

## FTA Independent Steering Committee, March 14, 2016

### ISC conflict of interest policy

The ISC comprises representative members and independent members and one ex officio (non-voting) member, the Director of FTA. Representative members represent among themselves the key institutions collaborating and participating in FTA. Representative members ensure that these institutions and their constituencies can provide formal input and perspectives into the development of all FTA's policies and overall management issues. The independent members of ISC are selected for their own individual expertise and the fact that they do not contribute/participate in any way in FTA's activities. They do not represent any institution. Representative members, together with independent members, whose experience brings an innovative perspective to discussions, engage in a process of balanced strategic decision-making. Subject to their respective representative roles, all ISC Members act in good faith in the best interests of FTA in furtherance of its purpose.

Conflicts of interest – of varying degrees of significance or nature – are an unavoidable reality in the conduct of ISC's operations. A conflict of interest may arise for a representative member, when the overall interests of FTA clash with the specific interests of the institutions they represent. Such a conflict may also arise when an independent member initiates collaboration with FTA, for instance. A conflict of interest may influence and impair objectivity of an ISC member, preventing them from performing their duties and responsibilities as FTA ISC members, looking after the best interest of FTA in an unbiased manner.

A conflict of interest in and of itself is not wrong and may not be unethical as long as it is properly managed. The objective is to protect the integrity and legitimacy of decision-making processes by the ISC, including with regard to the allocation of resources. To pro-actively manage conflicts of interest the ISC relies on the following principles:

1. Transparency and disclosure: all ISC members must fully disclose the existence of any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest. This is done through the submission of a declaration of interest form (in Appendix) to the Secretary of the CIFOR Board, once a year, and immediately following a change in a member's circumstances. The ISC Chair will inform the other ISC members of any disclosed conflict of interest at the beginning of an ISC meeting and will propose an appropriate way to deal with the conflict to the ISC. This will vary according to the issues being decided upon by the ISC at the time and can include for instance asking the concerned member to recuse him/herself from participating in decision-making on the matter that has led to the conflict.
2. The Secretary of the CIFOR Board keeps a full record of all the conflict of interest disclosure forms. The ISC Chair and the CIFOR Board Chair have direct access to this full record.
3. Protection of confidential information: all ISC members are required to protect the confidentiality of information, and to not use it to further personal or institutional interests for which such information is not intended.

## APPENDIX: CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM

Name:

Current Employer:

1. Please list all significant and **relevant professional activities** that might be considered to put you in a situation of conflict of interest within the ISC. These may include employment and/or consulting and/or collaborating relationships.
2. Please list current, significant, and **relevant financial interests** that may be viewed as impairing your objectivity in carrying out ISC duties and responsibilities or may create an unfair advantage for you or any person or organization. These may include financial investments, intellectual property and commercial interests and sources of private sector research support.
3. Please provide any **other relevant information** that may affect, or maybe perceived to affect your objectivity or independence to perform in your role as a member of the ISC.

I hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that the information provided is complete and accurate. I understand that this form will be reviewed annually or before if my situation changes by the ISC Chair and by the CIFOR Board Chair.

I hereby declare that I will comply with the FTA ISC Conflict of Interest Policy.

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ISC member

Date