

Safeguards Compliance Memorandum

Project Information

Project Name	Sustainable Luangwa: Securing Luangwa's water resources for shared socioeconomic and environmental benefits through integrated catchment management
GEF Focal Area	Land degradation and biodiversity
Safeguards Categorization	B

Project Description

To reduce forest and land degradation of the Luangwa Upper Sub-Catchment for enhanced protection of water resources, biodiversity and associated community livelihoods

Component 1: Protected area management and establishment in the Luangwa headwaters. Component 1 will lead to improved participatory management of the key protected area within the headwaters, Mafinga Hills National Forest Reserve, which includes important river source areas. It will also support the development and designation of a Water Resource Protection Area that will provide a model for improved protection and community-based management of the upper sub catchment.

Component 2: Community management of the upper Luangwa Sub-Catchment (Mafinga District). Component 2 will establish sustainable community management as well as environmentally sustainable and climate resilient livelihoods through prioritized interventions focused on the headwaters to reduce land and forest degradation that contribute towards the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Component 3: Knowledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation. Component 3 will ensure that the increased knowledge of sustainable catchment management from lessons learned and best practices supports replication of the approach in other headwater areas at local and national levels, as well as being disseminated at Zambezi River Basin level and globally. M&E will be carried out to inform project decision-making and adaptive management.

Project Location and Salient Physical Characteristics Relevant for the Safeguards Analysis

The project scope is the Luangwa Upper Sub-catchment, concentrated in the Mafinga, Isoka, Nakonde and Chama Districts in eastern Zambia, given the importance of the upper catchment to the long-term water flow and quality of the river and the associated ecosystems and ecosystem services downstream. Within that area, on-ground interventions will be concentrated around the source of the Luangwa River, in the Mafinga Hills National Forest Reserve and the surrounding agricultural land in Mafinga District, in the north-east of Zambia near the Malawi border.

The rich forest habitats of the headwaters provide rural communities with critical ecosystem goods and services, including wood fuel and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The Luangwa River is one of the major tributaries of the Zambezi River, and is one the four major rivers of the country. The Luangwa river

- one of the last long free-flowing rivers in Zambia and one of the largest unaltered river systems in southern Africa - is an essential source of water for adjacent populations (~1.8 million people reside in the Luangwa Catchment), providing water for irrigated agriculture, household use and hydropower in the downstream area of the catchment. The Luangwa Catchment has globally important biodiversity assets and natural resources: the Luangwa Floodplains (designated Wetlands of International Importance and Ramsar site), six National Parks, eight Game Management Areas, and National Forest Reserves. In all, these protected areas cover 68,812 km² - around 50% of the total catchment area. The catchment includes large areas of Miombo Woodland, designated by Conservation International as one of five High Biodiversity Wilderness Areas and by WWF as one of the Global 200 Ecoregions.

These ecosystems support important terrestrial and aquatic species, including the endangered marsh mongoose (*Herpestes palustris*), African clawless otter (*Aonyx capensis*), spotted necked otter (*Lutra maculicollis*), hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibious*), African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) and the critically endangered hook-lipped (black) rhino (*Diceros bicornis*). The Mafinga Hills NFR, a Category VI protected area is an area rich in biodiversity and forms part of the Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspot. Due to its rich variety of endemic flora and fauna species, Mafinga Mountains, in which the NFR is contained, is listed as a Key Biodiversity Area of Zambia (<http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/24247>).

Mafinga District had a projected population of 103,877 in 2018, the most recently available data. Of this population, 50,193 are male (representing 48.3%), while 53,684 are female (representing 51.7%) with an annual growth rate of 4.6%. The district has a total of 12,648 households and a population density of 16.0/Km². The majority of people in Mafinga are tribal peoples. Mafinga has three (3) chiefdoms namely Mwenchifungwe, Muyombe and Mwenewisi. The district has a number of tribes who have settled in Mafinga, however, the most predominant tribes are the Tumbuka, Lambiya, Fungwe and Nyika. Most of the land in Mafinga is under customary control. The district has village committees that assist the chiefs in allocation and administration of land. The district is predominantly rural and most of the land is not used for commercial purposes. Despite having plenty of virgin land, a significant part of it is mountainous and not suitable for production use. However, the larger part of Mafinga can be utilized for farming and other developmental activities.

The main livelihood of the people of Mafinga is the agricultural crop production on a small scale. About ninety percent (90%) of the rural communities of Mafinga depends on farming as their source of the livelihood. The crops include maize, beans, millet, sorghum and soya beans, whilst most farmers in the valley areas and plateau depends on pastoral farming and small livestock production. Gardening and Horticultural farming is also another source of the farmer's livelihood which is practiced along the riverbanks. Other livelihoods include brick molding, grocery shop businesses and mobile markets, beekeeping and honey production, charcoal production, timber production, and carpentry.

Safeguards Standard	Triggered	Explanation
Natural Habitats	Yes	Overall, activities of the project will produce significant conservation benefits and any potential adverse environmental impacts on human populations or

		environmentally important areas are expected to be very limited. While there shall be no conversion or degradation of natural habitats, this Standard has been triggered as a precaution since there will be site-specific activities relating to productive landscapes under Component 2.
Indigenous People	Yes	As a precautionary approach, this Standard is triggered are various tribal groups located in the target project areas. These include the chiefdoms of Mwenechifungwe, Muyombe, and Mwenewisi, in addition to other tribes who have settled in Mafinga including the Tumbuka, Lambiya, Fungwe, and Nyika. An initial assessment points out that their social and cultural identity, although distinct, does not make them vulnerable or disadvantaged, as all Zambians belong to a tribe. Therefore, although this safeguards standard is triggered, a separate Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework will not be prepared.
Restriction of Access and Resettlement	Yes	There will be no land acquisition or involuntary resettlement of individuals and/or families under the proposed project. While the proposed project will not cause displacement of people from their homes, the Standard is triggered because regeneration activities and management plans for MHNFR and community lands may restrict or prohibit the extraction of resources in certain areas, thereby restricting access to resources required for the subsistence and cultural maintenance of the affected populations. A Process Framework will be prepared as part of the ESMF to conform to WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Framework.
Community Health, Safety and Security	No	This Standard is not triggered as the project is highly unlikely to have an impact on community health, safety, and security
Pest Management	No	The activities are not expected to trigger the Standard on Pest Management. While the project might support community woodlots (under Component 2), it will not support the procurement or use of pesticides or other agricultural chemicals, or lead to the increased use of such chemicals. The ESMF will include guidance to this effect.
Cultural Resources	No	This Standard is not triggered as the project is highly unlikely to have an impact on cultural resources

Summary of Key Safeguards Issues

Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

There are no large scale, significant or irreversible impacts that are anticipated to arise from this project. During the ESS Screening, there were a few safeguard issues that warrant mitigation measures during project implementation, including:

- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Land and resource tenure rights, perceived to be at risk during the land boundary demarcation and beacon setting, access to natural resources and community landscape management plans and conservation agreements risking being politicized without consultative process on land tenure rights.
- **Elite Capture Risks:** Designation and management of conservation areas risking of elite capture, inequitable benefits; risks related to protection of natural habitat, land degradation and negative impacts on the natural habitat.
- **Capacity to claim community rights:** Risks were identified with local communities affected by the project being unaware of their rights and/or lacking the capacity to claim them.

Describe measures taken by the Project Team to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described:

There is a high level of capacity in the borrower to meet the safeguards policy issues raised in the screening. They were easily able to identify mitigation measure that have worked in similar situations in Zambia and are likely to be successful in this project. The planned mitigation measures for the safeguards concerns listed above include:

Conflict Sensitivity:

- Examine laws around tenure rights, forestry and CFMG to determine the level of risk to community tenure rights that the project may impose
- Project to clarify tenure rights by building a specific community training on land and resource tenure rights
- The project must build in participatory conflict resolution processes into project implementation to minimize this risk, captured in the grievance redress mechanism

Elite Capture:

- Asking trusted community members such as religious leaders or elders who the most disadvantaged people are and inviting those people specifically to meetings and events
- Working with women's groups, women-led cooperatives or female leaders to plan project activities that meet their needs. Men will be part of these activities to ensure their support.
- Creating a training program for women that work with them to become more comfortable speaking up in community meetings

- Formation of community groups under the project will be done through community-led nominations and elections. The project team will identify potential “elite households or individuals”, to ensure that they are not the only people who are nominated.

Capacity to Claim Rights:

- Incorporate participatory and conflict resolution processes into project design to minimize this risk.
- Conduct a community training on land and resource tenure and rights to natural resources in the project site.
- Develop a participatory, equitable process in the selection criteria for beneficiaries from all project activities, with special attention for the selection criteria for the members of CFMGs and WUAs

Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people:

Key Stakeholders:

Ministries and Divisions within the government of Zambia: The Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environment Protection (Environmental Management Department and Water Resources Management Agency – WARMA); Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (Forestry Department); Ministry of Community Development and Social Services; and Provincial and District administrative government offices and Town Councils. Traditional chiefs are also included here.

Local communities: Local communities comprise the main beneficiaries of this project. The project will work with men and women, as well as local community groups and cooperatives living around Mafinga Hills National Forest Reserve and the headwaters of the Luangwa River in three Wards of Mafinga District: Ntonga, Musipizi and Mafinga Wards. These local communities are made up small-scale farmers who depend on the sale of agricultural produce for their income and livelihood.

Others: NGOs including WWF Zambia, the Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia (WECZ), and WeForest; the Private Sector Community Markets for Conservation (COMACO)

Consultations:

Consultations with communities took place throughout the design phase of the project, with the first one being held in October 2020. Stakeholders provided views that were critical in the design consideration. The documentation of the consultations can be found in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Annex 3.

The second field visit was conducted from 17th to 21st May 2021 to validate the draft project document with local stakeholders and conduct social and environmental safeguards consultations and risk assessments. The field trip aimed to fill the gaps in baseline information that may have been noted in the first trip, and allowed further discussion with the main stakeholder partners and their current activities.

In addition to disclosing project Safeguards and SEP documents on the websites of the website of the Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection and the WWF Zambia Country office website, a summary document was translated into local languages and shared in person during site visits in February 2022 for comment and feedback.

Monitoring and Compliance

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies? Yes [X] No [] NA []
Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost? Yes [X] No [] NA []
Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies? Yes [X] No [] NA []
Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents? Yes [X] No [] NA []
Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to WWF-US? Yes [X] No [] NA []
Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs? Yes [X] No [] NA []

Disclosure Requirements

Environmental and Social Management Framework, including a Process Framework	
Stakeholder Engagement Plan	
Date received by WWF-US	January 13, 2022
Date Disclosed on WWF-US website	January 13, 2022
<i>In Country Disclosure</i>	
Date Disclosed on Government of Zambia, The Ministry of Green Economy and Environment website	January 13, 2022
Date Disclosed in Chinsali, Mafinga Ward, Ntonga Ward, Nsenje Ward, Chitipa, Musipizi Ward	January 30- February 7, 2022

Approvals

Adrienne McKeehan, Safeguards Coordinator	DocuSigned by: <i>Adrienne McKeehan</i> CF36CBFE14D14A7...	Date: 3/9/2022
Brent Nordstrom, Safeguards Compliance Officer	DocuSigned by: <i>Brent Nordstrom</i> DD6030B6C7E2446	Date: 3/9/2022