Stakeholder Engagement paper

Introduction

REDD+ readiness in the context of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) means submitting a Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) and implementing the readiness strategy proposed. The R-PP process involves significant consultation and broad participation (see figure 1). In order for this process to be successful and to uphold basic human rights it is important to have an approach for engaging with key stakeholders (see also box 1).

Box 1. Definition of stakeholders

“Those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest that will be affected either negatively or positively by (REDD+) activities. They include relevant government agencies, formal and informal forest users, private sector entities, Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent communities” - FCPF/UN-REDD

The FCPF and UN-REDD have written guidelines for effective stakeholder engagement specifically in the context of REDD+ (readiness). The World Bank, official trustee and delivery partner of the FCPF, has its principles for effective consultation processes. In the context of REDD+ it is also important to engage with the private sector. The strategy of IUCN for private sector engagement provides some principles that can be useful in the context of REDD+. In addition, there are other organizations and initiatives that build on experience to provide guidelines for stakeholder engagement.

The consultation and participation process for the R-PP finalization project in Suriname can build on these existing principles that can be tailored to the practical context of Suriname. As the main feedback on Suriname’s previous R-PP drafts is on the consultation and participation process, it is important to pay special attention to the aspect of stakeholder engagement in order to gain nation-wide input for and support of the final R-PP.

Figure 1. Phases of REDD+ Readiness and the importance of stakeholder engagement (CI, 2012)
In the context of REDD+, the FCPF and UN-REDD have published joint guidelines for stakeholder engagement with a focus on Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities (FCPF and UN-REDD, 2011).

This document includes the following principles:

- Consultation processes should be transparent and facilitate timely access to information
- Timely dissemination of information should occur at all levels in a culturally appropriate manner
- Consultations should cover a broad and diverse range of relevant stakeholders at national and local level and should be gender sensitive. (Representatives should be selected by the stakeholder groups).
- Consultations should take place prior to design phase, and be applied at every stage of REDD+ process with adequate lead time for local community decision-making
- Sufficient time should be given to fully understand and incorporate concerns and recommendations
- Consultations should facilitate dialogue and information exchange, and consensus building reflecting broad community support
- During consultation process and throughout REDD+ (readiness) implementation, impartial, accessible and fair mechanisms for grievance, conflict resolution and redress should be established.
- The diversity of stakeholder and their stakes or interests in REDD+ needs to be recognized
- Throughout the REDD+ (readiness) process there should be special attention for issues of land tenure, resource use rights and property rights, livelihoods of forest dwellers
- Records of consultations should be maintained and a report on the outcome of the consultations that is publicly disclosed in culturally appropriate form, including in local languages.

Figure 2 shows some practical steps for effective stakeholder engagement according to the joint FCPF/ UN-REDD guidelines. Highlighted in red are the guidelines relevant in the case of the R-PP finalization project.

![Figure 2. Practical steps for effective stakeholder engagement according to the FCPF and UN-REDD joint guidelines](image-url)

**World Bank guidelines**

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The World Bank has published a sourcebook on consulting with civil society that provides practical guidelines for improvement of the Bank’s engagement with civil society. In this context, civil society organizations refer to a wide range of non-governmental and non-profit organizations that have a presence in public life and express the interests and values of their members or others. The consultation sourcebook highlights the importance of:

- The participation of as many groups as possible who may have a stake in a consultation; especially marginalized groups (poor, disabled, woman, youth and indigenous, trade unions and social movements)
- Understanding the cultures and values of stakeholders, possible material or socio-cultural constraints
- Understanding the perception of stakeholders, marginalized groups in particular
- Using consultation methods that are appropriate to the social and cultural values of indigenous peoples
- Paying specific attention to ensure that women participate and benefit
- Seriously considering inputs from youth

Figure 3 shows some practical steps for effective consultation according to the World Bank consultation sourcebook (World Bank, 2007). Highlighted in red are the guidelines directly relevant in the case of Suriname’s R-PP finalization project.

| 1  | • Clarify scope and objectives of consultations |
| 2  | • Prepare to listen and be influenced (balanced consultations) |
| 3  | • Aim for ownership of all key stakeholders |
| 4  | • Invite participants to a consultation with enough lead time and develop and disseminate information at least three weeks before deadline for comments |
| 5  | • Use a variety of input methods for consultation (face to face, electronic communication, large plenaries or small workshops) |
| 6  | • Incorporate time for translating documents into local languages |
| 7  | • Build on existing mechanisms for deliberation at country level and existing consultation |
| 8  | • Develop civil society and socio-cultural profiles to ensure that the consultation approach is culturally and socially appropriate |
| 9  | • Verify that appropriate representatives have been selected |
| 10 | • Texts should be simplified, jargon should be avoided and text translated into local languages |
| 11 | • Notification about the consultation should include specific information on how, when and where stakeholders can participate. |
| 12 | • Feedback from consultations should include the following: a written summary of the consultation, list of points made, future steps, acknowledgement of participant’s contribution. |

**Figure 3 Practical steps for effective consultation according to the World Bank**

*IUCN strategy for engagement with the private sector*
In the context of REDD+ (readiness) where broad and diverse participation is stressed, it is also important to engage with the private sector. The International Union for Conservation of Nature has written operational guidelines for private sector engagement (IUCN, 2009). Although these guidelines are not written in the context of REDD+, figure 4 shows some points that could be relevant for REDD+ readiness consultations. The text in red indicates which points are relevant for the case of Suriname.

Other stakeholder engagement principles

Other examples of stakeholder engagement principles are more or less in line with those of the FCPF/UN-REDD guidelines and those of the World Bank. Some examples from the UNDP and the Inter American Development Bank, which are both to become a delivery partner under the FCPF, are listed below (UNDP, 2006; IDB, 2004). The list also includes examples from the rights-based approach to REDD+ of the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights (CIHR, 2012), an initiative by a range of international conservation organizations such as CI and IUCN.

- Participatory equity (UNDP)
- A transparent process (UNDP)
- A common understanding of the issue at stake (UNDP)
- Inclusion of vulnerable groups in the community (UNDP)
- Inclusiveness (broad range of civil society stakeholders) (IDB)
- Timely opportunities for stakeholders to provide input (IDB)
- Transparent distribution of information (IDB)
- Cultural sensitivity (IDB)
- Start with and complement the vision of the communities as opposed to coming in with complicated
concepts of REDD+ (CIHR)
- Definition of the community’s own agenda on REDD+ - interest from communities themselves, based on connections to their own priorities (CIHR)
- Flexible timelines, following community timeframes (CIHR)
- Clarity on the roles/responsibilities of all stakeholders (CIHR)
- Sharing of relevant case studies on rights-based approaches to REDD+ (CIHR)
- Two-way information-sharing process (CIHR)

**Stakeholder engagement in Suriname’s R-PP finalization project**

The R-PP finalization project will take into account the recommendations from the TAP on the consultation and participation process as well as the concerns previously expressed by the VSG and VIDS. Therefore it is important to take note of stakeholder engagement principles such as those described, and apply these in the practical context of Suriname. Figure 5 shows an example of how such a framework could look like.

**Figure 5. A suggestive framework for stakeholder engagement for the finalization of Suriname’s R-PP**

During the R-PP local and national dialogues will be conducted. After defining the scope and objectives of these dialogues, it is important to have a (draft) Consultation and Participation Plan as this will be direct input for the R-PP.

During the dialogues, stakeholders have an opportunity not only to exchange information regarding their interests and needs, but also provide feedback and suggestions for the Consultation and Participation Plan. It is important to have clear the desired outcome of each of the planned dialogue sessions (Local Dialogues,
1st and 2nd National Dialogues). In order for all stakeholders to be able to participate on the same level, simple and concise information will be timely disseminated. That way not just the experts or experienced on REDD+ can actively participate, but also government, companies from the forest- and mining sector, tourism sector and community-based organization. Furthermore it is important that all information and outreach methods are culturally and socially appropriate for the indigenous and maroon communities, taking into account their traditional institutional and cultural structures.

The recommendations of the last TAP review and the concerns expressed from society were centered on the consultation and participation process. A good consultation and participation process as discussed in this paper, aims for ownership of Suriname’s R-PP by all stakeholders and as such gathers nation-wide support for the finalization of the R-PP.

References

- Conservation International, January 2012