

# Evaluating Safeguards in REDD+ Developments: Assessing the Adherence of National Documents with International Frameworks



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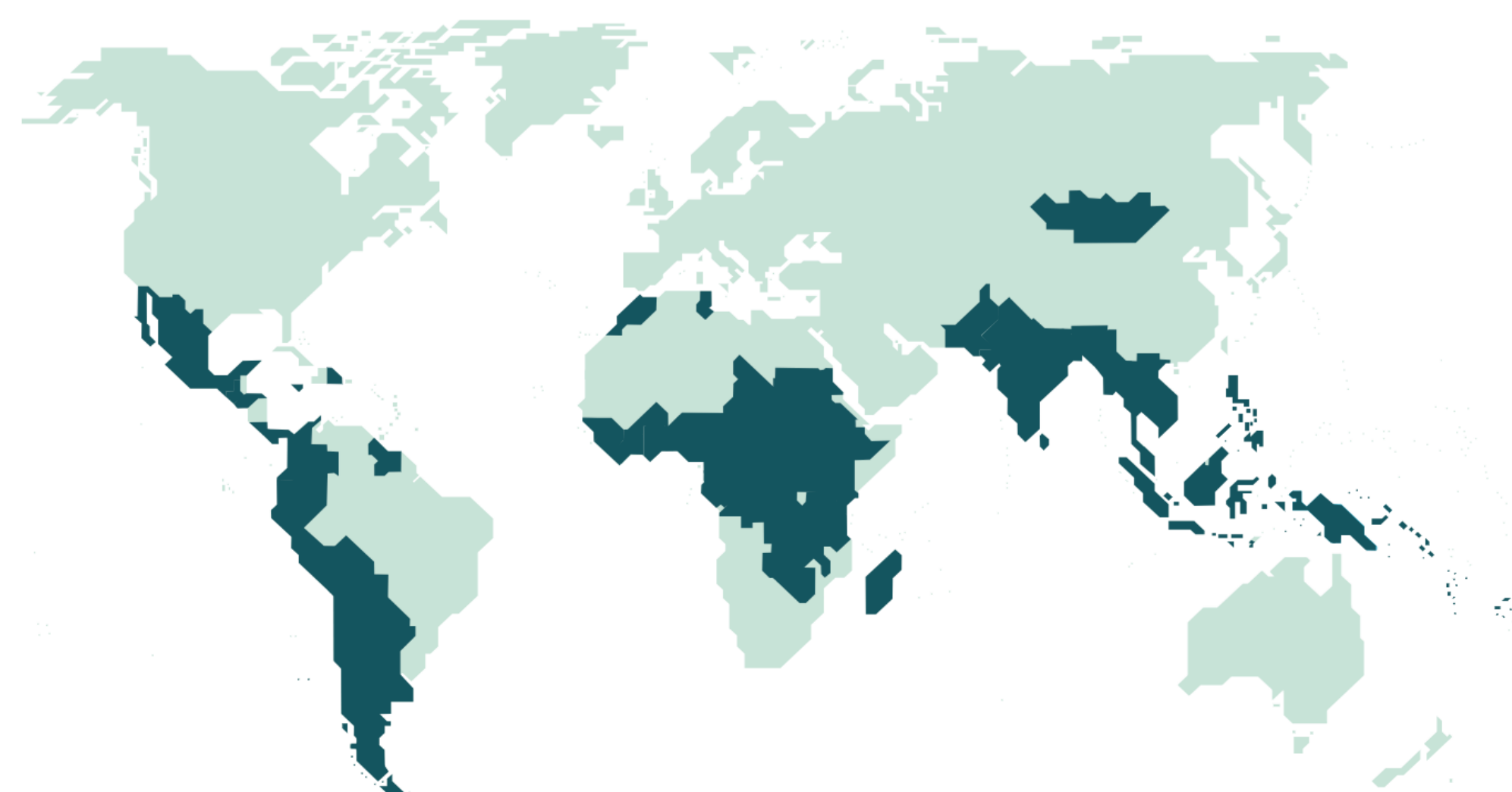
## Abstract

As climate change escalates, mitigation techniques like REDD+ continue to gain traction, but stakeholders often prioritize its monetary benefits over social implications. The UNFCCC's Cancun and Warsaw frameworks aim to combat this by raising awareness and ensuring Indigenous involvement, commitment integration, and transparent reporting. This study evaluates Indonesia and Brazil's adherence to these frameworks. The study's findings discovered that Indonesia aligns well, credited to its environmental history and governance, while Brazil falls short, particularly due to its governance and land tenure policy. Additionally, challenges while implementing safeguards on a project-based level include governance issues and capacity constraints. The research emphasizes need for global alignment with UNFCCC safeguards and stresses international collaboration for environmental and social sustainability.

## Introduction

Due to mounting concerns surrounding climate change, mitigation techniques such as the use of carbon credits derived from offset projects have become more popular. However, their impact on local communities remains a concern. This study investigates whether national strategies align with international safeguards, focusing on the top three REDD+ credit-producing countries. The use of carbon credits aims to offset emissions, meet decarbonization goals, and attract investment. Yet, research suggests their environmental efficacy is debatable, while poorly developed projects can harm communities and widen social disparities. To address these issues, global regulatory bodies have introduced safeguards to ensure environmental efficiency and social protection. Therefore, this study asks: At a national level, do the social safeguards employed by REDD+ credit-producing countries align with the Warsaw and Cancun frameworks?

● UN-REDD partner countries host 70% of all tropical forests



## Methodology

This section outlines the research methodology adopted to explore the alignment of national strategies with international safeguards in REDD+ projects. Through comprehensive data collection from national documentation and literature review, the study assesses the implementation of Cancun and Warsaw frameworks in the top three REDD+ credit-producing countries (Peru, Indonesia, and Brazil). By integrating findings from both sources, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of social safeguard implementation and address common barriers encountered by developers.

### Data Collection

To assess the adoption of Cancun and Warsaw frameworks and challenges in REDD+ project development, a systematic approach was employed. National strategy documentation from the top three REDD+ credit-producing countries—Peru, Indonesia, and Brazil—was examined. Utilizing the UNFCCC REDD+ website, REDD+ national strategy documents and Summary of Safeguard Information (SIS) were collected. While documents for Indonesia and Brazil were available in both REDD+ national strategy and SIS strategy, those for Peru were only accessible in Spanish. Therefore, Peru was excluded from the study to ensure data uniformity. Data for alignment with the Warsaw framework was sourced from Summary of Safeguard Information documents as no alignment information was found in national strategy documents.

### Data Analysis

Findings from national documentation and literature were synthesized using Microsoft Excel. Alignment with Cancun principles was evaluated through a text-based search, assigning scores (1-3) based on the depth of alignment evidence. Alignment with Warsaw framework was assessed using a yes/no system. Literature analysis identified recurring themes regarding challenges in safeguard implementation. Common keywords like "limitations," "barriers," and "issues" were utilized to extract relevant literature from sources like Google Scholar and University of Toronto Library Database. The themes extracted from literature were aligned with findings from national documentation to comprehend potential limitations faced by project developers.

This dual approach provided a comprehensive understanding of both national strategies' alignment with international frameworks and the challenges encountered in implementing social safeguards in REDD+ projects.

## Results

### Cancun Analysis Results

Cancun Safeguards Requirements	Indonesia	Brazil
(a)	3	1.5
(b)	2.5	1
(c)	2.5	1.5
(d)	2.5	1
(e)	3	1
(f)	2.5	0.5
(g)	2.5	0.5

### Warsaw Analysis Results

Warsaw Safeguard Requirements	Indonesia	Brazil
(1)	Yes	Yes
(2)	Yes	Yes
(3)	Yes	Yes
(4)	Yes	Yes
(5)	Yes	Yes

## Discussion

The analysis of Brazil and Indonesia's adherence to REDD+ safeguard frameworks reveals broader trends in global REDD+ implementation. While Indonesia demonstrates advanced alignment with the Cancun principles, rooted in historical commitments to sustainable forestry and robust governance structures, Brazil faces challenges stemming from governance issues and land tenure complexities. Indonesia's proactive approach and stakeholder engagement has positioned it as a leader in REDD+ implementation, showcasing its dedication to environmental stewardship. In contrast, Brazil struggles with ineffective coordination and legal ambiguities, hindering its efforts to meet international agreements.

Overall, the Warsaw framework offers a more flexible approach to safeguard alignment compared to the Cancun principles, facilitating easier compliance for participating countries. However, challenges persist in translating national commitments into effective project-level implementation, underscoring the need for enhanced coordination and capacity building. At the developer level challenges were discovered to include complexity surrounding REDD+, uncertainty, capacity constraints, and legal ambiguities, highlighting the complexities of translating international agreements into actionable strategies.

## Conclusion & Recommendation

This research paper aimed to evaluate the alignment of REDD+ social safeguards with the Warsaw and Cancun frameworks at a national level. Despite the focus on monetary benefits of programs such as REDD+, overlooking the social implications of projects can create significant blind spots. Therefore, to encourage better adherence from Indonesia, Brazil, and the wider global community it is recommended that:

- International framework language and verification mechanisms should be strengthened .
- Safeguarding guidelines should be consolidated for clarity.
- Additional aid partnerships should be created.
- Intergovernmental cooperation for alignment should become more of a priority amongst credit producing countries.