operating BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS system			
Webinar with different public functionaries in charge of operating different aspects of BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS.	1	- Capacity building on key public functionaries to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS implementation, monitoring and updating.	Aimed to address activity 3.7 SIS "SIS handover and training".

Annex 2 systematizes the scheduled activities developed throughout the SIS design process.

10.1 Engagement milestones for Belize's REDD+ SIS

The table below identifies the main objectives of the planned multi-stakeholder consultation process. Please see Annex 2 to consult the work plan with the activities scheduled to address these engagement milestones.

Aspect	Objective(s)	Planned consultation modalities	Stakeholder groups
National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI) procedure	Obtain inputs to draft the initial NSI version	1 st SIS-TCT webinar	1 & 2
		SIS National Webinar	1
		In-person REDD+ workshops with indigenous peoples and local communities	2
	Consult and feedback for the initial NSI version	2 nd SIS-TCT webinar	1 & 2
		Document-sharing with SIS-TCT and specific stakeholders	1 & 2
Consult and feedback for the final NSI version	Document-sharing with SIS-TCT and specific stakeholders	1 & 2	
Belize's REDD+ SIS report and operation	Inputs for the identification of <i>Sources of Information</i>	2 nd SIS-TCT webinar	1 & 2
		Document-sharing with SIS-TCT and specific stakeholders	1 & 2
		On-line meetings with experts, key actors or public functionaries	1
	Capacity building for BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS operation	Capacity-building process to report to BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS	1
		Capacity building for website update and management	1



Belize's REDD+ SIS validation and publication	Content of safeguards report	First draft of safeguards Report shared to with Government (Dr. Gladden)	1
		Final report to publish on BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS website	1

11. Recommendations

All the recommendation provided throughout this document are concentrated and organized in the list below:

1) Decisions and agreements on the SIS functioning: carry out training and coordination workshops with the different institutions that will have a role in the SIS (i.e. as Information Provider, members of the Safeguards Committee, SIS Board, etc.) to decide, communicate and build capacities in aspects such as:

- Periodicity to submit information on the Compliance Indicators;
- Focal points in charge of providing the information;
- Mechanisms and technical aspects (i.e. an specific Excel Sheet is advisable);
- How to use the SIS Information Template (see below);
- Other aspects as deemed necessary.

2) Design and share a SIS Information Template document with all the entities reporting to the SIS (Information Providers): the template proposed should indicate the information required with specific instructions. Using multiple-choice, grid-in sections or similar might be a good option when possible. The same goes for sections with brief descriptions and qualitative and quantitative information.

3) Formalize the tasks for the SIS Secretariat: the Secretariat plays a central role in the SIS, as it will be the coordinator for the other SIS roles, produce and report the SIS information, and maintain the website updated, among other tasks. Therefore, it is recommended to consider the importance and the various activities that this might involve, and to clearly establish written duties, people in charge and periodicity of activities. If possible, it would be advisable to establish the same for the rest of the SIS roles.

4) Formalize a process to elaborate, review and validate the SIS content: as part of the recommendation above, it is recommended to establish simple but clear protocols to produce, review and validate the information to be published on the SIS website, especially that related to how safeguards are respected. This would help to provide efficiency to the SIS, and also transparency and quality to the information provided. Section 8.1 outlines how this could be done according to a “SIS Report” elaboration procedure with the intervention of all the SIS roles proposed in the chart of title 8.1.

5) Formalize the Safeguards Advisory Committee: an entity with faculties to monitor, validate and complement the information to be published on the SIS as recommended would be a great asset for Belize's REDD+ SIS and the entire REDD+ policy. A multi-stakeholder working group can be invaluable in coordinating various stakeholder inputs to the validation process, and ensuring equitable representation from all stakeholders, particularly representatives of IPs and local communities, private sector, and academia. A gender and vulnerability approach should be promoted in the selection of representatives (i.e. consider establishing minimum quotas for women). However, as previously stated, establishing this Committee is optional and does not have implications for the proper functioning of the SIS procedure.

6) Maintain the SIS website up-to-date: the SIS will only work as an asset to Belize's REDD+ policy if it is presented as a dynamic, transparent and up-to-date system of information. To achieve this, it is advisable to:



- Assign clear roles to maintain the SIS (who, when and how?)
- Ensure the payment of the server for a certain period of time (see below)

7) Compliance Indicators and Sources of Information selected: Compliance Indicators are subject to changes in the future, especially if the SIS operator finds it difficult to obtain suitable information to report them. It is recommended to include realistic and dynamic Compliance Indicators to make sure the SIS website can be easily updated and improved.

Sources of Information need to be very precise to feed the Compliance Indicators selected for the SIS. As it can be seen in the analysis of international conventions matrix of section 7, existing sources of information do not generally provide the level of detail that Compliance Indicators require. Nevertheless, these international instruments might serve as useful sources for narrative information to feed to the UNFCCC Safeguards Summary Report (See Annex 7), or to update the SIS website, for example. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the one with more potential as a SIS Source of Information, nevertheless this will depend on if its indicators, that are supposedly under development for the upcoming report, are designed in a compatible manner with the SIS indicators referred to in the Matrix of Annex 4.1. It is recommended to include indicators that might also be useful to feed the SIS. This should be agreed by the REDD+ CU and the corresponding CBD focal point, the National Biodiversity Office, that would serve as a SIS Information Provider.

8) SIS Reporting levels: on its first version, the SIS reports information on safeguards at the national level, as the UNFCCC requires. Once REDD+ is under implementation on the ground, the SIS website will provide the necessary structure to also report at project-level. At this stage, coordination agreements, templates and guidelines for the sharing of information will be needed to ensure consistency and the flowing of information between the REDD+ Secretariat and project executors in charge of providing information of how safeguards are being respected on the ground. To help with that procedure, Annex 5.3 provides a template to report information at the national level to update to the website.

9) Hosting payment: in order to ensure the SIS website is available online in the long-term, it is advisable to pay the hosting for a term of 4-5 years at least, in order to avoid dealing with this issue every year. Possible certain funds from international projects/programs could be suitable to cover this cost.

10) UNFCCC Summary of Information on Safeguards: when it comes to safeguards-related commitment assumed by countries within the UNFCCC, together with ensuring safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+ and establishing a SIS, the countries willing to access to REDD+ result-based payments under the Convention shall also submit a Safeguards Information Summary periodically. Considering that Belize has not yet submit its first report it is worth mentioning that all the suitable Sources of Information selected for the SIS and included in the SIS Reporting Matrix of Annex 4.3 will serve to report about safeguards during the REDD+ readiness phase, therefore it will serve as the Summary of Information on Safeguards.

Please refer to Annex 6 for further recommendations and guidelines to elaborate the country's 1st Summary of Information on Safeguards.

Bibliography

Rey, D., Roberts, J., Korwin, S., Rivera, L., and Ribet, U. (2013). A Guide to Understanding and Implementing the UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards - https://www.climatelawandpolicy.com/files/files_publications/Guide_to-understanding-and-implementing-unfccc-redd-safeguards.pdf

UNFCCC secretariat. (2016). Key decisions relevant for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+) - https://unfccc.int/files/land_use_and_climate_change/redd/application/pdf/compilation_redd_decision_booklet_v1.1.pdf

Ministerio del Ambiente de Ecuador. (2015). Resumen del Diseño del Sistema de Información de Salvaguardas para REDD+ - <https://www.unredd.net/documents/global-programme-191/safeguards-multiple-benefits-297/studies-reports-and-publications-1/17003-diseno-del-sistema-de-informacion-de-salvaguardas-para-redd-documento-resumen-ecuador-2015-spanish.html>

National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR). (2017). First Summary of information on how all the Safeguards referred to in Decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected in Mexico - https://redd.unfccc.int/files/first_summary_information_on_safeguards.pdf

National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname. (2020). First Summary of Information on REDD+ Safeguards of Suriname - https://redd.unfccc.int/files/soi_suriname_final_29june2020.pdf

Gobierno de la República Argentina. (2019). Primer Resumen de Información Salvaguardas REDD Argentina - https://redd.unfccc.int/files/4849_2_primer_resumen_de_informacion_salvaguardas_redd_2b_argentina.pdf

Steve Swan and Judith Walcott. (2017). REDD+ safeguards information systems: practical design considerations - https://redd.unfccc.int/uploads/2234_2_sis-nov30_283_29.pdf

Epple, Hicks, Suarez, Swan, & Walcott, 2020. (2020). REDD+ Safeguards Information Systems: moving from design to operation - <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33927/InfBrief.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Victoria Suárez. (2021). Important considerations for gathering information on REDD+ Safeguards. UN-REDD Program

ANNEXES

Annex 1. SIS Technical Counterpart Team (SIS-TCT) directory

TECHNICAL COUNTERPART TEAM FOR THE SIS					
1	Colin Mattis	NCCO Deputy Chief Climate Change Officer	cco.cc@environment.gov.bz 828-5963, 637-4926	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on national environmental policy ● Knowledge on forest management ● Knowledge on legal issues (national laws + international conventions) ● Familiarity with institutional capacities to handle information and existing information systems
2	Anthony Mai	DOE	seo@environment.gov.bz	Government	
3	Darlene Padron	SDU	So.susdev@environment.gov.bz 615-2629	Government	
4	Wilber Sabido	Forest Department. Chief Forest Officer	cfo@forest.gov.bz , 604-9119	Government	
5	Belarmino Esquivel	Agriculture Department	belarmino.esquivel@agriculture.gov.bz 615-5488	Government	
	Dr. Victoriano Pascual		dir.wmcc@agriculture.gov.bz		
6	Michelle Alvarez	Department of Natural Resources	michelle.alvarez@naturalresources.gov.bz 828 6867	Government	
7	Jose Perez	APAMO	execdirector@apamobelize.org 673-4291	Conservation Community	
8	Elma Kay	UB-ERI	ekay@ub.edu.bz 610-3982	Academia	
9	Sandra Miranda	BENIC/NGC	samirandabz@gmail.com 610-1489	Indigenous Organization	
10	Max Ortega	Belize Livestock Producers Association	max.ortega@gmail.com blpa@outlook.com 671-5220, 822-3883	Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on forest management

11	Olivia Avilez	Belize Sugar Industries-ASR Group (BSI-ASR)	Olivia.avilez@asr-group.com 631-5824	Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on forest management
12	Nidia Panti	Pine Lumber Company	admin@bullridgebelize.com 824 3255, 670 4410	Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on forest management
13	Cynthia Williams	National women's commission	Execdirector.nwc@humandev.gov.bz	Civil Society/Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on gender ● Knowledge on stakeholder participation
14	Francisco Sabido President	National Association of Village Councils (NAVCO)	sanpablovillagecouncil@yahoo.com 671-4900	Community Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge on stakeholder participation ● Knowledge on IP rights (including land tenure), representing the interests of IPs
15	Reynaldo Ico	Toledo District Association of Village Councils	ico.reynaldo@yahoo.com 623-6889		
16	Luis Tun	Orange Walk District Association of Village Councils	luiistun001@gmail.com 624-1624		
17	Jervis Banner	Cayo District Association of Village Councils	jervis-banner@hotmail.com 614-0656		
18	Francisco Gonzalez	Central Information Technology Office (CITO) Sr. ICT Officer	Francisco.Gonzalez@cito.gov.bz 822-1219	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Familiarity with institutional capacities to handle information and existing information systems

Annex 2. Schedule of activities

Annex 2.1. Workplan

The table below outlines the process carried out to develop the SIS and its website

Activity	Notes	First or Second Half of the Month																				
		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Au		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		
		1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Validation and adjustment of this working plan and participation modalities	Doc validated with the IP Desk and the SIS-TCT, especially Activities 4, 6 and 10																					
Stakeholders directory updated and validated	In coordination with the SESA process																					
Key aspects for the SIS design (1)																						
1	Define BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS objective (scope)	To defined with safeguards, besides the UNFCCC, the BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS will report																				
2	Align UNFCCC safeguards with other safeguards specific frameworks	According to 1), as part of the SESA process																				
3	Identify the BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS Reporting Needs	Based on the results of Activities 3.1 – 3.3 below																				
National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI) process																						
3.1	Approach and methodology for the National Safeguards Interpretation (NSI) process	Built in a technical and multi-stakeholder participatory manner. See section 5.1. of the BELIZE'S REDD+ SIS Report																				
3.1.1	1 st SIS-TCT webinar	1 st meeting with the SIS-TCT, aimed at capacity building on safeguards and to obtain drafts for the NSI process. Held on May 14th, 2021. Inputs report in Annex 2.2.																				
3.1.2	In-person workshops with IPs and local communities																					



Asesoramiento
Ambiental
Estratégico



This Matrix consists of an Excel sheet presenting all inputs and comments about the SIS web content and appearance by REDD+ CU, BENIC and other public actors. This Matrix, together with the draft website on a temporary domain, was shared for review for two weeks until Sunday, October 10th.

The Excel file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

Annex 3. Multi-stakeholder input analysis matrix for the National Safeguards Interpretation

The following matrices cover the inputs obtained in the different participatory events, which had as an objective the identification of common key concepts and words and the expression of concerns and other ideas, with the final aim of drafting the country's national safeguards interpretation (NSI). The NSI, therefore, takes into consideration this and also technical requirements proposed by the team of experts on international REDD+ safeguards procedures.

Annex 3.1. SIS National Webinar.

This a document detailing the methodology used for the Group Work, with questions and groups per safeguards.

The pdf file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

Annex 3.2. Considerations for the IPs' Consultation Methodology for the National REDD+ Safeguards Interpretation Process

This is a document detailing the methodology used for the Group Work for the NSI with IPs.

The pdf file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

Annex 3.3. Multi-stakeholder input analysis matrix for the NSI

This is an Excel sheet that tracks and systematizes all inputs received in different workshops for the NSI elaboration. It presents the comments and concerns mentioned by different actors, and aims to demonstrate that the current Belize's NSI is the result of a technical and multi-stakeholder participation process.

The Excel file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

Annex 4. Information needs, sources of information and compliance indicators

Annex 4.1. Assessment of International conventions reports as Sources of Information

This is an Excel sheet that analyzes and assesses the main International conventions and their potential to serve as Sources of Information for the SIS.

The Excel file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

Annex 4.2. Domestic Sources of information identified

Safeguard	Topic	Sources of Information	Entity	Notes (periodicity, access, quality, etc.)
A1; E1; F-G	Forest governance implementation	Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030)	Statistical Institute of Belize	In progress. Identifying indicators and information linking the SDGs
A1	Plans report on a yearly bases with the M&E	Plan Belize Medium term development strategy 2021-2025	Ministry of Agriculture	Plans report on an annual basis according to its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan
B-D	Consultation processes on REDD	Not specific source identified	REDD+ CU	Upon request. During readiness phase
	Intersectoral coordination mechanisms	Not specific source identified	REDD+ CU	Upon request. During readiness phase
B3	Claims, challenges and legal requests	Not specific source identified	REDD+ CU	Upon request
B3	Report of the Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM)	Not specific source identified	REDD+ CU	Upon request
C2	FPIC	Not specific source identified	Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous People's Affairs	Protocol FPIC being drafted
C3	Monitoring of the recommendations of the International Human Rights and the Caribbean Court of Justice in Indigenous Rights	Not specific source identified	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	In progress. Working on a report on the implementation of recommendations
D2	Gender	Plan Belize Medium term development strategy 2021-2025		In progress
	Gender and Biodiversity	Not specific source identified	National Biodiversity Office	



E1 F G	State of Biodiversity	Not specific source identified	National Biodiversity Office	
E1	Rate of deforestation and forest degradation.	Not specific source identified	National Forest Monitoring Systems	
	Conditions of mangroves	National Forest Monitoring Systems	Forest Dep - Coastal Zone Management Institute	
	Non-timber goods production	Not specific source identified	Belize Ministry of Agriculture	Upon request. Bambu producers "Agroforestry" section (Jose Tillett mentioned this)
E2	Communal Land tenure	Not specific source identified	Land Department & Forest Department	Not specific in communal forest management
E2	REDD+ Benefit-sharing mechanism	Not specific source identified	NCCO	Consultancy on its design in progress

Annex 4.3. SIS Reporting Matrix

This Annex provides an Excel sheet to serve as the template to gather all the information necessary to update the SIS website, especially in reference to the ESMF's Mitigation Measures and Compliance Indicators, aligned with each of the corresponding aspects of the National Safeguards Interpretation.

The Excel file can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes.

To see a preview of the SIS Reporting Matrix once completed, please see **Annex 5. SIS Website Report.**



Annex 4.4. SIS Template for Information Providers

Belize's REDD+ SIS – Template for Information Providers				
Reporting Entity:		Date of submission:		Period reported:
Focal Point:		E-mail:		Telephone:
Safeguar	Compliance Indicators reported on	Information to provide	Source	Comment(s)
B	Indicator #1			
	Indicator #2			
	Indicator #3			
C	Indicator #1			
	Indicator #2			
F	Indicator #1			

Annex 4.5 Project level reporting template

Project title	(Insert official project name, according to Project Document -PD)	Star and end date:	(Month/year – month/year)	
Executing entity	(Name of the overall responsible entity, international organisms, etc.)			
Focal Point	(Name of project coordinator or similar)	Mail	(Insert a valid mail)	
Area of intervention				
Location	(Address, Department, county or other as needed)	Extension (in ha)	(Nº of hectares affected to the project, according to PD)	
Google Maps landmark	(Insert Google Maps link to locate the project area)			
Project characteristics				
Main project activities:	(REDD+-related activities, according to PD)			
Emissions Reductions projected (in CO2toneq)	(ER projected in CO2ton eq, according to PD)			
Environmental and social (E&S) framework(s) or similar applied	(Insert the name of the E&S policy(ies) applied (i.e. the World Bank's ESF), according to the policies of the executing and/or funding entity, or others)	Risk category	(According to Project's E&S Management Plan)	
Project's E&S Management Plan	(Insert links of access to project's Environmental & Social Management Plan, or similar)			
Project's grievance redress mechanism	(Insert the project's and/or entity's grievance redress mechanism, or similar)			
Relevant project's resources	(insert links to relevant project's resources, i.e. PD, Environmental & Social Management Plan, project's website, etc.)			
Report on Cancun Safeguards Respect				



Main risks identified	Safeguard (s) activated	Mitigation measures (MM) proposed	Compliance Indicator (CI)	Report
Risk #1 (description according to Project's E&S Management Plan)	(i.e. C & D)	MM1.1: MM1.2:	CI.1.1: CI.1.2:	(Narrative and quantitatively information on how the MM is being implemented)
Risk #2	(i.e. B)	MM2.1: MM2.2:	CI.2.1: CI.2.2:	(Narrative and quantitatively information on how the MM is being implemented)
Risk #3	(i.e. E)	MM3.1: MM3.2:	CI.3.1: CI.3.2:	(Narrative and quantitatively information on how the MM is being implemented)
Risk #4	(i.e. F & G)	MM4.1: MM4.2:	CI.4.1: CI.4.2:	(Narrative and quantitatively information on how the MM is being implemented)



Asesoramiento
Ambiental
Estratégico



Annex 5. SIS website report content on safeguards address and respect

This Annex provides a word document table that organizes the current information provided by the SIS website on how safeguards are addressed and respected. It is advisable to use this document to update the information before publishing it on the site. Additionally, it is preferable to use Google Docs due to compatibility issues with the *Webflow* interface.

The Word file is can be found in the folder: SIS Report – Annexes

Annex 6. Guidelines and recommendations to elaborate the country's 1st UNFCCC Summary of Information on Safeguards

Introduction and importance

According to UNFCCC COP decision 12/CP.17, “developing country Parties undertaking the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70” (REDD+ activities), “should provide a summary of information on how all of the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix” (the Cancun Safeguards) “are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities”.

Considering the above, the safeguards-related requirements established by the UNFCCC are:

1. Consider safeguards when developing and implementing National REDD+ Strategies/Action Plans;
2. Promote and support safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+ actions, regardless of the source and type of funding;
3. Develop a Safeguards Information System (SIS); and,
4. Produce and submit a **Summaries of information** (SOI) on how all the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected.

UNFCCC decisions regarding SOI

The list below contains information on the COP decision⁸ that establishes requirements and recommendations in relation to SOI:

Decision		Requirement (s) or recommendation (s)
1/CP.16	<i>The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention</i>	Determines the seven safeguards for REDD+ and the SIS as essential elements to implement REDD+.

⁸ UN-REDD Programme. 2016. Towards a common understanding of REDD+ under the UNFCCC. An UN-REDD Programme Document to foster a common approach of REDD+ implementation.



12/CP.17	<i>Guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected and modalities relating to forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels as referred to in decision 1/CP.16</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Established that developing country Parties working on REDD+ should provide a summary of information on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected o SOIs “should be provided periodically and be included in national communications^[2], consistent with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties” (paragraph 4)
9/CP.19	<i>Work programme on results-based finance to progress the full implementation of the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Agrees that developing countries seeking to obtain and receive results-based payments for REDD+ under the UNFCCC “should provide the most recent summary of information on how all of the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 2, have been addressed and respected before they can receive results based payments”
12/CP.19	<i>The timing and the frequency of presentations on the summary of information on how all the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I are being addressed and respected</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SOI could also be provided, on a voluntary basis, via the web platform on the UNFCCC website; o Developing country Parties should start providing the SOI in their national communication channel, including via the web platform of the UNFCCC; o The frequency of subsequent presentations on the SOIs should be consistent with the provisions for submissions of national communications, i.e. the BUR, NDC or other

Inputs extracted from UNFCCC. (2016). *Key decisions relevant for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+)*. Decision booklet REDD+

(https://unfccc.int/files/land_use_and_climate_change/redd/application/pdf/compilation_redd_decision_booklet_v1.2.pdf)

Scope of the SOI

- o **Period:** in each SOI, it is important to indicate the period to be reported. Presumably, in the case of the Belize’s 1st SOI, it would cover the country’s REDD+ readiness phase, from the initial REDD+ studies to the development of the four REDD+ pillars: (i) national strategy; (ii) MRV system; (iii) NREF; and (iv) SIS.

For future SOIs, once the country enters the REDD+ implementation phase, Belize will report on the five REDD+ activities: (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation; (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation; (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks; (d) Sustainable management of forests; (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks, according on how are they reflected on the Belize's National REDD+ Strategy.

- **Scope:** the SOI shall provide a summary of information on how all safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. Therefore, the report should include the seven Cancun Safeguards.

The Convention does not provide further information on what is to be understood by how safeguards are “addressed” and “respected”. Therefore, countries have the flexibility to adopt their own definitions. Such concepts were defined in the current SIS version as follows:

- *Addressed:* Here, countries provide information on the extent to which existing Policies, Laws and Regulations (PLRs) cover the aspects of importance under the safeguards as an indication of a country's ambition to avoid social and environmental risks and impacts.
- *Respected:* Here, countries provide information on additional efforts made to avoid social and environmental risks and impacts, as could result from REDD+ implementation, or where this is impossible, to minimize and manage them.

Source of inputs

This SIS Integrated Report, together with the information provided in the current version of the SIS website, provides mostly all the necessary inputs for drafting the first country's SOI. Other REDD+ specific documents, such as the National REDD+ Strategy, the FREL, the SESA and the ESMF document also provide relevant inputs for the elaboration of the SOI.

The Index below provides the exact sections and titles of the SIS Integrated Report that provide especially important information for the SOI.

Index of content

The table below provides the structure of a possible SOI index, based on the UNFCCC requirements and recommendations, and the analysis of different SOI submitted by countries in the region, together with considerations on Belize's SIS process and outcomes. The third column also indicates the sections of this SIS Integrated Report that will serve as the basis to draft each SOI section.

SOI Section		Main content	SIS Integrated Report references
1	Description of the national circumstances regarding REDD+ in Belize	Country's forests, elements of the readiness process, the National REDD+ Strategy and potential benefits and risks	See introduction to the National REDD+ Strategy, SESA and ESMF documents
2	Introduction and concepts	Introduction to the REDD+ Cancun Safeguards What a SIS is and the UNFCCC recommendations Introduction of the SOI process and its importance	Titles 1 & 3 Annex 6
3	The Belize's REDD+ SIS elaboration process	Introduction to the Key aspects for the SIS design	Section 3
3.1	<i>SIS development process</i>	The multi-stakeholder and technical process developed during 2021 to design the SIS, with an emphasis on the context of the COVID-19 pandemic	Title 2.1
3.2	<i>Objectives and functions of the SIS</i>	Step-by-step approach based on the UNFCCC requirements Reporting needs and rules: process to identify them	Title 6.1 Title 6.2
3.3	<i>National Safeguards Interpretation</i>	Multi-stakeholder and technical process Text on the NSI	Title 5
3.4	<i>SIS functions and institutional arrangements</i>	Belize's SIS roles and institutions assigned, with an special emphasis on the Safeguards Advisory Committee	Title 6.3
3.5	<i>Identification process for Sources of Information and Compliance Indicators for Belize's REDD+ SIS</i>	Emphasis on the opportunity to align the SIS process with the SESA and ESMF	Title 7
3.6	<i>Procedure to produce and report the SIS information</i>	Participation of the different SIS roles, aimed to ensure transparency, multi-stakeholder participation and enhance the quality of the information	Title 8

4	First report on how safeguards are being addressed and respected during the country's REDD+ readiness phase	<p>Scope: emphasis on the report at the national scale for the country's REDD+ readiness phase. Explanation of reporting criteria applied.</p> <p>Information on safeguards in the national context, including the national interpretation for each safeguard as well as information on how the safeguard is addressed and respected. Information that will become available in the future from project level is also described.</p>	Annex 5
5	Future steps for the SIS	Updates and improvements expected for the REDD+ implementation phase, i.e. project-level reports.	Recommendations and Government's decision
6	Conclusions	Conclusions that can be drawn from the current status of information on the extent to which the Cancun Safeguards are addressed and respected and the outlook on how information can be further improved over time.	

In addition to the table above, other content that could be interesting to add to the SOI, possibly in the form of Annexes, is:

- Consistency and equivalence between different sets of safeguards: particularly the Cancun Safeguards with the World Bank's Operational Procedures, which served the basis for Belize's REDD+ SESA and ESMF processes
- Links to the SESA, ESMF and other relevant REDD+ processes and documents

Annex 7 - Website User Manual

Excel file can be found in the folder: SIS Report - Annexes