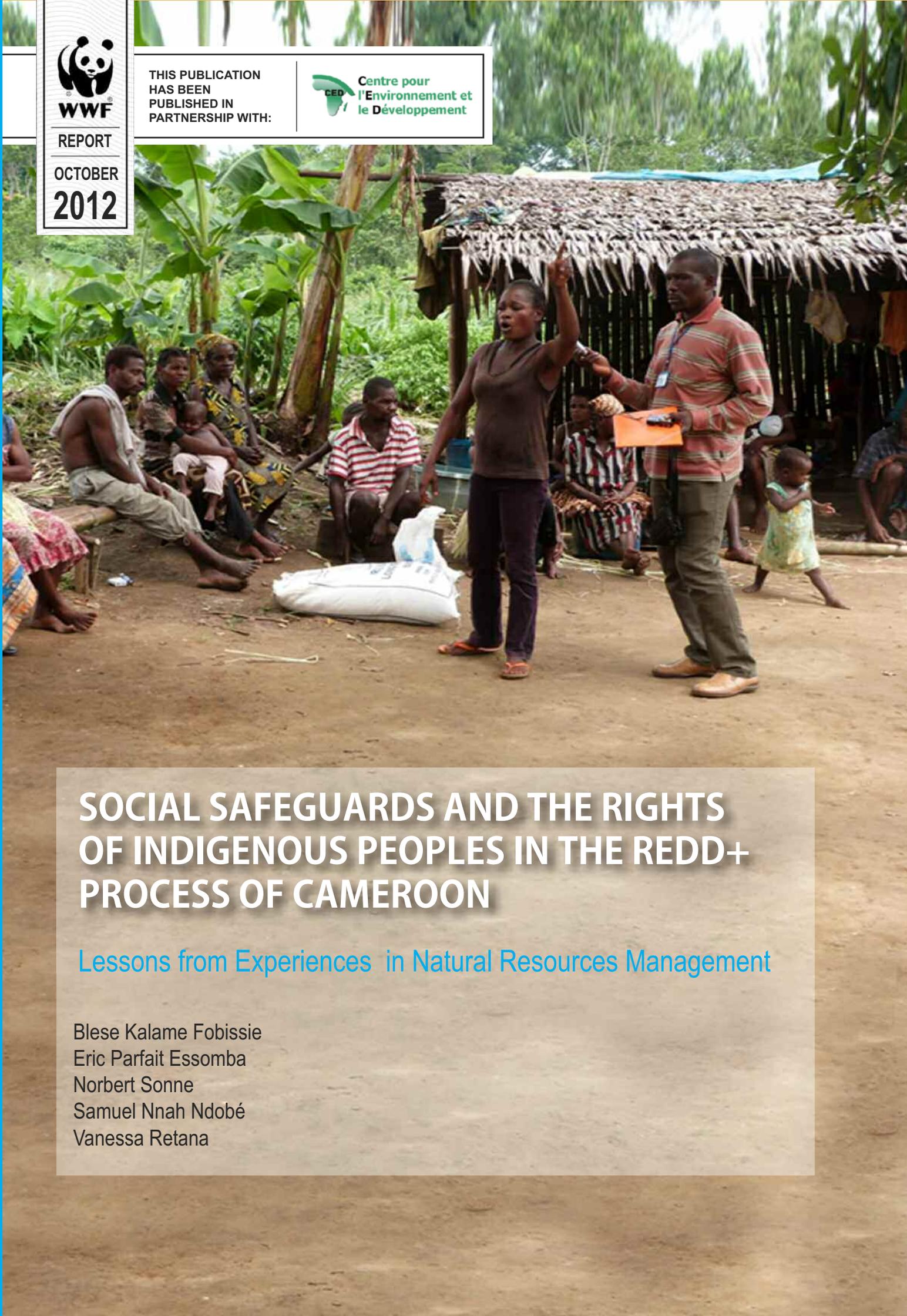




REPORT

OCTOBER
2012

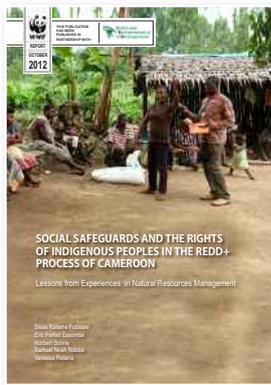
THIS PUBLICATION
HAS BEEN
PUBLISHED IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH:



SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE REDD+ PROCESS OF CAMEROON

Lessons from Experiences in Natural Resources Management

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Acknowledgement

WWF-Cameroon is grateful to WWF-US who provided the main funds for the workshop and the production of this document. CED provided additional funds for the production of this document while EU-funded Ngoyla-Mintom REDD project sponsored some workshop participants from NgoylaMintom.



Acronyms

ADEBAGO	Association des Bagyéli de l'Océan
APED	Association pour la Promotion de l'Environnement et du Développement
CADDAP	Centre d'Action pour le Développement Durable des Autochtones Pygmées
CADER	Centre d'Appui au Développement Rural
CED	Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement
CEDLA	Centre pour le Développement Local Alternatif
CEPFILD	Cercle de Promotion des Forêts et des Initiatives Locales de Développement
CPF	Comité Paysan Forêt
FCPF	Forest carbon partnership Facility
FMU	Forest Management Units
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
IP	Indigenous Peoples
LCIP	Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples
MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAS	Ministry of Social Affairs
MINEPAT	Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development
MINEPDED	Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development
MINFOF	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
MINIMIDT	Ministry of Industries Mines and Technological Development
ONED	Organisation for Nature, Environment and Development
OPFCR	Organisation pour la Protection de la Forêt Camerounaise et de ses Ressources
PERAD	Organisation pour la Protection de l'Environnement, la Recherche et l'Appui au Développement Durable en Afrique
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
RFC	Réseau de Foresterie Communautaire
RRI	Rights and Resources Initiative
SEFE	Struggle to Economize Future Environment
VDD	Volontaire Du Développement
WB	World Bank
WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature

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SUMMARY

International guidelines on social and environmental safeguards in the context of REDD+ have been proposed and developed by many organisations under different frameworks including UNFCCC, FCPF, UN-REDD and REDD+ SES. Cameroon is a signatory to UNFCCC and is currently involved in REDD readiness process linked to FCPF and UN-REDD. The national REDD+ process in Cameroon is, therefore, challenged to ensure that there is synergy between the different types of safeguards by modifying, where necessary, adapting and applying the proposed international guidelines on safeguards based on national and local realities. This document is therefore a step forward in addressing safeguard issues in the REDD+ process in Cameroon. The report focuses on past and current field experiences relevant to REDD+ social safeguards in Cameroon.

Main worries of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) relevant to REDD+ social safeguards in Cameroon are expressed in terms of unfavorable or restricted rights of IPLC to legal land tenure and ownership, restricted access to resources, lack of transparent and effective governance, inequitable sharing of profits stemming from activities aimed at exploiting, conserving and managing the forest as well as the absence of real engagement and participation to seek the consent of indigenous and local forest people. Recommendations are provided on participation, land tenure, benefit sharing. These recommendations are aimed at complementing existing efforts in building a credible REDD+ social safeguards system in Cameroon. The leading and coordinating government institution on REDD+ in Cameroon should therefore promote the creation of a task force to push forward the development of REDD+ social safeguards in Cameroon.

Securing the rights of Indigenous Peoples



INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Global: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD +) is a mechanism to reduce deforestation by paying compensation to forest sector stakeholders not to cut the forests that provide ecosystem services particularly carbon sequestration. Depending on how REDD+ process is developed and implemented, the outcome on the ground will be either positive or negative. REDD + has attracted much interest internationally and locally in terms of its potential to improve the socio-cultural and economic rights of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC), considered in many cases as guardians of the forests. At the same time, REDD + has also raised many concerns about the potential negative impacts related to unfavourable land tenure and livelihoods of IPLC, increased centralization of forest management, inequitable sharing of benefits from REDD+ activities, the lack of real participation and lack of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). The concerns raised have prompted the adoption of protective measures under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). An agreement to develop social safeguards for REDD initiatives was reached by Parties during the 16th UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Cancun in 2010. Many actors including UNFCCC, World Bank, UN-REDD, countries and many international and local NGOs (REDD+ SES) are now involved in the development and operationalization of REDD+ social safeguards.

Congo Basin: Since 2005, many countries are engaged in discussing and implementing actions that can enable the Congo Basin forest to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change. As part of this process, representatives of Congo Basin countries meet regularly under the coordination and facilitation of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC). The year 2008 was marked by an acceleration of the process and the commitment of Congo Basin countries in various initiatives and programs including REDD+ pilot initiative, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) hosted by the World Bank and the UN-REDD Programme. Recently at COP 17 in Durban in 2011, the Congo Basin countries and their partners jointly signed a letter of intent to formally renew their commitment to strengthening the conditions for the implementation of REDD+.

Cameroon: Under the FCPF and the UN-REDD Programme, Cameroon is in the process of developing a national REDD+ strategy (R-PIN, RPP...). During the development of R-PIN submitted to the FCPF in July 2008, one of the conclusions of the external audit was the need to conduct further consultations with additional key actors including the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), community forest managers, municipalities, IPLC, logging companies, agro-industry and civil society organizations, among others. More specifically, although policies and appropriate legislation were established to meet the requirements of the operational directives of the World Bank (Development Plan of Pygmy Populations in Cameroon), challenges to put in place a coherent policy to address the rights of IPLC remain. Recognizing the importance of integrating many actors, including the concerns of IPLC in the national REDD strategy in Cameroon, this report attempts to capture, highlight and document experiences and suggestions important for the development of REDD+ social safeguards.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

This report shares different experiences from a wide range of actors involved in forestry, IPLC and REDD+ in Cameroon. It capitalizes on the lessons learned over the years on IPLC's involvement in forest and other natural resources management. More specifically, this report:

Highlights international perspectives on REDD+ social safeguards and key governance issues relevant for REDD+ in Cameroon;

Shares past and current “workable” and “non- workable” forestry and natural resources management practices and experiences with focus on IPLC participation, land tenure issues and benefit sharing;

Recommends actions and steps to be taken to ensure that the concerns of IPLC are addressed in the development of a REDD+ social safeguards system in Cameroon.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The procedures and methods used to produce this document range from preparing the workshop, selecting choice and composition of participants, presentation of existing international standards and frameworks on safeguards, presentation of the state of REDD+ in Cameroon, participative and interactive discussions, group work on thematic areas, field visits to indigenous communities, to plenary discussions on REDD+ social safeguard issues in Cameroon.

Preparation phase and composition of participants

This report is based on the outcome of a workshop jointly organized by WWF Cameroon and CED with strong technical and financial support from WWF US. The preparation of the workshop included the elaboration of the terms of references including the objectives of the workshop and the expected results; the identification of participants; and the identification of potential key topics for discussions. In total 45 participants were identified and invited based on their participation in the REDD+ process in Cameroon, their experience on community-based natural resources management, and their familiarity with issues related to indigenous peoples' rights to natural resources. Table 1 highlights the composition of the participants.

Table 1. : *Diversity and composition of workshop participants*

Category	Institutions	Total
Government	MINEPDED, MINFOF, MINEPAT , MINAS, MINMIDT, MINADER.	11
Civil Society	CED, RFC, CEPFILD, ONED, CADDAP, CADER, APED, OPFCR, VDD, SEFE, CEDLA, ADEBAGO, PERAD.	15
Indigenous and local communities	CPF	06
International organisations	WWF, ICRAF, RRI, World Bank	17
		49

Field visit to indigenous communities



Engaging participants

The workshop was conducted based on an interactive method with facilitators from WWF and CED. Practically the workshop was constructed on three main sequences: presentations followed by discussions, group work followed by restitution and field visit. Presentations were made to give an overview on the international, national and local context in relation to REDD+ social safeguards. At the international level, FCPF/UN-REDD, UNFCCC and REDD+ (SES) standards on social and environmental safeguards were presented while at the national level, the National REDD+ Coordinator for Cameroon updated participants on the state of R-PP in Cameroon. Experiences from the field on the participation of local community in general and IP in particular in the management of forest resources, the strengths and weaknesses of existing benefit sharing mechanism as well as national trends in natural resource governance were presented to complement and link the participants to local realities.

After the session on presentations, participants were split into three groups to further analyze key themes that came out from the presentations and discussions. These themes were:

- Informed participation, direct consultation and FPIC,
- Benefit sharing mechanism in the light of REDD+ SES principles and criteria,
- Land tenure reforms needed to improve land security for IP in the context of REDD+

Each group identified past and existing practices (successes and failures), lessons learned and made recommendations. Results from the group works were presented and discussed in plenary and recommendations were adopted by all participants.

Besides the presentations and group work, participants visited two Indigenous Peoples communities (Nyamabande and Kilombo). Nyamabande is located between the Campo-Ma'an National Park and a rubber concession (HEVECAM) whereas Kilombo is located inside the palm oil concession of SOCAPALM. The field visits enabled the participants to briefly exchange, observe and discuss with indigenous communities on their appreciation of their participation and role in natural resource management and their relation with different stakeholders. These communities for example pointed out their increasing marginalization by private companies such as HEVECAM and SOCAPALM, and forest administrators as well as limited access and rights over forest resources with little livelihood alternatives. Information from this field visit was used to enrich group work, discussions during the presentation of group work and defining recommendations.

Community leader presenting their worries about their rights in REDD+



3. INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON REDD+ SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Forests are more than just a carbon sink...



... as they also provide communities with non-timber forest products



3.1 Cancun safeguards

One of the Cancun Agreements, Decision 1/CP.16, that resulted from UNFCCC 2010 Conference of the Parties (CoP 16) encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by implementing REDD+. Signatory countries (parties) can undertake any of the following five activities as deemed appropriate and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances: (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation; (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation; (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks; (d) Sustainable management of forests; and (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks. The implementation of REDD+ in the Cancun Agreements includes a list of international obligations and social and environmental safeguards (SES) that parties should comply with. In this light, parties are expected to promote and support principles and conditions that fully respect human rights, address land tenure issues and forest governance as well as the engagement of broad stakeholders with effective and full participation of women, indigenous and local peoples (Table 2). A Safeguard Information System (SIS) further expect parties to provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis (Decision 12/CP.17, para. 2), and report periodically on how and whether safeguards are being addressed and respected via national communications submitted to the UNFCCC.

3.2 REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards Initiative

Prior to the Cancun agreement on REDD+ safeguards, a voluntary initiative for countries called the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards Initiative (REDD+ SES) was already in existence. REDD+ SES aims at building support for government-led REDD+ programmes that make a significant contribution to human rights, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation (<http://www.redd-standards.org/>). Ecuador, State of Acre in Brazil, Nepal, Province of Central Kalimantan in Indonesia and Tanzania are example of countries that have started using the standards following similar country-led multi-stakeholder process with a series of exchange and learning events involving government and civil society. The REDD+ SES mechanism follow clearly defined principles, criteria and indicators that enhance benefits and avoid harm in the implementation of REDD+ activities. The principles provide the key objectives that define high social and environmental performance of REDD+ programs (Table 2). The criteria define the conditions that must be met related to processes, impacts and policies in order to deliver the principles while quantitative or qualitative indicators show progress in achieving a criterion. REDD+ SES has started reviewing similarities and understanding how it can support other safeguards mechanisms being developed under FCPF and UN-REDD as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. : *Example of common areas between UNFCCC safeguards and REDD+ SES*

Cancun Safeguards	REDD+ SES
(a) Consistency with objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international convention and agreements	Principle 7: The REDD+ program complies with applicable local and national laws and international treaties, conventions and other instruments.
(b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures	Principle 4: The REDD+ program contributes to good governance, to broader sustainable development and to social justice
(c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities	Principle 1: Rights to lands, territories and resources are recognized and respected by the REDD+ program
(d) Full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders	Principle 6: All relevant rights holders and stakeholders participate fully and effectively in the REDD+ program
(e) Conservation of natural forests and biological diversity - not used for conversion to natural forests - protection and conservation of natural forests and their services, - enhance other social and environmental benefits	Principle 3: The REDD+ program improves long-term livelihood security and well-being of indigenous and local peoples with special attention to women and the most vulnerable people Principle 5: The REDD+ program maintains and enhances biodiversity and ecosystem services
	Principle 2: The benefits of the REDD+ program are shared equitably among all relevant rights holders and stakeholders

In addition to the UNFCCC and REDD+ SES standards on safeguards, a third standard exist - the “Common Approach (CA)”- which provides the World Bank and other multiple Delivery Partners (DP) a common platform for risk management and quality assurance in the REDD+ Readiness Preparation process. The CA was developed with formal approval coming as part of the FCPF’s 9th Participants Committee meeting in Oslo, Norway in June 2011. It is being piloted in at least nine countries. The Task Force responsible for developing the CA was composed of representatives from multiple sectors including several indigenous representatives. A consensus statement that outlines the details involved can be found online at the FCPF website (<http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/>). DPs such as the Government of Cameroon are required to meet at least World Bank’s environmental and

social safeguard policies and procedures applicable to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Fund that will have a significant impact on the outcomes on environmental and social safeguard in the REDD+ readiness process of FCPF. Under the Common Approach, whichever DP is in the lead in a REDD+ Country still applies its own safeguard policies. If the safeguard policies/procedures of the lead DP are more protective than those of the World Bank, then those more protective policies are the ones that will apply to activities that will be undertaken as part of REDD+ Readiness. Four sets of guidelines are at the core of the Common Approach:

- i. FCPF Guidelines and generic Terms of Reference for Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) and the associated Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF).
- ii. FCPF/UN-REDD Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness. Greater emphasis is put on active participation of IPLC.
- iii. FCPF Guidelines on the Disclosure of Information; expected to be disclosed 45 days prior to the signature of the relevant contract.
- iv. FCPF Guidelines for Establishing Grievance and Redress Mechanisms at the Country Level.

Participation of Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples in REDD+ forum



4. EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS RELEVANT TO REDD+ SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS IN CAMEROON

Cameroon is in the process of finalising the development of its REDD Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) document. The R-PP document is a Cameroon-led process developed through the mobilisation of selected national experts. To integrate the views of the general public into the R-PP document, the organisation of five participatory and consultative workshops are planned in the different agro-ecological regions of Cameroon. Moreover, some members of the civil society have already contributed to the draft R-PP document while further inputs are expected from other members of the civil society platform. It is important to also note that REDD readiness process in Cameroon aims to comply with relevant standards and procedures especially under FCPF and UN-REDD. The lack of funding is, however, impeding the R-PP document to reach the highest possible level of quality and standard in which a wide range of information and views from stakeholders, particularly marginalised indigenous peoples and local communities, are sufficiently communicated and integrated into the R-PP. To address this challenge, the government of Cameroon is building on current relevant activities of various international and national partner institutions that support and complement the development of the R-PP document. In this light, this report has made substantive efforts in documenting the views and recommendations of different stakeholders on important REDD+ social safeguard issues linked to participation, land tenure and benefit sharing.

4.1 Participation

The participation and involvement of stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable, are essential elements for the success of natural resource management initiative. Moreover, best practices to ensure full and effective participation of vulnerable groups is a requirement for REDD process under the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements. Experiences in terms of engagement of key stakeholders notably the civil society, indigenous peoples, women etc. in the conception, implementation and monitoring of activities linked to the management of natural resources in Cameroon are mixed leading to many unclear questions and answers identified by workshop participants. For example;

- How do we ensure that the development of the REDD process in Cameroon involves effectively at all levels the often marginalized groups?
- Are there any biased or insufficient participation of IPLC in the REDD process that may probably be detrimental to the achievement of potential benefits from future REDD initiatives?
- How do we seek appropriate legitimate and genuine representation before LCIP and government organs?

Taking the above questions into account, workshop participants presented (in Table 3) past and current experiences on participation in forest and natural resource management that REDD+ process, initiatives and activities will most likely face and should therefore take them into account.

Table 3 : *Experiences on participation relevant to REDD actions*

Level of Participation	Positive experiences	Negative experiences
Multisectorial decision making on national initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment and functioning of committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict of interest between sectors - Fight over leadership - Weak representation of and insufficient political will to involve civil society and IPLC - Decision taken by majority and not by consensus where solidarity dominates
<p>Conception and elaboration of legal text, decrees, laws etc</p> <p>Implementation Monitoring and evaluation of forest and natural resource initiatives and programs</p>	<p>Community forestry policy Enthusiastic participation of civil society in the elaboration of the Manual of procedures for CF creation Transparent process in the representation of civil society</p> <p>Order No 520 on allocation of royalties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaboration of the order 520 - Introduction of equalization <p>VPA/FLEGT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participation and strong representation of civil society in the VPA/FLEGT process (under strong influence of EU) 	<p>Community Forestry policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak, low quality and questionable legitimacy of the representation of stakeholders including civil society and IPLC - Poor civil society network feedback mechanism - Inadequate resources to operate the network of civil society actors <p>Order 520 on allocation of royalties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited scope of consultation - Did not sufficiently capitalize on field experience - Precipitated implementation of the order - Some members of the civil society expected compensation - Weak civil society support to IPLC
	<p>Community forestry policy initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulfillment of community interest. For example, bee keeping in North West, and the the achievement of social initiatives that benefit the community - Compensations proportionate to participation - Strengthening technical and organizational capacities - Strengthening of local governance through PES 	<p>Community forestry policy initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elite dominance and confiscation - Lack of community enthusiasm due to limited immediate and personal benefits - Unclear and disputable forest ownership - Land insecurity with limited capacity of IPLC to engage - Resurgence of individualism - Precipitation in the process of creating CF <p>Monitoring of social and environmental management plan (S&E)</p> <p>Insufficient involvement of stakeholders in the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate participation of civil society - Lack of management plans - Official texts do not provide for the involvement of civil society in the S & E management plans - No representativeness of civil society in the Forest Environment Sector Programme

4.2 Land Tenure

In Cameroon, all land without a registered land title is treated as state land by the national legal system. This means that customary landholdings, where indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) have clear rights over forestlands, are also treated as state-owned land. It is therefore important to clarify the legal foundation of the rights of local dependent communities to forestlands as per Cameroon law. The government of Cameroon is however, slowly increasing local control over forestlands through the strengthening of local and customary rights and through private and collective ownership especially in community forestry. As new financial resources potentially become available through REDD+, the government of Cameroon may decide either to implement REDD+ within the current measures aimed at strengthening communities' rights or to centralize forest and land tenure ownership (Phelp et al. 2010) that may define carbon ownership in any future REDD+ project (Cotula and Mayers 2009). In this light, some key questions need to be addressed to ensure that REDD+ does not increase the marginalization and vulnerability of IPLC.

What land tenure and ownership practices may and may not work under a REDD+ regime in Cameroon?

What legislative and governance reforms are needed to transfer and enhance land tenure and ownership rights of IPLC in the context of REDD+ in Cameroon?

In addressing these questions, workshop participants presented in Table 4 some relevant past and current experiences that may inform current REDD process and initiatives in Cameroon.

Table 4: Experiences on land tenure relevant to REDD initiatives in Cameroon

Good practices	Why these practices work
Official recognition of customary law on land ownership	Facilitates families' access to land from one generation to the next. This law serves as land right and represents evidence of land ownership during conflict resolution over land title.
Official recognition of traditional rulers and authorities	The governance of villages and communities by traditional rulers and authorities is recognized by the state
Zoning and land use planning for different land uses e.g. zoning of a permanent protected area	It maps out forest (including biodiversity) and agriculture areas and space for other natural resource users. It is useful for conflict resolution among different natural resource users
Promoting possibilities to obtain title to land	Land title confers property rights, is unassailable and cannot be invaded easily following due procedures
Co-management agreement in protected areas	Allows indigenous peoples to have access to protected forest and carry on with their lifestyle. An example is the co-management agreement signed in Campo Ma'an between Bageyli and the state
Facilitating the process of obtaining a collective land title for indigenous communities	It enables indigenous communities to secure space for their activities



Forest Indigenous Peoples Leaders sharing experiences on land tenure

4.3 Benefit sharing

REDD+ is a performance-based system that transfers financial, technical or governance benefits to (implanters of REDD projects) in developing countries, targeted at actions to reduce carbon emissions which must be measured, reported and verified. The way in which these benefits are realised has become a major issue in REDD+. A particular concern is that the benefits may not be equitably shared between different stakeholders and that indigenous and local forest peoples in particular could lose out because they have less power in decision making processes, particular when land tenure and carbon ownership are not clearly defined in the national legal framework. To achieve equitable benefit sharing in Cameroon, it is important to clarify issues linked to land, tree and carbon rights and also promote good forest governance practices of transparency, accountability and broad participation of key stakeholders including indigenous and local peoples.

Implementation of benefit sharing should draw on past experience in Cameroon and be based on national and local realities. In this context, some of the past and current experiences and situations linked to benefit sharing in forest and other natural resources management in Cameroon is examined. At the national level, Forest Law provides for financial compensation for loss of use rights but the terms of implementation remain pending. Moreover, it is also important to note that Cameroon Land and Mining Laws provide royalties for local residents. The challenge in this case is how these legal provisions are perceived, implemented and managed by companies who are not guided by any strict compensation procedures and actions on the ground. Table 5 below further shares some concrete examples of benefit sharing drawn from practical experiences in community forestry, protected areas, payments for environmental services and mining and agricultural concessions.

Table 5 : *Experiences on benefit sharing in forest and natural resources*

Resource management	Positive and negative experiences
Annual Forestry Fee (AFF) in different forest management Units (FMU) in Cameroon	<p>Positive experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of community projects in some villages that benefit everybody (FMU 024) - The existence of a legal framework that regulates the management of AFF - AFF contributes to habitat restoration - The villages around the FMU (1045, 1044, 1042 and 1041) have defined equalization of equitable sharing for the villages - Some FMU(FMU 11005 and 11001) shared the 10% benefit by ethnic group and each group has its turn to benefit through the development of community projects. - The certification requires operators to develop and implement a number of initiatives such as social projects <p>Negative experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payments in cash cause a lot of conflict - All the villages do not benefit from the AFF and this encourages illegal logging. - The exclusion of Baka including benefit sharing - There are timber traders who do not obey the law and do not pay taxes - FMU 024 is located between two cantons. The two do not have the same needs. One is more enclave than the other - which is a problem in the choice of projects. - Some development projects do not reflect the will and priority of the people involved - The negative influence of some elites and friends. A Mayor, for example , shoehorned his friends in the management committee and they manage the 10% benefit as they wished - The bureaucratic long chain of the management committee collects and mismanages funds
Community forests in different parts of Cameroon	<p>Negative experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confiscation of the process by elites in complicity with economic operators and therefore low involvement of all communities, resulting in mismanagement of revenues - Conflict between individual and collective interests - Conflict between customary and modern laws
Wildlife fees in ZIC Mintom	<p>Negative experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confiscation of fee by a group of individuals - The mode of payment is made at the level of the region and not at the local level and involves too much travelling with the risk of accidents and theft - Wildlife fee is not well known so the practice benefits in many cases only the hunters
Co-management of Campo Ma'an National Park	<p>Positive experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreements with roles and responsibilities are signed between the communities and managers <p>Negative experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities of the protected areas are left out and thus gain nothing
Payment for Environmental Services in Monedjoh and Nkolegne community forests	<p>Positive experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pilot case enables learning on how PES can reduce deforestation in Baka and Bantu communities - Projects benefits groups and individuals such as old sunlamp, beekeepers, intensive agriculture - Annual direct payment into the account of communities. - Everything is planned in advance prior to disbursement. - Monitoring system based on indicators which allow to decide on the level of payment
Mineral resources (quarries and sand)	<p>Negative experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some of the laws are not sufficiently developed and existing laws and largely unknown - Taxes are often refunded only to local councils while communities are ignored
Agricultural concessions	<p>Negative experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In many cases, taxes are not often paid to communities even in the form of compensations

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Participation

- 1) The representation of the civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities with particular focus on women should be improved during the conception, design, revision and development of existing, and new texts, laws and decrees including initiatives such as REDD. Transparency and clear procedure should be established to address issues related to the legitimacy and quality of the representation. Moreover, resources should be allocated for the mobilization and effective participation of the civil society. The development of new text or revision of old texts should allocate sufficient time for a broader participatory process. A precipitated process does not always favour a broader consultation of local and indigenous communities and the civil society as stated in the joint decree N ° 0520 / MINATD / MINFI / MINFOF of July 28, 2010, laying down the terms of use and monitoring the management of revenues from the exploitation of forest and wildlife resources meant for village communities and municipalities.
- 2) With regard to participation in a multi-sectoral decision making in steering and inter-ministerial committees such as the 2012 decree establishing the REDD+ steering committee, the involvement of IPLC and civil society at large should be improved and their quotas increased. Synergies between different ministries should be enhanced as a means of solving conflict of interest and leadership and improving commitments and involvement of less empowered stakeholders such as IPLC.
- 3) At the implementation level, different mechanisms and initiatives should be developed to promote participation in community projects that limit currently dominant individualism of some elites. Community projects for example beekeeping project in the North West and PES project in the Nkolenyong community (South Region) can create a climate of trust among community members and also favour the involvement of various segments of the community (women, youths, the aged, Baka and Bagyeli minorities etc) in project activities
- 4) At the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) phase, legislations should be revised to involve civil society, communities and women in the process of monitoring and evaluation of social and environmental management plans. The civil society should be involved and represented in the M&E of existing and future programmes such as the Cameroon Forest-Environment Sector Programme and REDD.
- 5) A participatory mechanism and consultation strategy should be established. Such mechanism should be culturally appropriate, build participation capacity of less empowered and marginalized LCIP and women groups, and should implement systematically a database for information sharing that runs from local to national with sufficient, consistent, and well managed resources

5.2 Land tenure

- 6) The government should adopt a legal Act which recognizes IP's rights to own their land with a legal title to the land properties. IPLC must also be given land titles easily by improving and simplifying the process of obtaining land titles. To make it feasible for IP, the high tax rates imposed by the state should be specifically reduced for IP.
- 7) The orientation law on zoning signed in December 2011 provides an opportunity to adjust and secure the space for IP and also avoid conflicts between IPLC, conservation and agricultural, mining and forestry concessions. In this context, the zoning plan should be reviewed and should establish a mechanism for sharing of land by the state. It is also important to involve local communities prior to micro- zoning process and in the zoning process itself.
- 8) In the process of allocating land to different parties of the state, IP should not be treated the same way as everyone else. For example, Baka or Bageyli community members cannot easily afford the required 200 000 francs cfa fee for the Sub-Divisional Officer to visit a parcel of land in the process of issuing or obtaining a land title. It is, therefore, necessary that the law always protect the interest of IP and also differentiate IP from others. Officials engaged in corrupt practices in the process of allocating land titles and also the violations of the rights of IPLC should be sanctioned and their operations suspended.
- 9) The slow but increasing strengthening of local and customary rights over forestland by the State of Cameroon is a step in the right direction. In this context, it is also necessary to change IP settlements in villages into (Baka and Bageyli) Chiefdoms. Their leaders should be recognized and respected just like Bantu leaders.
- 10) If there is no organization and leadership from the IP themselves, no amount of external support and pressure on behalf of IP will truly represent the values that IP stand for. Therefore, capacity building support to IP should strengthen IP ability to take the leadership to fight for their rights and defend their interest and lifestyle. Some of the IP, Baka for example, are literates and can organize themselves, voice their positions and interest and even in some cases follow the set procedures to obtain land titles or space for their lifestyle.
- 11) In permanent forest areas and in consultation with IP and women in particular, a co-management agreement should be encouraged between IP community and the state. Such an agreement should either ensure that IPLC have usufruct rights that enable them to practise their hunting and gathering activities or the state should map out and issue a community land title to portions of the forest estate for IPLC.

Saving our forest saving our culture



5.3 Benefit sharing

- 12) A proportion of the quota should be reserved for indigenous peoples and local communities including gender considerations while other quotas should be used to improve forest tracks, help restore deforested and degraded habitats, as well as strengthening evaluation and community-led monitoring including community development initiatives. The requests of communities should obligatorily be included in the terms of reference of any community development initiative. Governance of the AFF can further be strengthened by empowering IPLC, with particular focus on women, through the establishment of democratically elected committees made of IP, forest fringe and local communities who should be actively involved in the implementation of the AFF. Similarly, procedures for payments for other related wildlife fees should be made simpler and brought to the local level closer to the communities.
- 13) Initiatives under community forestry should improve the structuring of management offices, strengthen local capacities by encouraging community members to take up management roles, focus on both wood and non-wood products and most importantly operate as a business with professional practices. Collective interest projects should where applicable take into account some individual interest such as medication for very old and elderly persons in the village. At the policy level, decision makers should harmonize the legal framework for community forest practices.
- 14) In protected areas and many other forest blocks in Cameroon and the Congo Basin in general where deforestation rates are low, a system of compensation such as payments for environmental services (PES) should be implemented as a realistic payment scheme for REDD projects. PES takes into account not only forest carbon but also the wide range of services provided by forest ecosystems. In this context, legislative and regulatory frameworks for PES should be developed, enhanced and implemented while the local governance of PES is strengthened. It may also be wise to learn from the example of Campo Ma'an to improve the regulations governing development in protected areas and forest management units.
- 15) The legal and regulatory framework for different logging, conservation, mining, agricultural and other natural resource concessions should be harmonized, improved and disseminated with a view to compensate and contribute to the development of communities adjacent to these concessions. A clear tax to be transferred to the communities by concessionaires should be defined and the implementation enforced.
- 16) While direct individual cash distribution is very appealing for many community members, development projects such as pipe born water, schools, community halls etc. that benefit the entire community has so far been the most successful benefit approach with the least potentials for conflicts within communities. Moreover, allocating financial resources to address needs of specific groups such as the elderly has proven to be culturally appropriate in many contexts and should therefore be taken into account in REDD initiatives.

6. WAY FORWARD

The leading and coordinating government institution on REDD+ in Cameroon – MINEPDED should promote the creation of a small task force on REDD+ social safeguards. This task force may be represented by men and women from different regions, particularly representatives of indigenous and forest dependent communities, and may have the responsibility to:

- Ensure the continuation of indigenous peoples and local level experience sharing relevant to REDD+ social safeguards.
- Inform and link with national level to analyse appropriate national options for social safeguards taking into consideration different international standards of social safeguards from which the best standards could be modified and adopted to fit the context of Cameroon.



Are we on the right path on REDD+ social safeguards ?

References:

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50%

50% of Africa's remaining elephants and more than 80% of Africa's primates

40%

40% of the region's people live in and depend directly on the forests for their survival and livelihoods



180 MILLION

180 million hectares of forest that's almost half the size of the entire European Union

1978

WWF has been operational in Central Africa since 1978

