

# SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS IN THE CALIFORNIA TROPICAL FOREST STANDARD

## Protecting human and indigenous rights

**The California Tropical Forest Standard (TFS) provides strong assurances on safeguards for the protection of human and indigenous rights and important elements of natural ecosystems, which draw on established international best practices, and go further with additional requirements for third party verification.**

Only jurisdictions that can demonstrate continued compliance with these stringent safeguards requirements would be eligible to issue emissions reductions under the TFS.

The TFS requires that partner jurisdictions:

- establish, implement and enforce their own policies, laws and regulations that meet international best practice standards (REDD+ SES<sup>i</sup>) for the protection of human and indigenous rights and important elements of natural ecosystems (TFS pages 10, 11 and 19).
- provide detailed information in safeguards reports that are independently verified following international best practice standards (REDD+ SES and ISEAL<sup>ii</sup>) to demonstrate that these safeguards have been effective (TFS pages 10, 11, 18, 19 and 20).
- provide documentation to demonstrate that the sector plan has been designed and implemented using exemplary public participation processes (GCF Principles<sup>iii</sup>, TFS pages 11 and 19).

Partner jurisdictions must demonstrate that they have these safeguards in place and have the capacity to implement, enforce, monitor, report and verify them.

**Assurance of the implementation of these best practices is not reliant solely on reports generated by the jurisdiction and shared with the partner government, but must be made publicly available on the internet, as well as undergoing verification by an independent, qualified, third-party verifier.**

## INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS IN THE TFS INCLUDE:

### REDD+ SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS (REDD+ SES 2012)

- Developed through an inclusive 3-year participatory process overseen by an International Steering Committee composed of representatives from indigenous peoples' organizations, community forestry organizations, environmental and social NGOs, governments and private sector from Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Developed through a transparent process involving two public comment periods and workshops at national and local level in three developing countries.
- Includes principles, criteria and indicators for all key constituent elements of safeguards for REDD+ with special attention to best practices related to the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- Principles encompass fundamental requirements such as free, prior and informed consent, effective participation of women and vulnerable and marginalized groups, equitable benefit sharing, and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem service priorities.

#### Example (from 7 principles, 28 criteria and 64 indicators)

**Principle 1.** The REDD+ Program recognizes and respects rights to lands, territories and resources.

**Criterion 1.3.** The REDD+ program requires the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities for any activities affecting their rights to lands, territories and resources.

**Indicator 1.3.2.** Collective rights holders define a process to obtain their free, prior and informed consent.

Including definition of their own representatives and traditional institutions that have authority to give consent on their behalf; The process is transparent; The process takes into account the views of all community members, including those of women and of marginalized and/or vulnerable people; The process is gender sensitive.

**Thus, under the TFS, to demonstrate compliance, a jurisdiction must provide documentation detailing how these safeguards were implemented and receive third party verification that they have met all the requirements of the 7 principles, 28 criteria, and 64 indicators of the REDD+ SES.**

### **GCF TASK FORCE PRINCIPLES: The Governor's Climate and Forest Task Force<sup>iv</sup> Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership between Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (GCF Task Force 2018)**

- Developed through a 3+ year-process by the GCF Task Force Global Committee for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, comprised of indigenous peoples and local community representatives, governmental representatives of GCF Task Force member jurisdictions and civil society members.
- Build on the experience of Acre, Brazil, which developed the first set of such Principles to guide how the state would partner with indigenous populations for climate change mitigation via extensive participatory processes with indigenous peoples and over 100 stakeholder groups.
- Seek to operationalize the 2014 Rio Branco Declaration, through which GCF Task Force members committed to partner and channel benefits to indigenous peoples and traditional communities for their forest conservation and climate change mitigation efforts.
- Guide how subnational governments partner with indigenous peoples and local communities to strengthen their rights and territorial governance, support livelihoods, ensure their participation in decision-making and co-design benefit-sharing mechanisms.

In 2018, the GCF Task Force Principles were endorsed by 34 subnational governments, encompassing approximately one-third of the world's tropical forests, 18 representative indigenous peoples' and local community organizations and 17 civil society groups. The GCF Task Force members and partners in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mexico and Peru are now conducting participatory processes for implementing the Principles. GCF Task Force Principles are included in the TFS as result of advocacy efforts by representative indigenous peoples and local community organizations in the public consultation process of the draft TFS.

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## **MORE INFORMATION**

VISIT: [www.redd-standards.org](http://www.redd-standards.org) and [gctf.org/news/gcf-approves-principles](http://gctf.org/news/gcf-approves-principles)

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<sup>i</sup> CCBA (2012). [REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards Version 2. 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012](#). Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance, Washington DC, USA.

<sup>ii</sup> ISEAL Alliance (2018) [Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards ISEAL Code of Good Practice Version 2.0](#). February 2018. International Social and Environmental Labelling Alliance, London, UK.

<sup>iii</sup> GCF (2018). [The Governor's Climate and Forest Task Force Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership between Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities](#). GCF Task Force, Boulder, Colorado, USA.

<sup>iv</sup> [The GCF Task Force](#) is a subnational network dedicated to avoided deforestation and climate change mitigation. It includes 38 states and provinces in 10 countries (USA, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Spain, Nigeria, Ivory Coast). California was a founding member of the GCF Task Force in 2008.