THE TRIPLE GOALS OF A CLIMATE SMART, PRO-POOR AND SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC POLICY: LESSONS FROM REDD+ IN ACRE, BRAZIL

By

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ABSTRACT

In attention to the urgency of tackling climate change and in recognition of the potential of forest conservation for increasing that effort, the UNFCCC proposed a policy for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, known as REDD+. In sequence, it was observed the need for a public policy that integrates responses to climate change with other global priority goals, including poverty alleviation and sustainable development. At the same time, it was suggested that the REDD+ policy could be designed to deliver multiple social and environmental benefits, beyond the carbon-related goals; however, little guidance has been provided about how this efforts can be effectively achieved. In attention to that context, this research aims to evaluate whether REDD+ can act as a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy and to investigate how it can achieve these triple goals successfully. It is believed that the state of Acre in Brazil has one of the most advanced REDD+ programmes in the world; thus, Acre’s ISA Carbon programme was chosen as a REDD+ case study to be studied in-depth and to provide valuable lessons on to improve the policy outcomes. Qualitative research methods were used, in a combination of documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, in contemplation of identifying the enablers and barriers to comply with the REDD+ safeguards, which are principles that seeks to ensure the achievement of successful policy outcomes. The findings revealed that among the most meaningful actions that are enabling the potential of Acre in delivering successful REDD+ outcomes include the insertion of its programme in a broader policy framework of synergistic objectives, besides its integration in a low-emission rural development strategy, together with a well-structured institutional arrangement for governance. Meanwhile, the strongest barriers identified that may potentially diminish its performance include delay in regularizing land tenure, an unclear benefit-sharing mechanism, and the lack of effective incentives to stimulate the transition of farmers to non-forest land use practices, coupled with an inconsistent government support. The main conclusion was that although operating in a suboptimal level, the ISA Carbon programme has a significant potential of reducing carbon emissions and delivering social and environmental co-benefits. Thus, there is an observed potential of the REDD+ case study in achieving the expected triple goals.

Keywords: REDD+ policy, mitigation of climate change, poverty alleviation, sustainable development, safeguards
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCBA: Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance

CDSA: Environmental Services Development Company

CEVA: State Commission for Validation and Monitoring

CIFOR: Centre for International Forestry Research

COP: Conference of the Parties from the UNFCCC

DP: Delivery Partner from the FCPF

FCPF: World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility

GCS: Global Comparative Study on REDD+

GHG: greenhouse gas emissions

GIZ: German Cooperation Agency

IMC: Institute of Climate Change and Environmental Services Regulation

INPE: National Institute of Spatial Research

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

ISA Carbon: Incentives for Environmental Services- Carbon (stands for “Incentivos por Serviços Ambientais - ISA Carbono” in Brazilian Portuguese)

ITERACRE: Acre’s Land Institute

IUCN: International Union for the Conservation of Nature

PAS: Sustainable Amazon Programme

PGE/AC: Attorney General of the State of Acre

PPCD/AC: Acre’s Deforestation Prevention and Control Plan

PPCDAM: Amazon Deforestation Prevention and Control Plan

PNMC: National Policy on Climate Change

KfW: German Development Bank

REDD+: reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and sustainable management of forests
**REDD+ SES:** REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards  
**REM:** REDD Programme for Early Movers  
**RESEX:** Extractive Reserves  
**SEANP/AC:** System of Natural Protected Areas of the State of Acre  
**SIS:** safeguards information systems  
**SISA:** State System of Incentives for Environmental Services (stands for “Sistema Estadual de Incentivos a Serviços Ambientais - SISA” in Brazilian Portuguese)  
**TIs:** Indigenous Lands  
**UCs:** Conservation Units  
**UCEGEO:** Central Geoprocessing and Remote Sensing Unit  
**UNFCCC:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
**UN-REDD:** United Nations programme for REDD+  
**WWF:** World Wide Fund for Nature  
**ZEE:** Ecological-Economic Zoning
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problems statement and Research justification

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014) in its latest assessment report, the future risks and impacts caused by climate change will be amplified and will generate new risks affecting the natural and human systems, in addition to the ones that are already being experienced worldwide.

It is estimated that the activities of deforestation and forest degradation are responsible for around 10% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) (Sills et al., 2014), contributing significantly to climate change. Furthermore, forest deforestation represents the loss of a major economic asset and it leads to the loss of livelihood opportunities for rural and indigenous communities in developing countries (UN, 2014). Accordingly, it is observed that forest conservation has the potential of increasing efforts of reducing carbon emissions and consequently, mitigating climate change, besides being a strategy for achieving other development goals.

In attention to the urgency of tackling climate change, and in recognition of the potential of forest conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks for increasing that effort, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) proposed a policy for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, known as REDD+. At the same time, the UNFCCC recognised that responses to climate change should be integrated into the pursuit of global priority needs such as sustained economic growth and eradication of poverty (UNFCCC, 2011). The IPCC further recognized that integrated responses for climate mitigation with other societal objectives, has the potential for contributing to a ‘climate-resilient pathway for sustainable development’ (IPCC, 2014). However, an observed limitation is that the IPPC lacks on giving guidance or establishing measures about how those integrated actions can be effectively achieved.

In attention to that context, this research aims to analyse a public policy model that may be potentially formulated for the purposes of mitigating climate change, as well as alleviating poverty and generating efforts towards sustainable development, and finally, investigate how best this policy can be formulated in order to achieve these triple goals successfully.

It is argued that the REDD+ policy can be designed to integrate goals other than carbon emissions reduction, including improvement of rural livelihoods and sustainable development, potentially completing the objectives of other international conventions (Angelsen et al., 2012; Sills et al., 2014; Springate-Baginski and Wollenberg, 2010).
For such purpose, the subject of REDD+ is taken as case study, specifically REDD+ in Brazil that is one of the leading countries of developing REDD+ policy strategies (Angelsen et al., 2012) and consequently, may provide valuable lessons. Accordingly, it is evaluated the potential of REDD+ to be designed as a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy.

Following, ensure the generation of environmental and social co-benefits, among the carbon-related outcomes, is believed to be crucial for the success of REDD+ (Angelsen et al., 2012; Elias et al., 2014), and there are special measures that can be taken to secure that achievement. This role is attributed to the safeguards principles that seeks to provide guidance for REDD+ activities fulfilling social and environmental outcomes (Angelsen et al., 2012; CIFOR, 2014a; Sills et al., 2014). However, there are a number of challenges associated with implementing safeguards, especially because little is known about how to comply with them (Angelsen et al., 2012; CIFOR, 2014a; Moss and Nussbaum, 2011).

Thus, the specific aim of this investigation is to identify the conditions and activities that act both as enablers and as barriers to compliance with the REDD+ safeguards, and consequently that help or hinder the achievement of successful outcomes.

Finally, lessons and recommendations on how to improve the policy outcomes aims to be provided to potentially enhance the chances of success of future REDD+ policy actions in Brazil, and consequently, increase the efforts of mitigating climate change, reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development.

1.2. Aim and objectives

There is an observed demand for a public policy that combines efforts of achieving multiple goals at once, in particular global priority goals, including mitigation of climate change, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

In that context, the overall aim of this study is to evaluate whether REDD+ can act as a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy and to investigate how it can achieve these outcomes successfully.

In order to achieve this research purpose, the following specific objectives are set:
• Identify a suitable REDD+ subnational initiative in Brazil to be used as a case study project for an in-depth investigation on how best the policy can achieve its social and environmental outcomes;
• Identify both the enablers and the barriers to comply with the REDD+ safeguards that seeks to ensure the achievement of the expected outcomes;
• Make recommendations on to improve the selected subnational initiative and provide lessons for future REDD+ policy actions in Brazil;
• Make conclusions about the extent to which the REDD+ case study achieve the triple goals.

1.3. Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is divided into six main chapters.

After this previous Introduction, Chapter 2 presents a literature review that gives an introduction to the subject of REDD+ and then outlines the main debates surrounding this initiative worldwide, with a particular focus on the safeguards systems approach, which was taken as criteria to guide the investigation.

Next, Chapter 3 details the subnational initiative in Brazil that was selected as a suitable case study project to conduct the investigation, based on the literature review. In sequence and in association with the specific objectives that was previously outlined, it is presented the methods that was employed for data collection, including the conceptual framework adopted to set the criteria on which the analysis and discussion will be based.

In Chapter 4, the results are presented, following its discussion in Chapter 5. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the research findings and outlines recommendations on to improve future REDD+ actions in Brazil, primarily addressed to national stakeholders involved in this political agenda.

The interview guides used for data collection, besides other relevant information, are included at the end of the dissertation in the appendices section.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided in four main parts. At first, an introduction about REDD+ is given, approaching its definition and aims, its current choices and challenges, beyond the initiatives and researches that are underway.

Secondly, the processes that led to the conceptualization and implementation of REDD+ in the international context are presented, in chronological order.

The following section, presents an in depth analysis of the safeguards under REDD+, which is the criteria that was adopted for the investigation.

2.1. Introduction to REDD+: Concept and aims

Proposed by the UNFCCC in response to the global efforts to reduce GHG emissions, the fundamental objective of REDD+, which can be inferred from the name, is about reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (UNFCCC, 2011). Its mechanism has a market-based approach that provides financial incentives (ibid.), which comes from developed nations to be addressed to developing countries, mainly the ones with large tropical forests, in order to compensate them for preserving their standing forests through avoided deforestation. REDD+ was primarily conceived as a potential instrument for mitigating climate change (UNFCCC, 2011), as it targets limiting the extent of such problematic GHG emissions caused by forest loss and its threats. However, its policy has been evolving to approach a multiplicity of objectives concerning outcomes beyond carbon emission reductions.

It has been proposed that REDD+ could be designed to deliver significant multiple benefits that includes social and environmental aspects, what may lead to complement the objectives of other important international agreements and political agendas, such as the UN development goals (Angelsen et al., 2012; Sills et al., 2014; Springate-Baginski and Wollenberg, 2010). These additional outcomes expected from REDD+ are referred to as non-carbon benefits and are often called co-benefits, which includes poverty alleviation (e.g. improved livelihoods of rural poor communities and indigenous peoples), biodiversity conservation and improved forest governance, besides contributing towards sustainable development (Angelsen et al., 2012; Springate-Baginski and Wollenberg, 2010).

Thereby, it is believed that REDD+ approaches a ‘win-win’ outcome, where economic objectives go closely associated with environmental and social prosperity (Angelsen et
al., 2012). Thus, the integration of multiple objectives in the policy, which also positively leads to the achievement of co-benefits, contributes to increase its legitimacy and stakeholder support, including attracting investors (Angelsen et al., 2012; Elias et al., 2014). In addition, this is what makes REDD+ distinct from other environmental policies.

It is believed that the success of the policy is dependent on the provision of non-carbon benefits (Angelsen et al., 2012; Elias et al., 2014), and in consequence, on its potential to deliver multiple social and environmental benefits. At the same, there is not a clearly defined purpose for REDD+ and the interpretations about its meaning vary accordingly to the different stakeholders involved in the process (e.g. members of government, indigenous peoples, the private sector, civil society). Thus, with this uncertainty about what the policy ought to achieve, its implementation on the ground turns into a challenge (Angelsen et al., 2012). As a result, REDD+ has been continually negotiated at international, national and local levels, in order to address the different interests of the parties and to define what it will mean in practice (in the long-term).

Section 2.2 presents information about the major ongoing international negotiations under the REDD+ regime and its significant evolving process. Meanwhile, the next section will present an overview about the REDD+ initiatives that are underway and the most prominent published researches that are available about the subject and its applicability on this study.

2.1.1. Initiatives underway and main researches

REDD+ projects are reasonably located in developing countries, where it can be addressed significant emissions reduction from avoided deforestation and where there are social and environmental disparities, such as low-income communities and threats to biodiversity (Angelsen et al., 2012). Thus, in places where its objectives can be unfold.

It is recognized that over 200 REDD+ projects are being undertaken worldwide, in approximately 40 countries (Angelsen et al., 2012). Two countries, Brazil and Indonesia, are responsible for the greatest number of projects currently being developed, in consequence of being the largest emitters of forest-related carbon, beyond being key tropical forest countries (ibid.). As a result, they are the leading countries in developing policy strategies for REDD+ (Sills et al., 2014; Springate-Baginski and Wollenberg, 2010; Angelsen et al., 2012).

The Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has a platform, englobing an expert scientific community, which is leading the researches about REDD+ by offering a
wealth of outputs that stands for the most complete available data about the subject. The latest book from CIFOR, from the series about how REDD+ is moving ahead since its idea was adopted in 2007, is ‘Analysing REDD+: Challenges and choices’ (2012), which follows two earlier volumes, ‘Realising REDD+: National strategy and policy options’ (2009) and ‘Moving Ahead with REDD: Issues, options and implications’ (2008). The short difference in time for the release of each book reveals how rapidly the REDD+ agenda has been evolving.

The 2012 book describes the main challenges in designing and implementing REDD+ policies and projects and it gives recommendations on to overcome obstacles. It is based on the findings of a major research project undertaken by CIFOR and partners that ran from 2009 to 2013, the Global Comparative Study on REDD+ (GCS). The GCS investigated national and subnational REDD+ activities across 13 countries in order to identify the challenges and the enabling conditions for achieving an effective, efficient and equitable REDD+. The overall aim of this series of studies from CIFOR is to provide information and tools in order to ensure ‘3E+’ outcomes (see Angelsen, 2009) from REDD+, including (climate-)effectiveness, (cost-)efficiency, and equity, plus achieving co-benefits, which is justified as being the successful way of designing and implementing REDD+.

The newest book from CIFOR, REDD+ on the ground: a case book of subnational initiatives across the globe (2014), aims to contribute to the understanding about the REDD+ realities on the ground, thus, at the implementation phase. The book reports on the experience of 23 REDD+ initiatives in six countries and highlight the key challenges and lessons learned, by offering “global insights from local context”. This is a very relevant study because it identifies potential problems of the policy in practice, and by sharing lessons across countries, it can be an opportunity for learning how to overcome them faster, ultimately contributing to turn REDD+ into a more consistent idea.

In addition, one more literature from CIFOR is being considered relevant for this paper: “REDD, forest governance and rural livelihoods: The emerging agenda (2010)”. Although the book is not updated anymore, there are some important considerations that can be taken from it in terms of the added benefit of poverty alleviation to the policy design. The book gathers the findings from an international workshop held at the University of East Anglia in 2009, where the participants included researchers from the CIFOR and UEA, and REDD experts from the focus countries (including Brazil).

2.2. International agreements and the evolution of REDD+
The UNFCCC emerged in 1992 at the “Rio Earth Summit”, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and entered in force two years later aiming to address climate change and its adverse effects\(^1\). It represents a global commitment, where 195 countries take part as Parties to the Convention that reunites occasionally to held conferences (“COP”) in favour of negotiating progressive international efforts to tackle climate change.

In 2007, at the 13th COP in Bali, it was recognized the urgent need of actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. Thereby, that represents the moment where REDD\(^2\) theme was put forward in the international agenda. At the same time, a decision was made, referred as the “Bali Action Plan”, about establishing a formal process to further implement the proposals of this Convention until 2012; thus, paving the way to officialise the REDD+ policy. Another fundamental recognition of the COP 13 was that “reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries can promote co-benefits and may complement the aims and objectives of other relevant international conventions and agreements”, what is now known to be critical for the success of REDD+.

At the following years the discussions about REDD increased and including, some REDD pilot projects started being developed worldwide, including in Brazil. At 16th COP in Cancun in 2010, which decisions became known as the “Cancun Agreements” (UNFCCC, 2011), a remarkable progress was made in the REDD+ policy agenda. In the first place, REDD+ was officially recognized as a mechanism for mitigating climate change and it was decided that it should involve the following aims: reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conserve and enhance forest carbon stocks, and act towards the sustainable management of forests\(^3\). Secondly, it was defined that the activities to be undertaken should be operationalised in phases, starting with the planning phase (1), which includes the development of national strategies or action

\(^1\) Information available at: http://unfccc.int/2860.php  
\(^2\) REDD (without the ‘plus’) was the old definition used at that context, when the sole purpose of the idea was Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. Three years later, as will be mentioned on the text, the concept expanded to also include the purposes of (‘plus’) conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and sustainable management of forests.  
\(^3\) The current definition from the UNFCCC for what is known as REDD+.
plans, followed by the phase (2) of implementing the plans, and lastly the phase (3) that consists on measuring, reporting and verifying the results-based activities. So far, most of the REDD+ initiatives worldwide are in phase 1, and a few has advanced to phase 2.

Moreover, the COP 16 elaborated a set of seven social and environmental safeguards to be followed by the parties when developing and implementing their national strategies or action plans. Accordingly, these safeguards were requested to be promoted and supported in favour of addressing key elements associated with undertaking the REDD+ activities. The safeguards principles include actions to (see Appendix 1 for the full text):

- Complement national forest programmes and international conventions and agreements;
- Ensure transparent and effective governance;
- Respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Ensure full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders;
- Conserve forests, biodiversity, ecosystem services, and to enhance other social benefits (e.g. sustainable livelihoods);
- Address risks of reversals (i.e. achieve permanence);
- Reduce leakage.

It is important to notice that even though complying with these safeguards is a standard requirement to be followed by REDD+ projects being carried out within the UNFCCC, they are non-binding principles, thus, they are not enforceable. In addition, countries have the flexibility to interpret and to put in practice these safeguards or others, according to the applicability of their own context.

Another important decision made at COP 16, was that developing countries involved in REDD+ activities were also requested to comply with “a system for providing information on how the safeguards...are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities” (UNFCCC, 2011: 13). However, limited guidance was provided on how countries should monitor and report on their safeguards.

In the following year, at the 17th COP in Durban, progress was made in terms of providing guidance related to the subject of safeguards information systems (SIS). It was agreed that a SIS should provide information on how all the safeguards are addressed and respected in a transparent manner and with consistent information that is accessible by all stakeholders involved in the process. In addition, it was stated that countries undertaking REDD+ activities should provide a summary of information on safeguards through national communications on a periodically basis. At the same time, it was contemplated that SIS should be implemented at a national level and should be country-driven, thus, interpreted and applied in line with the national context. However, these measures are too broad and further clarification on SIS is still being awaited.

Further guidance on SIS is being envisage as future steps to be taken by the next generations of COP. However, this should be done rapidly as there are considerable
information gaps that need to be addressed in order to make progress with REDD+. Yet, the ongoing COP negotiations have not been advancing considerably and, although the discussions about the prospects of safeguards have been receiving notable attention, the provision of further guidance on SIS has been slower than expected since its proposition in 2010.

Despite significant progress has been made over the past eight years of international agreements, there is still a general uncertainty about the future of REDD+ (Angelsen et al., 2012; Sunderlin et al., 2014). Notwithstanding, if the core goal of mitigating climate change do not turn out to be effective or meaningful in the long term, the policy can still be worth it if other social and environmental outcomes were achieved. Thus, it is worth considering a ‘no regrets’ approach to REDD+ (Angelsen et al., 2012). Therefore, ensuring that co-benefits are generated and that harm is avoided is key to make progress with REDD+ and including, it may increase the support (e.g. financial and political) and the stakeholders trust in the mechanism. The safeguards policies aim to do just this; accordingly, their discourses will be discussed in depth on the following section.

2.3. Safeguards discourses under REDD+

REDD+ safeguards are a set of norms or institutions, used in the form of guiding principles instead of rules, to guide the fulfilment of social and environmental outcomes (Angelsen et al., 2012) that are expected to be achieved in addition to the carbon-related benefits (see section 2.1). In other words, the safeguards seek to ensure the generation of REDD+ co-benefits.

In addition, as it can be deducted by the meaning of the word, the safeguards aim to protect against harm or loss (Moss and Nussbaum, 2011). This refers to the undesirable outcomes of REDD+ that have already been acknowledged, involving potential risks of undue harm to people and the environment (e.g. loss of rights, unequal distribution of benefits, conversion of natural forests) (ibid.), which have caused some people to oppose the policy by believing is a threat (Angelsen et al., 2012). In particular, there are some challenges associated with weak governance, often experienced in developing countries, that have the potential of bringing undesirable impacts mainly to traditional populations and biodiversity, and that shows how important it is to safeguard them by establishing a minimum standard to be met by the policy. Thus, safeguards can also be a risk management tool, targeting the minimization of social and environmental risks associated with REDD+ activities.
Therefore, the objectives of the safeguards are to support and promote REDD+ actions that target the generation of co-benefits and that cause no harm. It is envisaged a direct link between the implementation of safeguards and the achievement of effective, efficient, and equitable outcomes of REDD+ (Angelsen et al., 2012; CIFOR, 2014a, Sills et al., 2014). Thus, it can be inferred that implementing safeguards to guide REDD+ projects is fundamental for the achievement of successful outcomes.

However, it is necessary that the safeguards policies be implemented in an effective way, which is a condition that poses a number of challenges (Angelsen et al., 2012; CIFOR, 2014a; Moss and Nussbaum, 2011). In favour of avoiding vested interests from stakeholders at different levels, the operationalization of safeguards should be in an accessible and transparent manner, counting with a mechanism for the provision of information to indicate that the social and environmental standards are being met (Angelsen et al., 2012; Moss and Nussbaum, 2011), which is the role of a SIS (see section 2.2). On the other hand, that may impose significant transaction costs to be considered while implementing, monitoring and reporting on safeguards; thus, the provision of benefits should outweigh these costs in order to stimulate the adherence (Angelsen et al., 2012).

Moreover, safeguards are subject to different interpretations by different stakeholders, in the same way as the unclear definition for what encompasses co-benefits (Moss and Nussbaum, 2011). Thereby, they are being applied at different scales of governance, including at national, subnational and project levels, besides at the international arena in parallel to the UNFCCC (Angelsen et al., 2012), according to the observed need. As a result, more transaction costs are being generated while they are overlapping and could be being used in a more congruent way for the benefit of using data and indicators that are already in place (ibid.). Accordingly, there is a need of harmonising the implementation of the safeguards policies across the different scales and with the existing international agreements.

The following section will present and describe the most prominent safeguards policies that are currently in place for REDD+, including their differences and commonalities.

### 2.3.1. Current safeguards policies

Several safeguards initiatives have emerged in parallel to the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements, being developed by multilateral and bilateral donors at international level, beyond others multi-stakeholder agreements (i.e. public/private institutions) at
jurisdictional levels (i.e. national, state or local level). In common, all the initiatives have the goal of promoting environmental and social co-benefits, beyond ensuring a ‘no harm’ REDD+ approach. Each one of them has their own safeguards framework, setting different principles and criteria of environmental and social considerations, despite their general overlap in targeting similar issues.

A number of studies have reviewed and identified the key safeguards initiatives for REDD+, in terms of content and global adherence (Jagger et al., 2014; Mackenzie, 2012; McDermott et al., 2012; Moss and Nussbaum, 2011). Besides the UNFCCC agreements, there are two other major international programmes of safeguards involving multilateral institutions, which are the World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the United Nations programme (UN-REDD). In addition, a voluntary certification scheme has being largely adopted worldwide, which is the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES). Furthermore, a country level approach that is being greatly promoted is the safeguards policy from Brazil, which is the leading country in establishing a national policy framework.

These major initiatives are presented below, with an overview of their principles in order to allow comparison and a better understanding of the subject. The full document of principles from each presented initiative can be found in the appendix section.

**Forest Carbon Partnership Facility**

The FCPF is a global partnership of governments, businesses, civil society, and indigenous peoples focused on REDD+ activities. The World Bank assumes three different roles in this partnership that is of trustee, secretariat and, as delivery partner (DP), which in collaboration with other DPs provides support for the design and implementation of REDD+ to participating countries.

The FCPF developed in 2011 a “Common Approach to Environmental and Social Safeguards for Multiple Delivery Partners”, proposing safeguards standards to be adopted during the strategic planning and preparation process of national REDD+ projects (phase 1). The most relevant safeguards policies of the DPs (i.e. multilateral investments banks) were compiled in a set of six safeguards topics to be considered as standards by their funded projects. The actions to be promoted include the following safeguards principles (see Appendix 2 for the full text): Environmental Assessment (to ensure the integration of environmental and social aspects into the decision-making

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4 Information available at: https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/
process); Natural Habitats (to promote sustainable development by the conservation of natural habitats and their functions); Forests (to realize the potential of forests to reduce poverty in a sustainable manner); Involuntary Resettlement (to avoid involuntary resettlement or to assist displaced persons); Indigenous Peoples (to implement full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and with due respect for their traditional knowledge); Physical and Cultural Resources (to preserve significant physical cultural resources such as archaeological, religious, aesthetic).

The ‘Common Approach’ involves the use of a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment, and its associated Environmental and Social Management Framework, which are mechanisms that seek to ensure compliance with the safeguards policies from the DPs, promoting the integration of key environmental and social concerns into the planning process and managing risks from the activities.

**UN-REDD**

The UN-REDD is a United Nations Collaborative Programme that aims to assist developing countries to take part and to build capacity in REDD+ mechanisms\(^5\). The programme was created in 2008, through the cooperation of three UN organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

The UN-REDD programme has developed a set of six social and environmental principles and its first version was presented in 2011, despite the document being revised and refined sequentially. The actions to be promoted include the following safeguards principles (see Appendix 3 for the full text): Democratic governance; Stakeholder livelihoods (assesses and mitigates potential adverse impacts); Policy coherence (consistent with international conventions and agreements); Protect and conserve natural forest (from degradation or conversion to other land uses); Maintain and enhance multiple functions of forest (increases benefits from biodiversity conservation); Minimise indirect adverse impacts on ecosystem services and biodiversity.

The framework provides guidance for designing and implementing REDD+ programmes, with a focus on enhancing environmental and social multiple benefits and reducing risks. Moreover, the programme intends to contribute to the UNFCCC in developing guidance on SIS, in terms of checking how safeguards are being addressed and respected.

\(^5\) Information available at: [http://www.un-redd.org/]
REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards

The REDD+ SES is a multi-stakeholder initiative launched in 2010, facilitated by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International. It is a voluntary certification system designed to enhance benefits and avoid harm of REDD+ programmes at jurisdictional levels, through complementing the requirements of existing safeguards policies.

The standards provide a framework to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of the social and environmental concerns of government-led REDD+ programmes (REDD+SES, 2013). The framework consists on a set of eight principles that define the necessary conditions to achieve a high social and environmental performance. The actions to be promoted include the following safeguards principles (see Appendix 4 for the full text): Recognition of rights to lands, territories, and resources; Equitable benefit-sharing; Long-term livelihood security and well-being of indigenous peoples and local communities; Contribution to sustainable development and protection of human rights, beyond good governance objectives; Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services; Rights to full and effective participation; Full access to information; Compliance with local and national laws and international treaties.

There are five REDD+ countries that have currently adopted REDD+ SES standards, among them Brazil (State of Acre), Ecuador, Indonesia (Central Kalimantan), Nepal and Tanzania. The contributions of REDD+ SES for the participating countries involve gaining greater recognition for the high level performance of social and environmental considerations that they are achieving and, as a result, these standards are contributing to promote a more effective, equitable, and sustainable approach to REDD+.

Brazil’s safeguards policy: Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria for REDD+

The Brazilian civil society produced a document of social and environmental safeguards for REDD+ that aims to set standards for regulating REDD+ activities in Brazil, targeting the achievement of multiple benefits and reducing risks associated with the activities (Bonfante et al., 2010). The document presents a bottom-up approach, performed by an organized multi-stakeholder committee that was represented by members of different groups involved in or affected by REDD+ mechanisms, which took into consideration a wide range of social and environmental concerns through public consultations (ibid.).
The process was very inclusive and involved the participation of representatives of private sector (e.g. forestry segment), environmental NGOs, research institutions, besides the usually misrepresented group of indigenous peoples, local communities and smallholders. Their engagement was important to give legitimacy to the process, potentially increasing the stakeholders’ willingness to comply with the safeguards, besides enhancing their credibility on the REDD+ mechanism. In order to take into consideration only the opinion of civil society, representatives of government were not considered in the committee (Bonfante et al., 2010). However, the decisions made throughout the process were communicated to key government agencies and to all the involved stakeholders, ensuring transparency by allowing anybody to follow up the process.

The resulting document, completed in 2010, presents a number of safeguards that were agreed by consensus of the committee (Bonfante et al., 2010). The format is organized in eight principles and 27 criteria, with the purpose of defining a minimum standard to be complied with in any REDD+ programmes in Brazil. The actions to be promoted include the following safeguards principles (see Appendix 5 for the full text): Legal compliance (conformance to national laws and relevant international agreements); Recognition of rights to lands, territories and natural resources and respect for traditional knowledge; Fair, transparent and equitable benefit-sharing; Economic sustainability and poverty alleviation; Environmental conservation; Full and effective participation; Monitoring and complete availability of information; Good governance.

The initiative followed the good practices guidelines from ISEAL Alliance in the process of developing the standards, targeting the preparation of a legitimate and transparent document, besides being representative of the involved and affected stakeholders.

Conclusion

Among the presented safeguards initiatives, a common feature is that they all have been recently or are being envisaged to go under revision. Accordingly, there is an observed general uncertainty about how the safeguards tend to work in practice (Moss and Nussbaum, 2011), which is reinforced by the slow (and costly) development of an effective SIS to monitor and report on how the safeguards are being performed.

Against this background, this study will support that learning process by providing information on the sort of conditions and actions that act as enablers and barriers to compliance with REDD+ safeguards.
3. METHODOLOGY

This dissertation consists on a case study research design and uses qualitative research methods for data collection, including desk research and in-depth semi-structured interviews, in order to investigate the specific objectives of the study.

3.1. Case study methodology

A case study research design was adopted, due to its approach of collection and analysis of data being applicable to this study as it represents a comprehensive research strategy (Yin, 2013).

The method was applied to help answer the ‘how’ question, regarding the study’s overall aim of how a REDD+ initiative can successfully achieve triple goals and constitute a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy. A single case study model was chosen to comply with that aim, for the sake of being studied in-depth.

Brazil is one the leading countries in the world in developing policy strategies for REDD+. Thus, it was considered valid to use REDD+ in Brazil as an example of case study due to its great experience, contributing to obtain findings that are more conclusive in regards of the aims of this dissertation.

3.1.1. Selection of a subnational initiative in Brazil

Due to the fact of Brazil not having a REDD+ policy implemented at national level, a subnational initiative was chosen as a case study for the investigation, in order to be studied in-depth. The selection of a suitable subnational initiative was based on the literature review and the main criteria was the advance of the policy implementation phase and its representativeness in the national context, in order to gather more specific data and relevant lessons.

The selected initiative is presented below.

3.1.2. REDD+ in Acre: ISA Carbon Programme

The state of Acre is located in the southwest of the Northern Region in Brazil (see Appendix 6 for the map), where it occupies 1.9% of the national territory, and represents about 4% of the Brazilian Amazon. Acre has a long political context of implementing
public policies to foster forest conservation and sustainable development, what lead the state to be popularly known as the “government of forest”.

In 2010, Acre enacted the Law No. 2.308, creating the State System of Incentives for Environmental Services (SISA), which set the basis for a statewide REDD+ policy.

The SISA law consists on a set of principles, directives and instruments that provides the structure for establishing a system of incentives for conserving and enhancing the supply of a variety of ecosystem services, including forest carbon stocks, natural scenic beauty, socio-biodiversity, water and land resources, climate regulation and others (Governo do Acre, 2010a).

The SISA ought to be implemented through programmes, specifically designed according to the state’s priorities in terms of ecosystem services. In attention to Acre’s priority target of carbon emissions reduction, the first to be designed and implemented under the SISA structure was the programme of Incentives for Environmental Services-Carbon (ISA Carbon). This programme was established to create and implement financial and management instruments to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus achieving sustainable forest management and the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. Accordingly, the ISA Carbon programme has the objective of promoting the institutionalization of a state system of REDD+. Among other specific objectives, the programme also seeks to promote the local and regional sustainable development of low carbon intensity.

The programme is divided in a collection of REDD+ projects across the state, which may be implemented under the management of the SISA government institutions or under private initiative, but in compliance with the same law requirements, called as “special projects”. Currently, all the REDD+ projects that are under development in the state are being managed by the government, with only one exception that is the Purus “special project”; the first of its kind to be created (WWF, 2013). Funding to support the implementation of the programme has come from several sources, including Acre state treasury, international cooperation agencies (i.e. GIZ; WWF; IUCN; Sky TV; KfW), Brazilian NGOs and the Amazon Fund, which was the main source; and there are prospects for future financing partnerships (Kill, 2014; WWF, 2013).

It is agreed that Acre has the most advanced REDD+ programme at jurisdictional level in the world (Alencar et al., 2012; EPRI, 2012; WWF, 2013). Accordingly, its preparedness is mostly due to the fact of the state having a well-established legal and institutional framework that may allow the programme to move forward the implementation phase (EPRI, 2012). In addition, the ISA Carbon programme has been
elected to receive funding by the German Development Bank (KfW) through its REDD Programme for Early Movers (REM) of payment for performance, due to its verified breakthrough in the development of a political, institutional and technical REDD+ framework\(^6\).

Consequently, the “ISA Carbon programme” in Acre was chosen as a case study by this research, taking into consideration the fact of being an advanced and representative REDD+ subnational initiative in Brazil, thus, having a great potential of providing valuable lessons throughout the investigation.

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative data was collected through desk research and semi-structured interviews, contributing to an in-depth investigation. According to Richards (1996:204), “if the political scientist can combine the information gained from elite interviews with other sources of data, such a combination produces a powerful research package”.

The desk research was the primary stage of data collection and consisted of an investigation about the challenges and opportunities associated with realising REDD+ in Brazil, and locally in Acre. The documentary analysis contributed to develop the interview questions that was sequentially used to collect in-depth content, through semi-structured interviews, in contemplation of identifying the key enablers and barriers of action associated with achieving successful outcomes.

A conceptual framework was developed in order to guide the investigation about the key enablers and barriers. The criteria that was used to support the data collection was based on safeguards policies discourses, as they have a fundamental role that seeks to promote the achievement of successful outcomes within the REDD+ policy. Accordingly, a comparative matrix was designed taking into consideration the Brazilian Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria and the UNFCCC Safeguards, proposed by the Cancun Agreements (see Appendix 7), both previously described at the literature review chapter. The matrix was then derived in five main variables that represent five congruent

\(^6\)Source: Technical note by the Brazilian Institute of Climate Change (IMC) on “Programa REDD para Early Movers e nível de referência do SISA”. (Unpublished)
principles between the proponent’s safeguards policies, which was the coding strategy used to organize the findings. As a result, the following safeguards principles were considered on the investigation: legal compliance; recognition of rights to land, resource use and benefits; environmental conservation and sustainable development; full and effective participation; and, transparent and effective governance.

The specific data about REDD+ in Acre was collected using as primary source ‘elite interviews’, with key stakeholders involved with the REDD+ policy in Acre, that was complemented with additional findings from secondary sources, which consisted of an analysis of key documents.

The documents that were analysed covered official government documents about the SISA law and other relevant policies, and recent research done to analyse the design of the ISA Carbon programme. The sources were both in English and in Brazilian Portuguese. Another key document analysed was the special report about REDD+ in Acre developed by the CIFOR team and available at its Blog, presenting data from interviews conducted with relevant stakeholders involved with the policy in the state.

The in-depth interviews were crucial to help interpreting the contexts observed in the literature and to contribute to gathering original information (Richards, 1996), especially regarding information about the barriers of action, that are usually overshadowed due to policy constraints. Semi-structured interviews were deemed relevant due to its format of ‘open’ questions, allowing flexibility of answers and adaptation to the role of the respondents.

To select the interviewees, a method was taken from the “UK National Ecosystem Assessment work package”, which consists on a model adopted from Howlett and Wellstead (2010), followed to ensure that a variety of stakeholders’ perspectives would be captured. The classification of participants recognizes four key types of actors, being divided in two main dimensions: inside government vs. outside government and proximate (e.g. directly involved) vs. peripheral (e.g. indirectly involved) actors (Russel et al., 2014) (Table 1).

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7The last two principles presented by UNFCCC safeguards, concerning actions to achieve permanence and to reduce leakage, were not approached in-depth because it is indicated that they should be assessed in correspondence with the national strategy for REDD+, which is currently unfinished.
Table 1. Classification of participants for interviews. (Source: Russel et al., 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public/Governmental Sector</th>
<th>Proximate Actors</th>
<th>Peripheral Actors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Core Actors (e.g. national and devolved government departments, executive Staff, governmental policy analysts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(B) Public Sector Insiders (e.g. Commissions and Committees, task forces, Research Councils, scientific advisors, advisory bodies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Non-governmental Insiders (e.g. consultants carrying out appraisals)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(D) Outsiders (e.g. businesses, trade associations, Third Sector Organisations, independent academics, think tanks, media)</td>
</tr>
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A total of five interviewees (see Appendix 8 for their names) participated in the research; among them were three representatives of the government of Acre (Core Actors), one representative of a research centre (Public Sector Insider) and one independent researcher (Non-Governmental Outsider).

The interviewees were asked generally the same questions (see Appendix 9), framed around the conceptual framework, in order to allow an evaluation of the state of compliance of the ISA Carbon programme with the social and environmental safeguards of REDD+. Following, the interpretation of the findings allowed the identification of the key enablers and barriers of action, which were presented on the discussion, coupled with providing lessons and recommendations on to improve the REDD+ policy outcomes.

3.3. Limitations

The research faced many challenges, especially because the REDD+ policy is a very sensitive subject that often leads to divergent and sometimes conflicting ideas. Consequently, it was difficult getting participants for interviews and including, access to some specific information.

This condition is particularly true regarding the fact that government representatives position themselves in a defensive way when providing information about REDD+. It was observed that the government respondents did not provide much to not say any
information about the questions regarding the problems that are been experienced with the REDD+ policy.

In addition, due to budget constraints to travel to Brazil, it was not possible to conduct fieldwork to collect data from a broader range of stakeholders, especially from civil society members, including marginalised groups directly affected by REDD+. Thus, the results presented in this study might not be completely representative.

Another constraint was regarding accessing ambiguous information, especially regarding funding to support the REDD+ activities. Thus, some particular issues were not explored in-depth in the study.
4. RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings of the investigation about the compliance with the social and environmental safeguards of REDD+ of the ISA Carbon programme of Acre’s System of Incentives for Environmental Services- SISA.

The data was organized in accordance with the five main variables derived from the conceptual framework, with an overall description of the actions that should be followed in order to fully comply with their implementation, together with a short introduction of the indicators used for the evaluation of the extent of compliance.

The interviewees' answers were referred in the text using a code that represents their role on the involvement with the REDD+ policy in Acre, according to the participants' classification proposed by the previously described method (Table 1). Accordingly, the interviewees were titled as “Core actors”\(^8\), “Insider” and “Outsider”.

The findings are presented below.

**a. Legal compliance:** actions that are consistent with relevant legal requirements beyond international conventions and agreements, and that complement the objectives of national forest programmes.

For the investigation of compliance with this principle, it was evaluated the effective implementation and law enforcement of the policies that are in place to prevent and control deforestation and forest degradation, plus enhance forest carbon stocks and conduct sustainable forest management; the core goals of REDD+. In addition, it was taken into consideration the synergies with relevant policies that targets the same issues of climate change, improvement of livelihoods, and sustainable development, in order to evaluate the potential of complementing objectives.

The ISA Carbon programme presents a positive aspect in relation to fulfilling that safeguard principle, due to its insertion in a favourable political context of forest governance (WWF, 2013). For over 10 years, the government of Acre has implemented

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\(^8\) A group interview was held with the representatives of government, and they complemented and agreed with each other’s point of view; thus, their opinions were considered together.
a number of public policies dedicated to promote forest conservation and sustainable development. Three policies are particularly significant within that context.

The first of its kind is the Ecological-Economic Zoning (ZEE), a tool that divides the state in four zones, including areas of environmental protection and sustainable natural resources use, which covers almost 50% of the state, and others suitable for agriculture use and urban residence; being a mechanism for sustainable management of forests and land use planning (Governo do Acre, 2010b). Among all states in the Brazilian Legal Amazon where this policy applies, Acre was the pioneer in achieving its full implementation (WWF, 2013), what reveals the state’s commitment to forest conservation and sustainable development goals.

In sequence, Acre launched the policy for Valuation of Forest Environmental Assets, with the objective of valuing the standing forests through programmes for recovery of degraded areas and development of more sustainable practices of agriculture (Governo do Acre, 2010c). In addition to these efforts, the state developed the policy of Deforestation Prevention and Control Plan (PPCD/AC), in consonance with the Amazon Deforestation Prevention and Control Plan (PPCDAM) that was already in place, aiming to enhance the reduction on deforestation rates and in consequence, carbon emissions (ibid.). The PPCD/AC is also linked with the federal policies of Sustainable Amazon Programme (PAS) and the National Climate Change Plan, with which has a compatible goal of reducing deforestation rates by 80% by the year 2020 (including using the same baseline), a condition that was assumed voluntarily by Acre (ibid.).

In addition, the “core actors” interviewees said that the SISA law not only harmonizes with the principles of the National Policy on Climate Change (PNMC) but also complements the objectives of the current Brazilian Forestry Code legislation. Thus, it is observed a strong compliance and complementarity of the ISA Carbon programme with the objectives of other national forest programmes.

Moreover, according to Rodrigo Neves and Monica de los Rios for the Blog CIFOR (Evans, 2013), one important lesson from Acre’s case is the fact of its legal framework being inserted in a broader sustainable development strategy, which is a crucial condition to achieve the core goals of REDD+. Besides, the programme is inserted within a larger policy framework which SISA, contributing to add value to other environmental services (WWF, 2013). Consequently, the insertion of the ISA Carbon programme in a broader policy framework, may offer a potential to strengthen Acre’s actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance forest carbon stocks, besides
achieving other social and environmental outcomes. Thus, it represents an enabler of action.

In order to strengthen the control of the deforestation rates and in accordance with the national goal of preventing illegal deforestation in the Amazon, a monitoring system has been implemented in the state. The government of Acre has invested in a special system to monitor the forest vegetation cover across the state and including fire accidents, which causes forest degradation, through the Central Geoprocessing and Remote Sensing Unit (UCEGEO) by using qualified satellite images (Alencar et al., 2012; WWF, 2013). It approaches a similar methodology to that used by the National Institute of Spatial Research (INPE) to monitor the whole Amazon forest cover, for the “PRODES” programme adopted by the national government, with the difference of having a more accurate resolution to track deforestation (Alencar et al., 2012; WWF, 2013). This detection of around ~20% more deforestation than the one used at national level (Alencar et al., 2012) allows the state to improve substantially its monitoring process, including to the fact that it was observed that the highest deforestation rates originate from small to medium rural properties, which is a condition that makes the finer resolution a necessity (WWF, 2013). Thus, it can be inferred that by having an advanced monitoring system, Acre is well set to enhance its potential in curbing deforestation, and consequently, reduce emissions and enhance forest carbon stocks. However, there are constraints.

Since the last 10 years, with the spike of policies fostering forest conservation and sustainable forest management, the deforestation rates across the whole Brazilian Legal Amazon have been declining significantly (WWF, 2013). Despite the fact that Acre has also experienced a substantial drop in its deforestation levels, a concerning increase was registered from 2010 to 2012 (ibid.). This suggests that the laws that are currently in place are not being completely effective in preventing illegal deforestation, what may be a barrier to the programme achieving its goals.

b. Recognition of rights to land, resource use and benefits: actions that recognize the rights to lands and the use of natural resources of indigenous peoples and small landowners, besides ensuring a fair, transparent and equitable benefit-sharing mechanism. In addition, actions that recognize and value the socio-cultural systems and traditional knowledge of relevant stakeholders.

For the investigation of compliance with this principle, it was evaluated the effective implementation and law enforcement of the policies that are in place to consent rights to land and resource use, and to respect socio-cultural systems of traditional forest peoples.
Finally, it was investigated the implementation of the benefit-sharing mechanism and the strategies for distribution of financial incentives.

The “core actors” interviewees named the SEANP policy as a specific instrument of recognition of rights to lands and natural resources use, created by the state government. The System of Natural Protected Areas of the State of Acre (SEANP/AC) is a policy linked with the ZEE plan and it recognizes two specific types of lands to be protected by law, the federal Conservation Units (UCs) and the Indigenous Lands (TIs) (Governo do Acre, 2010b). Together they cover about 45% of the total land area in the state.

Notably, the TIs lands have mostly been regularized, marking an important step towards the recognition of rights of indigenous peoples over its territorial lands that they traditionally occupy and, are dependent on for their livelihood and to express their socio-cultural systems.

The UCs, responsible for about 30% of the state land, are divided according to land-use planning, including Conservation Units of Integral Protection and of Sustainable Use. Within the last category, there are protected areas designated as Extractive Reserves (RESEX) that represent an important instrument for recognizing the rights to natural resources use for forest dependent people. According to the law, the RESEX objectives are “promoting nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and maintaining the livelihood and culture of traditional populations”, referred as the extractivists. This measure also enables the recognition of rights to indigenous peoples and respect for their socio-cultural systems.

In addition, the government created the Acre’s Land Institute (ITERACRE), a body that is in charge of the demarcation of properties, fostering the regularization of land tenure. Nevertheless, the documentary analysis showed that many states across the Amazon are having problems with the process of regularization of land tenure, which is a condition that has generated conflicts in many places (Kill, 2014).

Although Acre is one of the first states in the country that has dealt with most of its unresolved land tenure issues (Alencar et al., 2012), thousands of properties are still in the process of being regularized; therefore, if regulation is pending, the recognition of rights are not fully being upheld. In addition, land tenure regularization was pointed by the documentary analysis as a critical issue that needs to be solved rapidly by Acre in order to avoid conflicts and perverse incentives (Alencar et al., 2012; WWF, 2013). Consequently, this represents a barrier of compliance with the safeguard principle here

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9 Information available at: http://www.iteracre.ac.gov.br
described and thus, it may be an obstacle into the achievement of an effective REDD+ mechanism.

According to the SISA law, the actors that have rights to benefits are those who provide environmental services, in compliance with the requirements of the legislation, through actions that promote the preservation, conservation, or restoration and sustainable use of natural resources. Among the potential beneficiaries are the traditional forest peoples, including indigenous peoples, and rural property owners, who have rights to use land and natural resources in a sustainable way and whose actions diminish the pressure on the forests.

The collected data showed that the benefit-sharing mechanism for the ISA Carbon programme is still being formally designed and its official structure has not been finished. Nevertheless, a number of concerns was raised regarding the current strategy.

The “core actors” interviewees basically answered, when asked about the benefit-sharing mechanism, that the financial incentives are being distributed according to the socio-economic segment, including extractivism, sustainable ranching, indigenous communities and rural producers. Yet, no specific information was given in regards of allocating the benefits in a fair share across sectors, nor the distribution of benefits being equitably shared with all the beneficiaries. The information gap suggests that these conditions have not been assessed yet and/or that an effective tool for monitoring the distribution of benefits is still not in place.

In regards of transparency, the “core actors” interviewees briefly said that the strategies for allocation of benefits go through a specific institutional body (called CEVA), composed by members of civil society and government, for validation and monitoring. However, the “insider” interviewee suggested that there are concerns in regards of a lack of transparency in the distribution of benefits, including conflict of interests among the different sectors involved in the mechanism and the existence of perverse interests behind the decision-making. Accordingly, it was noted that the resources are not being distributed in the most reasonable way. In addition, both the “insider” and “outsider” interviewees pointed that there is a deficiency in terms of not knowing how the resources obtained by the system will be used, including by the project proponents itself.

Consequently, it is concluded that the ISA Carbon programme still do not have a well-structured benefit-sharing mechanism to operate in a fair and equitable way, a condition that is coupled with a lack of transparency in terms of distribution of benefits. As a result, this poses a barrier that may risk the well-functioning and the credibility of the programme.
c. Environmental conservation and sustainable development: actions that avoid the conversion of natural forests and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In addition, enhancement of other social and environmental benefits, including the promotion of sustainable economic alternatives based on standing forest valorisation.

For the investigation of compliance with this principle, it was investigated the effective implementation and law enforcement of policies that are in place to value the standing forest, improve rural livelihoods and generate efforts towards sustainable development; in order to evaluate the potential of the ISA Carbon programme in promoting social and environmental co-benefits.

As it was described on previous discourses through this chapter, the ISA Carbon programme is beneficially inserted in a favourable political context, marked through a number of public policies that has been implement in Acre to promote forest conservation and sustainable development. In addition to the relevant policies that was aforementioned, two more policy programmes are worth mentioning on this particular context.

The Sustainable Property Certification Programme provides incentives for smallholders to adopt sustainable land-use practices, focusing on forest conservation, recuperation of degraded lands and emissions reduction. The financial incentives are given through direct payments, depending on the adherence to the programme (e.g. stop forest clearing and burning), besides technical assistance and access to credit lines (WWF, 2013).

In addition, the government of Acre has provided incentives for a forest-based economy, valuing the standing forest, through investments on the development of an industry of sustainably harvested forest products, such as natural rubber latex, Brazil nuts and timber (Alencar et al., 2012; WWF, 2013).

Common to both policy programmes, the aims are not only to reduce the pressure on forests but also to target the improvement of livelihoods of local forest communities, consequently, generating efforts towards the sustainable development of Acre. The creation of these programmes of incentive mark the investment of Acre’s government in a new model of rural economy, known as low-emission rural development (Alencar et al., 2012). A given definition is “a model that minimizes greenhouse gas emissions as it alleviates poverty, secures food production systems, recognizes indigenous peoples’
rights/claims to land and resources, increases agricultural and forest-based production, and conserves biodiversity, water, and soil resources” (ibid.).

Consequently, the ISA Carbon programme benefits from being integrated in this policy framework of low-emission rural development strategy, what may potentially enhance its achievement of co-benefits. Thus, this condition represents an enabler of action.

However, in order to transition to a new rural economy, there is a need for policies and incentives that effectively change land users behaviour, because, as the “insider” interviewee mentioned, they are influenced and stimulated by market demands (e.g. food commodities); thus, they alone will hardly change their economic activities only because it is important to conserve the forest.

An evaluation of the economic trends in Acre showed that the market demand for rubber tapping is becoming less attractive and other activities such as farming and cattle ranching are gaining more force (WWF, 2013). This demonstrates that the profitability of competing land uses is an important driver of action (Alencar et al., 2012). Consequently, it is strategic to provide financial incentives to motivate the land users choosing the less impactful practices.

Yet, the “insider” interviewee also pointed that it is not enough just give direct payments as incentives for them changing their practices, because this is a short-term measure and it depends on the availability of funding for the programme; thus, there are no guarantees of success.

Following, the same interviewee also noted that it is needed structural incentives such as capacity building, technical assistance, and technology (e.g. better instruments and machines) in order to effectively motivate the land users to change behaviour towards a low-emissions rural development; what will potentially lead to long-term changes. Notably, it was also mentioned the fact that these structural incentives and changes rely on government support and political will, which has been shown to be unstable. In addition, Monica de los Rios for the Blog CIFOR said that although Acre has implemented innovative policies, the government is still lacking the money and the capacity to help improve the rural producer’s situation (Evans, 2013).

Consequently, it is still uncertain if the ISA Carbon programme will have enough strength to deliver positive outcomes in the long term and consequently, it is unknown if the programme will be able to achieve meaningful and expected changes.
d. Full and effective participation: actions to include the participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, shall be ensured in all phases and in the decision-making processes, including the right to free, previous and informed consent.

In order to evaluate the compliance with this safeguard, it was gathered information about the past and the current initiatives taken to allow consultation, participation and inclusion of the opinion of the involved stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities; considering the phases of design and implementation of the ISA Carbon programme, and other decision-making processes.

The SISA law was designed through a number of participatory and consultation processes with stakeholders from national and international organizations and representatives of civil society in order to result in a fair and transparent policy structure. All the interviewees agreed that this highly participatory process offered a positive connotation to the ISA Carbon programme. The interviewees Neves and de los Rios for the Blog CIFOR, also stressed that public consultation, and constant dialogue with civil society, has been key to the success of REDD+ in Acre (Evans, 2013). Thus, it is observed that the ample participation on the design of the SISA law, may have offered a substantial improvement on the performance of the ISA Carbon programme, representing an enabler of action.

Following to the implementation phase of the programme, both the “insider” and the “core actors” interviewees said that a number of meetings, workshops and training programmes have already been conducted to provide information about the REDD+ actions and other environmental issues, in particular to indigenous peoples and local communities. However, the “insider” interviewee pointed that although a number of local participation initiatives were held within the last years, there is an observed lack of effective inclusion of relevant stakeholders in the decision-making processes; suggesting that some voices are not being heard or even overshadowed. This condition was observed in fact, when an open letter, from 25 mainly Acre-based NGOS and 40 individuals, was sent to the government of California to stimulate them “opposing REDD+ in principle, and any attempt by California to buy carbon offsets from Acre”, as they felt they were not being sufficiently consulted about the SISA law (Evans, 2013).

Thus, it is perceived that the stakeholder participation is being deficient in the current phase of the programme, and including, the right to free, previous and informed consent,

10 Information available at: www.imc.ac.gov.br
in accordance with the safeguard here described, it is not being respected. As a result, this condition poses a barrier to the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders and deserves special attention in order to not jeopardize the ISA Carbon programme.

e. **Transparent and effective governance**: effective institutional arrangement coupled with ensured transparency of actions and information, and periodic monitoring of REDD+ actions.

For the institutional arrangement, information was gathered on the structure and, distribution of responsibilities, besides cross-sector integration, in order to evaluate its effectiveness. In regards of transparency and social monitoring, it was considered the inclusion of members of civil society between the government bodies and the provision of information. In addition, it was gathered information on the monitoring system of the programme’s performance.

Five main institutions were developed under the SISA legislation, in order to conduct the management, control and registry of the activities related to the programmes, besides allowing the public to participate on its monitoring and social control (Governo do Acre, 2010a). These include:

1. The Institute of Climate Change and Environmental Services Regulation (IMC); a state government agency that is independent but supervised by the Secretary of Environment from Acre. The institute is responsible for establishing the rules under SISA; approving and registering programmes, projects and action plans; controlling and monitoring the reduction of GHG emissions, besides putting into effect other ecosystem services; among other responsibilities.

2. An Environmental Services Development Company (CDSA); a public-private partnership, aimed at raising funds and investments and responsible for managing the economic assets. In addition, the company is responsible for creating and executing the programmes, projects and action plans.

3. A State Commission for Validation and Monitoring (CEVA); composed of civil society representatives in partnership with members of the government, is responsible for the revision and approval of the norms and regulations presented by the IMC. It seeks to ensure transparency and participation among the processes of SISA, including the ISA Carbon programme.
4. A Scientific Committee; composed of recognized experts from interdisciplinary fields, directed to supporting on technical, scientific and legal issues related to SISA.

5. An Ombudsman scheme; targeted to resolve citizens’ complaints, mediating conflicts, and receiving suggestions.

As noted by the “core actors” interviewees, the main institutional arrangement (described above) counts with the cooperation of other government agencies that are externally mobilised to ensure the proper functioning of the system and of the ISA Carbon programme. Notably, they mentioned the role of the Attorney General of the State of Acre- PGE/AC, which aims to ensure the integrity and harmony of the performance of all institutions that has an active role in SISA. Moreover, it was stated that each institution execute its shares with due respect and transparency towards the intended goals, and this structure results in a harmonious functioning.

Other studies also pointed that the ISA Carbon programme presents an advanced governance system granted by its good institutional framework (Alencar et al., 2012; EPRI, 2012; WWF, 2013). This suggests that a well-structured institutional arrangement is in place to coordinate the programme, enabled by a multisector structure and the distribution of responsibilities among them, what may significantly strengthen the achievement of the programme’s goals. Thus, representing an enabler of action.

However, the collection of data has indicated a particular condition that poses constraints to the effectiveness of the governance. The dialogue across the different sectors involved on the institutional arrangement has been revealed to be deficient, in terms of being lacking cohesiveness (Alencar et al., 2012; “insider” interviewee; “outsider” interviewee; WWF, 2013), what may considerably weaken the potential of the programme.

The “core actors” interviewees mentioned that the CEVA and the Ombudsman are structures that are in place to function as social control and participation systems, and including, the first one acts as a local committee of safeguards standards. However, details about the periodicity, availability of information and the indicators that are used for monitoring were not specified.

Based on the findings of the literature review (chapter 2), it is known that Acre is one of the leading initiatives that has developed the “REDD+ Social and Environmental Standard” (REDD+ SES), a voluntary certification system. However, as it was previously discussed, the REDD+ SES proponents are still evaluating the full applicability of such standards.
In addition, the “insider” interviewee also pointed that there are a number of challenges in terms of implementing the safeguards on the ground and that, although Acre is ahead other states in the Amazon in adopting safeguards standards on its governance system, its strategy has a lot to improve. As a result, it is observed that there is a significant gap in terms of the ISA Carbon programme monitoring the performance of its REDD+ activities and in addition, checking compliance with safeguards.

Concluding, the governance of the ISA Carbon programme, although advanced, it is still not being fully effective and transparent, which is a condition that may diminish the achievement of successful outcomes in the long-term besides challenging its credibility.

The following chapter will further discuss the main enablers and barriers of action that were promptly observed in this chapter.
5. DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the key enablers and barriers of action to achievement of successful outcomes, identified by the interpretation of the findings, presented on the previous chapter.

Additionally, it is presented recommendations of potential actions to overcome the barriers and consequently, strengthen the ISA Carbon programme.

Enablers

a. Insertion in a broader policy framework with complementarity of objectives

It is argued that REDD+ should be part of a broader legal architecture, bringing together policies that envision forest conservation, poverty alleviation and economic growth in the context of climate change (Angelsen et al., 2012). In addition, it is debated that the objectives of the policies should be combined in order to empower the achievement of global priority goals such as GHG emission reductions.

Thus, the insertion of the ISA Carbon programme in a broader policy framework of environmental services (which is SISA), coupled with its insertion in a favourable political context that promotes congruent objectives, may lead to positive synergies and potentially contribute for the achievement of goals beyond carbon emissions reduction.

Moreover, the complementary of the programme with the objectives of other relevant national forest programmes, such as the PNMC, may increase its potential of achieving REDD+ goals.

Finally, it is concluded that significant expectations can be put on Acre in terms of delivering positive outcomes, including co-benefits, with its REDD+ programme.

b. Integration in a larger low-emission rural development strategy

The government of Acre, with the implementation of a number of policies to stimulate sustainable use of forest resources, has taken significant steps in developing a new model of rural economy based on valuing the standing forest.

It is argued that REDD+ has the potential of contributing towards the achievement of a low-emission rural development (EPRI, 2012). Thus, integrating the ISA Carbon
programme in the sustainable development strategy from the Acre’s government may contribute significantly to its efforts of establishing a forest-based economy.

Moreover, it is noted that the contribution of the REDD+ policy to objectives of sustainable development, may change the vision of forest protection as being an impeditive to economic development (Angelsen et al., 2012).

Consequently, the ISA Carbon programme, being integrated in a larger low-emission rural development strategy, has the potential of providing a shift of focus from the ‘usual’ political-economic interest in non-forest land uses. Accordingly, this is the kind of transformational change that it is being expected through a successful accomplishment of REDD+ policy (Angelsen et al., 2012; Sunderlin et al., 2014).

Concluding, high expectations may be envisaged about the ISA Carbon programme delivering co-benefits, including reducing carbon emissions, improving rural livelihoods and generating efforts towards the sustainable development of Acre.

c. Inclusiveness and ample participation in the early stage of decision-making

In reason of a number of participatory instruments being used to design the SISA law, it is believed that the ISA Carbon programme benefited from the support of various stakeholders, what may also have increased its legitimacy (WWF, 2013).

According to Cromberg et al. (2014), “REDD+ initiatives that actively include local people in their design and implementation may have a greater chance of success in providing longer-term benefits for local people and forests”. This is backed by the idea that dialoguing and listening to recommendations from a wide range of stakeholders, offers a potential for addressing better strategies, thinking ahead about potential conflicts and finally improving the delivery of results.

Concluding, the performance of the ISA Carbon programme may potentially benefit in the long term from this well-prepared design of its mechanism, especially in terms of increasing its legitimacy and potentially attracting more funding to further develop its programme.

d. Well-structured institutional arrangement for governance

The well-developed multisector structure of the ISA Carbon programme is positively reinforced by the decentralisation of coordination, which is proved to lead to improved
management efficiency, better adaptation of public policies to local realities, besides contributing to increase transparency among government agencies (May et al., 2011b). In addition, this strategy is also improved and facilitated by the development of a statewide programme, such is the case of ISA (Alencar et al., 2012; WWF, 2013).

However, a criticism points to the fact that the decentralisation often leads to a lack of engagement among local level institutions, what decreases efficiency in governance (May et al., 2011b), especially because influential actors can cooperate to the achievement of REDD+ goals (Gebara et al., 2014). The “insider” interviewee pointed that there is an observed lack of alignment specifically with the private sector.

Concluding, there is a well-structured institutional arrangement in place to coordinate the ISA Carbon programme; yet, in order to increase its effectiveness, it is need strengthening cross-sector dialogue, what may potentially turn into a better integration of public policies and consequently, enhance the achievement of mutual goals and finally, benefits.

**Barriers**

*a. Lack of law enforcement to prevent deforestation*

It is argued that polices to prevent and control deforestation, will only be effective if there is a proper monitoring process and forest law enforcement (May et al., 2011b). As it was already mentioned, the deforestation rates in Acre increased despite the effort of improving and refining its monitoring system. This suggests that lack of law enforcement might be contributing significantly to this condition. Yet, two underlying causes might be attributed to the increased rates.

The “insider” interviewee mentioned that there is an observed contradiction between policies that target economic development and policies that aim to prevent deforestation; mainly because the first one stimulate forest clearing for agriculture expansion. In addition, it was observed that parties that do not favour forest preservation, or any of the other aims related to the REDD+ policy, has attempted to weaken the Forest Code Law in Brazil (Angelsen et al., 2012). Thus, this suggests that strengthening the coherence among development and forest policies and the forest legislation itself, may potentially curb the deforestation rates.

Another important observation, is that many programmes have been having problems in properly addressing the drivers of deforestation (EPRI, 2012). Accordingly, it was
revealed that Acre has reached insufficient progress in terms of slowing deforestation due to cattle ranching. In that sense, it is perceived the need of implementing policies that effectively address Acre’s main driver of deforestation; thus, actions to decrease forest clearing for cattle pastures.

Yet, it is contested that law enforcement it is not the only action needed to curb deforestation driven by cattle ranching. As it was noted by the special report of the Blog CIFOR, “offering incentives to change people’s behaviour may be more effective than the threat of punishment alone” (Evans, 2013); accordingly, the ISA Carbon programme may potentially be well positioned to supply that need by providing incentives to change the economics of cattle ranching.

b. Land tenure insecurity

A serious concern that has predominated in the Brazilian Amazon is regarding the uncertainty of access and ownership rights to land and natural resources, which has been contributing to social and environmental conflicts (May et al., 2011b). Although it is perceived that, the recognition of land rights to indigenous peoples has progressed, a parcel of these populations, including other traditional forest peoples in which rights has not been secured yet, has been suffering pressures from ‘land-grabbers’ with perverse interest (ibid.). Thus, it is urged the need for land tenure security among indigenous and other traditional populations, in order to guarantee their legal rights and to avoid conflicts, what may diminish the potential of the ISA Carbon programme.

In addition, it was observed in many areas in the Amazon the occurrence of high levels of deforestation rates in illegally occupied land, where is lacking definitive title (May et al., 2011b). In Acre, it is estimated that a significant total of 24.7% of the state’s land territory are under classification or are still unclassified (WWF, 2013). Accordingly, it is also urged the need for regularization of tenure status in order to reduce deforestation caused by that condition.

Notably, it is pointed that the lack of regularization of land titles and property rights given to traditional forest peoples, affects negatively the process of benefit-sharing and the achievement of co-benefits, which are diminished (May et al., 2011b).

Finally, it is recommended urgent efforts to resolve land tenure problems, which is a condition that may impose a significant barrier into the achievement of successful REDD+ outcomes.
c. Unclear benefit-sharing mechanism

Studies pointed that the programme has big challenges to face by defining a benefit-sharing system capable of functioning in such a large scale, as the programme encompasses the entire state and it envisages benefiting over 30,000 rural properties, besides having to deal with the diversity of potential beneficiaries and its dispersion across the state (WWF, 2013). Although there are positive aspects in relation to benefiting so many people and potentially improving livelihoods, this represents a very ambitious goal that should be carefully planned in order to not ruin the chances of success.

One particular issue that has been observed with a range of benefit-sharing mechanisms worldwide, especially with ambitious programmes like Acre, is related to the risk of the financial incentives not being directed to benefit social aspects of REDD+ (Sills et al., 2014). Thus, focusing solely on the reducing carbon emissions part, which is a condition that was already debated in terms of risking the success of the REDD+ policy. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the lack of transparency about how the benefits are being distributed diminishes the credibility of the programme, including risking the attraction of funding, and the adherence of “providers of ecosystem services".

The findings of the media analysis study in Brazil shows that the REDD+ debate has been largely marked by a conflict between actors and interests, what is causing a delay on decision-making processes (May et al., 2011a). In addition to a point of view collected from an interviewee that reinforced that idea, it is perceived that this condition might be influencing the formal structuration of the benefit-sharing mechanism of the ISA Carbon programme.

Moreover, the lack of clarity in defining the priority areas for support by the programme, a condition that observed by both the “insider” and the “outsider” interviewees, also delays the decision-making, consequently decreasing the effectiveness of the REDD+ mechanism.

Finally, it is recommended a particular attention to the distribution of a fair and equitable share of resources to benefit social and environmental targets, beyond the carbon objectives, including improvement of livelihoods and to provide incentives to change agricultural practices towards sustainability. In addition, it is suggested setting a monitoring system to track how the benefits are being distributed, with availability of information to the stakeholders, in order to increase transparency and coordination.
d. Lack of effective incentives and inconsistent government support

It is argued that while Acre has made considerable advances in implementing the programme of certification of sustainable properties, providing incentives to smallholders to engage in more sustainable land-use practices, challenges remain (Sills et al., 2014). Accordingly, it was shown that the government is lacking ability to provide payments for the farmers, which are coming late or not at all, besides providing insufficient technical assistance and support for helping them transition to a more sustainable land use. Yet, this lack of consistent government support is critical as it may potentially result in a disincentive of participation on the programme and even, cause disinterest of the farmers in changing their behaviours.

In addition, given the fact that the ISA Carbon programme aims to achieve the entire rural population of the state, it is believed that direct payments will not be sufficient (WWF, 2013), and sustained in the long-term. Thus, it is suggested the provision of more effective incentives.

It is observed that the adoption of improved ranching practices such as intensifying ranching on already cleared areas, would contribute for addressing the main driver of deforestation in Acre (WWF, 2013); thus bringing substantial emissions reduction. Yet, it is need rural extension and technical assistance in order to improve the production methods by the land users.

Concluding, it is recommended the provision of effective incentives for the land users not switch to economic activities that involve forest loss, which should be backed by investments in order to strengthen the infrastructures of provision needed to provide smallholders with attractive non-degrading alternatives. In addition, it is emphasized the need for government support to contribute for the ISA Carbon programme moving forward on its strategy of low-emission rural development.

e. Lack of inclusiveness of relevant stakeholders

According to the findings of (Cromberg et al., 2014), “high performing REDD+ initiatives should demonstrate participation that goes beyond passive consultation”. In addition, the same study pointed that “participation must go beyond information sharing to incorporate a diversity of local perceptions in REDD+ design and implementation”. As a result, the
REDD+ policy might experience a number of benefits, which entails better strategies for achieving better results, besides the fact that a failure to do so constrains its success.

Some might argue that the stakeholders, which do not have technical or scientific knowledge, do not have much to offer in terms of valuable lessons on to improve the REDD+ outcomes. However, as it was notably mentioned by Amy Duchelle for the Blog CIFOR, “during our research, some of the community members (smallholders across the Amazon) have given us recommendations for how REDD+ type initiatives should move forward” (Evans, 2013). In addition, she said that those ideas were passed to the REDD+ project proponents, which enthusiastically received some of them. Another important consideration from her speech was that “REDD+ doesn’t have to be a top-down process.”

The “insider” interviewee also noted that the traditional forest people has valuable lessons to give, and a specific example that was given was the sustainable agriculture developed by family farming.

The “insider” interviewee mentioned that through her fieldwork experience across the Amazon, she noted that the indigenous peoples are conscious about the effects of climate change, because they are already experiencing it, and she added that if someone knows how that adapt to that condition, they are the ones. This consideration is very valuable because it is believed that mitigation actions to climate change are not enough, as the climate will continue to change (CIFOR, 2014b); thus, efforts of adaption are needed, in order to increase resilience.

Consequently, it is perceived the importance and relevance of including relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and traditional forest peoples, into the REDD+ decision-making processes.

Finally, it is recommended the enhancement of initiatives for sharing and valuing traditional knowledge. In addition, it is suggested further engagement with the indigenous peoples, putting them as protagonists of a climate-smart decision-making, as they may provide valuable lessons about adaptation to climate change effects.

Lastly, it is suggested taken a bottom-up approach to REDD+, a condition that may potentially contribute to the achievement of significant and expected changes.

f. Lack of an effective monitoring system to review performance

According to the compilation of data on the literature review, a number of studies have shown that much remains to be defined regarding the strategies for monitoring REDD+
projects, in terms of achieving its goals. In the specific context of Brazil, this was also observed by May et al. (2011b). In particular to the ISA Carbon programme, the lack of an effective monitoring system to review the performance of the programme was pointed by (Alencar et al., 2012).

Monitoring the REDD+ activities is crucial in order to gather evidence in terms of performance and accountability of emissions reduction, the maintenance of forest and biodiversity, and the improvement of livelihoods. In addition, this is needed in reason of recognizing gaps on the system and to allow improvement, 'moving ahead' with REDD+.

As it was pointed by May et al. (2011b), the monitoring process should be implemented more as a strategic tool for managing the REDD+ programme than a bureaucratic exercise; how it is often seen.

Finally, it is recommended the development of performance indicators, in compliance with safeguards policy, aiming to improve the monitoring process of the ISA Carbon programme and to optimize the achievement of successful results. Including, it is suggested to further incentivize the consultation and participation of civil society in the monitoring and verification process in order to increase the transparency and effectiveness of the programme, coupled with increasing its legitimacy.
6. CONCLUSION

This research looked for investigating whether the Acre’s ISA Carbon programme could act as a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy, by identifying its level of compliance with REDD+ safeguards that envisage bringing successful outcomes, such as those triple goals.

The findings revealed a number of meaningful actions that are being complacent with safeguards principles and that are enabling the potential of the ISA Carbon programme in delivering successful REDD+ outcomes. Among them is the insertion of the programme in a broader policy framework, while harmonizing and complementing the objectives of policies that envision forest conservation, poverty alleviation and economic growth, what may result in a powerful combination to achieve synergistic goals that go beyond emissions reduction.

In addition, due to the programme being integrated in a larger low-emission rural development strategy, it has the potential of increasing the government’s current efforts of establishing a forest-based economy, what may bring meaningful and largely expected transformational changes.

Moreover, the ample stakeholder participation process that resulted in a well-prepared design of its policy mechanism may have offered the benefit of strengthening its strategies and consequently, the future performance of the programme, besides enhancing its legitimacy and support.

Altogether, the well-structured institutional arrangement of governance, enabled by a decentralisation of coordination among sectors, offers the potential of strengthening the achievement of the programme’s goals. Yet, in order to fully comply with the safeguard principle and consequently, increase the governance effectiveness, it was observed the need for strengthening cross-sector dialogue across the institutions.

As a result, high expectations may be envisaged about the ISA Carbon programme achieving its goal of reducing carbon emissions while delivering co-benefits, including improvement of rural livelihoods and efforts towards the sustainable development of Acre.

On the other hand, it was identified critical actions that are not being fully, to not say any, complacent with safeguards principles and consequently, are risking the achievement of the programme’s goals and the delivery of co-benefits. Among them is a lack of law enforcement to prevent deforestation, mostly due to contradictions between policies, and
due to the lack of policies that effectively address the main driver of deforestation that is cattle ranching, risking the achievement of the programme’s goals.

Following, there is a lack of regularization of land titles and property rights given to traditional forest peoples, which affects negatively the process of benefit-sharing and diminishes the achievement of co-benefits, besides risking the generation of conflicts.

In sequence, an unclear benefit-sharing mechanism was observed as one of most critical aspects of the evaluation of the ISA Carbon programme, which is a condition that may risk decreasing the well-functioning and the effectiveness of the REDD+ mechanism. The underlying causes that are believed to be influencing that condition is the conflict of interests among actors, which might be delaying the formal structuration of the mechanism, besides the lack of clarity in defining priority areas to be supported by the programme and the lack of transparency about the distribution of benefits.

Moreover, it was observed a lack of provision of effective incentives to smallholders engage in more sustainable land-use practices together with an inconsistent government support to provide payments, besides technical assistance and capacity building to support farmers on that transition, what may potentially result in a disincentive of adherence to the practice and the REDD+ programme.

Furthermore, it was perceived that the implementation phase of the programme is marked by a lack of effective inclusion of relevant stakeholders in the decision-making processes, which may cause constraints to its well-functioning.

Lastly, there is a lack of an effective monitoring system to review the performance of the programme and in addition, to check compliance with safeguards, which is a condition that may diminish the achievement of successful outcomes in the long-term besides challenging its credibility.

The recommendations to potentially overcome the barriers and strengthen the ISA Carbon programme are as it follows: strengthen the coherence among development and forest policies to curb the deforestation rates; provide incentives to change the economics of cattle ranching, without the need for forest clearing; regularization of tenure status in order to reduce the significant deforestation rates on illegally occupied lands; land tenure security among indigenous and other traditional populations, in order to guarantee their legal rights and to avoid conflicts; ensure that a fair and equitable share of resources are directed to benefit social aspects of REDD+; increase transparency about the distribution of benefits; provision of effective incentives for land users not switch to degrading economic activities, coupled with consistent government
investments in order to strengthen the needed infrastructures of provision; enhancement of initiatives for sharing and valuing traditional knowledge, in particular from indigenous peoples; adoption of a bottom-up approach to REDD+, ensuring the inclusion of relevant stakeholders on the decision-making processes; development of performance indicators, in compliance with safeguards policy, to improve the monitoring process; and, stimulate participation of civil society in the monitoring and verification process.

Despite the fact that was identified a number of situations that may potentially constrain and risk the achievement of the programme’s goals it is believed that “in the short term, it might be necessary to work within the reality of a suboptimal policy context rather than waiting for reforms to happen” (Angelsen et al., 2012). Finally, it is reinforced the idea of the need of the programme acting towards the strengthening of its enablers and overcoming its barriers of action. Accordingly, the findings of this research are well set to provide valuable lessons that can be incorporated on to improve the performance of REDD+ in Acre, and including, provide insights for other subnational initiatives and the Brazilian national strategy.

Concluding, it is believed that the ISA Carbon programme has a considerable potential of reducing carbon emissions and enhancing forest carbon stocks, and in consequence, potentially contributing in a substantial way to the joint effort of mitigating climate change in the Brazilian Amazon. In addition, it is noted that the programme has a significant potential of delivering social and environmental co-benefits, including improvement of rural livelihoods and, environmental and economic sustainability, through the promotion of forest conservation and stimulation of better land-use practices. Thus, it is envisaged that the ISA Carbon Programme may potentially achieve the “triple goals”.

Finally, it is concluded that the studied REDD+ programme has a strong potential of representing a climate smart, pro-poor and sustainable public policy.
7. REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix 1. UNFCCC Safeguards Principles.

a. Actions that complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;

b. Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;

c. Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

d. The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities;

e. Actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits¹;

f. Actions to address the risks of reversals;

g. Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

¹Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.

Appendix 2. FCPF Safeguards Principles.

a. Environmental Assessment: To help ensure the environmental and social soundness and sustainability of investment projects/strategies and to support integration of environmental and social aspects of projects/strategies into the decision-making process;

b. Natural Habitats: To promote environmentally sustainable development by supporting the protection, conservation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of natural habitats and their functions;
c. Forests: To realize the potential of forests to reduce poverty in a sustainable manner, integrate forests effectively into sustainable economic development, and protect the vital local and global environmental services and values of forests;
d. Involuntary Resettlement: To avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement and, where this is not feasible, to assist displaced persons in improving or at least restoring their livelihoods and standards of living in real terms relative to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to the beginning of projects/ strategy implementation, whichever is higher;
e. Indigenous Peoples: To design and implement projects/strategies with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in a way that fosters full respect for Indigenous Peoples dignity, human rights, traditional knowledge, and cultural uniqueness and diversity and so that they: (i) receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits; and (ii) do not suffer adverse effects during the development process; and
f. Physical and Cultural Resources: To assist in preserving physical cultural resources and avoiding their destruction or damage. PCR includes resources of archaeological, paleontological, historical, architectural, religious (including graveyards and burial sites), aesthetic, or other cultural significance.

Appendix 3. UN-REDD Safeguards Principles.

Principle 1- Democratic governance: The programme complies with standards of democratic governance.
Principle 2- Stakeholder livelihoods: The programme carefully assesses potential adverse impacts on stakeholders' long-term livelihoods and mitigates effects where appropriate.
Principle 3- Policy coherence: The programme contributes to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sound development policy, consistent with commitments under international conventions and agreements.
Principle 4- Protect and conserve natural forest: The programme protects natural forest from degradation or conversion to other land uses, including plantation forest.
Principle 5- Maintain and enhance multiple functions of forest: The programme increases benefits delivered through ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation.
Principle 6- Minimise indirect adverse impacts on ecosystem services and biodiversity.
Appendix 4. REDD+ SES Safeguards Principles.

1. Rights to lands, territories, and resources are recognized and respected by the REDD+ programme.
2. The benefits of the REDD+ programme are shared equitably among all relevant rights holders and stakeholders.
3. The REDD+ programme improves long-term livelihood security and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and local communities with special attention to the most vulnerable people.
4. The REDD+ programme contributes to broader sustainable development, respect, and protection of human rights and good governance objectives.
5. The REDD+ programme maintains and enhances biodiversity and ecosystem services.
6. All relevant rights holders and stakeholders participate fully and effectively in the REDD+ programme.
7. All rights holders and stakeholders have timely access to appropriate and accurate information to enable informed decision-making and good governance of the REDD+ programme.
8. The REDD+ programme complies with applicable local and national laws and international treaties, conventions, and other instruments.

Appendix 5. Brazilian Safeguards Principles and Criteria.

1. Legal compliance: conformance to legal requirements and relevant international agreements.

1.1. REDD+ actions shall respect the Brazilian labor legislation, including requirements on health and safety and repression of any form of slave and child labor, while respecting the distinctiveness of the organization of labor of Indigenous Populations, small landowners and local communities.

1.2. REDD+ actions shall respect the Brazilian environmental legislation.

1.3. REDD+ actions shall respect all international social, environmental, cultural, labor and commercial agreements ratified by Brazil.

2. Rights recognition and guarantee: recognition and respect to rights to lands, territories and natural resources.

2.1. There shall be the recognition and respect of the constitutional, statutory and customary rights associated with land ownership, the official designation of occupied lands, and the use of natural resources of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners,
including complete respect to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to the FAO Treaty on Agriculture and Food, and to the ILO Convention 169.

2.2. REDD+ actions shall recognize and value the socio-cultural systems and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.

2.3. REDD+ actions shall respect the rights to selfdetermination of the Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

2.4. In the areas where REDD+ actions are implemented, lawful ownership and possession rights shall be respected, as well as those rights associated with the use of land and natural resources.

2.5. There shall be formal mechanisms for conflict resolution associated with REDD+ actions, through dialogs that include the effective participation of all involved stakeholders.

3. Benefit-sharing: fair, transparent and equitable benefit sharing generated by REDD+ actions.

3.1. Benefits generated by REDD+ actions shall be accessed in a fair, transparent and equitable form by those who hold the rights to the use of land and/or natural resources and promote activities related to conservation, sustainable use and forest restoration.

4. Economic sustainability, improvement in quality of life and poverty alleviation: contribution to economic and sustainable diversification of the use of natural resources.

4.1 REDD+ actions shall promote economic alternatives based on standing forest valorization and on the sustainable use of natural resources and deforested areas.

4.2 REDD+ actions shall contribute to poverty alleviation, social inclusion and improvement of livelihoods for people who live in REDD+ implementation areas and in areas affected by it.

4.3 REDD+ actions shall contribute to the empowerment and autonomy of populations involved, based on participatory planning and local development tools.

4.4 REDD+ actions shall consider adaptation measures to minimize the negative impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.

5. Environmental conservation and recovery: contribution to conservation and recovery of natural ecosystems, biodiversity and environmental services.

5.1 REDD+ actions shall contribute to the conservation and recovery of natural ecosystems and avoid causing significant negative impacts to biodiversity and ecosystem services.
5.2 Species or ecosystems that are rare, endemic or threatened with extinction, as well as any other high conservation value attribute, shall be previously identified, protected and monitored.

5.3 In case of restoration activities in degraded areas, REDD+ actions shall use native species.

6. Participation: participation in the development and implementation of REDD+ actions and in decision-making processes.

6.1. Conditions for the participation of the beneficiaries shall be ensured in all phases of REDD+ actions and in the decision-making processes, including the identification, negotiation and distribution of benefits.

6.2. Decision-making processes relating to REDD+ actions shall effectively ensure the right to free, previous and informed consent, considering local representations and respecting the traditional forms of electing representatives by Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.

6.3. Populations living in areas affected by REDD+ actions shall be informed about them.

7. Monitoring and transparency: complete availability of information related to REDD+ actions.

7.1 Beneficiaries shall have free access to information relating to REDD+ actions, in simple language, so they can participate in the decision-making process in a previously informed and responsible manner.

7.2 Transparency of information about REDD+ actions shall be guaranteed, including at least those related to the methodology, location and size of the area, definition and participation of involved and affected stakeholders, activities to be executed, time length of the project and conflict resolution mechanisms.

7.3 In public lands, protected areas and in other areas that involve Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities, or in REDD+ actions supported by public funds, there shall be ensured transparency of information regarding the raise, use and distribution of benefits generated by REDD+, as well as periodic financial reporting.

7.4 There shall be periodic monitoring of the socioenvironmental, economic and climate related impacts and benefits of REDD+ actions, while respecting the traditional way of life and practices of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities, and results of this monitoring shall be made publicly available.

8. Governance: fostering of better governance, coordination and alignment with national, regional and local policies and guidelines.
8.1 REDD+ actions shall be coordinated and be consistent with national, state, regional and municipal policies and programme on climate change, conservation, sustainable development and deforestation prevention.

8.2 REDD+ actions shall meet the requirements of state or national REDD+ policies.

8.3 Emissions reduction and carbon sequestration generated by REDD+ actions shall be quantified and registered in a way to avoid double counting.

8.4 REDD+ government actions shall contribute to strengthen public instruments and processes for forestry and territory management.

Appendix 6. Map of the state of Acre in Brazil, highlighting the federal Conservation Units. (Source: http://www.icmbio.gov.br)

Appendix 7. Comparative matrix of the Brazilian Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria with the UNFCCC Safeguards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brazilian Safeguards</th>
<th>UNFCCC Safeguards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>a. Actions that complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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1.2. REDD+ actions shall respect the Brazilian environmental legislation.

1.3. REDD+ actions shall respect all international social, environmental, cultural, labor and commercial agreements ratified by Brazil.

2. Rights recognition and guarantee: recognition and respect to rights to lands, territories and natural resources.

2.1. There shall be the recognition and respect of the constitutional, statutory and customary rights associated with land ownership, the official designation of occupied lands, and the use of natural resources of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners, including complete respect to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to the FAO Treaty on Agriculture and Food, and to the ILO Convention 169.

2.2. REDD+ actions shall recognize and value the socio-cultural systems and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.

2.3. REDD+ actions shall respect the rights to self-determination of the
Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

2.4. In the areas where REDD+ actions are implemented, lawful ownership and possession rights shall be respected, as well as those rights associated with the use of land and natural resources.

2.5. There shall be formal mechanisms for conflict resolution associated with REDD+ actions, through dialogs that include the effective participation of all involved stakeholders.

3. Benefit-sharing: fair, transparent and equitable benefit sharing generated by REDD+ actions.

3.1. Benefits generated by REDD+ actions shall be accessed in a fair, transparent and equitable form by those who hold the rights to the use of land and/or natural resources and promote activities related to conservation, sustainable use and forest restoration.

4. Economic sustainability, improvement in quality of life and poverty alleviation: contribution to economic and sustainable diversification of the use of natural resources.

4.1 REDD+ actions shall promote economic alternatives based on standing forest valorization and on the sustainable use of natural resources and deforested areas.

4.2 REDD+ actions shall contribute to poverty alleviation, social inclusion and e. Actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits¹.

¹Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their
<table>
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<th>Improvement of livelihoods for people who live in REDD+ implementation areas and in areas affected by it.</th>
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<td>4.3 REDD+ actions shall contribute to the empowerment and autonomy of populations involved, based on participatory planning and local development tools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4 REDD+ actions shall consider adaptation measures to minimize the negative impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.</td>
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5. Environmental conservation and recovery: contribution to conservation and recovery of natural ecosystems, biodiversity and environmental services.

| 5.1 REDD+ actions shall contribute to the conservation and recovery of natural ecosystems and avoid causing significant negative impacts to biodiversity and ecosystem services. |
| 5.2 Species or ecosystems that are rare, endemic or threatened with extinction, as well as any other high conservation value attribute, shall be previously identified, protected and monitored. |
| 5.3 In case of restoration activities in degraded areas, REDD+ actions shall use native species. |

6. Participation: participation in the development and implementation of REDD+ actions and in decision-making processes.

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<th>6. Participation: participation in the development and implementation of REDD+ actions and in decision-making processes.</th>
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<td>d. The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities.</td>
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interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.
6.1. Conditions for the participation of the beneficiaries shall be ensured in all phases of REDD+ actions and in the decision-making processes, including the identification, negotiation and distribution of benefits.

6.2. Decision-making processes relating to REDD+ actions shall effectively ensure the right to free, previous and informed consent, considering local representations and respecting the traditional forms of electing representatives by Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities.

6.3. Populations living in areas affected by REDD+ actions shall be informed about them.

7. Monitoring and transparency: complete availability of information related to REDD+ actions.

7.1 Beneficiaries shall have free access to information relating to REDD+ actions, in simple language, so they can participate in the decision-making process in a previously informed and responsible manner.

7.2 Transparency of information about REDD+ actions shall be guaranteed, including at least those related to the methodology, location and size of the area, definition and participation of involved and affected stakeholders, activities to be executed, time length of the project and conflict resolution mechanisms.

b. Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty.
7.3 In public lands, protected areas and in other areas that involve Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities, or in REDD+ actions supported by public funds, there shall be ensured transparency of information regarding the raise, use and distribution of benefits generated by REDD+, as well as periodic financial reporting.

7.4 There shall be periodic monitoring of the socioenvironmental, economic and climate related impacts and benefits of REDD+ actions, while respecting the traditional way of life and practices of Indigenous Peoples, small landowners and local communities, and results of this monitoring shall be made publicly available.

8. Governance: fostering of better governance, coordination and alignment with national, regional and local policies and guidelines.

8.1 REDD+ actions shall be coordinated and be consistent with national, state, regional and municipal policies and programme on climate change, conservation, sustainable development and deforestation prevention.

8.2 REDD+ actions shall meet the requirements of state or national REDD+ policies.

8.3 Emissions reduction and carbon sequestration generated by REDD+ actions shall be quantified and registered in a way to avoid double counting.
8.4 REDD+ government actions shall contribute to strengthen public instruments and processes for forestry and territory management.

Appendix 8. Interviewees list.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dande Tavares</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dandetavares01@gmail.com">dandetavares01@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Marta Azevedo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marta.azevedo@ac.gov.br">marta.azevedo@ac.gov.br</a></td>
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Appendix 9. Interview questions.

1. Legal compliance:
   a. To what extent do you believe the regulatory policies, including market incentives, are being effective in addressing the causes of deforestation and restraining it?
   b. What gaps or problems exist with these laws?
   c. What other actions or policies could be implemented to address the drivers of deforestation?

2. Monitoring:
   a. Is there an effective monitoring process in place to follow up on the development of the projects?
   b. Is there other strategies that could be used for the same purpose?
   c. Was there any progress towards the implementation of the national safeguards information system?

3. Governance:
   a. Is the REDD+ actions in Acre being coordinated in a transparent and effective way?
   b. What do you think about the distribution of responsibilities and authority?
   c. In your opinion, what are the main problems and opportunities related to the forest governance structures?

4. Rights recognition and respect for the knowledge of indigenous peoples and members of local communities:
a. Is there an effective system to recognize ownership rights to land and forest resources? What are the main problems and opportunities?
b. Were there any disagreements or conflicts associated with rights recognition?
c. Is there an initiative for knowledge sharing between the different involved actors? Are there any opportunities for improvement?

5. Benefit-sharing:

a. Are there initiatives to distribute the benefits generated by REDD+ actions in a fair, transparent and equitable form to all the relevant actors?
b. What are the main problems and opportunities related with the design and implementation of a benefit-sharing mechanism?

6. Participation:

a. Does all the involved actors have access to information related to REDD+ actions in a transparent and accessible way? Are there any opportunities for improvement?
b. Does all the involved actors have the right to participate in the decision-making process and/or any other phase of the process? Is the participatory mechanisms effective and inclusive (especially in relation to local people)? Are there any opportunities for improvement?

a. Do you believe that your opinions or positions (as an individual and/or group) were incorporated at some point in the process?
b. Are you satisfied with the outcome? If not, what can be done in the future to achieve better outcomes?

7. Environmental conservation and sustainable development:

a. Are there any initiatives underway for low emissions economic activities in the region (related to more sustainable land uses and avoided forest clearing)? What types of incentives are being given or should be given for actors to change their practices? Is there any capacity building programme to help them on the transition?
b. Are there any initiatives underway to incentivize the protection and conservation of forests, biodiversity and their ecosystem services?
c. Is there a plan to monitor the maintenance of biodiversity and the improvement of livelihoods?

Are there any other final comments you have on implementing safeguards and the potential for REDD+ in Acre?