**COUNTRY EXPRIENCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF**

**REDD SAFEGAURDS**

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PERSPECTIVES**

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**BY**

**ROBERT CHIMAMBO**

**AFRICA REGION REPRESENTATIVE – UN-REDD POLICY BOARD**

INTRODUCTION:

Under Cancun Agreement there are 7 Safeguards officially recognized to be promoted and supported when undertaking country REDD Plus activities.

These Safeguards are as follows:

1. Actions complement or are consistent with objectives of national forest programs and relevant international conventions and agreements.
2. **Transparent and effective national forest governance structures**, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty.
3. **Respect for rights and knowledge of Indigenous peoples and members of the Local Communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and Laws and noting that the UN General Assembly has adopted the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).**
4. Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders**, including, in particular, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.**
5. Actions that are consistent with conservation of natural forests and biodiversity, insuring that actions 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 services.
6. Actions to address the risks of reversals;
7. Actions to reduce displacements of emissions.

**CSO and IP emphasize that, Cancun Safeguards not only mitigate the risks of the REDD plus country activities but should also strongly promote the good and benefits beyond carbon emission reductions**

Following the recognition and adoption of these agreed Cancun Safeguards, it is crucial for CSOs, IPs and other stakeholders to consistently monitor how these are being adequately addressed and respected on the ground.

**COUNTRY EXPRIENCES – CSO/IP INVOLVEMENT**

**Challengers:**

* Given the diversity of countries taking place in the REDD processes; national circumstances come into play, e.g. existing traditions/culture of **good governance principles; accountability, openness, inclusivity and transparency**.

Positively or negatively, these generally **“kick-in”** and influence country implementation of REDD plus stakeholder consultation processes.

* Mostly the REDD plus process are seen as a government and **“technical experts turf ”**

CSO and IP consultation are perceived by some authorities as mare cosmetic and **“bolt-on** **exercise”** to be seen to meet international obligations and requirements.

* Emphasis is more on (“sexy”) **technical analysis** – “embedding” economic rational and spatial analysis - and Private Sectors involvement.
* REDD+ Safeguards country level development and implementation should not be thought of and or conceptualized as **“techno-connecting of dots”** exercise, but as complex activity involving humans **(fresh blood and bone**).

* REDD+ development and implementation (to do good) should go beyond country’s **PAMs**, and should take into **account traditional norms and indigenous knowledge and systems that have governed the conservation and protection of forest on indigenous and community lands.**
* Issues of **Rights , biodiversity and ecosystems conservation and protection** in the context of benefits to IPs and Local Communities, have receive, generally, **divided attention at country level.**

**Opportunities**:

* + REDD plus and in particular Safeguards implementation, is and will always be “**work in progress”**
  + Therefore organized **iterative and continuous learning** and **exchanges of information and experiences** between country stakeholders (government IP/CSO PS LC, national and sub-national) is an invaluable

**Key mile stones:**

UN-REDD FAO and UNEP organized knowledge exchange and training programs at global regional – **Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin-America** – have been important learning experiences for stakeholders, CSO and IPs included.

**For Africa, the Nairobi, Naivasha and Calabar – Nigeria,** REDD Academy stakeholder Training programs**, were good examples of stakeholder Safeguards stakeholder Capacity Building opportunities**. That should now be **“cascaded”** to country levels to inform and build capacities of country CSO/IP and other stakeholders.

**WAY FORWARD – REDD NATIONAL AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**

**UN-REDD Policy Board (PB) Inclusive and Consensual decision making:**

In the UN-REDD Strategic Plan, for the period ending 2015,

IP and CSO involvement at UN-REDD Policy Board (PB) governance and decision making processes, **has been inclusive and consensual**.

**However, UN- REDD plus, approved Strategic Implementation Plan starting 2016 – 20 will see a major shift (of goal-posts) in the decision making processes.**

* A new governance structure will be put in place that will see the doing away with the current Policy Board.
* A new structure made up of a General Assembly, an Executive Board and National Steering Committee, will come into being.
* shift or changed **“goal-posts”** in the participation of CSO and IP and other This new (2016-20) REDD plus governance arrangement has made a major stakeholders in high level decision making.
* **Unlike the Policy Board arrangement, where decision making was participatory and “consensual”, under the new arrangements “nonparty” members on the EB can only “recommend” to the EB.**

**The final decision powers will now be vested in the “contracting Parties” to the Convention. Meaning in practice - governments only!**

* **CSO and IPs perceive this new REDD+ Executive Boards (EB) decision making process as “degrading” a proven inclusive governance and decision making process that has worked well under the outgoing PB arrangements**.
* This sends **“a discriminatory signal “**and setting **a bad governance precedent** for REDD+ implementation and governance at country National Steering Committee level in future.