

**CAMPA funded ICFRE Scheme:
Execution of Readiness Activities for Implementation of REDD+ in India
Progress Report for the Financial Year 2020-21**

CAMPA funded ICFRE scheme on “Execution of Readiness Activities for Implementation of REDD+ in India” was submitted to the National CAMPA for the duration of 18 months. However, the Executive Body of the National Authority recommended the scheme with a reduced duration of 9 months from 18 months to 9 months) which was further approved by the Governing body of the National CAMPA.

The main objective of the project is development of Safeguard Information System (SIS) for implementation of REDD+ besides the development of web-based SIS module, REDD+ learning and knowledge sharing platform, and capacity building of the stakeholders on various aspects of REDD+ including safeguards at regional level.

Physical Progress

- A.** Draft of Safeguards Information System for implementation of REDD+ in India has been prepared and organised nine regional stakeholder’s consultation workshops in different parts of the country to get the inputs of the stakeholders on the draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India as per following details:

S. No.	ICFRE’s institutes involved	States covered in the regional stakeholder consultation workshops	Date of the stakeholder consultation
1.	IWST, Bengaluru	Karnataka and Goa	16/09/2020
2.	TFRI, Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Odisha	30/09/2020
3.	HFRI, Shimla	Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh	09/10/2020
4.	FRI, Dehradun	Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi	14/10/2020
5.	RFRI, Jorhat	North-eastern states	22/10/2020
6.	AFRI Jodhpur	Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Rajasthan, Gujarat	03/11/2020
7.	IFP, Ranchi	Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal	05/11/2020
8.	IFGTB, Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Kerala	16/12/2020
9.	IFB, Hyderabad	Telangana, Andhra Pradesh	04/01/2021

Proceedings of the stakeholder consultation workshops on draft safeguards information system are as under:

1. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa:

The first stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 16 September 2020 at Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST), Bengaluru. The workshop was attended by a total of 65 participants from State Forest Departments of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa, Indian Institute of Science, Agricultural Universities, Research Institutions, retired foresters and non-governmental organisations.

Dr. M.P. Singh IFS, Director, IWST welcomed the participants of the stakeholder consultation workshop, and briefed the purpose and importance of the workshop and requested for active participation in the form of inputs and discussion on the draft SIS document.

Shri A.S. Rawat IFS, Director General, ICFRE during his opening remarks appreciated the members of the Expert Committee for preparation of the draft SIS document and further stated that certain criteria and indicators have been proposed which would be modified and improved on inputs and suggestion of the stakeholders.

Shri Sanjay Mohan IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Karnataka Forest Department said that a State REDD+ Cell has been established in the state recently. The state is taking up planting activity in 55-60 thousand hectares every year, 30-40 million seedlings have been distributed every year to people under various afforestation programmes/schemes. This has successfully brought about an increase in forest cover in the state of Karnataka.

Shri Sanjay Gupta IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Working Plan), Andhra Pradesh Forest Department stated that draft SIS document has been prepared with good mapping of statistics and existing policy. However, the documents need to specify guidelines on the 0-9 grading system and also timeline for implementation of SIS. He also stated that the biggest drawback at present is the lack of capacity of the states.

Shri Subash Chandra, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Goa Forest Department stated that draft SIS document has good inputs for protection. Further he said that State Biodiversity Boards may be involved to provide real value to conservation efforts.

Dr. Jagmohan Sharma IFS, Member of the Expert Committee presented an overview of SIS for implementation of REDD+ in India.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist, Biodiversity and Climate Change Division, ICFRE & Member Secretary of the Expert Committee presented the draft document on SIS for implementation of REDD+ in India.

Mrs. Ritu Kakkar, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Evaluation, Working Plan, Research and Training, Climate Change), Karnataka Forest Department stated that availability of funds for implementation of REDD+ activities is a big challenge.

Shri Nagesh Hedge, Journalist and Farmer stated that information should be shared to stakeholders in local language for making it more effective. The inputs from local/ indigenous stakeholders may also be considered. He mentioned that excessive weeds and encroachment by wildlife should also be addressed.

Shri R. K. Suman, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Andhra Pradesh Forest Department stated that language of the SIS document should be simple and user friendly. Since REDD+ is a mandate of all departments, not forest department alone.

Dr. Devagiri, Forestry College, Shimogga stated that continuous monitoring of carbon stock being an important aspect of REDD+ implementation; a dedicated agency would be an essentiality.

Dr. M. H. Swaminath (Retd. IFS) pointed out that risk factor should be emphasized and taken care of leakages like fire, logging policy, desertification etc.

Dr. Suresh, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru indicated that there is a need for a long term research component on the safeguards, especially to record data of species wise performance on carbon stock improvement.

Shri H. Venuprasad IFS, Deputy Director, Forest Survey of India (FSI), Bengaluru mentioned that it is important to generate assessment reports periodically for REDD + implementation, for which FSI's reports on carbon stocks can be utilized.

Suggestions given by the participants for each safeguard are as under:

Safeguard 1: The 0-9 grading system may be reduced since it is at a project level. Parameters are not specified and measuring will become a huge task or retain 0-9 grading but each grade may be defined.

Policies /acts considered here may be mentioned and scoring may be done based on list of policies

Safeguard 2: Criteria 3 and 4 are part of institutional framework for planning, implementation and monitoring. It can be clubbed. As far as possible indicators may be borrowed from National Working Plan Code, so that implementation at Forest Division level is made possible. 0-9 grading may be removed.

Safeguard 3: Knowledge of local communities to be derived from people biodiversity register since it is documented and ready for use and fresh/separate collection of information is not required.

Safeguard 4: Criteria 9 may be removed, as participation of stakeholders is already covered. Identify specific stakeholders since it is very wide ranged.

Safeguard 5: For Indicator 24, Criteria 11, information may be taken from existing data of forest department to avoid subjectivity and better quantification. Local level data helps to increase credibility of information since source will be authentic with statistical data. Biodiversity status information for a state such as, number of species per acre/ha is very important for evaluation.

Safeguard 6: Benefit sharing can be a part of this safeguard

Safeguard 7: Monitoring of displacement activity to be added as a criterion without increasing project cost for which as far as possible and wherever possible indicators may be taken from existing documents.

Criteria 16 may be reframed to only plug leakage and not measure extent of forest /tree cover, as it may increase the cost of monitoring.

The workshop concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Dr. Anurag Bhardwaj, ICFRE, Dehradun.

2. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra:

The second stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 30 September 2020 at Tropical Forest Research Institute (TFRI), Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh). The workshop was attended by a total of 53 participants from State Forest Departments and other line departments such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Renewable Energy, Soil and Water Conservation, Research and Academic Institutions, NGOs and Joint Forest management Committees.

Dr. G. Rajeshwar Rao, Director, TFRI, Jabalpur in his welcome address briefed about the role of Indian forests and country’s stand in reducing emissions. He welcomed all the stakeholders enunciating the objective of the workshop to provide their valuable suggestions and comments on the draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ prepared by ICFRE.

Shri A. S. Rawat IFS, Director General, ICFRE welcomed all the participants from different parts of the country. He further elaborated the formulation of safeguards information system that should encompass national needs, safely implementable on the field and should be within the existing legal and institutional framework. He spoke on the importance of SIS for risk reduction in order to get REDD+ benefits.

Shri Rakesh Chaturvedi IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Chhattisgarh informed that state of Chhattisgarh initiated the process for creation of State REDD+ Cell. He further shared his ABC concept on REDD+ like strategies, i.e., A - Appropriate entitlement regime, B - Benefit sharing that will result in C - Conservation of forests. He was of the opinion that if A and B are ensured then conservation goals will be automatically met. He highlighted the importance of involving Joint Forest Management Committees and Gram Panchayats, Van Sanrakshan Samitis and Biodiversity Management Committees at the state level and added that the SIS should be aligned with the provisions of Forest Rights Act and Biological Diversity Act.

Dr. N. Rambabu, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Maharashtra shared the state's efforts in implementation of REDD+ and technological improvements made during the last two years. He also briefed about the arrangement of JFMCs with the Forest Department for various efforts like ensuring LPG supply to forest dwellers to reduce fuel wood extraction, providing alternate livelihood programmes wherein youths from the villages are diverted from forest-based activities to non-forestry activities aimed at reducing dependence on forests.

Shri V.R.S. Rawat, Former ADG (BCC), ICFRE and Member, Expert Committee delivered a detailed presentation on REDD+ readiness in India and discussed the elements of National REDD+ Strategy and national progress for development of the key elements of REDD+ implementation.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist-D, BCC Division, ICFRE & Member Secretary of the Expert Committee presented the Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+. He discussed in details all 16 criteria and their underlying 40 indicators for all the seven safeguards.

Shri Anurag Bharadwaj, IFS, Director, International Cooperation, ICFRE suggested that SIS is a reporting system to check risks and negative impacts of REDD+ implementation.

Dr. Promode Kant, Member of the Expert Committee suggested that all the participants should provide their valuable inputs on the draft document for further improvement.

Each safeguard was taken up for detailed discussion and feedback of stakeholders was sought as under:

Safeguard 1: Prof. Bhaskar Sinha, IIFM, Bhopal suggested to reduce the number of indicators and emphasised that the legal position of land where the projects have to be implemented needs to be reflected in criteria 1.

Safeguard 2: Prof. Bhaskar Sinha, IIFM, Bhopal brought out that Indexing should follow analytic hierarchy process in order to have a composite index. Hence, he suggested to either follow relative ranking or absolute score while grading.

Dr. Jagmohan Sharma, Member of the Expert Committee clarified that developing index is to assess the project once it is implemented. It should act as a surface guidance for interpretation and implementation. He assured that the grading system is yet to be finalised and 0-9 scales are yet to be defined.

The number of institutions as well as the mechanism through which the institutions will be involved needs to be incorporated under Criteria 3 and Criteria 4 of this safeguard.

Safeguard 3: Dr. Promode Kant, Member of the Expert Committee appreciated the importance of the safeguard and informed that the country is fortunate to have laws such as Forest Rights Act. The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act in order to respect rights of the indigenous people. Additionally, the Forest Working Plans have provisions to protect the rights of the communities.

Dr. Jagmohan Sharma, Member, Expert Committee suggested that People Biodiversity registers, which are the store house of knowledge of local people, will qualify as an indicator of documentation of local knowledge under Criteria 6 of this safeguard.

Prof. Bhaskar Sinha, Professor, IIFM, Bhopal suggested that number of people practising indigenous knowledge will be a strong indicator of knowledge base.

Safeguard 4: Dr. Promode Kant, Member Expert Committee suggested that number of stakeholders should be changed as percentage of stakeholders instead of numbers.

Safeguard 5

It has been suggested that indicators 24 and 25 can be merged as both are of similar nature, and similarly indicator 26 and 27 can be merged.

Criteria 12: It was suggested to shift this criterion from Safeguard 5 to an appropriate place.

It has been suggested that indicator 30 can be removed because grazing pressure questions people rights. Indicator 32: Ecosystem services/ environmental benefits are difficult to measure and introduce a risk; hence it should also be removed. A new indicator can be added: Improvement in soil and moisture conservation.

Criteria 13: This criterion is the biggest challenge for implementation and indicators are not very well worded. The word 'incentivization' to be reworded. The indicators have to be quantitative and in measurable terms.

Safeguards 7: It was suggested to remove Criteria 16 as Criteria 15 very well captures the essence of Safeguard 7.

Shri Anurag Bhardwaj, Director (International Cooperation), ICFRE in his closing remarks said that ICFRE would help the states in developing capacities related to preparation of

State REDD+ Action Plans and REDD+ safeguards. He also assured that the comments of all the stakeholders will be duly considered and ICFRE will come up with a template, much understandable to everyone.

3. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh:

The third stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 09 October 2020 at Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla (Himachal Pradesh). The workshop was attended by a total of 74 participants from State Forest Departments and other line departments of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Renewable Energy, Soil and Water Conservation, Research and academic institutions, progressive farmers, non-governmental organisations and local community members.

Dr. S.S. Samant, Director, HFRI, Shimla extended a warm welcome to all the participants and requested all the participants to provide their valuable suggestions and comments on the draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ Implementation in India.

Shri A. S. Rawat, IFS, Director General, ICFRE, Dehradun in his opening remarks extended a welcomed to all the officers and other participants participating from different parts of the region. He requested all the participants of the workshop to provide their valuable inputs on the draft safeguards information system for implementation of REDD+ in India.

Dr. Savita, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force appreciated the efforts of ICFRE for formulating the comprehensive draft document on REDD+ Safeguard Information System. She also said that Himachal Pradesh is required to have 33% area under the forest cover by 2030 and the REDD+ activities are going to play a significant role to meet this ambitious target. She further added that coordination and association with local communities is very important and insisted that there should be a workable mechanism for sensitization of stakeholders at the grass root levels.

Dr. V.R.S. Rawat, Former ADG (BCC) and Member, Expert Committee delivered a detailed presentation on REDD+ readiness in India.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist-D, BCC Division, ICFRE presented the Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India

Dr. S.S. Samant, Director HFRI, Shimla emphasised that there is need to assess the status of forests, identify the degraded forests across the horizontal and vertical gradients, and also identify the suitable native species for plantation in the degraded forests. He

emphasised for a strong network of Forest Departments, other Line Departments of the Government, NGOs and local institutions for achieving REDD+ goals.

Dr. Suresh Atri, Principal Scientific Officer, Department of Environment, Science & Technology HP, specifically touched upon the issue of Peoples Biodiversity Register preparation.

Shri Sandeep Khanwalkar, Senior Programme Director, Development Alternatives, New Delhi suggested that the Joint Forest Management Committees and community should be consulted while developing any REDD+ plan document.

Shri Mritunjay Madhav, Divisional Forest Officer, Una commented that as per his thinking REDD+ framework seems easy to implement, but at the same time institutional strengthening is required. He also suggested that best practices need to be incorporated for making it a success.

Shri R. R. Bhalaik, representing an NGO, Sutlej Bachao Jiwan Bachao Smiti said that REDD+ implementation can conserve native biodiversity and also provide the benefits to the local communities.

Dr. Rajesh Sharma, Group Coordinator Research, HFRI Shimla also stressed on the need to promote indigenous and lesser known species to be taken up in the afforestation programmes for better adaptability and their socio-economic relevance.

Dr. R. K. Verma, Head, Forest Ecology and Climate Change Division HFRI, Shimla stated that the local communities need to be taken aboard during the consultative programmes under REDD+.

Dr. Rajesh Sharma, Group Coordinator Research, HFRI proposed a formal vote of thanks.

4. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Chandigarh: The fourth stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 14 October 2020 at Forest Research Institute (FRI), Dehradun. The workshop was attended by a total of 42 participants from State Forest Departments and other line departments of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Chandigarh; Research and academic institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Shri Arun Singh Rawat, Director, FRI in his opening address briefed about the purpose of the workshop. He emphasized that the criteria and indicators of safeguards information system need to be developed to ensure the proper implementation of REDD+ activities. The field level conditions should be comprehensible so that it can be implemented and

reported in a proper manner by the people who are working at the local level. He also stated that active cooperation from the forest department is needed as they will be the major stakeholders as far as the implementation of the safeguard information system is concerned.

Sh. V. R. S. Rawat, Member of the Expert Committee delivered his presentation on REDD+ and India's approach to REDD+ Safeguards. He opined that climate is changing and forest plays an important role in mitigating climate change.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist, ICFRE Dehradun delivered his presentation on Stakeholders Consultation on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+. He highlighted that in the present document on 'Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+', 16 criteria and 40 indicators have been identified for Cancun safeguards. He requested all the participants to give their valuable inputs/ suggestion on the draft safeguards information system.

Sh. Ishwar Singh IFS, PCCF Delhi informed that creation of State REDD+ Cell for Delhi is under process. Safeguards number three and four are not applicable in the case of Delhi as every forest is a man-made forest which has now been naturalized in the form of natural forest. He also apprised that a Green app has been developed for tree felling complaints as well as tree transplanting.

Dr. K.K Joshi, Director Agriculture Uttarakhand stressed on breeding of elite animals so that pressure on forest will be reduce.

Sh. Kalyan Singh of Maiti Andolan, Dehradun stressed to involve women in Safeguards Information System for REDD+. He said that we need to give importance to the women as women have knowledge about the management of natural resources including forests. He also stated that kids need to be rooted and made aware about the environment at a young age through the activities such as Eco clubs.

Shri Raman Nautiyal, Former Scientist of ICFRE said that the demarcation of boundaries and information that comes from the field should have high integrity value. Use of technology should be used in the field.

Sh. Anurag Bhardwaj, Director, International Cooperation, ICFRE in his closing Remarks said that safeguards are mandatory. In the draft of Safeguards Information System for REDD+, the local community rights and traditional knowledge have been addressed. He also informed that a mechanism is already there to involve the women stakeholders. He also emphasized that urban forest needs to be looked at from a different perspective and will ensure to capture the urban forest and to address these issues. He informed

that capacity building programme of the stakeholders on various aspect of REDD+ will be taken up.

The workshop ended with vote of thank by Dr. Senthil Kumar, Assistant Director General, Biodiversity and Climate Change Division, ICFRE.

5. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the North-Eastern states of India: The fifth stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 22 October 2020 at Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI), Jorhat, Assam. The workshop was attended by a total of 21 participants from State Forest Departments and other line departments of North-Eastern states.

Dr. R. S. C. Jayaraj IFS, Director, RFRI, Jorhat welcomed the dignitaries and addressed the participants. In his welcome address, he highlighted about the diverse communities and tribes of North-Eastern states of India and the importance of conserving their traditional knowledge. He explained that the rights of the indigenous people should not suffer during the implementation REDD+ activities and this demands special attention in implementation of any developmental project/programme. He stated that land tenure system in the North-Eastern India is very complex.

In his opening remarks, Shri A. S. Rawat, IFS, Director General, ICFRE highlighted the four key elements of REDD+ viz. National REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan, National Forest Reference Level or Forest Reference Emission Level, National Forest Monitoring System and Safeguards Information System which are to be developed for implementation of REDD+ projects in the developing countries. He stated that REDD+ activities are not only the option of mitigating climate change by conservation or enhancement of carbon stock, but it provides financial incentives to the stakeholders as well.

Shri V.R.S. Rawat, Member of the Expert Committee delivered a presentation on ‘REDD+ Readiness in India’. He stated that forests play a critical role in climate change mitigation and adaption and it contributes about 20- 25% of global CO₂ emissions. He elaborated about the genesis of REDD+ under the umbrella of UNFCCC.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist-D, Biodiversity and Climate Change Division, ICFRE, presented the ‘Draft Safeguards Information System’ prepared by the Expert Committee constituted by the Director General, ICFRE. He requested the participants, to comment on the draft SIS document especially on 16 criteria and 40 indicators of SIS draft document.

Dr. R. K. Singh, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Arunachal Pradesh stated that implementation of REDD+ activities do not have any

problem and Arunachal Pradesh has already initiated various activities under REDD+ in the state. He opined that Safeguards Information System as prepared by ICFRE is in order but some issues need to be sorted out. Arunachal Pradesh is predominantly a tribal state where 80% forest is managed by tribal communities. There are a large number of tribes and sub-tribes which may face problem in documentation of traditional knowledge. Periodical monitoring of growing stock, extent of forest and tree cover, carbon stock and biological diversity may not be possible as the state is quite big and 80% area is forested. He informed that establishment of REDD+ cell in Arunachal Pradesh is in process.

Shri Hirdesh Mishra, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests, Social Forestry, Assam informed that Assam has constituted the State REDD+ cell on 24 June, 2020. The first meeting focused on the state level strategies or action plans, Safeguards Information System and Forest Reference Level for REDD+. The mechanism of involvement of various stakeholders like educational institutes for implementation of REDD+ activities were also discussed. Shri Mishra opined that the primary strategy would be to focus on capacity building of the forest officials, mainly working plan officers and incorporation of REDD+ activities in the working plans. The training on NTFPs, nursery development, soil and moisture conservation etc. need to be given the highest priority.

Dr. Lokho Puni, IFS, Additional Chief Conservator of Forests (CC&FCA), Manipur, stated that REDD+ activities have already been initiated in Manipur through involvement of local communities and State REDD+ Cell is constituted. Capacity building to the forest officials of the State Forest department and stakeholders will be initiated at the earliest. In the preparation of working plan, necessary steps have been taken to protect the knowledge and rights of local communities in Manipur.

Shri S. M. Sahai IFS, Additional Chief Conservator of Forests (CCR&T), Meghalaya, stated that Meghalaya will constitute the REDD+ Cell within a very short time and Meghalaya is the pioneer in the implementation of REDD+ activities in this region. The existing forest working plans are going to expire and will be revised with incorporation of REDD+ activities.

Shri Temjenyapang Jamir IFS, Conservator of Forests (Publicity & Training), Nagaland, stated that REDD+ is a comparatively new concept for Nagaland and people's participation is important as most of the forest lands and resources belong to communities. He stated that proposal for constitution of REDD+ Cell in the state has already been submitted to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of Nagaland.

Dr. D. K. Sharma IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Tripura, stated that steps have taken for implementation of REDD+ activities in Tripura. All the 8 working plans of Tripura are in place and Department has started revising them to incorporate the REDD+ activities. About 1264 Biodiversity Management Committees have been created in Tripura with involvement of local communities and People's Biodiversity Registers are in place. He informed that proposal for constitution of REDD+ Cell has already been sent to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of Tripura.

Shri Jitendra Kumar IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Mizoram and Shri Y.P. Gurung IFS, Secretary Forests, Sikkim appreciated the initiatives of ICFRE and informed that REDD+ activities in their respective states are in right track.

Prof. B.K. Tewari, North-Eastern Hill University (retired), Shillong appreciated the initiatives of ICFRE and briefed about the Mawphlang Khasi Hills Community REDD+.

Representatives of Community/NGOs, REDD+ Working Group for North-Eastern States of India Shri Tambor Lyngdoh, Chief Community Facilitator, Mawphlang Khasi Hills Community REDD+ project suggested that in order to ensure the historic and ongoing role of the communities involved in REDD+ project, developers must work with participating communities and local governments to fully implement the Forest Rights Act. He also suggested that in Sixth Schedule areas the project developers must involve local communities as willing and equal partners, respecting and fully recognizing the historic, customary forest rights and practices of the communities. Traditional institutions and indigenous governance bodies and their leadership should play an equal role in designing the project, and should be empowered with the technical and financial resources to implement it. At least 60 percent of all benefits from carbon offsets should be distributed to the participating communities.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Senthil Kumar, ADG (BCC), ICFRE.

6. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu:

The sixth stakeholder consultative workshop on "Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India" was hosted virtually on 03 November 2020 at Arid Forest Research Institute (AFRI), Jodhpur, Rajasthan. The workshop was attended by a total of 35 participants from State Forest Departments and other line departments such as, Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Research and Academic

Institutions, NGOs and JFMCs from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

Sh. M.R. Baloch, Director AFRI, Jodhpur welcomed all the participants and briefed about the efforts of expert committee members on the draft Safeguard Information System for REDD+ and spelled out the agenda of meeting. In his welcome address briefed upon the role of Indian forests and country's stand in reducing emissions. He also talked about the history, origin of REDD+ and its immense possibilities on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Shri A. S. Rawat, IFS, Director General, ICFRE welcomed all the participants and stated that clarity need to be developed about the implementation of REDD+ by various states and requested the concerned Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to nominate nodal officers to implement REDD+ activities in their respective states. He also said that the REDD+ is not only serves as a climate change mitigation option but also serves as a livelihood generation option to the local community. During his address he also highlighted the associated social and environmental risks while implementing the REDD+ activities. In order to minimize these risks involved in implementation of the REDD+ activities, seven Cancun safeguards need to be addressed and respected. The adoption of this REDD+ plan along with the implementation of the Safeguards will ensure a positive impact.

Shri Anurag Bhardwaj, Director (International Cooperation), ICFRE said that the efforts and intention of the Cancun safeguards are to minimize the risk associated with the REDD+ implementation. He described safeguards as the mechanisms to ensure that the project framework under REDD+ does not have any social or environmental issues. He further said that the intention of these Safeguards is to ensure that REDD+ projects are focused towards forestry intervention activities. He also said that the REDD+ readiness plan involves various exercises for capacity building in terms of training programmes for facilitating the entire process.

Ms. Shruti Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Rajasthan apprised that Rajasthan State Government is working to reframe the Forest Policy 2010, keeping the REDD+ safeguards and objectives into consideration. She also emphasized that the decision making process should be transparent for the proper implementation of rules and regulations. An advanced feature of tracking various services and e-transactions done each day along with the cumulative report of the year is added in the Rajasthan's government site. Rajasthan state has already created State REDD+ Cell. In her address she mentioned the need of capacity building for implementing the REDD+ project activities and dissemination of information.

Dr. Sanjiv Tyagi, Additional, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (R&T), Gujarat in his opening remarks emphasized the need of conservation and enhancement of carbon stock for efficient implementation of REDD+ in India. In Gujarat state the trees outside forest has outnumbered that within the forests which have resulted in the increased carbon stock and is beneficial in a long run. He also spoke about the ongoing Gujarat Forestry Development project running in its third stage after completing the first two stages. In the third stage focus is towards growing the grasslands which are very effective in absorbing CO₂. The Gujarat state has also developed an online system which aids the real time monitoring of forests. Finally, he ended his words appreciating the REDD+ initiative and its strategies for their efficient implementation in states through capacity building and infrastructure development.

Sh. K. Ravichandran, Chief Conservator of Forests, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu appreciated the efforts made by ICFRE for documenting the draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ Implementation in India. He emphasized that the enhancement of carbon stock by increasing the forest cover, augmenting the existing forest cover on moderately dense forest besides taking up the plantation programmes is the need of the hour. In his address he said that the Safeguards Information System has 16 criteria and 40 indicators identified for the seven safeguards. Each principle, criteria and indicator develop a dataset which will be useful for the department. Towards the end he said that for proper collection and dissemination of the information capacity building plays a key role wherein area based teams can be formed involving field experts.

Sh. N.K. Vasu, IFS, Ex Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Assam in his opening remarks said that the four key elements essential for implementation of REDD+ is very important. The climate change projects implemented at various states has impacted the overall environment. The REDD+ along with the safeguards, criteria and indicators needs critical understanding for their proper implementation and reporting at the ground level. He also focused on the necessary adaptations or refinements to be made in the safeguards, criteria and indicators as per the requirements through discussions at every level. During his address he said that the fifth safeguard is quite important with respect to conservation of forests and biological diversity.

Dr. Praveen Kumar Principle Scientist, CAZRI said that CAZRI is working on agriculture and agro-forestry but for the climate change issues AFRI and CAZRI shares a common platform. The harsh climatic conditions of the area enable us to focus on the arid lands. Afforestation helps to increase the carbon stock and proves to be one of the best

options for climate change issues. He said that the forest fire is a major issue which needs attention.

Dr. V.P. Tiwari, Ex Director, HFRI, Shimla emphasized on the effective participation of local communities in formulation of the safeguards. He also said that for implementing the REDD+ activities adequate manpower and skill is the key issue which is fulfilled by the capacity building programme. He said that goal and scope of the SIS should be clarified.

Dr. Ranjana Arya, Retd. Scientist, AFRI, Jodhpur said that the creation of database by collection of the growth and soil status data is very essential and hence needs proper training of the State Forest Department field staff for effective dissemination of information. The research institutes play an important role for providing the essential skill during the training programmes.

Shri S.R.V. Murthi IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests, Jodhpur said that there is a need to train lower forest staff on data collection. Capacity building of forest staff is required. Quantification of carbon sequestration in the afforestation area is required. Field specific criteria are needed for better functioning.

Sh. V.R.S. Rawat, Former ADG (BCC) and Member, Expert Committee delivered a detailed presentation on REDD+ readiness in India.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist-D, BCC Division, ICFRE presented the Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+. He gave an overview of the REDD+ objectives, its key elements, its implementation strategy, associated risks which are addressed by the Cancun safeguards with the principles, sixteen criteria and forty indicators.

Dr. G. Singh, Group Coordinator, Research, AFRI, Jodhpur proposed a formal vote of thanks.

7. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Bihar, Jharkahnd and West Bengal: The seventh stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 5 November 2020 at Institute of Forest Productivity, Ranchi (Jharkahnd). The workshop was attended by a total of 45 participants from Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Kerala Forest and Wildlife Department and Environment and Forests Department of Andaman & Nicobar Islands participated in the consultation.

At the outset, Dr. Nitin Kulkarni, Director, IFP, Ranchi extended a warm welcome to all esteemed dignitaries. He introduced the purpose of the REDD+ consultation meeting and informed that REDD+ is a climate change mitigation option under UNFCCC. He said

that the major responsibility for execution of REDD+ activities involved the State Forest Departments. He informed that Safeguard Information System for REDD+ has already been drafted and welcomed interaction among the dignitaries for further improvement. He invited suggestions and comments from the stakeholders for further improvement of the draft before final submission to the Ministry.

Dr. Sanjay Srivastava IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (CAMPA), Jharkhand State Forest Department informed that in 2011 in the Cancun agreement came into being and they decided that the REDD+ activity should be contributing towards the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions. He said that this programme will be providing the opportunities and livelihood support to the stakeholders at field level. He also explained the seven safeguards known as 'Cancun safeguards' and said that the whole purpose of making these safeguards was to ensure that negative impacts of anything, which will be implemented during the implementation of REDD+ action plan, would be avoided. Speaking on behalf of the Jharkhand State Forest Department, Dr. Srivastava said that before implementation of SIS, capacity building of the stakeholders is needed.

Shri A. S. Rawat, IFS, Director General, ICFRE, Dehradun welcomed the dignitaries and informed that this is the seventh consultation meeting on developing safeguards information system for REDD+. He impressed upon to get good and innovative suggestions and feedback from the participants of Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal on the draft document. He said that during implementation of REDD+ activities, there may be risks involved related to social and environmental. Safeguards are basically the tools to ensure effective implementation of REDD+ actions and to avoid and minimize governance, social and environmental risks of REDD+ implementation. He stressed that the REDD+ consultative meeting would be fruitful and would pave way for improvement in the SIS document.

Shri A. K. Pandey IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Bihar State Forest Department said that the State occupies 2.86% of country's geographical area and 12.06% of forest cover with huge population and tremendous pressure on forests, which are degraded. He informed that plantations have been done for extension of tree cover, mostly outside the forests and inside the forests too, but there is a huge gap of 2000 sq km inside recorded forest area as per FSI reports. He added that forests are under huge pressure by people residing in forest fringe villages. Removals are more than what is being supplemented. He informed that State REDD+ Cell has been created but there is lack of awareness among the members about REDD+. He called for capacity building programmes to be conducted by ICFRE.

Shri Ravi Kant Sinha IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, West Bengal Forest Department was concerned about lack of awareness at local level and the action plan or the way forward is to have more stakeholders' conferences, more stakeholders' awareness campaigns. He suggested that ICFRE should partner with institutions who can translate the technical benefits to local way of lives, so that local people can participate in a more meaningful manner. He said that the main focus of REDD+ was to prevent forest degradation and preserve our natural wealth. He pointed out that in the draft SIS document only targets trees and forest ecosystems, whereas the animals and wildlife are the best indicators of forest degradation. He also suggested for inclusion of funding pattern in the document format.

Shri V. R. S. Rawat, Former ADG (Biodiversity & Climate Change) and Member, Expert Committee on REDD+, ICFRE, Dehradun delivered a detailed presentation on "REDD+ Readiness in India".

Dr. Sanjay Srivastava IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (CAMPA), Jharkhand State Forest Department concerned about funding support and was of the opinion that funds are difficult to get REDD+ finance from GCF. He also informed that funds from CAMPA were to be used as per specific Ministry acts and rules. He added that the funds from CAMPA cannot be supplemented to any other scheme. He queried about capacity building and technical support that could be provided by ICFRE before implementation of the action plan.

Sh. Anurag Bhardwaj, IFS, Director (International Cooperation), ICFRE, Dehradun said that with regard to the capacity building issue, ICFRE has supported in preparation of REDD+ action plan for the States of Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim as a part of ICIMOD funded project. He also said that the REDD+ resource manual for capacity building of State Forest Departments has been prepared and would be very helpful in preparation of REDD+ action plan. He said that due to COVID 19 pandemic, training programmes have not been started, but assured that focused capacity building programmes would be taken up shortly.

Dr. R. S. Rawat, Scientist In-charge, Biodiversity & Climate Change, ICFRE, Dehradun presented the Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+.

Dr. Jose Mathews said that the SFDs will be collecting data and ICFRE will be coordinating. He said that DFOs are already under tremendous pressure and creation of REDD+ cell will be an added responsibility. He enquired about the responsibilities of the assessments, whether the State Govt., the ICFRE or the Govt. of India level?

Responding the queries put forth by Dr. Mathews, Sh. Anurag Bhardwaj said that activities of REDD+ will be project based activities. He said that ICFRE and Govt. of India

are building capacities of the State Governments so that they can develop the projects. These are facilitating mechanisms that are being done and it is not mandatory for the States. He informed that capacity building will be done to enable the SFDs to develop their own projects related REDD+ and will be funded exclusively under REDD+ scheme.

Dr. Kailash Chandra, Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata West Bengal said that after the REDD+ activity, there can be a periodic data to have a futuristic approach and a clear understanding about the status of forests.

Dr. J. P. Pandey, Scientist, Central Tasar Research and Training Institute, Ranchi informed that their organization wanted to set up a tasar silk sanctuary in various parts of the country. In response to Dr. Pandey, Dr. Kulkarni said that relevant projects may be drafted in lines of the REDD+ safeguards system.

Shri Rajnish Kumar, DFO, Saranda Forest Division, Jharkhand informed that there was excess dependence of local people on forest in terms of food, like NTFPs and fuel because they do not have other livelihood options. He queried about how REDD+ can help Saranda Forest Division in Jharkhand on reduction of pressure on forest from people who are residing in the vicinity.

Dr. Purabi Saikia, Assistant Professor, Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi said that REDD+ strategy is committed to safeguard and ensure respect for the rights of indigenous people and local communities as stated in the constitution of India. She added that Jharkhand is a State where forest dwelling communities are high and their dependency on forests is very high, so, there must be special provisions for the tribal dominated States or areas, where most of the tribals are highly dependent on forests and forest products.

Sh. Srikant Verma, IFS said that soil health card system can be developed through existing laboratories for soil carbon measurement.

Dr. Prasanjit Mukherjee, Head, Dept. of Botany, S.K.M College, Pakur, Jharkhand enquired about collaboration avenues with universities during data collection and awareness campaigns while implementing the REDD+ SIS activities. Shri V. R. S. Rawat said that during development of State specific REDD+ action plan, the collaborations with institutions, universities, NGOs, JFMCs, local communities etc will be taken care of.

Sh. Anurag Bhardwaj, IFS, Director (International Cooperation), ICFRE, Dehradun while concluding the day long deliberations praised the interactions and active participation. He summarized by saying that SIS is a mandatory reporting system and not a project formulation guideline system. The SIS exercise would help us in ensuring that we

incorporate all the key probable risks of the project that is formulated under REDD+ mechanism and it is important to have the SIS system in place.

The workshop concluded with presentation of formal vote of thanks by Dr. Yogeshwar Mishra, Scientist-F & Group Coordinator (Research), Institute of Forest Productivity, Ranchi.

8. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands: The eighth stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 16 December 2020 at Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The workshop was attended by a total of 48 participants from Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Kerala Forest and Wildlife Department and Environment and Forests Department of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Dr. C. Kunhikannan, Director, IFGTB welcomed the dignitaries and delegates and highlighted about the climate change, its impact like change in rainfall pattern due to frequent floods, drought, rise in sea level etc. across the global level. He stressed the importance of the contribution of forests towards climate change, like absorbing Co2 and storing it in woods, leaves etc.

Shri Anurag Bhardwaj IFS, Director (International Cooperation), ICFRE enlightened the gathering about the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which encourages developing countries to contribute in climate change mitigation by undertaking REDD+ activities and about the incentives and various welfare measures provisioned to the forest dwelling communities.

Shri P.K. Kesavan IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Kerala Forest and Wildlife Department highlighted the impact of climate change and the ground reality situation of the Kerala State, which is facing the climate change related issues for the last three years. He stressed the need to address those issues. The forestry sectors globally known as carbon source due to degradation of habitat but it has the potential as carbon sink. He opined that since water will become a commodity in future, we need to follow the safeguard information system for effective implementation of REDD+ in the country.

Shri Deepak Srivastava IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Working Plan), Tamil Nadu Forest Department highlighted the importance of Cancun Agreements. He insisted on collecting various scientific data once in two or four years in a synergic manner or through convergent approach from the Department of Agriculture,

Department of Social Justice, and Department of Sericulture. He mentioned about NWFP and the benefits accrued to be shared with the local tribal communities in a participative manner leading to overall benefit in environment protection and social protection.

D. G. Trinadh Kumar, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests (Research & Working Plan), Environment and Forests Department, Andaman & Nicobar Islands stated that about 86% of geographical area of Andaman & Nicobar Islands comes under the forest cover. He also pointed out the constraints in land availability to initiate any carbon sink activity and lack of expertise in REDD+ activities. He also stated that at the same time the Andaman & Nicobar Islands is already involved in undertaking afforestation programmes, biodiversity conservation etc.

Shri V.R.S. Rawat, Former ADG, (Biodiversity and Climate Change) ICFRE gave an overall introduction to the REDD and the role of our country in REDD+.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist, BCC Division, ICFRE gave a detailed presentation on the Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ including the criteria and indicators developed for monitoring the REDD+ activities in the country.

Shri Anurag Bhardwaj, IFS, Director (IC), ICFRE highlighted the need for developing the criteria and indicators for adopting the safeguard information system drafted for implementation of various REDD+ activities. Detailed discussion on the various draft criteria and indicators developed for each of the safeguards on was made.

Shri S. Senthilkumar IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests, Silviculture and Forest Management Division, IFGTB during the discussion opined that detailed guidelines and weightage may be developed for easy understanding of field staff to assign scores from 0 to 9 for each of the indicators. Field level staff should know clearly while reporting about grading in planning and implementation stage of REDD+ project. Further, such guidance followed by them for assigning scores will help the higher officials to monitor effectively. He also mentioned that the detailed guidelines if made will help the field officers to accurately grade it and problems while reporting could be avoided. So, he suggested that guidelines for the field level officers and awareness on existing policies should be there before initiation of any REDD+ project.

Shri A. Mohamed Zainulabdeen, Deputy Conservator of Forests (Working Plan), Palakkad stated that already some initiatives have been made with regard to REDD+ activities in the working plans. Some of the unproductive teak plantations were reverted back to natural forests. So he opined that under the criteria 2, instead of number of approved Forest Working Plans, all parameters in the working plan are to be included as indicators for REDD+ activities.

Shri S. Ramasubramanian IFS, Conservator of Forests (Working Plan), Trichy suggested that while implementing National Afforestation Programme, the carbon stock, the above ground biomass and below ground biomass were assessed and documented, which will serve as bench mark for future REDD+ projects.

Shri S. Suresh, Forest Range Officer, Coimbatore Forest Division informed about the functioning of JFMC and the role of JFMC in controlling forest fire. He also mentioned that grievance redresal of local community is important and hence the number of grievances addressed should be considered as criteria to judge effective functioning of JFMC. He further informed that man-animal conflict is another important issue in the division which is being effectively managed with the help of a Whatsapp group "Thadam" and the compensation to the affected people are given depending upon the fund availability. He emphasized the need for utilizing the technology for addressing forest degradation.

Shri G. Rajesh IFS, Head, Extension Division, IFGTB suggested that under criteria -3 "Adequacy of institutional framework for management of REDD+ activities", the likely institutions which would facilitate management of REDD+ activities may be mentioned which would facilitate management of REDD+ activities. He added that whether various committees like JFMC and VFC come under this criterion need to be clarified. This will help the field staff to make correct entries against the indicators, otherwise they may record that no such adequate institutional facilities are available for management of REDD+ activities.

Dr. K.R. Sasidharan, Scientist-F, IFGTB suggested that the Biodiversity Management Committees functioning at the grass root level can also be included in the criteria -3 as they are important in terms of local biodiversity conservation and traditional knowledge documentation.

Shri K. Ravi, President, VFC, Kandivazhli Village highlighted the role of VFC members in forest protection and conservation. He also informed about the loan given to VFC and the benefits derived out of such loans. He added that the local communities are collecting forest products and they have knowledge on various medicinal plants.

Shri S. Senthilkumar IFS, wanted to know whether their local knowledge with reference to crops, medicinal plants etc. were documented at present. The field staff informed that such documentation is available in the Range Office and stated that while on patrolling, the field staff collected such knowledge from local people, recorded and kept for future reference. The need for linking people biodiversity register with the REDD+ activities was also discussed and stressed during the meeting.

Shri G. Rajesh, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests & Head, Extension, IFGTB opined that details of growing stock, tree cover, etc based on National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) data are included during the revision of forest working plan and hence the remote sensing data should be used for reviewing the REDD+ activities.

Shri R. Suryaprakash, Forest Guard, Coimbatore Forest Division opined that GPS and drones may be used for identifying sites for increasing forest cover as part of REDD+ activities, so that it is easier to monitor the progress. He also stated that, similarly camera traps may be used to monitor wildlife movement, identify poachers and other offenders. He informed that some advancement in technology is required, so that the images in the camera traps are directly stored/ sent to a desktop/server.

Shri S. Senthilkumar, IFS, wanted to know the list of displacement of activities from project area to other nearby places and effective addressing of the issue for proper reporting (Criteria 15 of the draft SIS document). He suggested that all the activities are to be clearly mentioned for easy understanding of the frontline staff.

The meeting was concluded with vote of thanks by Dr. A. Rajasekaran, Scientist, IFGTB.

9. Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ for the states of Odisha and Telangana: The ninth stakeholder consultative workshop on “Draft Safeguards Information System for REDD+ implementation in India” was hosted virtually on 04 January 2020 at Institute of Forest Biodiversity (IFB), Hyderabad on behalf of Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. The workshop was attended by a total of 40 participants from Odisha and Telangana.

Dr. Ratnaker Jauhari, Director, Institute of Forest Biodiversity, Hyderabad welcomed all the participants and briefed about the transition from REDD to REDD+ at global level, highlighted important features of REDD+ and UNFCCC guidelines for implementation of REDD+.

Shri Lokesh Jayaswal, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (CAMPA), Telangana Forest Department in his opening remarks welcomed all the participants. He acknowledged the efforts of ICFRE on REDD+. He also appreciated the inputs and capacity building in the form of National REDD+ Strategy, achievements and way forward for implementation of REDD+ and tackle the issues associated with it. Mr. Jayaswal mentioned the features of India’s National REDD+ Strategy which aims to extend the process uniformly across the country. He mentioned that the efforts are appreciable. He mentioned that for achieving this target there is a need of capacity building at all levels of the stakeholders from frontline staff to the higher officials which is generally lacking and these workshops will be helpful in this aspect. He also touched

upon the activities to be taken up as per the Cancun safeguards to ensure positive results on implementation of REDD+ such as by ensuring uninterrupted flow of ecosystem services.

Shri Anurag Bhardwaj, Director (IC), ICFRE said that REDD+ has emerged as a promising mitigation option against climate change. He also mentioned that avoiding the negative feedbacks and experiences from previous mitigation options such as Clean Development Mechanism, we should look forward to other available promising options. He highlighted the components of REDD+ which focus exclusively on forestry sector and address issues in this sector, and touched upon the major role-players in its implementations. Mr. Bhardwaj highlighted the need to involve all the stakeholders. He elaborated that SIS is meant to reduce the negative impacts (if any) due to REDD+ implementation. He also informed that ICFRE will be taking up all the capacity building activities for successful implementations of REDD+. He requested for constructive inputs on the Draft SIS through active and healthy participation which will be effective in functioning SIS for REDD+ implementation.

Shri Akshaya Kumar Patnaik, Chief Conservator of Forests (T&D), Odisha Forest Department in his opening remarks said that this meeting is a medium to get some information about REDD+ and related activities. He stressed upon the improvement of carbon stock and forest conservation through REDD+. He said that proper implementation of REDD+ with safeguards will be helpful in two important aspects – rights of forest dwellers which are usually the disadvantage group most of the times will be well taken care through Forest Right Act as with the help of these people we are getting better services from the forests, and REDD+ will help in sustainable management of forests ensuring sustained availability of forest produce and ecosystem services. Community participation is very effective in Odisha, and involving the communities in REDD+ implementation will equally work well. For effective implementation of REDD+, he said that the REDD+ strategy and other documents will be translated into local language and distributed among the stakeholders at all levels in the state so that they have proper understanding of its working and activities. He also mentioned about future support in implementation of REDD+ activities.

Shri V.R.S. Rawat, Former ADG (BCC) and Member, Expert Committee, ICFRE, Dehradun gave a presentation on 'REDD+ and India's approach to REDD+ Safeguards'.

Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist-in-charge, Biodiversity and Climate Change Division and Member Secretary, Expert Committee, ICFRE, Dehradun, elaborated the Draft SIS for REDD+.

The feedback regarding principles, criteria and indicators of draft SIS were discussed and recorded for each safeguard. The comments and suggestions for each indicator under respective safeguard were:

Safeguard 1: Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) informed about the mobile application “One App” similar to the “Forest-Plus 2.0” which the forest department is using to collect information for working plan preparation. He told that the components of the indicators are already taken care of in the working plan preparation by giving emphasis to ecosystem approach following the new National Working Plan Code 2014 and new working circles are being introduced accordingly.

Indicator 4: Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) suggested to add ICFRE as a vetting agency at national level.

Safeguard 2: Ms. Nibedita Das (Odisha Forest Department) informed how involvement of communities in the working plan preparation works to help to reduce the gaps and issues between forest departments and local communities, and improve the grievance redressal.

Safeguard 3: Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) wanted to know about the vetting agency for the indicators under this safeguard, as it is not mentioned. Shri Akshaya Kumar Patnaik (Odisha Forest Department) suggested that community related data is already being collected for working plan preparation, thus these criteria and indicators can be pursued with aforesaid one.

Safeguard 4: Criteria 9 & 10: Shri Rama Murthy (Telangana Forest Department) suggested that instead of reporting the indicators in numbers it can be mentioned in percentage, as numbers may vary in different states and regions.

Safeguard 5: Criteria 12- Mr. Akshaya Kumar Patnaik (Odisha Forest Department) suggested that instead of responses like Y/N quantitative and/ qualitative response options can be given where ever possible/ applicable.

Shri Rama Murthy (Telangana Forest Department) suggested that Indicator 32 can be further simplified into small sections. Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) informed that using the mobile application “One App” they have collected data on ecosystem services and it could be useful to address this indicator. Mr. Gaini Sailu (Telangana Forest Department) explained the mobile application “One App”. He informed that the process to include ecosystem valuation component in this application is going on, they have already prepared manual for data collection for tree outside forests and for manual working plan preparation is in progress.

Safeguard 6: Criteria 14, Indicator 35: Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) said that a lot of risks are identified and is a severe problem. He asked in such case Y/N is needed or it should be detailed. Mr. Akshaya Kumar Patnaik (Odisha FD) suggested that since it is a vast issue, it should be detailed out.

Safeguard 7: Indicators 39: Shri Akshaya Kumar Patnaik (Odisha Forest Department) suggested to incorporate all the possible displacement activities which vary from state to state.

Shri Prabhu Datta Himanshu Mishra (Odisha Forest Department) also made his submission that there are lots of qualitative indicators in each category which will make them subjective. He suggested to include quantitative indicators to get real data from field-level and avoid bias.

Shri Rama Murthy (Telangana Forest Department) suggested that digitalization of forest boundaries can also be included in indicators.

Shri Akshaya Kumar Patnaik (Odisha Forest Department) said that the session was eye-opener will be helpful in working plan preparations. Since this meeting involves all levels of stakeholders so it will be helpful for all.

Shri Sarvanan (Telangana Forest Department) said that it will be much better if these criteria and indicators are integrated in working plans and he requested to incorporate it in Working Plan Code 2014 for working plan preparations.

Shri M.B. Honnuri (Scientist-C, IFB) proposed the vote of thanks.

- C. A consultation workshop was organized on month of December 2020 by FRI, Dehradun to get the inputs of the Frontline Staff of State Forest Departments and members of the Van Panchayat on REDD+ safeguards.
- D. Relevant inputs of the aforesaid stakeholder consultation workshops on REDD+ safeguards have been incorporated in the draft which was presented before the Expert Committee on 22 March 2021. Draft of the safeguards information system has been finalized and is ready for web hosting for public comments.

2. Financial Progress

S. No.	Total Approved Budget (Rs. in Lakh)	Financial Year	Budget Released (Rs. in Lakh)	Year wise Expenditure (Rs. in Lakh)	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs. in Lakh)
1.	120.40	2019-20	72.00 <small>(on 24/02/2020)</small>	7.49	7.49
2.	-	2020-21 <small>(from April to Sept. 2020)</small>	-	0.21	7.70
3.	-	2020-21 <small>(from Oct. to March 2021)</small>	-	15.33 (expenditure) 2.59 (unadjusted advance)	17.91
Total Expenditures					23.00

Area of Concern: This scheme was submitted to the National CAMPA for the duration of 18 months. However, the Executive Body of the National Authority recommended the scheme with a reduced duration of 9 months (from 18 months to 9 months) which was further approved by the Governing body of the National CAMPA.

The draft document on Safeguards Information System for REDD+ was prepared and was to be finalized after due stakeholder consultation processes. There was delay in organization of stakeholder consultation workshops due to COVID-19 pandemic. After that it was decided to conduct the regional stakeholder consultation workshops in a virtual mode. Nine regional stakeholder consultation workshops on draft safeguards information system were organized by January 2021. After finalization of the Safeguards Information System, a web-based SIS module has to be developed for collection of information on REDD+ Safeguards from the States for preparation of Summary of Information on Safeguards for periodical submission of the report to the UNFCCC. A knowledge sharing platform on REDD+ has to be developed alongwith SIS module. Organisation of the trainings for building the capacity of the SFDs has also been delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic as it was not feasible to organize the capacity building programmes in the pandemic situations as per the Government Guidelines.

Keeping above points in to consideration, National CAMPA was requested to extend the project period up to 31 December 2021. However, necessary communication in this regard is still not received.

Component: Capacity Buildings of State Forest Departments for Developing State REDD+ Action Plans under ICFRE CAMPA funded scheme titled 'Strengthening Forestry Research for Ecological Sustainability and Productivity Enhancement'

Progress Report for the Financial Year 2020-21

1. Physical Progress

- A. Resource manual for capacity building of State Forest Departments:** A resource manual for capacity building of State Forest Departments for developing State REDD+ Action Plans has been prepared and published. The manual has been written in a simple and easy to understand manner so that State Forest Departments can easily follow the methodology and process for developing their SRAP. The manual addresses five main stages for developing SRAP, i.e., prepare, analyse, plan, monitor and budget. The first stage: preparation is purely institutional and comprises of collection of preparatory data and analysis, the second stage: analysis involves identification and prioritization of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation through multi-stakeholder consultation processes. The rest of the three stages, i.e., planning, monitoring and budgeting deals with identification of intervention packages, safeguards analysis, monitoring activities and budget for identified activities along with operation plan. The 'Problem Analysis Workshop' and 'Solution Analysis Workshop' are the central group activities that give an outline towards and recognising the challenges faced by the respective areas and contributing necessary actions to improve the forest productivity. These contribute essential inputs in the whole process of developing SRAP.
- B. Capacity building of the Nodal Officers/ Trainers of ICFRE institutes for developing State REDD+ Action Plan:** 18 Nodal Officers/ trainers have been nominated by the ICFRE's institutes for building the capacity of the officials of the State Forest Departments for developing State REDD+ Action Plan. A four days stakeholder consultation workshop and expert consultation workshop for building the capacity of the State Forest Departments of Chhattisgarh was organized under the World Bank funded Ecosystem Services Improvement Project at Raipur, Chhattisgarh from 17 to 20 February 2021. This platform was also utilized for building the capacity of the 18 Nodal officers of ICFRE institutes (two from each institute).
- C.** It was proposed to organize the capacity building programmes of the SFDs for developing State REDD+ Action Plans as per following details:

S. No.	Proposed venue of capacity building	Proposed states to be covered for capacity building
1.	FRI, Dehradun	Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi

2.	IFP, Ranchi	West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand,
3.	IWST Bengaluru	Goa, Karnataka
4.	AFRI Jodhpur	Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Rajasthan, Gujarat
5.	HFRI Shimla	Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh
6.	TFRI Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha
7.	IFB Hyderabad	Telangana, Andhra Pradesh,
8.	IFGTB Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Kerala
9.	RFRI Jorhat	Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur

- D. IWST Bangalore has organized a two days stakeholder consultation workshop for building the capacity of the State Forest Departments of Karnataka on 15 and 16 March 2021 at Bengaluru.
- E. Hindi version of the Resource Manual for capacity building of the SFDs has been prepared and same is under finalization. This will be useful for the Hindi speaking states.
- F. Documentary for developing state REDD+ action plan is also under preparation and finalization.

2. Financial Progress

S. No.	Total Approved Budget (Rs. in Lakh)	Financial Year	Budget Released (Rs. in Lakh)	Year wise Expenditure (Rs. in Lakh)	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs. in Lakh)
1.	120.06	2019-20	18.00 (on 26/02/2020)	0.82	0.82
2.	-	2020-21 (from April to Sept. 2020)	-	1.61	2.43
3.	-	2020-21 (from Oct. to March 2021)	20.00 (on March 2021) 10.00 (on March 2021)	10.54 (expenditure) 13.96 (unadjusted advance)	12.97
Total Expenditures					12.97

Area of Concern: The duration of this component is 2 years, i.e., February 2020 to January 2022. Trainings have to be organized in a physical mode as lot of group exercises are to be involved with the active participation of participants. Organisation of the trainings for building the capacity of the SFDs has been delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic as it was not feasible to organize the trainings in a physical mode in the pandemic situations as per the Government Guidelines. Organisation of the trainings will be completed by January 2021, if pandemic situation will become normal. If pandemic situations prevail in the remaining project duration then about six months of extension will be required for completion of the trainings for capacity building of the State Forest Departments.