



Costa Rica development of the Information System on REDD Safeguards in Costa Rica

Condition of national forests

- ❖ In the late 1980s, Costa Rica had 21% forest coverage. In 2010 according to the coverage map, the country had 53.4% coverage.
- ❖ Forestry Law (7575 passed in 1996) does not permit changes in land usage. However, according to studies conducted there is verified evidence of deforestation and forest degradation.
- ❖ There is a National Forestry Development Plan (2011-2020), which under the law is the official instrument for forestry sector planning.
- ❖ There is a System of State Protected Areas that covers 26% of the territory and reaches 33% with the inclusion of biological corridors.
- ❖ For the management of the National System of Conservation Areas, (State Forestry Authority), structures of forestry governance have been established with representatives from various sectors and stakeholders, with political and administrative decision making power at the highest level (Biodiversity Law No. 7788).
- ❖ There is wide control and regulations in place regarding land use.
- ❖ There is a National Action Program to Combat Land Degradation in Costa Rica, made official by Executive Decree No. 35216-MAG-MINAET in 2009.
- ❖ There is a National Strategy for Integrated Fire Management (2012-2021) and its National Action Plan formalized by Executive Decree No. 37480-MINAE 2014.

Strategic actions REDD Costa Rica (R-PP)

REDD is based on the Payment for Environmental Services, created by the Forestry Law. Since its implementation in 1997, the Government has invested over \$400 million in the protection and recovery of forest cover. This program is funded primarily with financial resources from the 3.5% tax on fuels. Through REDD policies and programs an increase of up 6% current coverage is being sought by making use of the PES financial instrument, strengthening the Fire Management Strategy, and increasing the use of wood from sustainable sources.

- 1) Integrating carbon capture in National Parks and Biological Reserves (SINAC)
- 2) Maintain long-term coverage of the PES Program
- 3) Expand the coverage of the Payment for Environmental Services Program
- 4) PES to retain the regeneration and management of secondary forests:
- 5) Increased carbon sequestration by inducing natural regeneration and establishing forest plantations to produce raw materials for domestic consumption, in areas devoid of forested land

- 6) Strengthening the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) by controlling illegal logging and forest fires
- 7) Surveying and Land Regularization of special lands (eg, indigenous lands)
- 8) Production and consumption of sustainable timber under certification schemes (natural forests, reforestation)
- 9) Strengthening the management oversight of the College of Agricultural Engineers (Forest Managers, professionals responsible for the verification of contracts PES)
- 10) Create funding sources for the implementation of the Strategy

Progress of REDD

2014	2015
Implementation of governance structures for REDD	REDD Strategy
Formation of "cultural mediators", representatives of indigenous territories responsible for communicating and informing people so they can participate in the SESA process.	Project Protocols
Development and Implementation of Information and Consultation Plan for indigenous territories.	REDD Financing Strategy
Development and Implementation of Information and Consultation Plan for groups living in forests	Implementation of mechanisms for information and complaints
Conducting SESA and ESMF	Presentation of R-Package ERPD
Pilot for information complaint mechanism	Lines of accreditation
Dialogue on Safeguards for the Strategy	System for Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
Registration, fraud and benefit sharing mechanism	Updating of the SI, based on safeguards defined for the Country Strategy
Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System	REDD Strategy
Information System for REDD Safeguards (CP. 16)	Implementation of mechanism for information and complaints

Process of SIS development

Among the instruments analyzed for the development of SIS are: the R-PP of Costa Rica; the National Forestry Development Plan (2011-2020); National Strategy on Climate Change; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ratified by Act No. 7494; Convention on the Conservation of Ecosystems and Forest Plantations (Law No. 7572); the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and drought especially in Africa (Act No. 7699); Convention on Biological Diversity (Law No. 7416),

the Strategic Plan and the aims of AICHI; the Central American Convention on Climate Change (Law No. 7513); the Convention for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage (Law No. 5980); the Central American Convention for the Protection of the Environment (Law No. 7226); Convention for the conservation of biodiversity and protection of priority natural areas in Central America (Law No. 7433); Ramsar Convention (Law No. 7224); the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Law No. 8586).

In addition, the following objectives were considered; the global objectives on forests adopted by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution 62/98 in 2007; the National Action Program to Combat Land Degradation in Costa Rica, formalized by Executive Decree No. 35216-MAG-MINAET in 2009; the National Strategy for Integrated Fire Management Plan 2012-2021 and National Action formalized by Executive Decree No. 37480-MINAE in 2014.

For the development of the indicators, the rules related to forest governance have been analyzed with respect to indigenous peoples; gender; the right of access to information; the right of access to justice; on accountability and preventing corruption; information systems and their operation, information mechanisms and instruments; and dealing with complaints and responses. Costa Rica has the regulatory and governance structures and mechanisms in place for managing information and complaints which were developed during the REDD preparation process. They take into account the OIT 169 agreement ratified by Law No. 7316; The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; the Indian Act No. 6172; the Environmental Act No. 7554; Biodiversity Act No. 7788, among others.

For Safeguard "g": The adoption of measures to address the risks of displacement indicators have not been developed because the design of REDD in Costa Rica internalizes potential shifts and adjusts the amount of verifiable tons of CO₂e per year. According to Javier Hernandez, coordinator of MRV (personal communication, September 9, 2014), REDD will be implemented at the national level by a set of policies and programs, such as the Payment for Environmental Services, the Control of Illegal Logging and Fire Management among others. When the country has a forest monitoring system in place it will report on CO₂ emissions and absorption. Accordingly, payment will be based on demonstrable results in net reductions nationwide and not on sub-national levels

2014:

- Analysis of the international context: Decisions made at COP.
- Compilation and analysis of Costa Rica's legal framework and the institutions linked with REDD measures and REDD safeguards adopted by the COP 16
- Analysis of existing information systems
- Developing and disseminating information
- Conducting events with sector representatives to exchange ideas on the expectations of the System
- Analysis of variables of COP 16 safeguards

- Definition of Operating System platform (www.sinac.go.cr/ceniga)
- Development of indicators according to the goals of REDD included in the R-PP, and according to the legal, institutional framework and safeguards of REDD
- Socialization Process, review and validation of indicators
- Development of methodology sheets for each indicator
- Development of the operating manual
- SIS Dissemination Phase

2015:

- Updating indicators based on the REDD Strategy through a participatory process, and in accordance with the design of the MRV
- Inclusion of new indicators for country safeguards that have been generated in the context of the REDD
- Adjustments to the instruments and manual.

SIS: National

As the implementing institution of the project and operating under a legal framework, FONAFIFO uses the platform of the National Environmental Information System (SINIA, for its acronym in Spanish), established by Decree No. 37658-MINAET in 2013.

SINIA, under the responsibility of MINAE and coordination of the National Center for Geo-environmental Information (CENIGA) is the official platform for institutional and sectorial coordination and linkage in the Costa Rican State that facilitates the management and distribution of national environmental knowledge and information. The CENIGA as Guideline DM-078-2013 February 5, 2013, also supports the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC), State Forestry Authority in creating the institutional geographic information system and ecosystem classification system on biodiversity.

Under the framework of the new Government: (2014-2018) Guideline DM-480 of October 2014, the Minister of MINAE Rector of the Environment, Energy, Oceans and Land Management Sector has asked all its dependencies to provide the necessary support to CENIGA in the process of implementation and operation of SINIA, for which he has issued a series of provisions.

For the operation of SINIA the National Environmental Information Network has been formed, in which environmental data are located as well as the technical units of governmental and non-governmental organizations related to the generation and use of environmental information. The SINIA Board of Directors consists of the representatives of the leaders of Environment and Energy sectors, decision makers, and a representative of the National Environmental Council, called on the current government, the Presidential Environmental Council, which is coordinated by the President of the Republic or the Minister of the Presidency (Decree No. 38536-MP-PLAN, to August 20, 2014)

REDD is a planning tool for the Climate Change Strategy and the National Forestry Development Plan (2011-2020), the planning tool for official use, management and protection of forest resources of the country, which, according to Decree No. 36945 – MINAET, applies to ecosystems and forested lands located within and outside the State’s Natural Heritage (PNE).

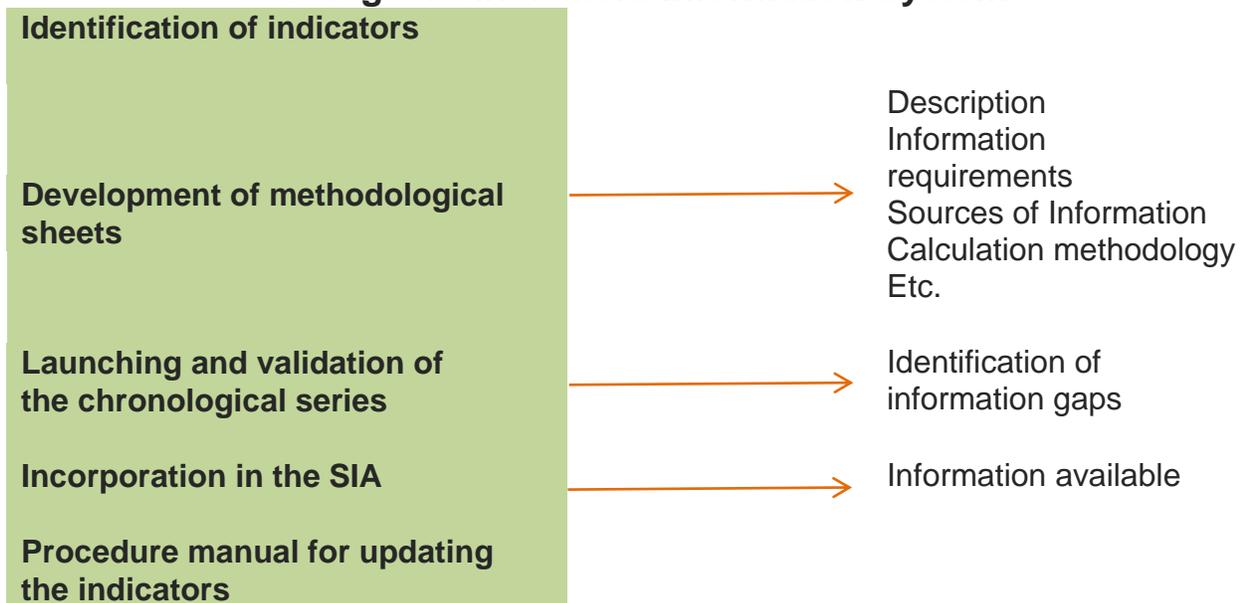
REDD safeguards Information System in Costa Rica	
Objective	Compile and present relevant information on REDD + safeguards that are being promoted and respected in the country.
Projected scope	The three phases of REDD considered by the Convention, and all the safeguards, both adopted by COP 16, as others are prepared to address gaps in the legal framework, or as a result of the risk assessment and co- benefits.
Will permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Initially, provide information for the preparation of National Communications (every 4 or 5 years), and update reports (every 2 years), both by the Meteorological Institute of Costa Rica. ❖ During later stages, to serve the information needs of internal and external stakeholders.
Presentation of the information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ According to the schedule of reporting and updating of National Communications. ❖ According to the schedule of reporting by different donors. ❖ According to the needs of other users.
Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The roles and responsibilities of information are set out in the indicator methodology sheet. The rule of law is respected in the institutional competencies. ❖ The reports complying with safeguards in REDD activities or measures are prepared by the responsible institution which delivers it to IMN, or communicates through officially established mechanisms.
Guiding principles	Paragraph 1 of Annex I to Decision 1 / COP 16, and subsequent guidelines adopted by the Convention.
Role on national focus on safeguards	Report how the REDD safeguards were approached and respected (recognized, promoted, protected by the law).
Address	www.sinac.go.cr/ceniga

Focus for the SIS

REDD+ Measures	REDD+ Activities	REDD+ Safeguards	Safeguards implementation measures
COP16, paragraph 70	National and sub-national measures to achieve REDD To be included in the REDD+ Strategy?	Reflect the obligations derived from the international Instruments. Should be promoted and respected when implementing REDD measures and activities.	Promotion activities Compliance activities Process and impact indicators (demonstrate if the principles or policies are being complied with) Goals Performance
Safeguard Information System SIS			
(To report how the safeguards are being addressed and complied with) Data Collection system and Information Providing System (UNDP_Policy_Brief-SP_final_small)			

The indicators should be process indicators that illustrate if a result is achieved or not, as well as impact indicators that are linked to current social and environmental impact.

Safeguard Indicators Information System



Some lessons learned from development of SIS

- a) Those responsible for the preparation process should know and be very clear about the decisions of the Convention on Climate Change. These decisions and guidance from the COP guide the design and construction of the 4 components of REDD. It should be clear that as a priority, the country must address and comply with these provisions and with the safeguards adopted by COP 16, both during the design process, and implementation stages and results.
- b) It should identify, understand and define national legislation, based on the REDD measures that are defined for the country. Those responsible for the preparation and implementation process should ensure that sovereignty and laws are positioned, and respected, both by stakeholders, and by national and international organizations and institutions.
- c) It should be clarity about the "REDD measures that apply to the country" to facilitate process of analysis of the safeguards and the construction of the information system. Constructing indicators on a theoretical basis is not the same as using data that is well defined, geographically located, linked to groups or stakeholders with clearly established goals and which has been evaluated in terms of environmental, social and economic risk, as well as potential benefits.
- d) The process of designing the System, under the direction of Fonafifo, has shown that it is necessary to understand and analyze in detail the legal and institutional context in which the design of REDD is based. The Safeguards Information System is so based by using existing information platforms and is optimized by respecting the responsibilities of each institution. Beginning an analysis of the safeguards, without having reviewed the capacities of its institutions would be working in a vacuum and runs the risk of generating policy proposals or instruments that already exist, or not making use of those that existing due to lack of knowledge of their existence.
- e) As REDD is a new topic, there are no specialists. There are professionals with expertise in specific areas, such as planning, project development framework, participation methodologies and risk analysis, etc. The country must have support of people who do not work in the institutions responsible for the REDD measures, but the results, which are of national or sub-national interest, should not be left in their hands.
- f) The institutions responsible for REDD measures should build capacity for the design and implementation of the different processes and activities. Knowledge and the development of skills should not be left in the hands of consultants.
- g) When there are several sources of cooperation, the lead REDD institution, which should be defined and legitimized, must develop comprehensive planning processes that allows for a proper and timely monitoring of the different projects in order to verify the integration of results towards the common objectives, and compliance with the requirements of donors. The country needs to adopt a leading and guiding role.
- h) The heads of the different stages of REDD, as defined by the Convention, must map the stakeholders involved in the "REDD measures" that the country has chosen, and define very precisely the different levels of participation, including who participates and when and how they will be involved. Including actors that are not involved in some parts the process can create confusion, conflicts and delay results.

- i) The information and communication planned according to the characteristics of the various stakeholders and social groups is a substantive issue, which must be planned and implemented in time for the tasks designed for the Strategy. Respect for the right of access to information must be respected and communication must be undertaken with an educational focus in order to facilitate free decision-making.
- j) The safeguards of the Convention should be seen as guidelines to protect human rights and environmental integrity. They aim to integrate international legal instruments to ensure that these instruments will be respected. These safeguards go beyond building measures to manage risk or to enhance benefits.

Actors / Stakeholders of REDD and the SIS development

k) FCPF - World Bank: REDD preparation process
l) UN-REDD Program: Support for SIS and communication
m) REDD-CCAD-GiZ Program: Inventory and social processes
n) USAID-Conservation International: Development of processes for social participation
o) INBio National Institute of Biodiversity: Co-Benefits Analysis
p) International Union for Nature Conservation IUCN-ORMA: JNR-VCS

Author: Dr. Carmen Roldán Chacon, Ministry of Environment and Energy - National Forest Financial Fund (Fonafifo)

Email: croldan@fonafifo.go.cr

Raquel Morales (Translator), rakymorales@gmail.com

Alvaro Aguilar, CENIGA Coordinator (alvaro.aguilar@recope.go.cr)

<http://www.reddcr.go.cr/>