

Mapping Interested Parties in Carbon Projects
Facilitator's Guide
~2.5 hours

This document is meant for teams who are assessing the feasibility of undertaking a carbon project. As part of the feasibility process, teams will want to understand if a carbon project is “socially feasible.” A first step to doing that is to identify all of the people who may be impacted by or interested in the carbon project, to understand how the project aligns with (or does not align with) their interests, and to define potential project impact. This document outlines a participatory process to do that.

Present the Goals of the session (10 minutes):

1. To think broadly about the people interested in the socio-ecological system – we call them interested parties or stakeholders. We want to expand our consideration of the people who may be impacted by the project, including groups that may not have been sufficiently considered in the past.
2. To identify and describe the interested parties, with as much relevant detail as possible – being specific about people, organizations, and groups, and disaggregating within groups as much as possible.
3. To develop a shared understanding of the interested parties’ rights, interests, and level of influence/relevance, as well as how they benefit from or are harmed by the current system.
4. To identify and describe any potential positive or negative impacts of the project on the interested parties.
5. To brainstorm on how to begin to engage the key interested parties.

This session will result in a draft map of the interested parties – it will be necessary to revisit and refine this first draft with more time and information as the project proceeds. The team will likely want to discuss the initial mapping with additional partners to check if their understanding matches ours and/or to add in additional perspectives.

Part 1: Identification of Interested Parties (45 minutes):

1. Present the Interested Parties identification grid on a flip chart (in-person) or in mural (virtual) (see Table 1 in the appendix).
2. Give participants ~15 minutes to write names of interested parties on sticky notes and put on the grid. People should brainstorm as many people/entities/groups as they think are relevant – we want a complete view, so do not limit the number of people identified at this stage.
 - a. Be specific – name specific communities and important groups within those communities; name specific companies, specific government agencies (or even people)
 - b. Call out women and men if they have different interests; youth and the elderly; different religious or ethnic groups, etc. If sub-groups have different interests, identify them on separate sticky notes in the table
3. Ask questions to see if there are any interested parties we may have missed:
 - a. Does this encompass everyone who may use the land or resources on the land? What about seasonal/migratory access? What about people who may use the land for cultural or recreational value?
 - b. Does this consider anyone that may be impacted downstream? Or in neighboring areas?

- c. Are there additional people with connections to this place historically?
 - d. Are there people who have been excluded or marginalized from access to this place?
 - e. What are the social and economic issues important to the people living in and around this place – have we identified all the people involved in those issues?
4. Ask participants to identify the interested parties who experience disproportionate barriers, burdens, inequities, or injustices within the current system.
 5. Have the group vote on the 10 interested parties to focus on for the rest of the session. Note that we are only limiting the number due to time constraints. Teams should complete the rest of the exercise for all the interested parties who may be impacted by, or could have an impact on, the project.

Part 2: Identification of potential impact (45 minutes):

1. Present the impact grid on a flip chart (in-person) or in mural (virtual) (see Table 2 in appendix) and list the 10 selected interested parties in the first column. Divide the group up - assign specific interested parties to different members of the team so that each person (or pair) is filling out the chart for 1-2 different interested parties – that way the full chart gets completed in a short amount of time. Participants should have at least 20 minutes to complete the exercise. For each interested party:
 - a. Describe the relevant rights that this actor currently has. Include traditional or customary rights, use and access rights, land tenure rights, etc. Also flag if there are disputed rights, active claims, or unclear rights.
 - b. Describe their main interests in the third column. What is important to them (e.g. income, security, job opportunities, re-election, status, etc)?
 - c. In the fourth column, describe how they are benefitting from the current system? In other words, would they rather not see change? Are they getting immediate income from their current activities? Is there status associated with what they are currently doing? Do they have at least short-term food security because of their current practices?
 - d. In the fifth column, describe how the current system may be harming them. In other words, do they have an interest in seeing things change? Is their crop productivity decreasing? Are they suffering food insecurity? Do they have low or unstable income?
 - e. In the last two columns, think about the specific project. What are the potential (no matter how likely or unlikely) impacts to these people, positive or negative?
2. Review and discuss as a full group. Does everyone agree? Anything missing? What are the critical impacts that stand out to you?

To close this session, highlight the following points:

- To design the project, it's important to understand the interests of the main actors. If the project aligns with those, it will be easier to get people constructively engaged. If the project does not align with the current interests, you will need to invest time working with those actors so they understand how the project may still be beneficial to them. You may need to make adjustments in your project design to support existing interests to the extent possible.

- Understanding the way people benefit from the current system will help you understand what they will not want to change. If you are taking away or altering those benefits, the project will need to compensate for that in a way that convinces participants that it is worth it for them.
- Understanding the harms of the current system will help you identify other potential benefits you can provide – can you alleviate some of the current problems? How can you make sure not to exacerbate harms for any of the actors?
- Understanding the current inequities is critical to ensure that you design the project in ways that does not exacerbate those inequities, and hopefully, can address some of them.
- This full analysis allows you to have a broader understanding of the ways a project can be designed to benefit or harm interested parties. You will want to further refine this analysis with your team to include the full suite of people who may be impacted by or could impact the project. You may also want to share your analysis with close partners to get their perspective.

Part 3: Initial Engagement Plan (40 minutes)

1. Present the engagement grid on a flip chart (in-person) or mural (virtual) (see Chart 3 in Appendix)
2. Again, divide the group so each member fills out the chart for the same interested parties that they worked on in the last exercise.
 - a. Column 2: What is the level of influence, relevance, or importance of this actor?
 - i. High: their buy-in is critical to the success of the project – if they are not positively engaged, the project will fail
 - ii. Medium: they need to be engaged and involved, but they don't hold the success or failure of the project in their hands
 - iii. Low: we need to keep them on our radar, as they could impact the project; or we need to keep them informed though not actively engaged
 - b. Column 3: What is our current relationship with this actor? Are we already working with them on a project? Have we started meetings and discussions with them but have not worked together on anything concrete? Do we have a good relationship or strained relationship? Have we not yet engaged with this person/entity?
 - c. Column 4: What is our goal for engaging this actor? Do we want them to co-design and co-implement the project with us? Do we need their approval for certain aspects? Do we want them to provide data or research? Etc
 - d. Column 5: Are there any barriers or challenges to engaging them? Language or cultural barriers? Are there barriers to the active engagement of women or youth or people from certain ethnic groups? Are there financial or logistical barriers? Etc
 - e. Column 6: When do we need to engage them? Do we need to engage them now to get information or gauge their initial interest? Do we engage them once we are sure we have a feasible project? Are they engaged at approval stages? Etc.
 - f. Column 7: What is the next best step in the process with each actor? We will not develop a full engagement plan in this session, but is there something we should do now to get the process started? More research? Initial meetings? Etc.
3. Discussion. Does everyone agree? Anything missing? What are the critical first steps?

Wrap-up (10 minutes)

Identify next steps for refining/completing this process.

- What additional information do we need to gather? Is there desk research that we can undertake to begin to increase our understanding?
- Who else needs to be engaged? Who can you talk to to learn more?
- Should you consider reaching out to representatives of the interested parties directly to interview them?
- Do you need a partner for this work, for instance a trusted intermediary or someone with social science expertise?
- Who will be on point for developing a stakeholder/rightsholder engagement plan?



Table 1: Identification of Interested Parties

| | | Sector | | | | |
|-------|---------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|---|------------|
| | | Indigenous Peoples Local Communities | Smallholders Farmer Groups | Corporations Businesses Private Sector | Non-Profits NGOs Academic Institutions | Government |
| Scale | Local | | | | | |
| | State or Provincial | | | | | |
| | National | | | | | |
| | International | | | | | |



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