



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT  
AND TOURISM



**Environmental and Social Management Framework  
for  
“Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity  
Conservation in The Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” Project**

ULAANBAATAR  
2020

## ABBREVIATIONS

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ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
ALAMGAC	Agency for Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography
AMEM	Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring ( <i>aimag</i> -level)
AOC	Administration for Inter- <i>aimag</i> Otor Pastureland Use and Coordination
BD	Biodiversity
BEIA	Baseline Environmental Impact Assessment
BCM	Bagh Citizens' Meeting
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBIT	Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency (via GEF)
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CRM	Citizens' Representatives Meeting
DEIA	Detailed Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
EA	Executing agency Ministry of Environment and Tourism
ECOP	Environmental Code of Conduct
ECF	Environment and Climate Fund (under MET)
EIC	Environmental Information Center (under IRIMHE)
EMA	Emergency Management Agency ( <i>aimag</i> )
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESM	Environmental and Social Management
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System
ESS	Environmental and Social Screening
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FUG	Forest User Groups
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GoM	Government of Mongolia
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP	Impact Program
IRIMHE	Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment (under NAMEM)
IVM	Institute of Veterinary Medicine (in MULS)
LD	Land Degradation

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LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
LOA	Letter of Agreement
LPA	Local Protected Area
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCUD	Ministry of Construction and Urban Development
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
MNFPUG	Mongolian National Federation of Pasture User Groups
MOFALI	Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry
NAMEM	National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (under MET)
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NR /NRs	Nature Reserves
NSO	National Statistical Office (GoM)
PA	Protected Area
PAP	Project Affected Person/s
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPIS	Project Physical Intervention Site
PUG	Pasture User Groups
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RUA	Rangeland Use Agreement
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIPP	Integrated Policies and Procedures
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SPA	Special Protected Area
SSESMP	Site-Specific Environment and Social Management Plan
TOR	Terms of reference
TWG	Technical working group
UB	Ulaanbaatar
UN	United Nations
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WWF Mongolia	World Wildlife Fund for Nature in Mongolia
WWF-US	World Wildlife Fund – United States

### **Glossary**

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<i>Aimag</i>	Province (first administrative sub-division of Mongolia)
<i>Bagh</i>	Lowest administrative unit in Mongolia (below soum level)
<i>Consultant</i>	"Green Focus Facilitator" NGO
<i>Clients</i>	MET and FAO/WWF
<i>Dzud</i>	Severe winter characterized by extreme cold, heavy snowfall or drought
<i>Hot ail</i>	Herding camp consisting of group of households
<i>Otor</i>	Long-distance, inter-aimag migration of Mongolian herders
<i>Soum</i>	County (second administrative division of Mongolia)

<i>Project</i>	“Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” Project
<i>Community group</i>	Herder groups, pasture user group, foster user partnerships, environment conservation groups etc.

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the end of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, Mongolia began transitioning toward a market economy through the privatization of state-owned assets which included livestock. The Government of Mongolia (GOM) distributed collectively owned herds to member families of collectives. Pasture land use by herders have not changed dramatically. It was similar or even better to collectivization time in the beginning with enabled herders to freely grow their livestock and move without any direct supervision. However, herders soon felt some significant changes in their livelihoods. They included:

- The government provided supports including social welfare care, veterinary services, developing infrastructure for pasture (livestock stalls, fences, wells construction, fodder production, etc.) have disappeared.
- Also, the government subsidies during bad weather, harsh climate conditions such as *dzud*, drought, flood, and wildfires also vanished completely but limited volunteer support from individuals or non-governmental organizations continued.

The weak legal regulation, other competing economic sectors' interventions over the pastureland, and ever-increasing climate change impact has also increased pressure on herders' livelihoods. Therefore, herders attempted to minimize their risk by increasing herd numbers and by changing their herd structure to maximize cash-producing products such as cashmere and other market products.

Closer location to market, education and healthcare system and other factors attracted herders to get nearby *aimag* and *soum* centres or key highways and water resources like lakes, rivers, and wells. Herds are concentrated in these pastures and exceeded the safe carrying capacity of the land furthermore the grazing pressure expanded throughout the country as livestock continued to grow.

As a result, 70% of Mongolian rangelands are moderate to very severely degraded according to the estimates of scientists. This has been caused by a combination of natural factors (extreme weather and climate change), overgrazing, and desertification.

The numerous initiatives and programs had been implemented or are ongoing by national or international organizations. However, the results are not yet sufficiently satisfactory and effective. At this critical time, WWF and FAO have decided to put afford on conservation of fragile dryland ecosystems and support population livelihoods in eastern Mongolia and designed the Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia project. The project is part of a global program led by FAO, the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes.

The project aims to halt the ongoing tragedy of commons regarding pasture land in eastern Mongolia and reverse the current unfavorable dynamic into positive and sustainable prosperity through the project activities. The project will support the development of improved land and pasture management plans to increase environmental protection and livelihood support.

The project interventions will target nine soums of the three eastern aimags of Dornod, Khentii, and Sukhbaatar. In addition, the project activities will cover national and local levels.

A project-specific Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) study has been carried out for the proposed project in accordance with the guidelines and policies of WWF and FAO and legislation of Mongolia. The major objective of this study was to assess environmental and social risks that might arise from project activities and to prepare an Environmental and Social Management Framework

(ESMF) for timely implementation of the mitigation measures to ensure that the project is environmentally and socially sound and sustainable.

The Introduction chapter will discuss the project overview and justification and it comprehensively illustrates how the ESIA process was conducted for this project.

Chapters one, two and three provide a summary of the project activities and current environmental and social baseline. The chapters are relatively brief as most of the basic background of the project is explained in the project document and its annexes.

Chapter four describes the environmental and social policies, regulations and guidelines of the Government of Mongolia, WWF and FAO. Chapter five describes the Implementation Arrangements of the project.

The Stakeholder Consultations chapter highlights the stakeholders who have been consulted and who have contributed their valuable inputs and comments to this ESMF.

The most vital chapters are seven and eight. Chapter 7 describes the anticipated key environmental and social impacts. Furthermore, it ranks the identified risks/impacts by significance and magnitude. The next chapter on the impact and mitigation measures covers i) the activities that may pose risk; ii) the impact that the risk cause if not properly managed; iii) current background describes overall national and project site-specific conditions related to the activities with impacts; and iv) most importantly proposed mitigation measures are discussed. Chapter 8 provides an overview of the ESMF and its mitigation measures.

Recommendations are the last but key chapter that wraps up all consultancy outcome and compacts into useful guidance for the project further implementation as well as it contains the general conclusion.

Annexes included all key supporting documents such as the Process Framework, Ethnic Groups Planning Framework, and Environmental Code of Practice (ECOP).

The main environmental risks identified are:

1. Land Management Planning: Potential negative impacts on natural resources and local community livelihoods in case of uncoordinated/inadequate planning.
2. Farming (cropland) activities: Fertile topsoil and water resources depletion could occur in farmland associated with the project if proper management measures are not put in place.
3. Risk Funds (Pasture Management Funds): Potential financing of environmentally unsustainable practices that might impact local environment.

The main social risks identified are:

1. Ethnic groups: Although currently, conflicts among ethnic groups are not present nor expected in the future in the project area, the project could unintentionally exacerbate community and group relations through its selection of beneficiaries and participants receiving project support or technical assistance.
2. Access restrictions: Project activities may suggest/lead to restrictions on access to natural resources for local communities (including any ethnic minorities).

The report concludes that all identified impacts/risks are limited and localized; with proper management they can be easily mitigated or prevented effectively. Nevertheless, the risk categorization is maintained at “high” risk under FAO’s Environmental and Social Management (ESM)

Guidelines and Category “B” under WWF’s Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) to ensure continued oversight of these issues in implementation and monitoring of the environmental and social safeguards measures as outlined in this ESMF.

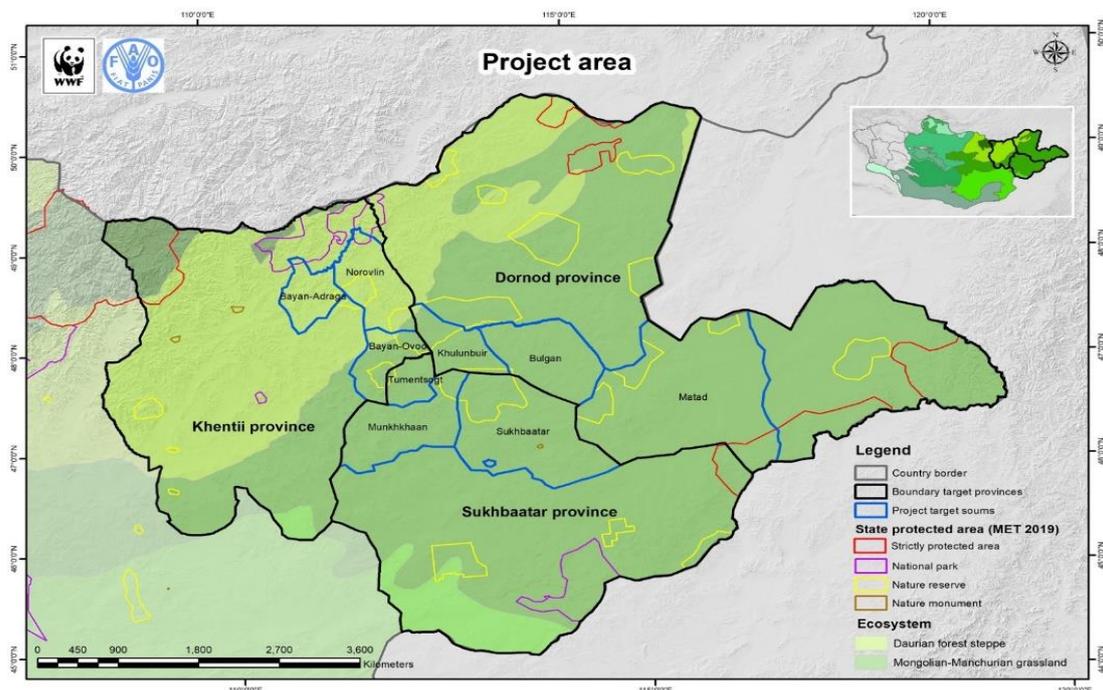
## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Project Overview and Justification

#### 2.1.1 Project overview

The project “*Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia*” (“Eastern Steppe project”) is part of a global program led by FAO, the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (SFM/Drylands IP). In Mongolia, the project is led by FAO in partnership with WWF, and will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in collaboration with other partners.

The objective of the project is to reverse and prevent dryland ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss through an inclusive, integrated landscape and value chain approach securing multiple environment benefits and sustainable, resilient livelihoods in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia. The project interventions will be implemented in nine counties (*soums*) of the three eastern provinces (*aimags*) of Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar as shown in the map below, as well as at the aimag and national level.



#### 2.1.2 Environmental and/or adaptation problems in the project target area

The following environmental problems are highlighted in the Project document:

- Part of Eurasian Steppe: The Eastern Mongolian Steppe, covering 27.3 million hectares, is one of the world’s largest remaining grassland ecosystems and hosts critical ecosystems of global environment importance. The three target provinces, Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar, lie within the Eastern Mongolian Steppe. The target area includes nine counties (soums) covering a total 7.08 million ha dryland.

- Overlapped with two ecoregions: Mongolian-Manchurian grassland ecoregion and Daurian forest steppe ecoregion. In the territory of selected aimags, there are a number of state protected areas.
- River basin areas: Four rivers forming headwaters of the Amur. River/water protection zones are established with the relevant regulations approved by the public authorities in Dornod and Khentii aimags.
- Forest area: The target soums include 109,872.75 ha (or 1.6%) of forest area, over 95% of which is found in the territories of Norovlin (71,210 ha) and Bayan-Adarga soums (33,061 ha)
- Flora and fauna: Home to globally and regionally threatened species of animals and plants.

As indicated in the Project Document, the Steppe is under an increasing human footprint and which is witnessed by the following environmental changes:

- Land degradation
- Climate change impacts
- GHG emissions and loss of soil carbon
- Overexploitation of surface and groundwater
- Loss of biodiversity
- Threats to forests

### 2.1.3 Root causes and barriers

One of the major root causes of land degradation and biodiversity loss in Eastern Mongolia, per project documentation, is the increasing number of livestock, surpassing landscape carrying capacity, leading to overgrazing. The total number of livestock is 1.97 million in all nine soums, as of 2018. The three target soums with the highest number of livestock are Munkhkhaan (457,600), Sukhbaatar (331,200), and Bayan-Ovoo (202,200). In all of these soums, carrying capacity has been exceeded 2-4 times.

The following barriers to the implementation and scaling of sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation in the Eastern Mongolian Steppe have been identified as stated in the Project Document:

Barrier 1: Inadequate conditions of dryland governance, unregulated and overuse of natural resources (addressed by Component 1)

Barrier 2: Inadequate capacities and incentives at local level for managing drylands sustainably (addressed by Component 2)

Barrier 3: Limited experience and knowledge in protected area management and monitoring, and limited understanding of PA interactions/connectivity/benefits to wider landscape management (addressed by Component 3)

Barrier 4: Lack of systematic sharing of knowledge and best practices in sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation (addressed by Component 4)

### 2.1.4 Project scope and expected results

Scope and expected outcome of the project are summarized below from the project documentation:

The project will be divided into four components, as follows.

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling environment for the sustainable management of drylands in Mongolia.

Component 2: Scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia.

Component 3: Strengthening biodiversity conservation and landscape connectivity.

Component 4: Project coordination, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation.

The expected results and Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) of the project are as follows:

- 1.19 million hectares of terrestrial protected areas under improved management for conservation and sustainable use.
- 0.25 million hectares of land restored.
- 5.64 million hectares of landscapes under improved practices.
- 10.3 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e greenhouse gas emissions mitigated.
- 25,241 direct beneficiaries (at least 40% of both women and men<sup>1</sup>)

## 3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 Description of Project Activities

The planned project activities were analyzed to identify activities with potential risks to environmental and social aspects of the project target area.<sup>2</sup> The analyzed activities were used for the ESIA process. Most activities related to capacity building support through training, handouts, planning and adaptation and etcetera.

#### Component 1: Strengthening the enabling environment for the sustainable management of drylands in Mongolia.

Under Component 1, the project will strengthen cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration for integrated land management planning and monitoring. It will also support incorporation of land degradation and biodiversity considerations into the ongoing land management planning process; and will support the ongoing policy reform to promote sustainable land use.

The activities under this component include consultations, assessments, developing plans, developing guidelines, conducting trainings and supporting adequate adoption of these institutional support.

Component 2: Scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia. Under Component 2, the project will strengthen sustainable dryland management in Eastern Mongolia through a three-pronged approach. First, the project will promote environmentally friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production. Second, the project will work with local herder and forest communities in the target area to implement and scale up sustainable management and restoration of rangelands and forest patches. And third, the project will support partnerships between herder groups/cooperatives, local government and private sector to develop value chains and access to markets for sustainably produced agricultural products.

The component covers numerous activities to support herders, farmers, crop companies and government officials including stakeholder consultations, agrochemical and soil erosion analysis, developing technical guidelines/handbook, with corresponding trainings.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex A1 and Annex Q of the Project document for more details on gender-disaggregated targets.

<sup>2</sup> Annex H Work Plan\_MNG DSL\_Version 19 May 2020\_clean

Consequently, herders, farmers, cropping companies, fodder producers and local institutions will receive technical assistance from the project. This includes:

- Pasture management and restoration.
- Sustainable cropland management.
- Establishing or strengthening risk funds or other financing mechanism
- Planning and implementing bag-level pre- and primary schooling
- Implementing interventions for sustainable forest management
- Providing technical and business development support to herder groups/cooperatives to enhance capacity for processing, marketing and sale of agricultural products (such as cashmere, meat, and crops).

In addition, the project will develop and implement pasture management and restoration plans under this component.

### Component 3: Strengthening biodiversity conservation and landscape connectivity

Under Component 3 of the project, the management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas will be strengthened to support survival of the Mongolian gazelle, the White-naped Crane, and other iconic migratory species. Priority interventions will be implemented to support enhanced management and connectivity of these protected areas, along with conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men) and sustainable financing mechanisms of the protected areas. It has following key activities:

- The component has overall goal to improve PA management plans;
- Develop and pilot financing mechanisms for the NR; and
- Provide technical assistance for implementation of the conservation measures to ensure ecosystem integrity.

### Component 4: Project coordination, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation for the sustainable management of drylands in Mongolia

Component 4 of the project will support effective project coordination, as well as the systematic creation and sharing of knowledge on sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation at the provincial, national and global levels. The project will also aim to strengthen LDN target monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Through exchange with and alignment to the Global SFM/Drylands Impact Program, best practices and knowledge will be systematically documented and shared, and regional and global collaboration will be leveraged to have a larger impact at biome and ecoregion levels.

The project will build on lessons learned and collaborate closely with ongoing and planned initiatives by organizations including the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The PMU, project coordination M&E, and implementation of Gender Action Plan, Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Environmental and Social Management Plan; and other relevant activities included in the component.

Moreover, the project will develop and implement gender-sensitive/responsive knowledge management and communications strategy to support implementation and replication of project activities; and develop regular planning, review and monitoring process for national and subnational LDN targets and share information on LDN targets through national and global platforms.



## 3.2 Project Area Profile: The Environmental and Social Baseline

### 3.2.1 Environmental Baseline

The environmental baseline in target areas are solely based on the Report on biodiversity in the target landscapes, Annex S. of the project document.

#### Steppe ecosystem in Mongolia

Mongolia is located in Central Asia and borders Russia in the north and China in the south. The largest ecosystem in Mongolia is grassland. All grassland covers an area of 1,034,737,38 km<sup>2</sup> or 66,12% of the total national territory. Mongolian grassland represents 2.6% of the world's grassland and 12% of Eurasian grassland (Tuvshintogtokh, 2014). Over 80% of grassland in Mongolia is used as pasture. Tuvshintogtokh (2014) has classified steppe types into 6 sub-types, along the gradient Mean Annual Precipitation MAP (from 400 mm to 100 mm) and Mean Annual Temperature MAT (from 40C): high-cold mountain steppes, meadow steppes, mountain steppes, dry steppes, desertified steppes and desert steppes.

In general, we do not yet have visible conservation results of NRs in region. Ordinary herders have poor or even negative understanding as they consider these NRs have taken from them for livestock of rich businessman, famous race horse trainers or politicians. In this case, if we want to also promote the idea of ecosystem connectivity among these NRs, it will require tremendous effort to achieve satisfactory outcome.

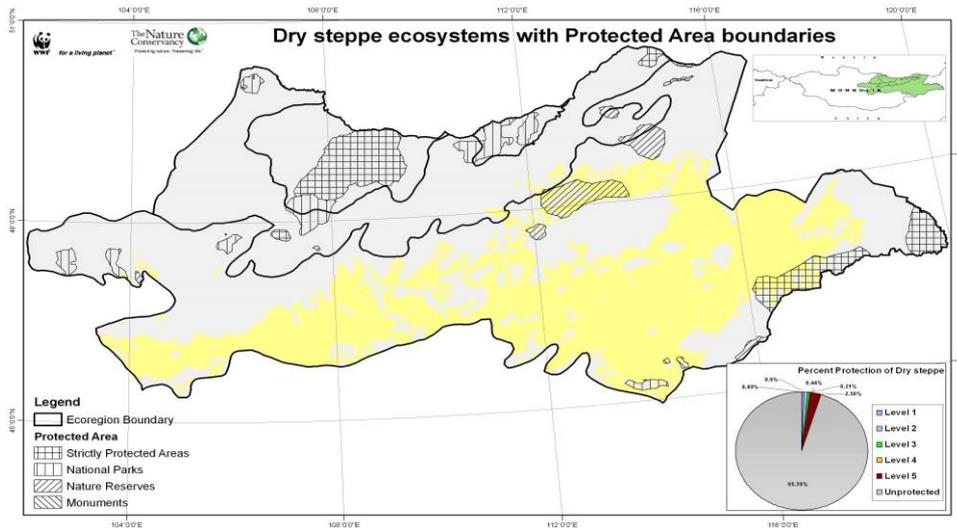
*The Interviewee of ESA, Dornod aimag*

The Central and Eastern Grasslands of Mongolia span an area of 458,000 km<sup>2</sup> that is bounded by the Gobi Desert to the south, the Khyangan Mountains to the west, the Chinese border to the East and the Russian border to the North. Globally, the Temperate Grasslands biome is the most converted and least protected (Hoekstra, 2005). The temperate grasslands in Mongolia are largely unconverted, support a full assemblage of native wildlife and the pastoral livelihoods of half of Mongolia's population. However, the wildlife and indigenous livelihoods of this area are threatened by overgrazing and rapid growth in mining and oil development.

#### *Steppe – Stipa grassland*

The Eastern Mongolian Steppes are home to the largest remaining intact temperate grasslands of the Earth. The ecosystem of Eastern Mongolian Steppes is characterized by treeless flat steppes, gently rolling hills, wetlands, and interlinkages with the Khyangan Mountain Range all the way to the border with the People's Republic of China. The main distinctive characteristic of this landscape compared to other steppe ecosystems is that it is dominated by grasslands across thousands of square kilometres with several species of bush and shrubbery.

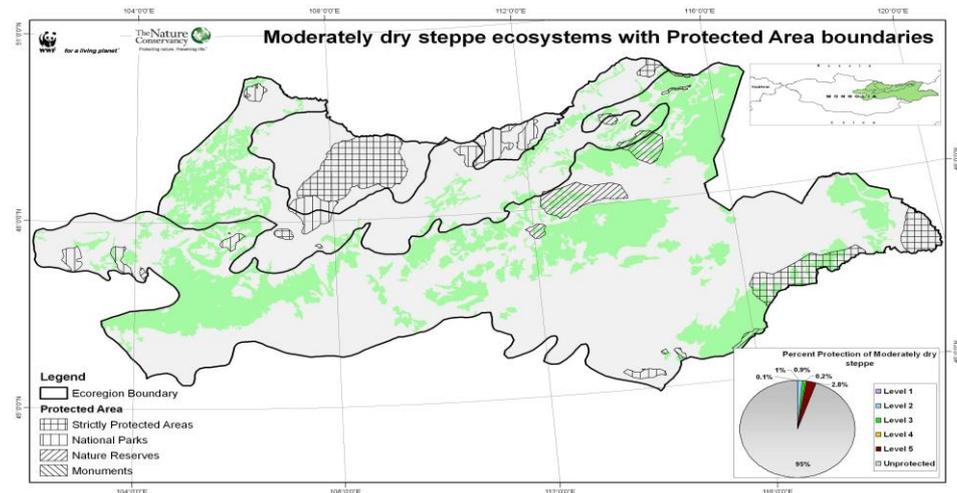
There is an estimated total of 310,915 km<sup>2</sup> /31 million ha/ of Mongolia-Manchurian Steppe in central and eastern Mongolia. Only 6.6% of the estimated Mongolia-Manchurian Steppe in central and eastern Mongolia was included within the protected areas in eastern Mongolia in 2011.



### Dry steppe ecosystem in eastern Mongolia

A Biodiversity Gap Analysis for Eastern Mongolian Steppe was developed in 2011 (Moore et al, 2011) and identified two steppe ecosystems. The areas specifically included in the gap analysis and its recommendations are related to the priority areas that were to be immediately placed under state and local protection as they are at greatest threat from the mining sector's rapid development. For instance, the analysis identified an immediate need to take areas under state and local protection, upgrade the status of existing protected areas, and establish "ecological corridors" between protected areas in the eastern steppe in Mongolia. Accordingly, three new Nature Reserves were established in the project area in 2019.

The Eastern Steppes are an exceptional ecoregion within the vast Eurasian Steppes spanning from the European Pannonian Steppe to the Mongolian-Manchurian grasslands due to its intactness, relatively high altitude and northern latitude.



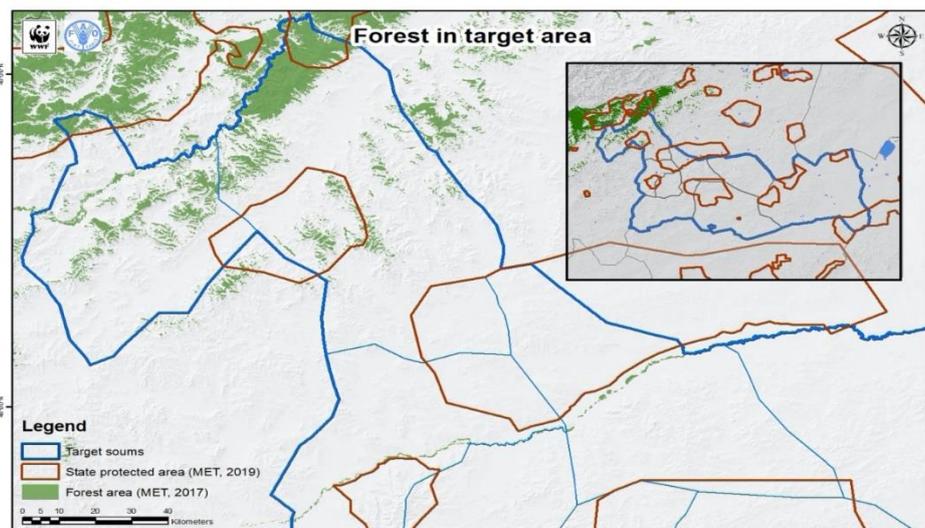
### Moderately dry steppe ecosystem in eastern Mongolia

#### Forest in the target area

Mongolian forests have low productivity and growth, and they are vulnerable to disturbance from drought, fire and pests. Forests can easily lose their ecological balance following disturbance, and they have a relatively low ability for expansion to currently non-forested areas, due the boreal forests location in the southern boundary of the northern hemisphere's cold forested region with a harsh

continental climate. The main drivers of forest loss and degradation in Mongolia are forest fires, pests, selective logging and clear felling, and grazing (Narangerel, 2017).

Project target areas cover a total of 6,860,145.80 ha including 109,872.75 ha (or 1.6%) of forest area in the target soums of eastern Mongolia. More than 95% of total forest area within the project's target soums is located in the territories of Norovlin (71,210 ha) and Bayan-Adarga soums (33,061 ha), which represents 1.2% of total boreal forest in Mongolia. These forests mostly contain coniferous species such as Siberian larch (*Larix siberica*), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), and Siberian pine or cedar (*Pinus sibirica*). The broad-leafed trees found there are mainly birch (*Betula platyphylla*), aspen (*Populus tremula*) or poplar (*Populus diversifolia*). There are no forests included in Matad, Sukhbaatar and Munkhkhaan soums which are located in the eastern part of the target area.



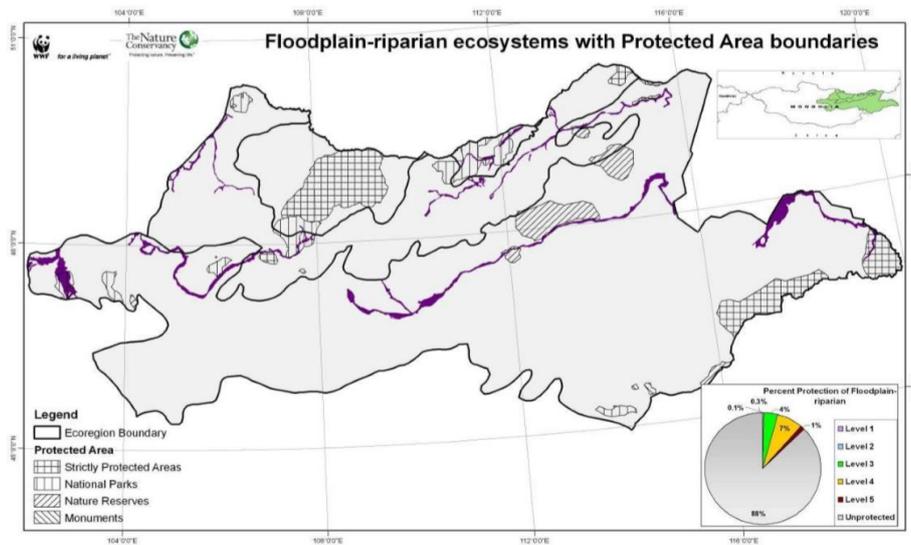
Forest in the target area

Beyond the large-scale matrix ecosystems, there is a group of ecosystems that occur in a more scattered pattern. These are called the Patch Ecosystems. The variety of the Mongolian landscape is often related to these patch ecosystems distributed in an irregular pattern across the country.

#### Riparian system in Eastern Mongolia

Lower elevation (650-1700 meters) riparian ecosystems are comprised of willows (*Salix* sp.), cottonwood trees (*Populus*), Tamarix, elms and various understory shrubs and grasses in the floodplain. Over the centuries, during snow melt and early summer rains, parts of north eastern Mongolia's largest rivers (like the Kherlen, Ulz, Tuul, and Orkhon rivers) have meandered over broad valley floors, creating wide floodplains. These floodplains, in the foothills and lowlands below the mountains in which the rivers originate, have given rise to dense broadleaf forest of riverine trees and shrubs. Species of poplar, birch, and larch are most common in the tree layer, and of willow in the shrub layer. Forbs and grasses typically associated with moist or periodically moist sites can be dense below the trees – in addition to genera already mentioned in connection with the lowland and upland meadow ecosystems, *Ribes* and *Cacalia* are often found. Floodplain systems around the world are among the most vulnerable to conversion to human uses and while hydrologic regimes remain mostly intact in the study area, grazing by livestock has altered much of the original floodplain vegetation. Dense, naturally stratified riverine forests, and places where natural processes of floodplain succession are allowed to happen, are rare. In the absence of overgrazing by domestic livestock or

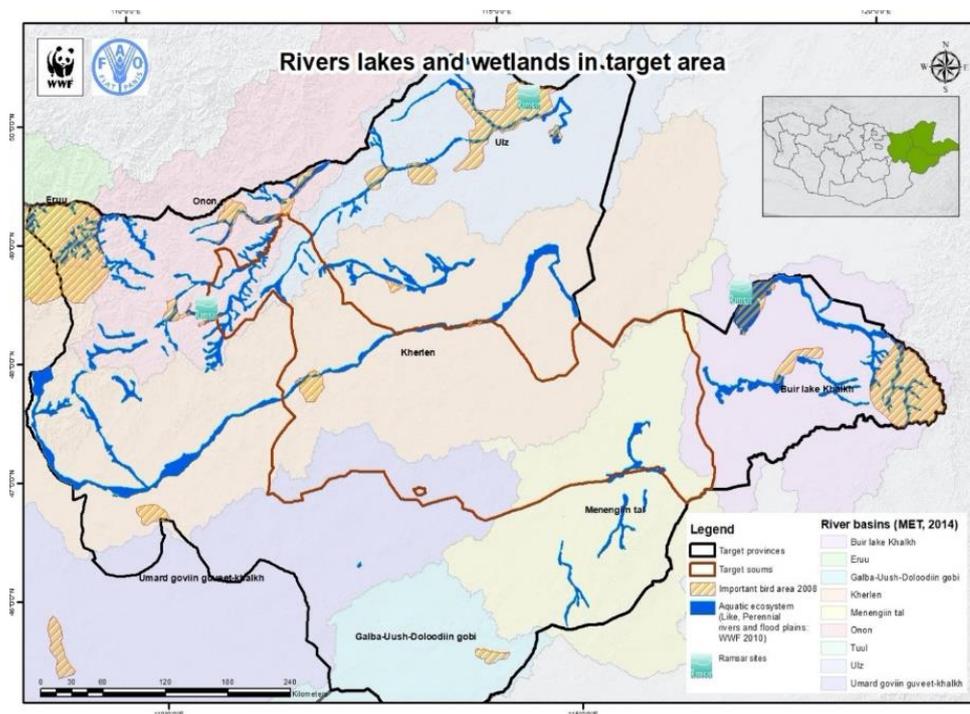
physical disturbance by natural flooding or scouring, succession to gallery Salix shrubs is likely (Moore, 2010).



### Riparian system in Eastern Mongolia

#### Rivers in the target area

The target area partially covers three main rivers including the Kherlen, Ulz and Onon Rivers in the eastern Mongolia.



#### Rivers, lakes and wetlands in the target area

**Kherlen:** Kherlen River is the biggest and longest river and runs through 4 target soums: Bulgan, Khulunbuir, Tumentsogt and Bayan-Ovoo. The total population in the Kherlen river basin in Mongolia is 110,000 people, and settlements, camps and roads tend to line the Kherlen River, where the best living environment is found. The large human population and huge livestock economy of the region depends on the Kherlen River. Livestock overgrazing coupled with a warming changing climate

contributes to a decrease in water quality and quantity. Water mineralization and turbidity increases manifold as the Kherlen flows through the dry steppe. Integrated pasture management is needed to protect its ecosystem, water and crane habitat along the river valley. This great river with tiny flow volume is an important lifeline for biodiversity and socio-economic stability of the Steppe landscape.

### Biodiversity in Eastern Mongolia

The target landscape comprises a large area of grassland steppe, partially covering three main rivers in eastern Mongolia (the Onon, Ulz and Kherlen Rivers). Globally and regionally threatened species occurring at the eastern landscape include (mammals) Mongolian gazelle, Pallas's cat, Gray wolf, Corsac fox, Red fox, and (birds) White-naped Crane, Great Bustard, Steppe Eagle, Saker Falcon, Cinereous Vulture, Swan Goose, Japanese Quail, Black-tailed Gadwit, Asian Dowitcher and Yellow-breasted Bunting.

### Globally significant biodiversity in the target area

Two globally significant species of birds and one regionally endangered species of mammal have been identified as being in highest need of conservation activities in the project target soums. These are species that are highly dependent on the steppe ecosystem in eastern Mongolia, and are threatened by current development. The Mongolian gazelle *Procapra gutturosa*, a regionally endangered species, is a key mammal species in the whole project target soum areas and conservation actions are needed for the species. The Great Bustard *Otis tarda dybowskii* is a globally threatened species and one of the unique species in the dryland landscape. The western part of the target area with river valleys supports the breeding habitat for White-naped Crane *Antigone vipio* in eastern Mongolia.

The use of long-distance driving transects following the protocol for Distance sampling and analysis was assessed by Olson et al., (2005a) and they estimated approximately 870,000 gazelles to be in the only south eastern 80,000-km<sup>2</sup> region of the steppe in Mongolia. According to the latest research findings and results, there are 5,724,885 individuals recorded in Mongolia (Lkhagvasuren et al., unpublished report, 2010). Their numbers likewise have declined from, possibly, 18 million to between 1 and 5.5 million (Olson, 2005).

Historical and current data collected by the WWF team indicate that nearly 95% of the world distribution of the Mongolian gazelle population is included within the Mongolian territory and all seasonal movement of the gazelle shows that a high density of the gazelle population is identified among most of the target areas.

According to a 2008 study (Mueller et al, 2008), only about 5% of the dry steppe ecosystems in Eastern Mongolia where the Mongolian gazelle population constantly grazes were protected, and only about 3% of the steppe lakes where a large number of Gazelle groups come to drink were protected by State level. In the case of gazelle, because available forage is constantly shifting, annual gazelle movements are nomadic and irregular, covering large distances to follow vegetation growth that follows precipitation (Mueller et al 2008).

### Ecosystem connectivity

Management effectiveness of a total of 6 Nature Reserves (of which, 3 newly established in 2019) and 1 Local Protected Area (LPA) in the target areas was assessed and an average METT score of new nature reserves were estimated as 14%. Scores: Tosonkhulstai NR 49%; Khar Yamaat NR-61.6%; Ulz goliin ekh NR-15.6%; Menegiin tsagaan khooloi NR-10.9%; Bayantsaganii tal NR-15.6%;

Jaran togoonii tal a,b NR-12.2%; Khurkh-Khuiten River Valley LPA-15.7%<sup>3</sup> (See annexes to Project document).

Across all the issues, Khar Yamaat and Tosonkhulstai were evaluated with the highest scores, due to existing sustainable management authorities, and implementation of management plans. Other newly established NRs and LPA were evaluated as lower than 47%

The project approach is very appropriate by targeting the landscape connectivity among these especially newly established NRs. Because even after improving protection of this NRs, these areas will be like small islands in this vast open steppe. Then they will be vulnerable and ecosystem cannot remain sustainable without key wildlife migration among these NRs.

*The Interviewee of ESA, Dornod aimag*

In the project areas, 5 nature reserves (out of the 6 mentioned above) were established to protect the grasslands and its biodiversity. But those target nature reserves are isolated from each other within the whole steppe ecosystem and there is no connectivity management between the target areas to support wildlife species such as the Mongolian gazelle.

### Pastureland

Mongolia has shifted to a market economy in the 1990s through the privatization of livestock which led to sharp increase in head number of livestock. The weak legal regulation and increasing climate change impact has also increased pressure on sustainability of pasture use. As a result, currently total number of livestock has reached over 70 million while 70% of Mongolian rangelands are degraded and caused conflicts over pasture.

## **3.2.2 Social Baseline**

### Population

The three target aimags have a total population of 222,570, of which 34,508 (or 15.5%) are herders. Total population in the nine target soums is 24,841, of which 6,204 (25%) are herders. 42.5% of the population in Dornod aimag live below the poverty line; 30.2% in Sukhbaatar aimag; and 38% in Khentii, compared to a national average of 28.4%.<sup>4</sup> The monthly average income per household in the Eastern aimags is the lowest of Mongolia's five regions.<sup>5</sup>

### Economic and social background

The livestock sector accounts for almost 10% of export earnings and approximately 80% of the total agricultural production in Mongolia. About 26% of the workforce and about 20% of households, more importantly, over 70% of employment in rural areas are directly engaged in the livestock sector providing food and goods to the remaining 3 million people.<sup>6</sup> Livestock related income is highly

<sup>3</sup> Note: By decision of the Parliament of 02 May 2020, the status of Khurkh-Khuiten River Valley LPA was upgraded to Nature Reserve.

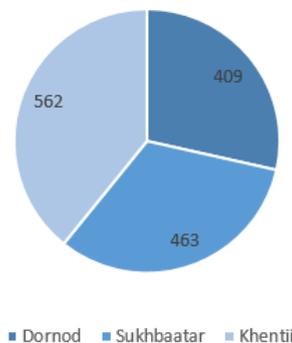
<sup>4</sup> National Statistical Office. <https://www.1212.mn/>

<sup>5</sup> Ca. USD 300 per month in the Eastern Steppes, compared with USD 450 in Ulaanbaatar. Dornod aimag stands slightly higher in average GDP per capita than the national average; while Sukhbaatar aimag is 20% lower and Khentii 50% lower.

<sup>6</sup> Mongolia's Initial Biennial Update Report (BUR1) under the UNFCCC (2017).

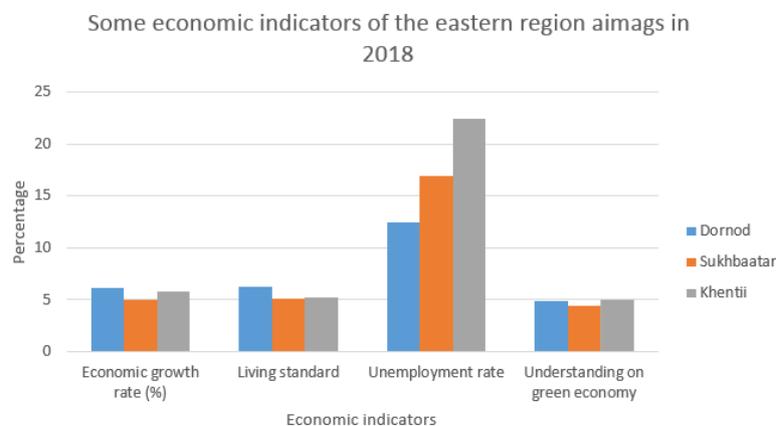
seasonal, and herders often take out loans and repay their debt when they sell their livestock products such as meat and cashmere.

Number of livestock per herder household



Cashmere income accounts for a significant portion of herder income and is key to their resilient livelihoods.<sup>7</sup> For Mongolia, cashmere is the country’s third largest export industry after copper and gold. The cashmere industry provides income to over 100,000 people, 90% of whom are women, and 80% are people below the age of 35. Mongolia has an estimated total of 27 million goats and an annual cashmere production capacity of 9,400 tons.<sup>8</sup>

Scarce population, insufficient investment, weak infrastructure and active migration flows represent major obstacles of the socio-economic development in the Eastern Region. The Economic Policy and Competitiveness Research Center defines some economic indicators of the target *aimags* as follows:



## Gender

The population gender ratio is (102.2) in Khentii, (101.6) in Sukhbaatar and (100.2) in Dornod *aimags* which represent over 100 men per 100 women. Men outnumber women among the *soum* population. For instance, men make up 63.3 per cent of Matad *soum* population. Generally, young women increasingly move to cities for education, jobs and a few return back to their native areas. On the one hand, there are limited job opportunities in the rural areas and on the other, they attain higher education and marketable qualifications to stay and work in urban areas. Moreover, women of herder

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2019). Comparative Analysis of Sustainable Cashmere Projects in Mongolia.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gschneider.com/2019/03/01/annual-cashmere-market-report/> (retrieved October 2019)

households often move to settlements for the education of their young children however, most of them prefer to stay in their *soums*.

There is a lack of sex-disaggregated data in the target soums except general demographic information. Gender-specific sex-disaggregated data is not used in the agricultural, land management and environment related actions. Although, every year soum-level gender focal points report on the soum civil-servants gender survey to the aimag, this information is not used for the local policy planning processes.

“Bayandelgerekh saving group has 28 members including herders, veggie farmers and crop farmers and small business owners (bakery, shoemaker, sewing business owner etc.) of all ages. Out of 28 members, 3 are male and 25 females.”

*Meeting notes of focus group discussion  
in Bayan-Adarga soum, Khentii aimag*

Although gender ratio is not explicitly imbalanced, the consultant observed that females show more actively participate in business and social activities during the field assessment.

### Ethnic groups

Representatives of khalkh, buryad, barga, uzemchin and dariganga people live in the target locations.

#### *Uzemchin people*

The Uzemchin people live in Baruun-Urt, Erdenetsagaan and Tumentsogt soums of Sukhbaatar aimag and Bayantumen, Sergelen and Bulgan soums of Dornod aimag. The 2020 census reports that 2,308 people identified themselves as uzemchin. Currently, 74.6% of uzemchin people of Mongolia live in Dornod aimag.

Uzemchin people are nomadic herders similar to khalkh herders.

#### *Dariganga people*

The Dariganga people live in the southwestern part of Sukhbaatar aimag, Ongon, Khalzan, Asgat, Dariganga, Bayandelger, Tuvshin Shiree, Uulbayan and Naran soums. According to the 2020 census, 36,419 people were reported to have dariganga ethnic origin. 67.2% of dariganga people of Mongolia persons live in Sukhbaatar aimag. Dariganga people are famous throughout Mongolia for their herding techniques and handcrafting skills for gold and silver jewelries.

#### *Barga people*

Bargas are currently living in Gurvanzagal and Khulunbuir soums of Dornod aimag, Sergelen, Bayan and Bayantsagaan soums of Tuv aimag, Ikh-Uul, Urgamal and Santmargats soums of Zavkhan province and Uulbayan and Bayanterem soums of Sukhbaatar aimag. A total of 2,832 barga people were registered in the 2020 census, as barga ethnic origin. 66.6% of barga people of Mongolia live in Dornod aimag.

#### *Buryat people*

As of census 2020, a total of 45,615 people identified themselves as buryat ethnic origins from which 37.4% live in Bayandun, Bayan-Uul, Dashbalbar, Tsagaan-Ovoo soums of Dornod aimag, and 12.1% live in Batshireet, Binder, Dadal, Norovlin and Bayan-Adarga soums of Khentii aimag.

Buryats live mainly in houses, and engage in haymaking, hunting and cattle breeding. In addition to being famous for making butter by churning machine, baking a bread, and making jam, they are also known for singing duet songs, play dialogue, dancing, and telling legends at festivals.

Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework contains more detailed information on ethnic groups.

## 4 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

This chapter first outlines the laws and regulations of the Government of Mongolia (GOM), WWF's Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) and FAO's Environmental and Social Management (ESM) Guidelines that are applicable to the project, and then discusses gaps between GOM laws and regulations, WWF's SIPP and FAO's ESM guidelines. For the purposes of the Project implementation, the more stringent policies and procedures will be followed in case of discrepancy.

### 4.1 GOM Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines

Scope of this legal review covers only those laws and policies used in the development and further implementation of the ESMF. In addition, the legal review applied to assess risks associated to project activities and facilitated to define proper mitigation measures and to develop recommendations.

#### **Law on Land** (Enacted in 1994)

**Brief Description:** The Land Law provides basic principles and regulations of land rights, land management, land tenure, land use requirements, land management planning, implementation, land allocation, land registration, land cadaster, land tax, and land protection, restoration and monitoring in Mongolia. (Enacted in 1994 and amended in 2012)

#### **Law on Environmental Protection** (Enacted in 1995)

**Brief Description:** To ensure a safe environment, have an ecologically balanced social and economic development, and ensure the protection of the environment for present and future generations. Ensure the proper use of natural resources and the restoration of available resources".

#### **Law on Environmental Impact Assessment** (Enacted in January 1998)

**Brief Description:** Regulates "relations concerning protection of the environment, prevention of ecological imbalance, the use of natural resources, assessment of the environmental impact and decision-making on the start of a project". It sets out the general requirements and procedures for project screening and conduct of environmental assessment and review.

#### **Law on Special Protected Areas** (Enacted in 1994 and amended in 2004)

**Brief Description:** Regulates relations concerning the use and taking of areas under special protection (strictly protected areas, national parks, nature reserves and national monument areas, local protected areas).

#### **Law on Plant Protection** (Enacted in 2007)

**Brief Description:** Regulates the inhibition, protection, inspection of pasturelands and plants.

### **Law on Buffer Zones** (Enacted in 1997)

**Brief Description:** Regulates the determination of zones and activities. Article 9 requires to conduct detailed environmental assessment for the establishment of water reservoirs or construction of floodwalls or dams in buffer zones for special protected areas.

### **Law on Forests** (Enacted in 1995 and amended in 2012)

**Brief Description:** Regulates relations for protection, possession, sustainable use and reproduction of the forest in Mongolia. Defines prohibited activities in protected forest zones and their regimes and conditions when undertaking allowed activities in the utilization zone forests and their regimes.

### **Law on Soil protection and prevention from desertification** (Enacted in 2012)

**Brief Description:** Regulates matters related to protection of soils with regard to deterioration and prevention from desertification.

### **National Program on Soil protection and Land degradation mitigation** (Enacted in 2019)

**Brief Description:** Elaboration of the outline of the Soil programme and relationship with other plans/programmes;

Assessment of environmental (soil, water and forest) and social characteristics of the area;

Definition of environmental protection objectives;

Elaboration and design of relevant mitigation measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and compensate any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme; and

Implementation of environmental monitoring system.

### **The State Policy on Forests** (Enacted in 2015)

**Brief Description:** The State Policy on Forests was approved by Parliament in 2015 addressing both boreal and saxaul forests, and giving priority to enhanced carbon storage, reduced degradation and effective monitoring. It backs up a legal amendment passed in 2012 to improve management of forests by devolving responsibility for sustainable forest management to province-level Forest Bureau and soum-level Forest Units. National policy also supports the establishment of Forest User Groups (FUGs) as a tool to involve rural communities in forest management, provide income opportunities to rural communities, and provide practical management mechanisms for Mongolia's fragmented forests. Mongolia has identified REDD+, including improved forest management, as a critical mitigation action as part of its Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) that is submitted to the UNFCCC in 2010.

### **Green Development Program in the target areas** (Enacted in 2016)

**Brief Description:** Khentii Province is the only province in eastern Mongolia that has developed the Green Development Program in 2016 for 10 years (2016-2026) and it includes 5 goals with 35 objectives as follow:

Goal 1: To promote tourism that meets high international environmental and health standards.

Goal 2: Develop agricultural production adapted to climate change, provide the population with healthy food and green technology-based processing industries.

Goal 3: Develop infrastructure for natural resources, greenhouse gas emissions and low waste.

Goal 4: Introduce rational financing, taxes, loans and incentives for environmentally friendly production and consumption, and support for the green economy.

Goal 5: Develop a green environmentally friendly industry.

Relevant standards are listed in Annex 6: List of Mongolian National Standards (MNS) applicable to the ESMP.

### **Laws and Policies related to gender and indigenous peoples**

A Law on Promotion of Gender Equality (LPGE) was ratified in 2011. This law established a legal basis for the creation of conditions to ensure gender equality in political, legal, economic, social and family relations and to regulate their implementation as well as defined the duty bearer's responsibility and accountability for citizen's equal opportunity to participate in social life and gain equally from the benefits of development process. Its article (5.2) stipulates that the state policy on gender equality shall aim at ensuring conditions for equal rights, opportunities, and treatment of men and women and, furthermore, at preventing and eliminating gender discrimination. The guarantees for equality, as defined in the Law on Promoting Gender Equality, are today reflected in the relevant provisions and are being implemented in the Law on Families, the Labor Code, Law on Promoting Employment, Package of Laws on Education, the Health Law, the Law on Child Protection, the Law on Combating Domestic Violence, the law on Combating Human Trafficking and the Law on Elections.

The Constitution of Mongolia recognizes rights of diverse ethnic people and stipulates "no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of ethnic origin, language, race, age, sex, social origin and status, property, occupation and post, religion, opinion and education. Everyone should have the right to act as a legal person." (Constitution of Mongolia, 1992, Article 14, Chapter 2). Constitutional declaration has been elaborated further in other branch laws, as such Labor Law of Mongolia obliged employers not discriminate against persons on grounds of sex, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, while performing their tasks and exercising their powers.

A strong notion exists about the fact that Mongolia is socially and culturally homogenous and indigenous peoples largely remain unrecognized in terms of current government supported policies, which are broadly focused on Mongolian citizens. At the same time, it is important to note that while the term 'indigenous peoples' is used internationally, a number of local, national and regional terms are utilised, including "ethnic groups or minorities", "pastoralists" and "nomadic groups". As such, an issue of terminology could apply to the case of Mongolia. While the Government of Mongolia has no specific law or regulation related to indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities, the Constitution of Mongolia in its Article 8, sub-article 2 does protect ethnic minorities' right to practice their own culture and use their own language. In fact, such sub-article cites "the right of national minorities of other tongues to use their native languages in education and communication and in the pursuit of cultural, artistic and scientific activities".

## **4.2 WWF Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines**

The project must comply with WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF), as detailed in the Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP) document. WWF's safeguards policies require that any potentially adverse environmental and social impacts are identified, avoided, or mitigated. Safeguards standards that are relevant to this project are as follows.

#### **4.2.1 Policy on Environmental and Social Risk Management**

This policy is applicable because the Project intends to support activities that result in a variety of environmental and social impacts. The Project is a conservation project, and its environmental and social outcomes are expected to be generally positive. The project is classified as Category B based on initial safeguards screening. Adverse environmental and social impacts that may occur as a result of project activities are expected to be site-specific, negligible and easily mitigated.

The exact location and impact of specific activities cannot be determined at this stage, and will only be known during project implementation. Thus, an ESMF was prepared to set out guidelines and procedures on how to identify, assess and monitor environmental and social impacts, and how to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts. Site-specific ESMPs will be prepared as required, based on principles and guidelines of the ESMF.

#### **4.2.2 Policy on Protection of Natural Habitats**

WWF's mission is to protect natural habitats, and it does not undertake any projects that would result in conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, especially those that are legally protected, officially proposed for protection, or identified as having high conservation value.

Overall, project activities will produce significant conservation benefits. Any potential adverse environmental impacts on human populations or environmentally important areas including forests, grasslands and other natural habitats are expected to be very limited. However, the ESMF is prepared to properly manage the risk of any unforeseen adverse environmental impact on natural habitats, including critical natural habitats, as well as measures to enhance the project's positive environmental outcomes.

#### **4.2.3 Policy on Involuntary Resettlement**

The WWF's policy seeks to ensure that adverse social or economic impacts on resource-dependent local communities as a result from conservation-related restrictions on resource access and/or use are avoided or minimized. Resolution of conflicts between conservation objectives and local livelihoods is sought primarily through voluntary agreements, including benefits commensurate with any losses incurred. Involuntary resettlement is avoided or minimized, including through assessment of all viable alternative project designs and, in limited circumstances where this is not possible, displaced persons are assisted in improving or at least restoring their livelihoods and standards of living relative to pre-displacement or pre-project levels (whichever is higher).

The adverse resettlement impacts of the project are expected to be minimal. Land acquisition or physical displacement will be avoided. Other forms of economic resettlement (e.g., restrictions of access to natural resources and livelihoods, loss of community property resources, land use conflicts, etc.) may occur under the project to achieve conservation outcomes, although the project will seek to minimize these restrictions. However, if such resettlement impacts will be necessary, mitigation measures will be taken to reduce and mitigate such impacts, in accordance with the guidance provided in Annex 1: Process Framework prepared for the project.

#### **4.2.4 Policy on Indigenous Peoples**

WWF's policy requires to ensure that indigenous peoples' rights are respected, that indigenous peoples do not suffer adverse impacts from projects, and that indigenous peoples receive culturally appropriate benefits from conservation. The policy mandates that projects respect indigenous peoples' rights, including their rights to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes and to tenure over traditional territories; that culturally appropriate and equitable benefits (including from traditional ecological knowledge) are negotiated and agreed upon with the indigenous peoples'

communities in question; and that potential adverse impacts are avoided or adequately addressed through a participatory and consultative approach.

This policy was triggered and an ESIA was conducted. Mongolia has more than 30 ethnic groups, including the Dukha (reindeer or Tsaatan community live in taiga forest in the north) and Kazak ethnic group that would need specific plan in order to benefit from project activities. However, these groups are not found in the project area (please refer to Section 7.10 below and Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework for detailed analysis). Thus, a separate documentation (IPPF/IPP) does not need to be prepared, but guidelines on ethnic minority groups engagement are included in the ESMF. In order to ensure that all project affected peoples take an active part in the design and implementation of project activities, the implementation of the ESMF will be done in a participatory and inclusive manner as required in Annex 1: Process Framework.

#### **4.2.5 Standard on Community Health, Safety and Security**

This standard ensures that the health, safety and security of communities are respected and appropriately protected. The Guidance on Labor and Working Conditions requires employers and supervisors to implement all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of workers through the introduction of preventive and protective measures. It also requires that the labor rights of project-employed workers are observed, as indicated in Annex 5: Screening Tool. Project activities should also prevent adverse impact involving quality and supply of water to affected communities; safety of project infrastructure, life and properties; protective mechanisms for the use of hazardous materials; disease prevention procedures; and emergency preparedness and response.

#### **4.2.6 Standard on Pest Management**

The project will not allow the procurement or use of formulated products that are in World Health Organization (WHO) Classes IA and IB, or formulations of products in Class II, unless there are restrictions that are likely to deny use or access by lay personnel and others without training or proper equipment. Should the project require pesticides, the project will follow the recommendations and minimum standards as described in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides and its associated technical guidelines, and procure only pesticides, along with suitable protective and application equipment, that will permit pest management actions to be carried out with well-defined and minimal risk to health, environment, and livelihoods.

The project will not fund nor include the promotion or usage of pesticides. On the contrary, it will aim to reduce the amount of chemical fertilizers and pesticides used through strengthening of farmer capacity on the proper use of chemicals/non-chemical alternatives for pest management (e.g. integrated pest management and good agriculture practice). Thus, this standard is not triggered by the project.

#### **4.2.7 Standard on Cultural Resources**

Project activities are not expected to negatively impact cultural resources (CR). Project activities will contribute to strengthening the sanctity of CR through integrated conservation actions. To avoid or at least mitigate any adverse impacts on CR, the project will not finance activities that could significantly damage CR. The Project Management Unit will also consult with local people and other relevant stakeholders in documenting the presence and significance of CR, assessing the nature and extent of potential impacts on these resources, and designing and implementing mitigation plans.

#### **4.2.8 Policy on Accountability and Grievance Mechanism**

Project-affected communities and other interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time to the Project Management Unit (PMU). The Project PMU will be responsible for informing project-affected parties about the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism. Contact information of the PMU will be made publicly available. Relevant details are also provided in the Grievance Redress & Process Framework section of this ESMF.

The WWF Policy on Accountability and Grievance Mechanism is not intended to replace project- and country-level dispute resolution and redress mechanisms. This mechanism is designed to: Address potential breaches of WWF's policies and procedures; be independent, transparent, and effective; be accessible to project-affected people; keep complainants abreast of progress of cases brought forward; and maintain records on all cases and issues brought forward for review.

#### **4.2.9 Standard on Public Consultation and Disclosure**

This standard requires meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, occurring as early as possible and throughout the project cycle. It requires the Project Team to provide relevant information in a timely manner and in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to diverse stakeholders. This standard also requires that information concerning environmental and social issues relevant to the project is disclosed for at least 30 days prior to implementation. WWF will disclose safeguards documentation on its Safeguards Resources web page. The final safeguards documents should be published on national websites of the Executing Agency and made available locally in specific locations. The project is also required to locally release all final key safeguards documents via hardcopy, translated into the local language and in a culturally appropriate manner, to facilitate awareness by relevant stakeholders that the information is in the public domain for review.

#### **4.2.10 Standard on Stakeholder Engagement**

This standard details the necessary requirements for meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of projects. The project has prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex I2 of the Project document) that will be implemented during the project.

### **4.3 FAO Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines**

The following Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) and sections of FAO's ESM Guidelines are most relevant to the project.<sup>9</sup>

#### **4.3.1 ESS 2: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Natural Habitats**

FAO requires that biodiversity and ecosystem services are maintained or enhanced and is committed to integrating their sustainable management into its crops, forestry, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture practices. As project activities and local land use choices interact with and impact upon biodiversity, natural habitats and protected areas, landscape approaches must be adopted to within acceptable environmental and social standards.

As explained above, overall, project activities will produce significant conservation benefits. Any potential adverse environmental impacts on human populations or environmentally important areas including forests, grasslands and other natural habitats are expected to be very limited. However, the ESMF is prepared to properly manage the risk of any unforeseen adverse environmental impact on

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<sup>9</sup> Please refer to the guidelines under <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4413e.pdf> for details.

natural habitats, including critical natural habitats, as well as measures to enhance the project's positive environmental outcomes.

#### **4.3.2 ESS 5: Pest and Pesticide Management**

FAO promotes integrated pest management (IPM) as a pillar of sustainable agriculture. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms. If provision or use of large volumes of pesticides is foreseen, a Pest Management Plan (PMP) needs to be prepared to demonstrate how IPM will be promoted to reduce reliance on pesticides, and what measures are taken to minimize risks of pesticide use.

As explained above, the project will not fund nor include the promotion or usage of pesticides. On the contrary, it will aim to reduce the amount of chemical fertilizers and pesticides used through strengthening of farmer capacity on the proper use of chemicals/non-chemical alternatives for pest management (e.g. integrated pest management and good agriculture practice). ESS 5 is, therefore, not triggered by the project.

#### **4.3.3 ESS 6: Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement**

ESS 6 applies to all FAO activities that may involve physical displacement or economic displacement (i.e. loss of assets or access to assets that lead to a loss of income or means of livelihoods), whether full or partial, permanent or temporary, as a result of land or resource restrictions. For displacement and resettlement that may impact indigenous people, ESS 9 Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage shall also apply.

FAO will seek to avoid physical and economic displacement in its projects, and, when avoidance is not possible, mitigate displacement impacts and risks. In exceptional circumstances where displacement may occur, it would be negotiated with the affected individual, group or community. Alternative project designs will be explored, measures elaborated to mitigate impacts, and a Resettlement Action Plan or Livelihood Action Plan prepared.

As explained above, the adverse resettlement impacts of the project are expected to be minimal. Land acquisition or physical displacement will be avoided. Other forms of economic displacement (e.g., restrictions of access to natural resources and livelihoods, loss of community property resources, land use conflicts, etc.) may occur under the project to achieve conservation outcomes, although the project will seek to minimize these restrictions. However, if such impacts will be necessary, mitigation measures will be taken to reduce and mitigate such impacts, in accordance with the guidance provided in Annex 1: Process Framework prepared for the project.

#### **4.3.4 ESS 7: Decent Work**

ESS 7 covers any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed by women and men, adults and youth. It applies to direct beneficiaries of FAO projects (including those administered by sub-contracted organizations).

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH): All FAO projects that may pose serious OSH risks should undertake a dedicated assessment of these risks and appropriate means of mitigating them.

#### **4.3.5 ESS 9: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage**

In accordance with international consensus and as per the FAO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, FAO considers the following criteria to identify indigenous peoples: priority in time with respect to occupation and use of a specific territory; the voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness (e.g. languages, laws and institutions); self-identification; an experience of

subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination (whether or not these conditions persist).

All projects that may impact indigenous peoples must carry out an assessment and verify: a. whether indigenous peoples inhabit the proposed project area(s) and, if so, include disaggregated data by indigenous group and geographical location; and b. whether project activities may impact (even indirectly) indigenous peoples living outside the project area.

FAO requires that, before adopting and implementing projects and programmes that may affect indigenous peoples, a process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent is followed and consent given by the concerned indigenous community. In those instances when a proposed project may be considered high risk, an Indigenous Peoples' Plan (IPP) will be prepared following the results of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Based on the outcomes of the ESIA (please refer to Section 7.10 below and Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework), a separate documentation (IPPF/IPP) does not need to be prepared. Nevertheless, guidelines on ethnic minority groups' engagement are included in the ESMF. In order to ensure that all project-affected peoples take an active part in the design and implementation of project activities, the implementation of the ESMF will be carried out in a participatory and inclusive manner as required in Annex 1: Process Framework.

#### **4.3.6 Grievance Mechanism**

FAO will facilitate the resolution of concerns of beneficiaries of FAO programmes regarding alleged or potential violations of FAO's social and environmental commitments. For this purpose, concerns may be communicated in accordance with the eligibility criteria of the Guidelines for Compliance Reviews Following Complaints Related to the Organization's Environmental and Social Standards, which applies to all FAO programmes and projects.

Concerns must be addressed at the closest appropriate level, i.e. at the programme management/technical level, and if necessary at the Regional Office level. If a concern or grievance cannot be resolved through consultations and measures at the project management level, a complaint requesting a Compliance Review may be filed with the Office of the Inspector-General (OIG) in accordance with the Guidelines for Compliance Reviews.

In addition, under FAO's ESS 9 and as part of the implementation of the FPIC process, a mutually agreed feedback and complaints mechanism is to be established at community level. Such system is fundamental for the indigenous peoples' operationalization of their right to give or withhold consent, especially during project implementation.

#### **4.3.7 Disclosure**

FAO will undertake disclosure for all moderate and high-risk projects

For moderate risk projects FAO releases the applicable information as early as possible, and no later than 30 days prior to project approval. The 30 day period commences only when all relevant information requested from the project has been provided and is available to the public.

For all high-risk projects, FAO releases the draft ESIA as early as possible, and no later than 60 days prior to project approval. The 60 day period commences only when all the relevant information requested from the project has been provided and is available to the public.

#### **4.3.8 Stakeholder Engagement**

FAO is committed to ensuring meaningful, effective and informed participation of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of FAO programmes and projects. "Stakeholder" refers to project

affected communities and national and local authorities, and where appropriate, other stakeholders. FAO would consult with project-affected representative communities and/or groups and civil society representatives. Stakeholder engagement, including indigenous peoples, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (as explained in ESS 9), is required in designing, implementing and monitoring individual projects and sub-projects.

The project has prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex I2 of the Project document) that will be implemented during the project.

#### 4.4 Gaps between Policies, Regulations, and Guidelines

##### Safeguards FAO/WWF comparison

Topic	FAO Guidelines <sup>10</sup>	WWF Guidelines <sup>11</sup>
1. Categorization	<p>Categories: Low, Moderate, High Risk</p> <p>“For each project, at project identification stage, FAO Lead Technical Officers (LTO) will screen for the risks/ negative impacts of the proposed project based on the available information and using the E&amp;SS Checklist.”</p> <p><i>Low Risk:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project has no or minimal potential negative environmental and/or social impacts, either upstream or downstream.</li> <li>2. The project will not be controversial in terms of the interests of key stakeholders.</li> <li>3. In the case of minimal impacts, the risk remains low because there are widely known and readily available good practices that will be used to address those impacts, and a track record that implementers of the project (e.g., farmers, fishermen) know how to apply and do engage in these good practices.</li> </ol> <p><i>Moderate Risk:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Projects with identified potential adverse environmental and /or social impacts.</li> <li>2. Potential impacts are not unprecedented in the project area.</li> </ol>	<p>Categories: A, B, C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Category A</b> projects are those that are likely to have significant adverse social or environmental impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented. Category A projects require additional approval by WWF’s Ventures Committee before safeguards procedures can continue beyond this step.</li> <li>• <b>Category B</b> projects are those likely to have potential adverse social and/or environmental impacts, but whose impacts are less significant than in Category A and can be properly addressed and/or mitigated in the project.</li> <li>• <b>Category C</b> projects are those that are likely to have minimal to no social and environmental impacts.</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4413e.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [https://wwfgeftracks.com/sites/default/files/2018-08/17\\_432\\_Safeguards\\_Manual\\_Update\\_FINAL.pdf](https://wwfgeftracks.com/sites/default/files/2018-08/17_432_Safeguards_Manual_Update_FINAL.pdf)

	<p>3. Potential impacts are limited to the project's footprint.</p> <p>4. Potential impacts are neither irreversible nor cumulative.</p> <p>5. Potential adverse impacts can be addressed by the use of recognized good management or pollution abatement practices, and there is a demonstrated record of their successful use in the project area (upstream and downstream).</p> <p><i>High Risk:</i></p> <p>1. Project entails potentially significant, irreversible and/or cumulative negative environmental and social risks and/or impacts.</p> <p>2. Potential adverse impacts are unprecedented in the project area (e.g., local communities and directly affected people are not aware of the risks and potentially adverse impacts, and are not familiar with the mitigation hierarchy options).</p> <p>3. Potential adverse impacts extend beyond the project footprint (e.g., a larger area-of-influence).</p> <p>4. Project risks are controversial in the views of some key stakeholders.</p>	
<p>2. Environmental and Social Analysis / Impact Assessment</p>	<p>"Where projects or sub-projects are classified as moderate or high risk, FAO will require an Environmental and Social Analysis (<u>ESA, for moderate risk</u>) and a full Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (<u>ESIA, for high risk</u>) carried out by an independent external expert."</p>	<p>"The screening outputs may result in a project being designated as <u>Category A</u> (full or comprehensive Environment and Social Impact Assessment [ESIA] is required), <u>Category B</u> (partial assessment is required), or Category C (no further assessment is required)."</p>
<p>3. Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)</p>	<p>"For FAO <u>moderate and high risk projects</u> an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) will be prepared during project development to set out the measures and actions required for the project to manage and effectively mitigate environmental and social risks and achieve compliance with Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) over a specified timeframe."</p>	<p>"For <u>Category A and B projects</u>, relevant assessments will identify impacts and mitigation measures that are incorporated in project design and would result in an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The ESMP is a document that identifies a set of mitigation, management, monitoring, and institutional actions to be implemented. The ESMP addresses any potential adverse environmental and social impacts."</p>
<p>4. Pest Management Plan (PMP)</p>	<p>"If provision or use of <u>large volumes of pesticides</u> is foreseen, a Pest Management Plan (PMP) needs to be prepared to demonstrate how IPM will</p>	<p>"<u>Any project</u> that proposes to use chemical pesticides must include a PMP."</p>

	<p>be promoted to reduce reliance on pesticides, and what measures are taken to minimize risks of pesticide use. Such a PMP needs to be an integral part of the ESCP.”</p>	
5. Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP)	<p>IPP required if high risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>“LOW:</b> At project assessment there are no indigenous peoples in the project area and there are no apparent risks associated with project activities.</li> <li>- <b>MODERATE:</b> There are indigenous peoples in the project area and/or project activities could affect indigenous peoples outside the project area. The project activities will <u>impact without major disruption</u> indigenous peoples’ rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions and governance systems. Project activities should be designed to address and mitigate any potential impacts.</li> <li>- <b>HIGH:</b> There are indigenous peoples in the project area or outside the project area who are <u>adversely affected</u> by the proposed project activities. In these cases, an Indigenous Peoples Plan will be prepared in full consultation with the affected communities and with advice from the Project Task Force. The IPP will have to be approved by the indigenous community, as well as by the FAO unit responsible for indigenous people.”</li> </ul>	<p>“If a project <u>may potentially have adverse impacts on, or have direct interventions with</u>, indigenous communities, an Indigenous Peoples Plan is prepared.”</p> <p>“The main objective of an IPP is to avoid adverse impacts on indigenous peoples, provide them with culturally appropriate social and economic benefits, and ensure that their rights to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) are respected. The IPP describes all potential negative impacts that a project may have on indigenous peoples and the measures that the Executing Agency will put in place to avoid and/or mitigate these impacts.”</p>
6. FPIC	<p>“FAO requires that, before adopting and implementing projects and programmes that may affect indigenous peoples, a process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent is followed and consent given by the indigenous community. The FPIC process needs to be undertaken whenever the project may affect indigenous peoples’ rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, and culture or heritage (tangible and intangible).”</p>	<p>“For projects that affect rights and interests, lands, resources and territories of indigenous peoples, ensure Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). (For details on FPIC, please refer to the WWF Policy on Indigenous Peoples).”</p>

<p>7. Involuntary resettlement and access restrictions</p>	<p>FAO will seek to avoid physical and economic displacement in its projects, and, when avoidance is not possible, mitigate displacement impacts and risks. In exceptional circumstances where displacement may occur, it would be negotiated with the affected individual, group or community. Alternative project designs will be explored, measures elaborated to mitigate impacts, and a Resettlement Action Plan or Livelihood Action Plan prepared.</p>	<p>The WWF's policy seeks to ensure that adverse social or economic impacts on resource-dependent local communities as a result from conservation-related restrictions on resource access and/or use are avoided or minimized. Resolution of conflicts between conservation objectives and local livelihoods is sought primarily through voluntary agreements, including benefits commensurate with any losses incurred. Involuntary resettlement is avoided or minimized, including through assessment of all viable alternative project designs and, in limited circumstances where this is not possible, displaced persons are assisted in improving or at least restoring their livelihoods and standards of living relative to pre-displacement or pre-project levels (whichever is higher).</p> <p>This is done through preparation of a Livelihood Restoration Plan.</p>
<p>8. Community health and safety</p>	<p>Occupational Safety and Health (OSH): All FAO projects that may pose serious OSH risks should undertake a dedicated assessment of these risks and appropriate means of mitigating them.</p>	<p>The Guidance on Labor and Working Conditions requires employers and supervisors to implement all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of workers through the introduction of preventive and protective measures. Project activities should also prevent adverse impact involving quality and supply of water to affected communities; safety of project infrastructure, life and properties; protective mechanisms for the use of hazardous materials; disease prevention procedures; and emergency preparedness and response.</p>

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) will have the overall executing and technical responsibility of the project, with FAO and WWF-US providing oversight as GEF Agencies as described below. The MET will act as the Lead Executing Agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions laid out in Annex N of the Project document. At the request of the Government of Mongolia, FAO Mongolia and WWF Mongolia will provide limited execution support to MET. The execution support services provided will include:

- a. Recruitment of consultants to be assigned to the Project Management Unit (PMU), in close consultation with the joint recruitment committee that will be established between the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), FAO and WWF Mongolia.

- b. Contracting of executing partners and purchase of goods and services based on the procurement decisions made by the PMU, and in line with the annual budgets and work plans that will be approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- c. Financial management and reporting.
- d. Contracting independent evaluators for the Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation.
- e. Processing of project terminal report and annual financial audits.

In addition, WWF-US will enter into a Grant Agreement with WWF-Mongolia which spells out the terms and conditions under which the GEF funding is being receive, disburse and accounted for project funding.

All other execution functions will be assumed by MET. As Lead Executing Agency of the project MET is responsible and accountable to FAO and WWF-US for the timely implementation of the agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting, and for effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with FAO, WWF-US and GEF policy requirements.

The government will designate a **National Project Director (NPD)**. Located in MET, the NPD will be responsible for coordinating the activities with all the national bodies related to the different project components, as well as with the project partners. He/she will also be responsible for supervising and guiding the National Project Manager(see below) on the government policies and priorities.

The NPD will chair the **Project Steering Committee (PSC)**, which will be the main governing body of the project. The PSC oversees the PMU for the overall project delivery according to the FAO/WWF GEF Project Document and take necessary decisions based on PMU documentation provided in advance of PSC meetings, including the approval of the annual work plans and budgets, the approval of project reporting before submission to the GEF agencies. It will also provide strategic guidance to the Project Management Team and to all executing partners. The PSC will be comprised of representatives from MET, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry (MOFALI), the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development (MCUD), the National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE),FAO Mongolia, WWF Mongolia, the three Aimag Governments, as well as the private sector and civil society. The members of the PSC will each assure the role of a Focal Point for the project in their respective agencies. Hence, the project will have a Focal Point in each concerned institution. As Focal Points in their agency, the concerned PSC members will: (i) technically oversee activities in their sector; (ii) ensure a fluid two-way exchange of information and knowledge between their agency and the project; (iii) facilitate coordination and links between the project activities and the work plan of their agency; and (iv) facilitate the provision of co-financing to the project.

The PSC will meet at least twice per year with the PMU's National Project Manager to ensure: i) Oversight and assurance of technical quality of outputs; ii) Close linkages between the project and other ongoing projects and programmes relevant to the project; iii) Timely availability and effectiveness of co-financing support; iv) Sustainability of key project outcomes, including up-scaling and replication; v) Effective coordination of government partner work under this project; vi) Approval of the six-monthly Project Progress and Financial Reports, the Annual Work Plan and Budget; vii) Making by consensus, management decisions when guidance is required by the National Project Manager of the PMU.

A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be co-funded by the GEF and established within MET. The main functions of the PMU, following the guidance of the Project Steering Committee, are to ensure

overall efficient management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project through the effective implementation of the annual work plans and budgets (AWP/Bs). The PMU will be composed of a National Project Manager who will work full-time for the project lifetime. In addition, the PMU will include a Knowledge Management, Capacity Development and M&E Specialist, as well as the Technical Project Consultants including a Safeguards and Gender Specialist, a Project Assistant, and two (part-time) Finance Officers to support the financial management of the WWF/FAO grant. The hiring of project staff and consultants will be undertaken by a joint committee constituted by FAO Mongolia, WWF Mongolia, and MET.

The **National Project Manager (NPM)** will be in charge of daily implementation, management, administration and technical supervision of the project, on behalf of the PSC. He/she will be responsible, among others, for:

- i) Coordination and close monitoring of the implementation of project activities;
- ii) Tracking the project's progress and ensuring timely delivery of inputs and outputs;
- iii) Overall responsibility for compliance with FAO Safeguards and with WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures;
- iv) Providing technical support and assessing the outputs of the project national consultants hired with GEF funds, as well as the products generated in the implementation of the project;
- v) Coordination with relevant initiatives;
- vi) Ensuring a high level of collaboration among participating institutions and organizations at the national and local levels;
- vii) Ensuring compliance with all sub-agreements to project partners provisions during the implementation, including on timely reporting and financial management;
- viii) Manage requests for provision of financial resources using provided format in sub-agreement annexes;
- ix) Monitoring financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports;
- x) Ensuring timely preparation and submission of requests for funds, financial and progress reports to FAO and WWF Mongolia as per reporting requirements;
- xi) Maintaining documentation and evidence that describes the proper and prudent use of project resources as per sub-agreement provisions, including making available this supporting documentation to FAO and WWF and designated auditors when requested;
- xii) Implementing and managing the project's monitoring and communications plans;
- xiii) Organizing project workshops and meetings to monitor progress and preparing the Annual Budget and Work Plan;
- xiv) Submitting the six-monthly Project Progress Reports (PPRs) with the AWP/B to the PSC, FAO and WWF GEF Agency;
- xv) Preparing the first draft of the Project Implementation Review (PIR);
- xvi) Supporting the organization of the mid-term and final evaluations in close coordination with the FAO Budget Holder, the FAO Independent Office of Evaluation (OED), and WWF GEF Agency;
- xvii) Submitting the six-monthly technical and quarterly financial reports to FAO and WWF and facilitate the information exchange between the Lead Executing Agency, the PMU, FAO and WWF, if needed;
- xviii) Reflect on opportunities for adaptive management based on M&E and other project data;
- xix) Inform the PSC, FAO and WWF of any delays and difficulties as they arise during the implementation to ensure timely corrective measure and support.

The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** will be the Lead GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the Project. **World Wildlife Fund, Inc. (WWF-US)** will be the Co-Implementing Agency. Both IAs will provide project cycle management, which includes project identification, preparation of project concept, preparation of detailed project document, project approval and start-up, project implementation and supervision, and project completion and evaluation, and support services as established in the GEF Policy. As the GEF IAs, FAO and WWF hold overall accountability and responsibility to the GEF for delivery of the results. FAO will monitor implementation of FAO GEF funded activities under FAO policies, and WWF GEF will monitor implementation of WWF GEF funded activities under WWF policies.

For the activities funded by FAO, FAO will utilize the GEF fees to deploy three different actors within the organization to support the project (see Annex N of the Project document for details):

- The **Budget Holder**, which is usually the most decentralized FAO office, will provide oversight of day to day project execution;
- The **Lead Technical Officer(s)**, drawn from across FAO will provide oversight/support to the projects technical work in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee;
- The **Funding Liaison Officer(s)** within FAO will monitor and support the project cycle to ensure that the project is being carried out and reporting done in accordance with agreed standards and requirements.

FAO and WWF-US responsibilities, as GEF agencies, will include:

- Administrate funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO and WWF-US, respectively;
- Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers, project sub-agreements, and other rules and procedures of FAO and WWF-US, respectively;
- Provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;
- Conduct at least one supervision mission per year (to be coordinated between FAO and WWF); and
- Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR), the Mid Term Review, the Terminal Evaluation and the Project Closure Report on project progress (to be and reviewed and approved by WWF GEF Agency and submitted to GEF by FAO as the Lead Agency);
- Financial reporting to the GEF Trustee.

### **Local level coordination**

Nine Soum Coordinators will be responsible for day-to-day management of the activities at the local level, in collaboration with the local soum government officers and communities. The Soum Coordinators will be recruited locally in each soum (wherever possible), and will be based at the local government offices in order to ensure close collaboration with the local land, agriculture, and livestock officers. Local project implementation teams will be established at the bagh and soum levels, involving local women and men to support project implementation at the local level. Regular project meetings will be held at the bagh and soum levels, where project progress and monitoring and evaluation will be discussed. Women federations at local level will be engaged to facilitate the participation of women and to ensure that project activities are also responsive to the interests and needs of local women.

In addition, a National Agriculture Expert, National Value Chain and Finance Expert, National Livestock Expert and Protected Area/Biodiversity Experts will also coordinate and facilitate local level activities, in line with their Terms of Reference (TORs). At the aimag level, project activities will be coordinated directly with the different aimag agencies (land agency, environment, and agriculture).

### Technical Assistance

Project consultants will be hired as required to provide the technical assistance required for project implementation. These include:

- National Land Management Expert
- National Policy and Legal Expert
- National Agriculture Expert
- National Value Chain and Finance Expert
- National Livestock Expert
- National Safeguards and Gender Specialist (may be two separate positions)

The key organizations responsible for implementing the project and the role in Environmental Safeguards implementation are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1. Implementing Organizations**

General Role and Responsibilities	Role in Environmental Safeguards
<b>The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)</b> FAO/WWF will establish Joint recruitment committee	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approve Project Steering Committee (PSC)</li> <li>▪ Establishes a Project Management Unit (PMU)</li> <li>▪ Financial management and reporting.</li> <li>▪ Contracting independent evaluators for the Mid-Term Review and Terminal Evaluation.</li> <li>▪ Processing of project terminal report and annual financial audits.</li> </ul>	Overall responsibility for ensuring environmental safeguards are implemented.
<b>MET</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appoint National Project Director</li> </ul>	Overall responsibility for ensuring environmental safeguards are implemented.
<b>Project Steering Committee (PSC)</b> PSC will be comprised of representatives from MET, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry (MOFALI), the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development (MCUD), the National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE), FAO Mongolia, WWF Mongolia, the three Aimag Governments, as well as the private sector and civil society.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oversee the PMU</li> <li>▪ Take necessary decisions based on PMU documentation</li> <li>▪ Approval of the annual work plans and budgets, the approval of project reporting</li> </ul>	Support and specific recommendations on specific safeguard issues if needed.

<b>General Role and Responsibilities</b>	<b>Role in Environmental Safeguards</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide strategic guidance to the Project Management Team</li> </ul>	
<b>Project Management Unit (PMU)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PMU reports to Executing Agency (EA) Project implementation and supervision</li> <li>▪ Preparing and submission of implementation reports to FAO/WWF</li> <li>▪ PMU staff to include National Safeguards and Gender Specialist</li> <li>▪ Overall efficient management, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project through the effective implementation of the annual work plans and budgets (AWP/Bs)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure bidding documents and contracts include any relevant particular clauses or conditions relevant to environmental safeguards as set out in this ESMF;</li> <li>2. Implementing and supervising ESMF and other safeguard plans;</li> <li>3. Provision of safeguard reports to EA;</li> <li>4. Provision of specialist consultant to perform the function of PMU ESS (and gender); and</li> <li>5. Dissemination and Implementation of Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).</li> </ol>
<b>National Project Manager (NPM)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordination and close monitoring of the implementation</li> <li>▪ Overall responsibility for compliance with FAO Safeguards and with WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures</li> <li>▪ Implementing and managing the project's monitoring and communications plans</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementing and supervising ESMF and other safeguard plans;</li> <li>2. Responsibility for compliance with ESMF Safeguards and other annexed documents of this report;</li> <li>3. Ensure implementation of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM);</li> <li>4. ESMF monitoring.</li> </ol>
<b>National Safeguards and Gender Specialist</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In close collaboration with the National Project Manager and the Knowledge Management and M&amp;E Specialist, lead implementation and monitoring of the Gender Action Plan, ESMP/ESMF, as well as Stakeholder Engagement Plan.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overall responsibility of ESMF implementation and monitoring;</li> <li>2. Ensure tender documents specify requirements of ESMF;</li> <li>3. Ensure that ESMF considerations are incorporated in the ECOP and Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups, and other annexed documents of this report;</li> <li>4. Training for contractor and community groups in implementing the ESMF;</li> <li>5. Site inspections and progress reporting. ESMF update after detailed project activities with target locations;</li> <li>6. Lead the development of Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRPs);</li> <li>7. Ensure full disclosure with concerned stakeholders;</li> <li>8. Ensure implementation of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM);</li> <li>9. Carry out regular monitoring and capacity building visits to the project sites; and</li> <li>10. Conduct consultation meetings with local stakeholders as required, informing them, updating them on the latest project development activities.</li> </ol>

General Role and Responsibilities	Role in Environmental Safeguards
<b>National Agriculture Expert</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lead the implementation of Outputs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 (implementation of sustainable crop production).</li> <li>▪ Coordinate to sub-contract agrochemical and soil erosion analysis of agricultural soil for selected plots.</li> <li>▪ Liaise with biodiversity experts to ensure incorporation of biodiversity considerations.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure implementation of ESMF measures related to crop activities.</li> <li>2. Liaise with the Gender and Safeguards Specialist on ESMF and Gender Action Plan implementation.</li> </ol>
<b>Local level coordination</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nine Soum Coordinators will be responsible for day-to-day management of the activities at the local level</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with the local soum government officers and communities</li> <li>▪ Regular project meetings will be held at the bagh and soum levels</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct consultation meetings with local stakeholders as required, informing them, updating them on the latest project development activities;</li> <li>2. Ensure that ESMF considerations are incorporated in the ECOP and Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups, and other annexed documents of this report;</li> <li>3. Site inspections and progress reporting. ESMF update after detailed project activities with target locations.</li> </ol>
<b>Community groups</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design of the maintenance</li> <li>▪ Construction supervision</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaboration with PMU and local government to implement ESMF and any Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) of EIAs if required by national legislation to ensure acceptable mitigation of environmental and social impacts;</li> <li>2. As well as compliance of requirements indicated in Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups.</li> </ol>

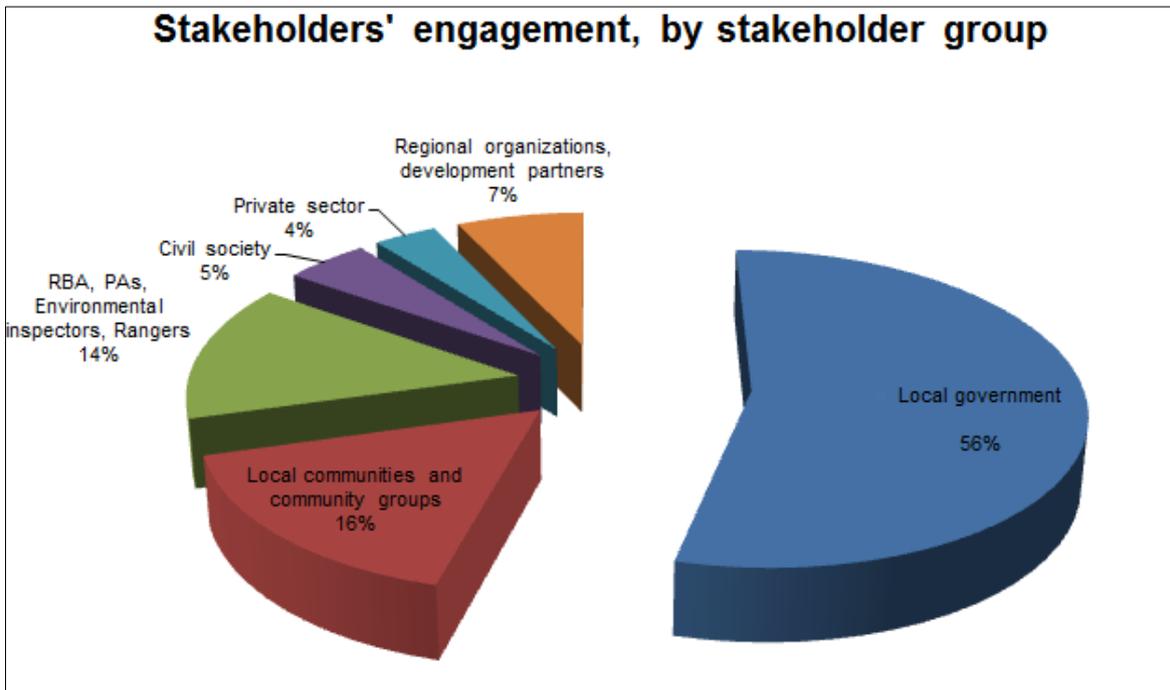
## 6 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

### 6.1 Stakeholder Consultations under ESIA assignment

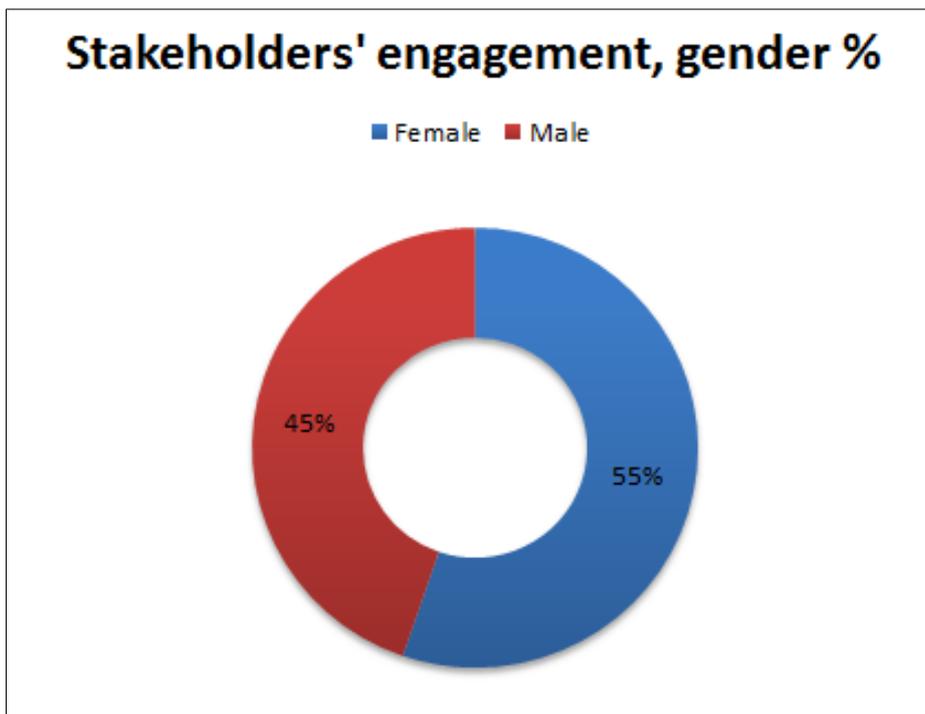
In order to consult with the project's stakeholders and collect the information needed for the relevant assessments in the project areas, stakeholder meetings and consultations were organized at three levels and in different locations as follows:

Engagements	Attendance	Location	Issues/Aspects covered
Meeting Jun, 2020	WWF Head Office GFF Team	Online	ESIA Assignment
Meeting Jun, 2020	WWF/FAO country office	Ulaanbaatar office	Inception
Field survey Jun 25-Jul 10, 2020	Approx. 80 participants	8 locations of project target area	Data collection for ESIA
Meeting Jul 25, 2020	WWF/FAO country office	Ulaanbaatar office	Presentation of key points of ESMF

The consultant team carried out focus group meetings, individual and phone interviews, and household interviews to collect data needed for the relevant assessments. Below chart shows stakeholder engagement in percentage by stakeholders' groups. These stakeholders are those who participated in the development of the ESMF. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the number of people invited for focus group meetings was limited. Meetings and interviews were organized in collaboration with WWF local support staff.



Gender-inclusiveness of the stakeholders who participated in the development of the ESMF is shown in the chart below:



## Local stakeholders

During the field work, the consultant team consulted with various stakeholders that will be involved in the project activities. The individual interviews and focus group discussions largely targeted local herders and farmers, Soum Governor's Administration, crop companies, herder groups, Forest User Groups, and civil society organizations. The main stakeholder groups consulted are summarized below.

Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Type	Description
<i>a) Local government</i>		
Aimag Governor's Office	Key	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director and staff of Environment and Tourism Department</li> <li>• Director and staff of Food and Agriculture Department</li> <li>• Deputy Director and staff of Land Affairs and Urban Development Department</li> <li>• Deputy Director and staff of Investments and Developmental Policy and Planning Department</li> <li>• Staff of Aimag State Professional Inspection Agency</li> <li>• International Project and Programme Coordinator</li> </ul>
Soum Governor's Office	Key	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soum Governor</li> <li>• Social Policy Specialist</li> <li>• Food and Agriculture Specialist</li> <li>• Land Officer</li> </ul>
Bagh Governors	Key	Onon bagh of Norovlin soum
River Basin Administrations (RBAs)	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kherlen RBA</li> <li>• Buir Lake, Meneen steppe RBA</li> </ul>
Environmental state inspectors and rangers in soums	Primary	All locations
PA Administrations in Eastern Mongolia	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Onon Balj PA</li> <li>• Dornod Protection, Mongol Dagyyi PA</li> </ul>
<i>b) Local communities and community groups</i>		
Local farmers, herders	Primary	All locations
Herder groups	Key	All locations
Forest user groups	Key	Bayan-Adraga, Norovlin
Saving groups	Primary	Bayan-Adraga soum, Khentii
Volunteer ranger	Primary	Norovlin
<i>c) Regional organizations, development partners</i>		
Eastern WWF office	Key	Dadal soum, Khentii
Ongoing project representative of other donor organization	Key	Khulunbuir soum, Dornod
<i>d) Civil society</i>		
Mongolian Environment Civil Council (MECC)	Secondary	Khentii Branch at Chinggis city, Khentii

e) <i>Private sector</i>		
Crop and vegetable producers	Primary	Bayan-Adraga soum and Chinggis city, Khentii

### Methods of engagement

The consultant team reviewed primary and secondary data and carried out focus group meetings, individual and phone interviews, household visits to collect data needed for the relevant assessments.

The consultant used voice recording and notes taking methods to retain evidence of the data collection. Meeting notes for each location was well documented. The format of the meetings and interviews was as follows:

- Part 1. Briefing by the team about the project, purpose of the assignment, purpose of meeting and team members;
- Part 2. Introduction of the meeting participants;
- Part 3. Main discussion and consultations;
- Part 4. If there are any risks identified, the corrective measures were determined; and
- Part 5. Continue with interviews, if necessary in case of focus groups.

The consultant's engagement principles are:

- Explaining the importance of their input for the future implementation of the project;
- Avoided to trigger any sensitive aspects such as indigenous and ethnicity matters but provided opportunity for stakeholders to express their opinion on these issues;
- Communicating clearly with stakeholders in native language;
- Providing time and space for stakeholders to understand and respond properly;
- Enabling equal participation;
- Offering of clear opportunities to further engage with us separately; and
- Appreciation of all stakeholders who have taken the time to engage with us.

These principles were applied to the engagement with all project stakeholders.

## 6.2 Main outcomes of the consultations

The main outcomes of the consultations and how they were integrated into the ESMF document are summarized below. Detailed meeting notes and participants lists are available upon request. Please also refer to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex I2 of the ProDoc) for information on how stakeholders will be engaged during project implementation.

Note: Please refer to Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework for details on consultations with ethnic minorities.

Main issue raised	How it was addressed by the ESMF / Project design
<i>Key observations and findings noted among all locations</i>	
1. Stakeholders had limited knowledge about the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the project inception phase, the project will develop a gender-sensitive/responsive knowledge management and communications strategy, to ensure that the project reaches a wider audience than was feasible during the project preparation phase.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also, the project will organize inception workshops/ meetings with the purpose to introduce the project to stakeholders and jointly develop detailed workplans.</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement, consultations and participation will be critical for the project's success, and will be followed as outlined in the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan.</li> <li>• The National Project Manager (NPM) and a dedicated Knowledge Management and M&amp;E Specialist in the PMU will be in charge of leading the implementation of the KM and communications strategy of the project.</li> </ul>
2. Expression of interest to benefit from the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed consultations and participatory meetings will be held during implementation to plan the detailed project interventions.</li> </ul>
3. Concerns about implementation structure and mechanism, importance of local staffing for the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPM will ensure smooth implementation and manage any relevant issues.</li> <li>• Nine Soum Coordinators will be responsible for day-to-day management of the activities at the local level, in collaboration with the local soum government officers and communities. The Soum Coordinators will be recruited locally in each soum (wherever possible), and will be based at the local government offices in order to ensure close collaboration with the local land, agriculture, and livestock officers.</li> <li>• Local project implementation teams will be established at the bagh and soum levels, involving local women and men to support project implementation at the local level.</li> </ul>
<i>1) Baruun-Urt city, Sukhbaatar aimag</i>	
1. Haymakers just focus on making profit; they destroy plant and grass roots which in turn contribute to dryland and land depletion. Need rehabilitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under Outcome 2.2, the project will support the development of guidelines and/or local agreements/regulations on haymaking that reflect local characteristics, based on detailed consultations with stakeholders. Environmentally-friendly haymaking technologies will be introduced.</li> </ul>
2. Rapeseed cultivation by crop companies is resulting in environmental impact. When supporting crop companies, need to think whether to provide funding or other support to rapeseed cultivation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguards measures have been put in place in the ESMF with regard to crop farming activities.</li> <li>• Under Outcome 2.1, the project will work to enhance capacity of farmers (women and men), farmer groups and cooperatives, private companies and local government officers for environment and biodiversity-friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production.</li> </ul>
3. Contribution to mutual funds (risk funds/ pasture management funds) need criteria before granting to herders, farmers and other target community members. Ask for environmental evaluation. Provide project financing to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups was developed by the consultant team and is an integral part of the ESMF (Annex 4).</li> </ul>

<p>beneficiaries in installments and before each installment, the receiver shall responsibly report about their compliance to environmental requirements as a prerequisite to continue benefit from the project.</p>	
<p>2) <i>Bayan-Adraga soum, Khentii aimag</i></p>	
<p>1. Vulnerable people usually comes from outside such as aimag or city. Local residents' standard of living is not that bad.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs of vulnerable groups have been incorporated into the ESMF, in particular Annex 1 Process Framework, and the project design.</li> </ul>
<p>2. There are 13 CSO groups of forest users or for environment protection covering 180 families in total.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone or other tools are necessary to actively involve in environmental protection.</li> <li>Need support for household business start-up.</li> <li>Dryland and pastureland deterioration is high, because herder families gather in too tight density around river bank during summer.</li> <li>Water well / water source issue in remote pasture lands.</li> <li>Marmot protection is needed.</li> <li>Assistance in branding and packaging of dairy products, small home-based production support.</li> <li>More results will be achieved if project work closer with partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in project design. Detailed consultations and participatory meetings will be held during implementation to plan the detailed project interventions.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Migration of herder families with too many livestock from other territories into our soum causing dryland and pasture deterioration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in project design.</li> </ul>
<p>4. In Mongolia, the only main conflict in the agricultural sector is conflict between livestock herders and crop producers. When fencing is done, many other interrelated issues such as fodder production, decrease soil deterioration, wildlife movement will be resolved as well. However, one change fencing will bring is that herders cannot use crop field as pasture land during off season. But after fencing, herders may negotiate with crop company if they want to access the crop field during off season.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in ESMF, mitigation measures for crop farming activities and Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> <li>Furthermore, the pasture management plans developed under Outcome 2.2 will also take into account the existing delineation of cropland and pastureland as described in relevant legal documents.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Need of vehicle, drone, fire extinguisher.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed consultations and participatory meetings will be held during implementation to plan the detailed project interventions.</li> </ul>
<p>6. State policy shall set cashmere price lower intentionally otherwise too many of goats cause problem to the pasture capacity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable cashmere production and ways to reduce its impact on the environment are addressed in the project design, including by seeking to establish policy and market incentives for a balanced herd composition. Further consultations to be held during implementation.</li> </ul>

<i>3) Chinggis city, Khentii aimag</i>	
1. Funding and staffing capacity for some of the NRs is insufficient. Due to shortage of vehicles and equipment, sometimes we are unable to reach and direct our effort to the protected area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in project design. Further consultations to be held during implementation.</li> </ul>
2. In case of running farmer business for profit (not only for household use), farmer shall propose environmental plan on an annual basis, where mitigating measures are specified in response to negative impacts to the environment and the report shall be submitted to the Environment and Tourism Department. Currently, in fact, there is no such report received from local vegetable farmers and evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in ESMF, mitigation measures for crop farming activities.</li> </ul>
3. Complicated issue for vegetable farmers is that their farming land overlaps with water protection zone in 50m from river basin which set out by Law of Mongolia on Water and river protection regime. Area within 50m from bank of river is special protected zone and any kind of operation is prohibited. However, problem is that these lands were licensed before approval of these water related legislations. This creates major conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the approval of water-related legislation, rearrangement of cropland in special protected zone is expected by the local government. This is not, however, directly related to the project interventions.</li> <li>• Nevertheless, the issue is addressed in the ESMF, mitigation measures for crop farming activities. The project will not implement any activities in farmland in the river/water protection zones.</li> </ul>
4. Relocation is very sensitive; it depends whether there is accommodation built or only farming land will be affected. Local administration shall promptly resolve land affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework. The project explicitly excludes financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation.</li> </ul>
5. There is a lot of overgrazing in the willow forests of the river. The willow forests of the river are beginning to die and are no hope of re-living. Grass around bank of river is getting deteriorated with livestock herding all seasons. There is a need to train and build the capacity of rangers in this aspect. What other sources of income herders could have?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in project design and in ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> </ul>
<i>4) Choibalsan city, Dornod aimag</i>	
1. What we want from the projects is to leave us with tangible results at the end of project/project financing. To conclude from previous projects, during the project many capacity trainings are organized but when financing stops; problems and challenges are still there left unresolved or not resolved completely. In fact, what has left is just production of many papers only in Mongolian and English instead of real results; herders do not read those papers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In line with earlier feedback received during the project preparation phase. Has been incorporated into the project design and will be further taken into account during implementation.</li> </ul>
2. Relocation to remote pasture land will raise water supply issue; need to provide access to water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project explicitly excludes financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation. If there is a</li> </ul>

	<p>(voluntary) restriction on access to pastureland and/or water source, replacement pasture land with water source would be provided. Addressed in ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be considered during the development of land management plans and pasture management plans.</li> </ul>
<p>3. If any risk or conflict arises with respect to project investment in infrastructure of SPAs, it shall be solved according to Environmental law at that moment. We cannot predict the risks now, because we do not know precisely what activities will be implemented under this project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in ESMF and Annex 3. ECOP.</li> </ul>
<p>4. It should be determined what to finance and what not to finance from mutual fund. If any activity has adverse impact to the environment and same time gets financing from mutual fund, it is not good logic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups was developed by the consultant team and is an integral part of the ESMF (Annex 4).</li> </ul>
<p>5. Toson Khulstai is in the target area of the project. It is critical place for wildlife such as gazelle; so relocation of livestock may cause risk or conflict to safeguard those wildlife.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> </ul>
<p>5) <i>Khulunbuir soum, Dornod aimag</i></p>	
<p>1. Pasture deterioration is caused by migration from another provinces, especially large number of horses. For example one household with 5-6k of livestock migrated into our soum from Tuv province.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in project design and ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Toson Khulstai PA covers 5 soums of Khentii and Dornod province. Over 100 herder families live within protected area under land use agreement. In PA, it is prohibited to drill new water wells and haymaking activities. Some herders have land possession agreement with term of 15 years. Governor's Order is issued to cancel land possession agreements and re-issue land use agreement. Some of citizens don't agree with this change. Our soum's 2-3 rangers are responsible for Toson Khulstai.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land possession/land use agreements are based on the law and are not directly related to the project interventions.</li> <li>• The issue of (voluntary) access restrictions resulting from project interventions is addressed in the ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> </ul>
<p>6) <i>Norovlin soum, Khentii aimag</i></p>	
<p>1. By law, no grazing allowed within 500 meters of arable land. Herders prefer that arable lands are protected with fencing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in ESMF, mitigation measures for crop farming activities.</li> </ul>
<p>2. There are a lot of disputes between herders over pastureland due to winter, spring migration and haymaking. Especially this year, dispute is increasing. In response to this, every year herders are engaged in land management plan through bagh and soum citizens'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in project design and ESMF, Annex 1 Process Framework.</li> </ul>

Khural/meeting; their comments and requests are reflected in the planning.	
3. Remote pasture lands have no access to water. So herders follow the access of water; which causes density of livestock in certain area and then causes overgrazing and pasture deterioration. Those unused remote pasturelands become the target of migrating livestock, specially goats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed in project design, Outcome 2.2.</li> <li>• Will be considered during the development of land management plans and pasture management plans.</li> </ul>

## 7 ANTICIPATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The ultimate goal of the ESMF and Process Framework (PF) is to assess the various determined impacts/risks and define corresponding mitigation measures. This chapter explores the impacts and corresponding mitigation measures in detail.

### 7.1 Discussion of mitigation hierarchy opportunities

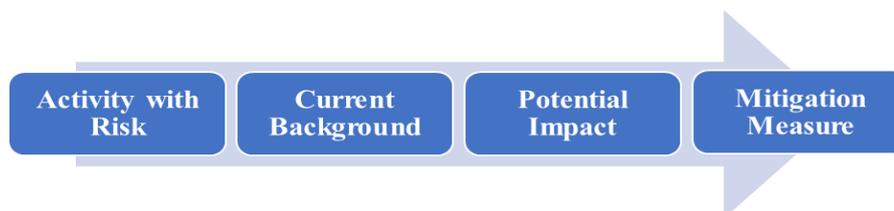
The ESMF provides the corresponding mitigation and projection measures to avoid or reduce these impacts to an acceptable level. The ESMF also determines the institutional arrangements and mechanisms, the roles and responsibilities of different institutions, procedures and budgets for implementation of the ESMF.

Management of E&S risks adheres to a mitigation hierarchy:

- a. Avoidance of the E&S risks is the priority;
- b. Where avoidance is not feasible, minimize/reduce risks to acceptable levels; and
- c. Where residual impacts remain, compensate for/offset them whenever technically and financially feasible.

The project key mitigation goal is to halt the ongoing *tragedy of commons*<sup>12</sup> effect regarding pasture land in eastern Mongolia and potentially reverse the current unfavorable dynamic into positive and sustainable prosperity through the project activities.

This chapter covers i) the activities that may expose risk; ii) the impact that the risk lead into or if not properly managed; iii) current background describes overall national and project site specific conditions related to the activities with impacts; and iv) most importantly proposed mitigation measures are discussed.



<sup>12</sup> The **tragedy of the commons** is a situation in a shared-resource system where individual users, acting independently according to their own self-interest, behave contrary to the common good of all users by depleting or spoiling the shared resource through their collective action.

## 7.2 Environmental and Social Risk Categorization

A preliminary FAO and WWF Environmental and Social Risk Categorization Screening was conducted during the project preparation phase. The project was screened against WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF) and it was categorized as a Moderate-risk project (**Category B**), whereas according to the FAO Environmental and Social Risk Classification, the project was classified with the **high risk**.

These preliminary screenings indicated that the project has potential adverse social and environmental impacts. They include:

Environment and Social Risk Management: WWF: The proposed project is a Category "B" given that it is essentially a conservation initiative, expected to generate significant positive and durable social, economic and environmental benefits. Any adverse environmental and social impacts due to project activities are minor and site specific and can be mitigated. FAO: The preliminary screening indicated a high risk level due to potential adverse impacts resulting from access restrictions of Indigenous Peoples/local communities.

Natural Habitat: is triggered as the proposed project directly targets protecting and restoring species and their habitats; strengthening local communities' ability to conserve the natural resources they depend on.

Involuntary Resettlement: No involuntary resettlement is anticipated in the project, and the project will not finance any activities which involve involuntary taking of land and involuntary restriction of legally designated protected areas. While project is unlikely to cause displacement of people, the project might lead to certain access restrictions. Thus, the policy is triggered and a Process Framework has been prepared (Annex 1: Process Framework).

Indigenous Peoples: As a precautionary approach, the project considered that indigenous peoples were present in the project site, because various ethnic groups are located in the target project areas, including *khalkh*, *buryad*, *barga*, *uzemchin* and *dariganga* people. An Ethnic Groups Planning Framework was prepared as part of the current ESMF to ensure that all ethnic groups have equal opportunity to benefit from the project and that the project does not accidentally benefit only mono-ethnic community (see Section 7.10 below and Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework).

Policy on Pest Management: The project is not expected to trigger the policy on Pest Management as the proposed activities do not include the promotion or usage of pesticides but will aim to reduce the amount of fertilizers and pesticides used through strengthening of farmer capacity on the proper use of chemicals and fertilizers (e.g. integrated pest management and good agriculture practice).

Standard on Community Health, Safety and Security: This standard is triggered as there are potential negative environmental impacts from small civil works primarily from small-scale infrastructure in NRs under Output 3.1.3, if not carried out properly.<sup>13</sup>

Cultural Heritage Policy: is not triggered as the project will not be implemented in areas of cultural heritage sites. However, chance find procedures will be included in Project as is standard practice.

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<sup>13</sup> GEF Project Document: Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia, FAO & WWF, 2020

## 7.3 Impact Assessment

The overall potential influence could not yet be determined as the project specific sites for the activities that involve physical interventions were not yet selected.

It means the exact locations for the i) NR infrastructure support; ii) LD hotspots; iii) Crop, fodder and farming; and iv) Project Physical Intervention Sites (PPIS) are not clear.

The definite impact zone or project influence area for certain activities cannot be specified in detail. As a consequence, the assessment was broad so the consultant could get a general scope.

The consultant has developed this ESIA/ESMF prior to the selection of the PPIS, which will enable the PMU and relevant stakeholders to avoid critical, or minimize negative, impacts in advance. This resulted in a strong advantage comparing to other projects. The tables below describe the expected impacts.

### Associated Impacts

**Environmental negative impacts:** The magnitude of the PPIS scale is minimal. The actual project intervention that might have a potential negative impact to the environment is the soil disturbance for farmlands and infrastructure work for NRs. The surrounding area of the NRs infrastructure and farmlands could be polluted by wind-blown waste, if conventional waste is not properly managed. Soil and vegetation will be directly impacted mainly due to the dust from the farmland processing and infrastructure of NRs. Air and groundwater pollution could happen in the long term if pesticides are used. An overview of the impact assessment is presented in the table below.

**Social negative impacts:** The main social and economic receptors are businesses, herders and landowners, who have formal or customary rights, such as user, private and possession rights, in the project area of influence. The loss of environment related livelihoods and involuntary resettlement risk of these receptors due to the development of the project are minimal. Also, Mongolia has a fairly homogenous ethnicity. 90% of the population is of Mongol background, mainly *khalkh* (84.5 percent) as well as *durvud*, *bayad*, *burriad*, and other Mongol groups.

### 7.3.1 Environmental Assessment

The main environmental risks are summarized in the table below. Please refer to the following sections for details.

Activities	Risks
<p><b>Land Management Planning</b>  <b>Activity 1.1.3.2:</b> Develop aimag and soum-level land management plans (3 aimag &amp; 8 soums) and provide equipment and tools.</p>	<p>Inadequate/uncoordinated planning could lead to more problems to <b>degradation of natural resources and local community livelihoods</b> in project areas.</p>
<p><b>Farming activities</b>  <b>Activity 2.1.2.1:</b> Technical assistance to local governments and cropping companies/farmers to enable them to provide the required technologies and inputs is one of the project activities that include direct investments to cropping companies and local communities.</p>	<p><b>Fertile topsoil and water resources depletion</b> could occur if activities are unmanaged and unregulated.</p>

Activities	Risks
<p><b>Activity 2.1.2.4:</b> Implementing environmentally friendly, gender-sensitive and climate-smart crop and fodder production practices based on guidelines and training developed under Output 2.1.1.</p>	
<p><b>Risk Funds (Pasture Management Funds)</b>  <b>Activity 2.2.3.1:</b> Establish or strengthen risk funds or other financing mechanisms (such as user fees or local tax) to finance pasture management activities (co-financed by local government or herder groups). This will take into account existing good practices, such as the communal monetary fund established in Bayan-Adraga soum</p>	<p><b>Financing of environmentally unsustainable practices</b> that might impact local environment.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Forest Management</b>  <b>Activity 2.2.4.3:</b> Implement interventions for sustainable forest management, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation.</li> <li>▪ Thinning and cleaning.</li> <li>▪ Fire prevention.</li> <li>▪ Reduced grazing in forest areas.</li> <li>▪ Protection/rehabilitation of riparian forest.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Failure of reducing herding in forest area could undermine other intervention efforts like reforestation</b></p>
<p><b>Strengthening PA Administration Infrastructure</b>  <b>Activity 3.1.3.2:</b> Implement priority interventions on-the-ground in line with management plans. This will include the implementation of BD monitoring plan, target communication events and trainings for local people and school children, restoration/rehabilitation of wildlife and nature resources, <b>joint patrolling</b>, and development of community based eco-friendly small business and strengthening of PA administration infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>Negative impact from civil works strengthening of PA administration infrastructure.</b></p> <p>Health and safety risk from joint patrolling.</p>
<p><b>Technical Assistance for Conservation-based Income-generation</b>  <b>Activity 3.1.3.3:</b> Provide technical assistance and inputs for conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men), such as beekeeping, growing medicinal plants, and nature-based tourism in buffer zone/adjacent areas.</p>	<p><b>Financing of environmentally unsustainable practices</b> that might impact local environment.</p>

### 7.3.2 Social Assessment

The main social risks are summarized in the table below. Please refer to the following sections for details. Note: Risks related to COVID-19 are addressed in the ProDoc, *Section 5. Risks*.

Activities	Risks
<p><b>Land Management Planning</b>  <b>Activity 1.1.1.3:</b> Adopt TORs in a consultative manner and establish cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder <b>working groups</b> at national and local levels. The working groups shall be established under the existing legal and institutional framework (such as the Land Reform Committee).</p>	<p>Inadequate/uncoordinated planning could lead to more problems to degradation of natural resources and local community livelihoods in project areas.</p>

<p><b>Activity 1.1.2.1:</b> Under the lead of ALAMGAC, prepare detailed guidelines for aimag-level general land management planning, soum territorial development plans, soum land management annual planning, and assessment and monitoring in consultation with relevant agencies and stakeholders.</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.2: Develop aimag and soum-level <b>land management plans</b> (3 aimag &amp; 8 soums) and provide equipment and tools.</p>	
<p><b>Ethnic groups</b></p> <p>All the project planned activities can expose social risks. However, activities under the component 2 and 3 are more directly related to local communities. As these activities involve technical assistance, training, awareness and joint management and direct investments to community groups.</p> <p>Component 2: Scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia</p> <p>Component 3: Strengthening biodiversity conservation and landscape connectivity</p>	<p>Although currently, conflicts among ethnic groups are not present nor expected in the future in the project area, some factors <b>might disrupt cohesion of stable soum or bagh community</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accidentally <b>selecting mono-ethnic community groups as beneficiary or participants</b> for the numerous grant, supports and technical assistance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Access restrictions</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas is increased to support survival of Mongolian gazelle and other iconic migratory species</p> <p><b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Local communities are applying sustainable management and restoration of rangelands, forest patches and riparian forests in the target area</p> <p><b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Farmers/crop producers in target areas are applying more sustainable crop and fodder production practices through the introduction of improved/ climate-smart technologies</p>	<p>Project activities may suggest/lead to <b>restrictions on access</b> to natural resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-By limiting number livestock can be grazed on the NP areas;</li> <li>-By restricting permission to use pastureland for new households in the NRs.</li> <li>-By putting in place temporary restriction on use of certain pastureland for conservation, restoration purposes; and</li> <li>-By fencing cropland.</li> </ul>

## 7.4 The Land Management Planning

### Activity with Risks

In general, the first component does not include any physical or direct interventions that have an impact on environment and social settings of the project area. However, it mainly plans to support the aimag and soum-level land management, covering the entire planning process including consultations, assessment, planning, adaptation and training. The following associated activities are extremely vital for overall project success.

- Activity 1.1.1.3: Adopt TORs in a consultative manner and establish cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder working groups at national and local levels. The working groups shall be established under the existing legal and institutional framework (such as the Land Reform Committee).
- Activity 1.1.2.1: Under the lead of ALAMGAC, prepare detailed guidelines for aimag-level general land management planning, soum territorial development plans, soum land management annual planning, and assessment and monitoring in consultation with relevant agencies and stakeholders.
- Activity 1.1.3.2: Develop aimag and soum-level land management plans (3 aimag & 8 soums) and provide equipment and tools.

## Current Background

Land management plans are being developed at three levels in Mongolia. Under the provisions of the Law of Mongolia on Land, National Land Management Plan is approved by the Government. The aimag, capital city, soum and district governor submits their annual land management plan to the respective Citizens' Representatives Meeting (CRM) for approval. Within the framework of this National Land Management Plan, the aimag and capital city CRM shall approve the aimag and capital city land management plan. In the case of soums and districts, soum and district territorial development plans are approved by the soum and district CRM. The land management plan to be developed within the scope of this project is land management plan at the aimag and soum level.

Some portion of local herder community and governments are a bit passive to make changes as the current poorly regulated situation is beneficial for them. Also, one of the most vital key factors is politicians avoid/afraid of dealing with this pasture law because its culturally sensitive to herders.

*The Interviewee of ESA, Ulaanbaatar*

According to the current legislations in effect, the current law does not have clear and detailed provisions on the phases of land management planning and what measures should be taken.

ALAMGAC guidelines for land management planning which are followed nowadays is not normative act, therefore it just provides general directives to its subordinate agencies for land management planning.

## Potential Impact

As the land management plan is the base and root for pasture, NRs and landscape connectivity plans, the plan is instrumental in proper environmental conservation covering the entire ecosystem and landscape. All land in eastern Mongolia is basically pasture. Pasture related conflicts have already developed into social and environmental problems that cover the entire country.

An appropriate land management plan is one of the key instruments to effectively solve the above highlighted problems. A land plan orchestrates various environmental protection, landscape connectivity of biodiversity, social relations, economic and commercial activities and supervision and enforcement.

The successful outcome of the component depends on the following factors:

- i) High level of professionalism;
- ii) Pursue proper participatory stakeholder engagement processes approach;
- iii) Provide gender equality;
- iv) Avoid resettlement and economic displacement;
- v) Protect cultural heritage;
- vi) Mitigate conflict caused by restriction or exclusion of particular groups from access to resources;
- vii) Avoid conflict between authorities/rangers & community conflict as well as herders and crop farmers;
- viii) Guarantee overall human rights; and
- ix) Ensure adequate supervision and enforcement.

Improper planning can worsen the status quo. The planning process and relevant adaptation must include all stakeholders and social groups. Dropping or ignoring particular groups will be a cause of conflict caused by restriction/exclusion of particular groups from access to resources provided by the project, to services or participation in decision-making and stakeholder engagement processes.

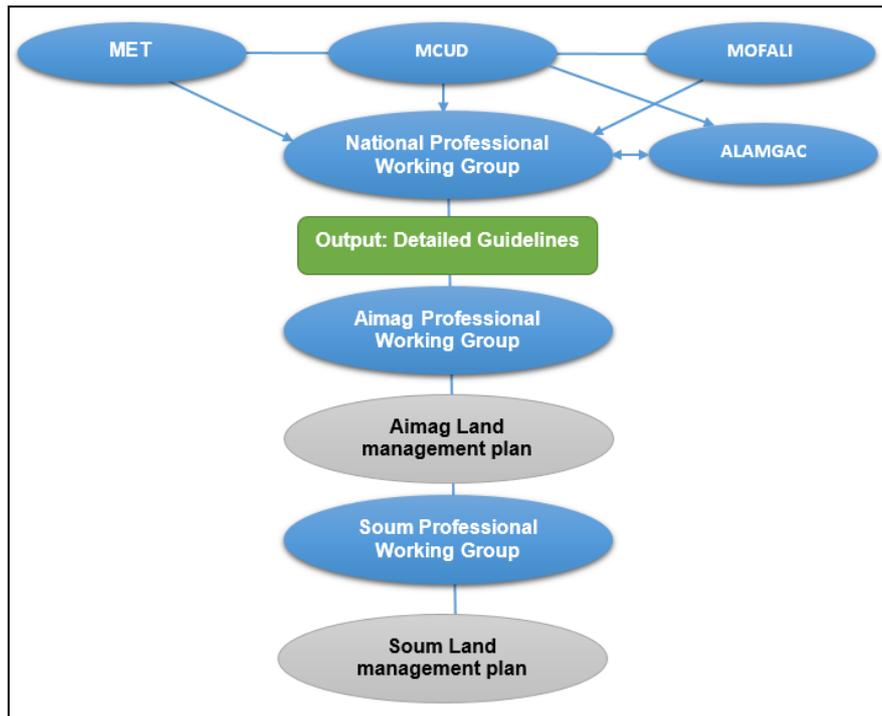
Eventually, the involuntary resettlement and economic displacement could take place due to inappropriate planning.

Today, aimag and soum land management plans can be developed without any formalized normative acts. This creates gap that might lead to inadequate/uncoordinated planning could result in more problems to degradation of natural resources and local community livelihoods in project areas.

Inadequate/uncoordinated planning could lead to more problems to degradation of natural resources and local community livelihoods in project areas.

### **Mitigation measure**

- i) Establish mechanism and permanent information channels for citizens to comment on the land plans. The channel shall be accessible for citizens to express their comments and maintain its regular functioning;
- ii) Professional companies with special permits are supposed to develop land management plans at local level. For this purpose, selected professional companies shall be trained in advance on new land management planning guidelines developed by the project.
- iii) Adopt a decision-making system based on consultations of land management changes and amendments beginning from the bagh citizens' meeting;
- iv) According to the current legislation, the aimag, capital city, soum and district governor submits their annual land management plan to the CRM for approval. Therefore, aimag, capital city, soum and district Governors need to approve a procedure for appointing a working group to develop a land management plan and then, in that procedure, assign to the working group to ensure citizens engagement and gender equality;
- v) The current law does not have clear provisions for implementations on the phases of land management planning as indicated above. Therefore, when creating a platform within the scope of the project, it is necessary to approve and enforce the procedures that make the process as clear as possible;
- vi) Adopt a decision-making system based on consultations of land management changes and amendments specially at the Bagh Citizens' Meeting (BCM);
- vii) The system of majority votes of the bagh meeting decisions related to pasture management will always create a minority. The minority positions and opinions shall be considered in further decisions and solved accordingly in a framework of project; and
- viii) MCUD, MET and MOFALI will establish joint Professional Working Group (PWG) by their resolution. PWG will develop guideline in cooperation with ALAMGAC and the guideline shall be correlated with existing guidelines of ALAMGAC. Guideline shall be tested first prior to the approved as normative act and eventually, it shall get approval as normative act.



Subsequently, aimag and soum level PWGs will develop their corresponding land management plans.

## 7.5 The Farming Activities

### Activity with Risks

- Activity 2.1.2.1: Technical assistance to local governments and cropping companies/farmers to enable them to provide the required technologies and inputs is one of the project activities that include direct investments to cropping companies and local communities;
- Activity 2.1.2.4: Implementing environmentally friendly, gender-sensitive and climate-smart crop and fodder production practices based on guidelines and training developed under Output 2.1.1;

Component 2 involves not only technical assistance and human and institutional capacity development, but also investments in the form of small-scale machinery, equipment and tools that support sustainable crop and pasture management and restoration, investments in pasture rehabilitation, community risk funds, rehabilitation of wells, as well as small-scale investments in processing capacities, animal health and breeding services at the local level.

### Current Background

Fodder and vegetable farmlands are located along the river basin in Khentii and Dornod provinces. Some farmlands in the target areas are placed in the river's basin protection and hygiene zones. These farmers are required by government to move their farmlands out of the protection zones. Hence, the project shall not implement activities in farmland in the protection zones.

The aimags have different approaches to establishing the protection/hygiene zones for the rivers. Khentii has taken the entire river zone under protection while Dornod excluded the vegetable farmers land to avoid the resettlement issues.

Law on EIA is not always followed among the farmers who operate in the protect area, thus Baseline Environmental Impact Assessment (BEIA) and consequent Detailed Environmental Impact

Assessment (DEIA) (if required) shall be developed. The Environmental Management Plan (EMP) is also developed as an integral part of the DEIA document.

Fodder use is not permanent due to the weather condition of the given year. If the year is bad in terms of grass and vegetation as well as winter was harsh, the demand for fodder will be high. It can also be the opposite. Thus, the crop companies have low interest in fodder production.

Crop companies, herders and local government (agriculture officer) conclude triple partied contract to regulate crop field and surrounding protection land areas. However, the enforcement of this contract's terms is insufficient. Thus, problems periodically do arise. Field work has revealed two issues:

- i. Crop companies are interested to build fences to halt grazing within or prohibited zone of their crop field, whereas herders interest to let livestock to graze in these fields at least off-seasonal basis.
- ii. Herders like to have fences to avoid penalties which is quite strict and high comparing to the vegetable farmlands. Therefore, some herders support the idea of building fences around the crop fields.

Pesticide use is common currently thus it can be hard control the use. However, the project will not be supporting or funding the use of pesticides.

### **Potential Impact**

The majority of the risks with regard to these activities are directly related to environmental issues, but also to some social concerns. Improper planning and implementation by crop, fodder and vegetable producers (farmlands) activities may lead to environmental degradation especially in the eastern steppe of Dornod and Khentii aimags. Environmental degradation would consist of pollution, climate change, soil erosion and resource inefficiency.

Competition for suitable land, technical assistance and funds may trigger resettlement and economic displacement through access restrictions to previously open land. The restriction/exclusion of particular groups from access to resources provided by the project, to services or participation in decision-making may result in the following type of conflicts:

- Among the project beneficiary groups to compete for more support from the project;
- Between farmers and herders;
- Between crop companies and herders;
- Between project beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups;
- Between humans and wildlife;
- Between authorities/rangers and communities.

Environmental and social risks include:

- i) Fertile topsoil and water resources depletion could be caused by unmanaged and unregulated farming;
- ii) Health and safety risk related to small machinery, equipment and tools;
- iii) Potential conflicts between crop companies and herders will arise inevitably, if project support will be spent for restricted measures like fencing.
- iv) Uncontrolled pesticide uses and alien plant (seed) invasion risk; and
- v) There might be a risk that parents engage their children in using project-provided equipment and tools and that children that are present on the farm are accidentally harmed by these.

### **Mitigation measure**

If farmers want to get assistance from the project, the following requirements by the project apply:

- i) BEIA and consequent DEIA (if required) shall be developed according to the law. The EMP is also developed as an integral part of the DEIA document;
- ii) The project shall not implement activities in farmland in the river/water protection zones; and
- iii) The farming activities will strictly prohibit child labor; however, it is necessary to highlight that "child labor" is not a concern because it does not exist in the project area. The concern is more related to the safety of operations of the machinery including potential threats to children who are around.

Crop companies, vegetable producers and herders under supervision of local government (agricultural officer) shall conduct comprehensive consultation and reach consent in terms of the restricted measures to avoid amongst potential conflicts.

Specially, conflict between crop companies and herders are inevitable if companies will use the project support for restricted measures such as fencing or limiting herders' livestock grazing within prohibited zone (500m) of the crop field.

Health and safety risk related to small machinery, equipment and tools:

- i) Technical and safety instructions must be provided when handing over the equipment;
- ii) In addition, the signing of a contract with the person using the equipment will clarify the rights and obligations of the parties. This agreement must require the receiver to strictly follow the safety instructions of the equipment;
- iii) It must also state that the equipment must not be accessible to or used by children;
- iv) Instructions for the use of soil fertilizers and proper handling of pesticides/non-chemical alternatives for pest management should also be given regularly; and
- v) Wildfire safety requirement should be implemented specially machineries shall have a spark arrestor.

In cooperation with local authorities, the project shall control the permitted types and amount of pesticide use, if the crop companies will be supported. Alien plants might be transported with the projects selected seeds and could have impact in the local ecosystem. Therefore, PMU shall have thorough monitoring system for seeds.

The project shall not support nor fund the use of pesticides, and shall only provide seeds/plant material that is already locally available.

Immediate neighbors shall be asked for their acceptance or objection in case of establishing new or expanding existing farms to avoid potential conflicts. (It should be noted, however, that the project will not work on expanding farmland area. Rather, it will work to improve the environmental sustainability on existing cropland. Nevertheless, potential conflicts may occur on allocated cropland that has previously been fallow, for example.)

## **7.6 The Risk Funds (Pasture Management Funds)**

### **Activity with Risks**

- Activity 2.2.3.1: Establish or strengthen risk funds or other financing mechanisms (such as user fees or local tax) to finance pasture management activities (co-financed by local government or herder groups). This will take into account existing good practices, such as the communal monetary fund established in Bayan-Adraga soum

### **Current Background**

The project is going to make direct financial contribution to risk fund for pasture management groups. The budget for this activity is approximately 45,000 USD or over 120 million MNT. The total amount is not that considerable, but this is quite rare experience by international projects to directly make

financial funding to the risk funds of local community groups. The funded capital can be used quite autonomously by the herder groups and partnerships.

Today, not all community groups have operational bylaws and proper enforcement. Moreover, decision making process amongst community groups is not always transparent and consistent.

### **Potential Impact**

The project might unintentionally finance environmentally unsustainable practices that might result environmental degradation and social conflicts.

### **Mitigation measure**

Restrictions shall be applied as condition to community groups or individuals who are willing to get the project assistance.

- Develop the restricted activities list;
- The selection committee shall consider the restricted activities list;
- Describe the terms and conditions of the funding and have it approved by the stakeholders;

Sign a contract with the beneficiaries, and specify their rights and obligations

Annex 4: Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups and the ESMP elaborate this aspect in more detail.

## **7.7 Sustainable Forest Management**

### **Activity with Risks**

- Activity 2.2.4.3: Implement interventions for sustainable forest management, such as:
  - Reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation;
  - Thinning and cleaning;
  - Fire prevention;
  - Reduced grazing in forest areas; and
  - Protection/rehabilitation of riparian forest.

### **Current Background**

The project is aims to implement interventions for sustainable forest management (Activity 2.2.4.3) including i) reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation, ii) Thinning and cleaning, iii) fire prevention, iv) reduced grazing in forest areas, and v) protection/rehabilitation of riparian forest.

These interventions will be heavily based on the support of Forest User Groups (FUGs). Reforestation, thinning, and fire prevention, can be successfully implemented however, protection and rehabilitation of riparian forest area could be complicated. As regulation requires, FUGs members are almost hundred percent formed by local herders who live adjacent their responsible forest area, thus it is difficult to require them to reduce the herding in riparian forest area.

The reason is that income structure of the FUG member families demonstrates that 80-90 % of total family income is livestock whereas revenue from forest thinning and forest secondary products constitutes the rest.

### **Potential Impact**

Failure of reducing herding in forest area could undermine other intervention results.

Potential health and safety risks. Potential harm from use of invasive species or pesticides.

## **Mitigation measure**

The protection of new and young trees particularly in riparian forest area by fencing shall deserve special attention of the project. It shall be put as condition present for the FUGs, if they want to be involved or get support from the project. In general, this condition present shall be effective to all groups whoever has some level of impact on the riparian forest.

Health and safety risk during the forestry work (thinning, fire prevention work, potential use of invasive species for reforestation) could occur thus precautionary measure shall be taken, in line with WWF's Guidance Note on Labor and Working Conditions and FAO's ESS 7 Decent Work.

Use of invasive species or pesticides shall be strictly prohibited. Only non-invasive, preferably native species will be used for reforestation.

Thinning and cleaning needs to be done sustainably as per guidelines developed by previous projects (including FAO/WWF projects).

## **7.8 Strengthening PA Administration Infrastructure**

### **Activity with Risks**

- Activity 3.1.3.2: Implement priority interventions on-the-ground in line with management plans. This will include the implementation of BD monitoring plan, target communication events and trainings for local people and school children, restoration/rehabilitation of wildlife and nature resources, joint patrolling, and development of community based eco-friendly small business and strengthening of PA administration infrastructure.

### **Current Background**

Small scale civil works usually do not require EIA and EMP according to the national legislations however these kinds of activities do provide minor environmental impacts. Therefore, some level of management to mitigate shall be in place.

### **Potential Impact**

Negative impact from civil works strengthening of PA administration infrastructure.

Potential impact to cultural heritage (considered unlikely).

### **Mitigation measure**

The Environmental Code of Practice (ECOP) is developed by the consultant to avoid, if possible, to minimize to acceptable level the impacts from the civil works to support infrastructure of NRs (Annex 3: Environmental Code of Practice). This ECOP is prepared to satisfy the safeguard requirements of FAO and WWF to develop an EMP before and during construction, implement and supervise the EMP and the mitigation measures during civil works of NRs related infrastructure.

Chance find procedure is included in the ECOP.

## **7.9 Technical Assistance for Conservation-based Income-generation**

### **Activity with Risks**

- Activity 3.1.3.3: Provide technical assistance and inputs for conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men), such as beekeeping, growing medicinal plants, and nature-based tourism in buffer zone/adjacent areas.

## Potential Impact

Financing of activities that might inadvertently impact local environment.

## Mitigation measure

Conditions shall be established for community groups or individuals who are willing to get the project assistance.

- Develop operational guidelines for the committee and terms and conditions to grant financing; have it approved;
- Medicinal plant production and nature-based tourism operations shall meet and follow high health and safety requirements; and
- Sign a contract with project beneficiary, and specify rights and conditions of the beneficiaries.

## 7.10 Ethnic groups

### Activity with Risks

Project social impact is actually broader than environmental impacts. In that sense, almost all the project planned activities can be exposed to social risks. However, activities under the component 2 and 3 are more directly related to local communities. As these activities involve technical assistance, training, awareness and joint management and direct investments to community groups.

- Component 2: Scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia
- Component 3: Strengthening biodiversity conservation and landscape connectivity

### Current Background

The national statistics and population related official documents use “yastan”-ethnicity definition in order to identify the Mongolian nationals as khalkh, dorvod, bayad, buryad, barga and dariganga, etc. Representatives of khalkh, buryad, barga, uzemchin and dariganga people live in the target locations and they considered “uuguul” people the ones “who were born in the given *soum* and aimag”.

Population in the eastern region of Mongolia is relatively homogenous compared to the western region in terms of ethnic composition; 73.8% of population are khalkh, 12.1% dariganga, 10.2% and buryad. The project target areas include among others khalkh, buryad, barga, uzemchin and dariganga people.

The consultant has assessed the social and cultural habitats of the ethnic groups present in the project sites guided by FAO ESS9 and the WWF Policy and has concluded that none of the ethnic groups in the Project site qualifies as “indigenous peoples” and confirmed by the statement of Social and Gender Analysis (Annex Q1 of the ProDoc) “None of these ethnic groups belong to “indigenous” as they all distinguished primarily by certain cultural elements and dialects of the Mongolian language. And they are neither discriminated against nor regarded as vulnerable”.

The GEF “Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples” of 2012 pointed out that self-identification is an important criterion for determining indigenous status. However, none of the ethnic groups identified in the project site have, so far, self-identified themselves as indigenous peoples. Thus, at this stage, an Indigenous Peoples Plan and FPIC are not required for the project areas. However, such need will be reassessed upon approval of the project and once additional site-specific discussions with beneficiaries have taken place before implementing activities that have an impact on them.

The Government of Mongolia has no specific law related to Indigenous Peoples or ethnic minority concerns and issues. As such there is no specific branch of government designated to be responsible for addressing ethnic and indigenous peoples concerns. However, in Article 24.3.4 of 2020 Parliament Law, a standing committee has been designated to formulate state policies on ethnic minorities' language, culture and tradition.

### **Potential Impact**

Although currently, conflicts among ethnic groups are not present nor predicted to be raised in the future in the project area, some factors might disrupt cohesion of stable soum or bagh community. These factors might include:

- Accidentally selecting mono-ethnic community groups as beneficiary or participants for the numerous grant, supports and technical assistance.

Therefore, in a precautionary approach, an Ethnic Groups Planning Framework was prepared as part of the current ESMF to ensure that all ethnic groups have equal opportunity to benefit from the project and that the project does not accidentally benefit only mono-ethnic community (see Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework for more details).

### **Mitigation measure**

As a precautionary approach, the consultant suggests taking the following actions:

- i) Representation of ethnic groups that are considered as a minority within the soum and bag, shall be assured in the further regular consultations, effective participation and influence in decision making process;
- ii) Trainings shall also ensure all ethnic groups participation apart from equal participation of women and men;
- iii) Under the project activity 2.3.1.2 the criteria for the selection of herder groups shall ensure the group diversity and composition, i.e., age, sex, wealth and ethnic origin;
- iv) Under the project activity 2.2.3.3 uzemchin people's herding skills needs to be shared, possibilities of utilizing barga and uzemchin sheeps for improving livestock production are explored, with a view to strengthen quality rather than quantity of livestock and reduce grazing load.

This shall be done in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner in order not to create any new conflicts. The project shall have a sensitive approach towards various ethnic groups.

Please see Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework for more information and guidance.

## **7.11 Access restrictions**

### **Activity with Risks**

- Outcome 3.1: Management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas is increased to support survival of Mongolian gazelle and other iconic migratory species
- Outcome 2.2: Local communities are applying sustainable management and restoration of rangelands, forest patches and riparian forests in the target area
- Outcome 2.1: Farmers/crop producers in target areas are applying more sustainable crop and fodder production practices through the introduction of improved/ climate-smart technologies

### **Current Background**

The protected areas covered by the project are all Nature Reserves (NRs) or Local Protected Areas (LPAs). NRs consist of areas taken under state special protection in order to create conditions for the conservation, preservation, and restoration of certain natural features and natural resources. In NRs, traditional, non-commercial activities such as grazing are allowed. However, management measures can be agreed on in a management plan/NR bylaw through a participatory, consultative process.

The following PAs are located in project target area. Three of them were newly designated by state level as NR in 2019, one of them is a Local Protected Area (and Ramsar site), partially located in the project target area.

1. Toson Khulstai NR
2. Khar Yamaat NR
3. Ulz goliin Ekh NR
4. Menengiin Tsagaan Khooloi NR
5. Bayantsagaan tal NR
6. Jaran Togoo tal A and B Section NR
7. Valley of Khurkh Khuiten Rivers LPA (also an NR since May 2020)

The project is planning to conduct an assessment to enhance landscape connectivity and management of globally important biodiversity in the target landscape conducted and incorporated into local plans (Output 3.1.1).

Develop/update management plans for NRs based on assessments, local consultations and available data using internationally recognized PA management tools. This will include a monitoring plan for systematically collecting data on key species and other indicators related to the conservation targets that is needed to continually improve and adapt the management plans (Activity 3.1.2.3).

There are two main factors negatively influencing NRs conservation.

1. Potential/ongoing conflict between protected area administration and within or neighboring herders over the natural resource use specially the grazing.
2. Currently, the protection regime of the NRs in the project area are mostly not yet implemented other than in Toson Khulstai and Khar Yamaat NRs, thus the project will increase the protection which means there will potentially be more conflicts.

### **Potential Impact**

Herding is a land-based livelihood that basically depends on good pasture land and nearby water sources. Project activities in the selected Project sites may suggest/lead to restrictions on access to natural resources, which may include but are not limited to:

- By limiting number livestock that can be grazed in the NR areas;
- By restricting allocation of/permission to use pastureland for newly formed households in the NR areas;
- By putting in place temporary restriction on use of certain pastureland for rehabilitation or rotation purposes;
- By fencing cropland making it difficult to access winter and spring shelters, water resources and graze livestock or detour route etc.
- Potential impacts to cultural resources.

### **Mitigation measure**

Law on protected areas does not prohibit any traditional herding activities in NRs provided that they do not have a negative impact on the natural features, the condition and location of certain types of

natural resources, population levels, and the reproduction of flora and fauna for which the reserve is under protection.

- i) It is expected that such grazing related conflicts remain minimal.
- ii) Local government shall develop NR bylaw which shall be developed through comprehensive continuous stakeholder consultations for the developing to approval.
- iii) Any access restrictions resulting from the project (pasture management plans, NR co-management plans, etc.) are to be developed in a highly participatory process and will be agreed on a voluntary basis.
- iv) In addition, a Process Framework has been developed and must be complied with in order to mitigate this risk.
- v) Potential impacts to cultural resources will be discussed with local stakeholders during planning process and, if applicable, avoidance/mitigation measures will be included in the Livelihood Restoration Plans.

Please see Annex 1: Process Framework for more information and guidance.

## 8 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (ESMF)

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
<b>Institutional and Legal Section</b>							
<p><b>Land Management Planning</b></p> <p>Activity 1.1.1.3: Adopt TORs in a consultative manner and establish cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder <b>working groups</b> at national and local levels. The working groups shall be established under the existing legal and institutional framework (such as the Land Reform Committee).</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2.1: Under the lead of ALAMGAC, prepare detailed guidelines for aimag-level general land management planning, soum territorial development plans, soum land management annual planning, and assessment and monitoring in consultation with relevant agencies and stakeholders.</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.2: Develop aimag and soum-level <b>land management plans</b> (3 aimag &amp; 8 soums) and provide equipment and tools.</p>	<p>Inadequate/uncoordinated planning could lead to more problems to degradation of natural resources and local community livelihoods in project areas.</p>	<p>High</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Establish mechanism and permanent information channels for citizens to comment on the land plans;</li> <li>ii. It is required for working groups to work with professional companies and train these companies prior to the planning process;</li> <li>iii. Adopt a decision-making system based on consultations of land management changes and amendments beginning from the bagh citizens' meeting (BCM);</li> <li>iv. Aimag, capital city, soum and district Governors need to approve a procedure for appointing a working group to develop a land management plan and then, in that procedure, assign to the working group to ensure citizens engagement and gender equality;</li> <li>v. Within the project framework, it is necessary to approve and enforce the procedures that make the process as clear as possible;</li> <li>vi. Adopt a decision-making system based on consultations of land management changes and amendments specially at the BCM;</li> <li>vii. The minority positions and opinions shall be considered in further decisions and solved accordingly in a framework of project;</li> <li>viii. MCUD, MET and MOFALI will establish joint Professional Working Group (PWG) by their resolution. PWG will develop guideline in cooperation with ALAMGAC and the guideline</li> </ol>	<p>The first two years of the project lifetime</p>	<p>National and local level</p> <p>(All the project areas)</p>	<p>No extra cost</p>	<p>PMU, MCUD, MET and MOFALI</p> <p>ALAMGAC</p> <p>PWGs at National and local levels</p> <p>All cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholders</p>

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
			shall be correlated with existing guidelines of ALAMGAC. Eventually, it shall get approval as normative act.				
<b>Grievance Redress Mechanism</b>	In Mongolia, there is a deadline of 10 days for court matters related to land issues. Therefore, if the GRM process takes too long, Project Affected Persons (PAPs) may lose their right to open court case.	High	<p>Comments were provided for improvements and incorporated in revised GRM.</p> <p>GRM should make mention of the 10-day deadline and should specify that PAPs are still allowed to seek legal recourse.</p> <p>The project will organize inception workshops/ meetings with the purpose to introduce the project to stakeholders and jointly develop detailed workplans. GRM mechanism will be discussed in these meetings.</p>	Continuously during the project lifetime	All the project areas	No extra cost	PMU
<b>Environmental Section</b>							
<p><b>Farming activities</b></p> <p>Activity 2.1.2.1: Technical assistance to local governments and <b>cropping companies/farmers</b> to enable them to provide the required technologies and inputs is one of the project activities that include direct investments to cropping companies and local communities;</p> <p>Activity 2.1.2.4: Implementing environmentally friendly, gender-sensitive and climate-smart crop and fodder production practices based on guidelines and training developed under Output 2.1.1;</p>	<p>i) Fertile topsoil and water resources depletion could be caused by unmanaged and unregulated;</p> <p>ii) Health and safety risk related to small machinery, equipment and tools;</p> <p>iii) Potential conflicts between crop companies and herders regarding fencing;</p> <p>iv) Uncontrolled pesticide uses and</p>	High	<p>If farmers want to get assistance from the project, the following the requirements by the project:</p> <p>i) BEIA and consequent DEIA (if required) shall be developed according to the law. The EMP is also developed as an integral part of the DEIA document;</p> <p>ii) The project shall not implement activities in farmland in the water protection zones; and</p> <p>iii) The farming activities will strictly prohibit child labor;</p> <p>Extensive consultation among crop companies, vegetable producers herders and local government and achieve mutual consent in terms of the restriction measures.</p> <p>Health and safety risk related to small machinery, equipment and tools:</p>	Continuously during the project lifetime	<p>Local level</p> <p>(Chinggis city, Bayan-Adraga, Norovlin</p> <p>and</p> <p>Khulunbuir, Choibalsan)</p>	No extra cost but include in National Agriculture Expert TOR	<p>PMU</p> <p>Crop companies</p> <p>Vegetable producers and their association</p>

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
	alien plant (seed) invasion risk.		i) Technical and safety instructions must be provided when handing over the equipment; ii) The signed agreement must require the beneficiary to strictly follow the safety instructions of the equipment; iii) It must also state that the equipment must not be accessible to or used by children; iv) Wildfire safety requirement should be implemented specially machineries shall have a spark arrestor.  In cooperation with local authorities, the project shall control the permitted types and amount of pesticide use, if the crop companies will be supported. PMU shall have thorough monitoring system for seeds.  The project shall not support nor fund the use of pesticides, and shall only provide seeds/plant material that is already locally available.				
<b>Risk Funds (Pasture Management Funds)</b> Activity 2.2.3.1: Establish or strengthen <b>risk funds</b> or other financing mechanisms (such as user fees or local tax) to finance pasture management activities	The project might unintentionally finance environmentally unsustainable practices that might result environmental degradation and social conflicts.	Medium	Restrictions shall be applied as condition to community groups or individuals who willing to get the project assistance.  - Develop the restricted activities list; - The selection committee shall consider the restricted activities list; - Describe the terms and conditions of the funding and have it approved by the stakeholders;  Sign a contract with the beneficiaries, and specify their rights and obligations	2022 Q2-2025 Q1	Local level  (All the project areas)	No extra cost (PMU staff)	PMU  Local government  Community groups

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
			<p><i>Annex 4: Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups elaborates this aspect in more detail.</i></p> <p>No activities shall be financed that would have a negative environmental impact.</p>				
<p><b>Sustainable Forest Management</b> Activity 2.2.4.3: Implement interventions for sustainable forest management, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation;</li> <li>-Thinning and cleaning;</li> <li>-Fire prevention;</li> <li><b>-Reduced grazing in forest areas;</b> and</li> <li>-Protection/rehabilitation of riparian forest.</li> </ul>	<p>Failure of reduce herding in forest area could undermine other intervention results.</p> <p>Potential health and safety risks.</p> <p>Potential harm from use of invasive species or pesticides.</p>	Medium	<p>Fence new and young trees particularly in riparian forest area shall well deserve special attention of the project. It shall be put as condition present for the FUGs.</p> <p>Health and safety risk during the forestry work (thinning, fire prevention work, potential use of invasive species for reforestation) could occur thus precautionary measure shall be taken, in line with WWF's Guidance Note on Labor and Working Conditions and FAO's ESS 7 Decent Work.</p> <p>Use of invasive species or pesticides shall be strictly prohibited. Only non-invasive, preferably native species will be used for reforestation.</p> <p>Thinning and cleaning needs to be done sustainably as per guidelines developed by previous projects (including FAO/WWF projects).</p>	Starting from 2021 Q4 till the end of project	Local level  (All the project areas)	No extra cost but include in project staff/ sub-contract TORs	PMU, Soum Governments  FUGs
<p><b>Strengthening PA Administration Infrastructure</b> Activity 3.1.3.2: Implement priority interventions on-the-ground in line with management plans. This will include the implementation of BD monitoring plan, target communication events and</p>	<p>Negative impact from civil works strengthening of PA administration infrastructure.</p> <p>Potential impact to cultural heritage (considered unlikely).</p>	Medium	<p>The ECOP is prepared to satisfy the safeguard requirements of FAO and WWF to develop an EMP before and during construction, implement and supervise the EMP and the mitigation measures during civil works of NRs related infrastructure.</p> <p>Preparation Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contract the civil work contractor company and the contract shall include ECOP (if EIA and EMP is not legally required) as an Annex; and</li> </ul>	2021Q4-2025Q2	Local level  (All the project areas)	No extra cost (PMU staff)	PMU, MET, Nature Reserve Boards

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
trainings for local people and school children, restoration/rehabilitation of wildlife and nature resources, improving professional skills and capacity, and development of community based eco-friendly small business and <b>strengthening of PA administration</b> infrastructure.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct training on for Small-Scale Civil Works and other relevant issues.</li> </ul> Implementation phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strictly follow ECOP and report the progress</li> <li>▪ Comply guidance and recommendations of the monitoring by PMU.</li> <li>▪ Chance find procedure is included in the Environmental Code of Practice (ECOP).</li> </ul> <i>Please refer to Annex 3: Environmental Code of Practice for detailed mitigation measures.</i>				
	Health and safety risks related to joint patrolling.	Extremely high	Note: Reference to joint patrolling has been removed in the revised ProDoc.  WWF Standard on Community Health, Safety and Security will be duly applied.	Continuously during the project lifetime	PAs	No extra costs	FAO/WWF PMU
<b>Technical Assistance for Conservation-based Income-generation</b> Activity 3.1.3.3: Provide technical assistance and inputs for <b>conservation-based income-generating opportunities</b> for local communities (women and men), such as beekeeping, growing medicinal plants, and nature-based tourism in buffer zone/adjacent areas.	Financing of activities that might inadvertently impact local environment	Medium	Restrictions shall be applied as condition to community groups or individuals who are willing to get the project assistance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop operational guidelines for the committee and terms and conditions to grant financing; have it approved;</li> <li>- Medicinal plant production and nature-based tourism operations shall meet and follow strictly health and safety requirements and other legal provisions; and</li> <li>- Sign a contract with project beneficiary, and specify rights and conditions of the beneficiaries.</li> </ul>	Continuously during the project lifetime	Local level  (All the project areas)	No extra costs (PMU staff)	PMU MET, MOH GASIA  Local government  Business entities
<b>Social Section</b>							
<b>Ethnic groups</b> All the project planned activities can expose social risks. However, activities under the component 2 and 3 are more directly related to	Some factors might disrupt cohesion of stable soum or bagh community:	Low	As a precautionary approach, the consultant suggests to take the following actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Conduct regular consultations with all ethnic groups about project activities, ensure effective</li> </ol>	Continuously during the project lifetime	Local level	No extra costs	PMU  Soum and bagh governors

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
<p>local communities. As these activities involve technical assistance, training, awareness and joint management and direct investments to community groups. Component 2: Scaling up sustainable dryland management in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia Component 3: Strengthening biodiversity conservation and landscape connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accidentally selecting mono-ethnic community groups as beneficiary or participants for the numerous grant, supports and technical assistance</li> </ul>		<p>participation and influence in decision making process;</p> <p>ii) Activity 2.3.1.2: The criteria for the selection of herder groups shall ensure the group diversity and composition, i.e, age, sex, wealth and ethnic origin; and</p> <p>iii) Activity 2.2.3.3: Uzemchin people’s herding skills needs to shared.</p> <p>This shall be done in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner in order not to create any new conflicts. The project shall have a sensitive approach towards various ethnic groups.</p> <p>See Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework.</p>		(All the project areas)		
<p><b>Access restrictions</b></p> <p>Outcome 3.1: Management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas is increased to support survival of Mongolian gazelle and other iconic migratory species</p> <p>Outcome 2.2: Local communities are applying sustainable management and restoration of rangelands, forest patches and riparian forests in the target area</p> <p>Outcome 2.1: Farmers/crop producers in target areas are applying more sustainable crop and fodder production practices through the introduction of</p>	<p>Project activities may suggest/lead to restrictions on access to natural resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-By limiting number livestock can be grazed on the NP areas;</li> <li>-By restricting permission to use pastureland for new households in the NRs;</li> <li>-By putting in place temporary restriction on use of certain pastureland for conservation, restoration purposes</li> <li>-By fencing cropland.</li> </ul>	Medium	<p>Law on protected areas does not prohibit any traditional herding activities in NRs provided that they do not have a negative impact on the natural features, the condition and location of certain types of natural resources, population levels, and the reproduction of flora and fauna for which the reserve is under protection.</p> <p>i) It is expected that such grazing related conflicts remain minimal.</p> <p>ii) Local government shall develop NR bylaw which shall be developed through comprehensive continuous stakeholder consultations for the developing to approval.</p> <p>iii) The project will exclude financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation.</p> <p>iv) Any access restrictions resulting from the project (pasture management plans, NR co-management plans, etc.) are to be developed in</p>	Continuously during the project lifetime	Local level  (All the project areas)	See Section Budget below.	<p>PMU, MET</p> <p>EPTAs Local government</p> <p>PA Administratio ns</p> <p>Community group and herders</p>

Activity with Significant Risk	Impact/Issues	Type/ Degree of Impact	Mitigation/Enhancement measures	Timeframe and frequency	Special Target Area(s)	Budget required	Responsible Party(ies)
improved/ climate-smart technologies	-Potential impacts to cultural resources.		<p>a highly participatory process and will be agreed on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>v) Potential impacts to cultural resources will be discussed with local stakeholders during planning process and, if applicable, avoidance/mitigation measures will be included in the Livelihood Restoration Plans.</p> <p>vi) In addition, a Process Framework has been developed to mitigate this risk (Annex 1: Process Framework).</p>				

## 9 RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Proceed/do not proceed with project**

All identified impacts/risks are limited and localized; with proper management they can be easily mitigated or prevented effectively. Therefore, it is highly recommended by the consultant team that the project shall proceed. Nevertheless, the risk categorization is maintained at “high” risk under FAO’s ESM Guidelines and Category “B” under WWF’s SIPP to ensure continued oversight of these issues in implementation and monitoring of the environmental and social safeguards measures as outlined in this ESMF.

### **Recommendations**

The project is targeting huge territory almost covering entire eastern Mongolia to satisfy the landscape approach. Landscape base is not just a general principle, but small scale impacts spread throughout the vast areas can together build up to significant problems with extensive magnitude. Small-scale activities are hard to control and monitor. It requires complex data collection and strong capacity of this data analysis to get a proper understanding of where it is heading. Therefore, sufficient human and financial resources shall be available for monitoring and management of these impacts.

The project uses land management planning as a vehicle to achieve improved environmental and economic conditions in eastern Mongolia. The tragedy of commons can be only eliminated by social engineering therefore the project awareness training and consultation activities are all valuable. The whole concept of the project is innovative.

- All identified impacts/risks are limited and localized with proper management it can be **easily mitigated or prevented effectively**.
- **Strong monitoring capacity** needs to be implemented.
- The Project **shall not provide institutional or technical direct and indirect support** to local government or protected area administrations if it is related to in following issues:
  - **Relocating vegetable farmers** out of the river protection/hygiene zones;
  - **Regulating land possession issues** inside the protected areas or outside within the project areas;
  - Avoid from **involving in any existing dispute** between herders and crop companies. Avoid cropland areas that are likely to lead to conflict.

If vegetable farmers and herders neighboring to each other, strong support from the project might raise the risk of potential conflicts.

The project proposed activities cannot have successful implementation and sustainability if they are based only on the current legal system and policies, due to the following reasons:

- Existing legal provisions that regulating pasture management are not sufficient enough in the existing legal system.
- Nowadays, soum and aimags develop land management plans. Nevertheless, the reason for poor planning and incomplete implementation is a lack of adequate financing. Therefore, in order to improve pasture management, approval of law and regulations alone would be insufficient, and adequate financing mechanism is vital.

- Methodologies and guidelines for land management planning have not been adopted as normative acts.

Therefore, the project shall focus on providing support for adopting the pasture management law. The key issue here is to introduce 'tax based on the livestock heads' principle in the law which is instrumental to decrease livestock quantity.

There are existing ongoing conflicts among the stakeholders like herders vs crop companies, vegetable farmers vs environmental inspectors, herders vs PA administrations, etc. Therefore, the project shall have a neutral position and avoid escalating these existing conflicts by its activities.

A year prior to the project end, the PMU in collaboration with the project stakeholders shall develop an exit strategy to maintain the sustainability of the project outcomes.

### **Work plan timeframe**

The current work plan has quite a tight schedule especially for legal and guideline activities therefore the timeframe for these activities shall be extended. Due to current bureaucracy and legal requirements, it is quite a time-consuming process.

### **Exit strategy**

The project invested equipment, tools and machineries will be owned by local communities or companies. In addition, the project brought capacity for training, public awareness, consultations, and guidelines/handouts development shall be transferred gradually to local organizations, teams or individuals through capacity building programme. It will create local ownership and assist to sustainability of the project.

## 10 GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

### Grievance Mechanism

Focal Point Information and Contact Details	Mr. Vinod Ahuja, FAO Representative in Mongolia <a href="mailto:FAO-MN@fao.org">FAO-MN@fao.org</a> Tel: (+976) 11 310248	Mr. Batbold Dorjgurkhem, WWF Mongolia Country Representative <a href="mailto:info@wwf.mn">info@wwf.mn</a> Tel: (+976) 11 311659
	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) <a href="mailto:FAO-RAP@fao.org">FAO-RAP@fao.org</a>	WWF Project Complaints Officer (PCO) SafeguardsComplaint@wwfus.org
	Add PMU and Local Soum Coordinator contact information	
Explain how the grievance mechanism will be/ has been communicated to stakeholders	The grievance mechanism will be communicated to stakeholders at the beginning of the project implementation through the project inception workshop and project inception meetings at the local level. A handout will be given to the <i>soum</i> and <i>bagh</i> leaders and will be displayed at each <i>soum</i> and <i>bagh</i> centre. The local stakeholders will be regularly reminded of the grievance mechanism during relevant project meetings.	

### Disclosure (only for Moderate or High Risk)

Disclosure Means		
Disclosure information/document shared		
Disclosure dates	From: <a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>	To: <a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>
Location		
Language(s)		
Other Info		

**(+)** Add disclosure as necessary

FAO and WWF are committed to ensuring that their programs are implemented in accordance with the Organizations' environmental and social obligations. **FAO policy:** In order to better achieve these goals, and to ensure that beneficiaries of FAO programs have access to an effective and timely mechanism to address their concerns about non-compliance with these obligations, FAO, in order to supplement measures for receiving, reviewing and acting as appropriate on these concerns at the program management level, has entrusted the Office of the Inspector-General with the mandate to independently review the complaints that cannot be resolved at that level.

FAO will facilitate the resolution of concerns of beneficiaries of FAO programs regarding alleged or potential violations of FAO's social and environmental commitments. For this purpose, concerns may be communicated in accordance with the eligibility criteria of the Guidelines for Compliance Reviews Following Complaints Related to the Organization's Environmental and Social Standards<sup>14</sup>, which applies to all FAO programs and projects.

<sup>14</sup> Compliance Reviews following complaints related to the Organization's environmental and social standards: <http://www.fao.org/aud/42564-03173af392b352dc16b6ceec72fa7ab27f.pdf>

Concerns must be addressed at the closest appropriate level, i.e. at the project management/technical level, and if necessary, at the Regional Office level. If a concern or grievance cannot be resolved through consultations and measures at the project management level, a complaint requesting a Compliance Review may be filed with the Office of the Inspector-General (OIG) in accordance with the Guidelines. Program and project managers will have the responsibility to address concerns brought to the attention of the focal point.

The principles to be followed during the complaint resolution process include: impartiality, respect for human rights, including those pertaining to indigenous peoples, compliance of national norms, coherence with the norms, equality, transparency, honesty, and mutual respect.

**WWF policy:** WWF's Policy on Accountability and Grievance Mechanism, also known as WWF Project Complaints Resolution Policy, is not intended to replace project and country-level dispute resolution and redress mechanisms. This mechanism is designed to:

- Address potential breaches of WWF's policies and procedures;
- Be independent, transparent, and effective;
- Be accessible to project-affected people;
- Keep complainants abreast of progress of cases brought forward; and
- Maintain records on all cases and issues brought forward for review.

Project-affected communities and other interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time to the Project Team and WWF (see above). The Project Team will be responsible for informing project-affected parties about the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism. Contact information of the Project Team and WWF will be made publicly available. A grievance can be filed with the Project Complaints Officer (PCO), a WWF staff member fully independent from the Project Team, who is responsible for the WWF Accountability and Grievance Mechanism and who can be reached at: Email: [SafeguardsComplaint@wwfus.org](mailto:SafeguardsComplaint@wwfus.org) Mailing address: Project Complaints Officer Safeguards Complaints, World Wildlife Fund 1250 24th Street NW Washington, DC 20037 The PCO will respond within 10 business days of receipt, and claims will be filed and included in project monitoring. In addition to the above, projects requiring FPIC or triggering an Indigenous People's Plan (IPP) will also include local conflict resolution and grievance redress mechanisms in the respective safeguards documents. These will be developed with the participation of the affected communities in culturally appropriate ways and will ensure adequate representation from vulnerable or marginalize groups and subgroups.

### **Project-level grievance mechanism**

The project will establish a grievance mechanism at field level to file complaints during project inception phase. Contact information and information on the process to file a complaint will be disclosed in all meetings, workshops and other related events throughout the life of the project. In addition, it is expected that all awareness raising material to be distributed will include the necessary information regarding the contacts and the process for filing grievances.

The project will also be responsible for documenting and reporting as part of the safeguards performance monitoring on any grievances received and how they were addressed.

The mechanism includes the following stages:

- As explained in the Ethnic Groups Planning Framework, local stakeholders may firstly consider amongst themselves whether the issue can be resolved internally, within herder groups and/or forest groups, community elders, etc.
- In the instance in which the claimant has the means to directly file the claim, he/she has the right to do so, presenting it directly to the Project Management Unit (PMU). The process of filing a complaint will duly consider anonymity as well as any existing traditional or indigenous dispute resolution mechanisms and it will not interfere with the community's self-governance system.
- The complainant files a complaint through one of the channels of the grievance mechanism (as described below). This will be sent to the National Project Manager (NPM) to assess whether the complaint is eligible. The confidentiality of the complaint must be preserved during the process.
- The Project can only review and resolve complaints related to project activities, PMU staff and contractors, and the works done under the project. As soon as a complaint is received, a legal screening must be made to determine whether the complaint falls within the scope of the Grievance Redress Mechanism. It is important to highlight that the following types of disputes cannot be resolved by the PMU and are only subject of regulations under laws of Mongolia:
  1. If it is related to work performance or decision making of civil servants;
  2. Resolutions pertaining to land tenure, land tenure overlapping issue;
  3. Issues related to the violation case;
  4. Issues related to the criminal case; and
  5. Dispute between citizens over property etc.
- The stakeholders will be made aware that they may still seek legal recourse in parallel while filing a grievance with the project. In particular, they will be made aware of the 10-day deadline for court matters related to land issues in Mongolia.
- The Safeguards and Gender Specialist in the PMU, in close collaboration with the NPM will be responsible for recording the grievance and how it has been addressed if a resolution was agreed.
- If the situation is deemed too complex by the Safeguards and Gender Specialist and the NPM, or the complainer does not accept the resolution, the complaint must be sent to a higher level (as described below), until a solution or acceptance is reached.
- For every complaint received, a written proof will be sent within ten (10) working days; afterwards, a resolution proposal will be made within thirty (30) working days.
- In compliance with the resolution, the person in charge of dealing with the complaint, may interact with the complainant, or may call for interviews and meetings, to better understand the reasons.
- All complaint received, its response and resolutions, must be duly registered.
- Note: The complainant does not necessarily have to follow the defined levels, i.e. the complaint can be addressed directly at any of the defined levels or steps.

## Internal process

- Level 1:** Project Management Unit (PMU). The complaint could come in writing/email or orally/via phone to the PMU directly (including through the Local Soum Coordinators or other PMU staff or consultants). At this level, received complaints will be registered, investigated and solved by the PMU. If complaints are filed with the local Bagh or Soum Governor's Office, the PMU will also be informed and the complaint will be addressed by the PMU if it cannot be solved directly by the local offices.
- Level 2:** If the complaint has not been solved and could not be solved in level 1, then the NPM elevates it to the FAO Representative in Mongolia and the WWF focal point.
- Level 3:** Project Steering Committee (PSC). The assistance of the PSC is requested if a resolution was not agreed in levels 1 and 2.
- Level 4:** FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and WWF GEF Agency. If necessary, the FAO Representative will request the advice of the Regional Office to resolve a grievance or will transfer the resolution of the grievance entirely to the regional office, if the problem is highly complex. Similarly, the WWF focal point will transfer the grievance to the WWF GEF Agency, if no resolution can be reached at levels 1 to 3.
- Level 5:** Only on very specific situations or complex problems, the FAO Regional Representative will request the assistance of the FAO Office of the Inspector General, who follows its own procedures to solve the problem. A grievance can also be filed with the Project Complaints Officer (PCO) at WWF (see above).

## Resolution

Upon acceptance a solution by the complainer, a document with the agreement should be signed with the agreement.

Project Management Unit (PMU)	Must respond within 5 working days.
FAO Representation in Mongolia  WWF Mongolia Office	Anyone in the FAO Representation and/or WWF Mongolia Office may receive a complaint and must request proof of receipt. If the case is accepted, the FAO Representative and/or WWF focal point must respond within 5 working days in consultation with FAO's Representation and Project Team.  FAO Representative: Mr. Vinod Ahuja e-mail: <a href="mailto:FAO-MN@fao.org">FAO-MN@fao.org</a> Tel: (+976) 11 310248  Mr. Batbold Dorjgurkhem, WWF Mongolia Country Representative e-mail: <a href="mailto:info@wwf.mn">info@wwf.mn</a> Tel: (+976) 11 311659
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	If the case cannot be dealt by the FAO Representative and/or WWF focal point, he/she must send the information to all PSC members and call for a meeting to find a solution. The response must be sent within 5 working days after the meeting of the PSC.
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP)	Must respond within 5 working days in consultation with FAO's Representation.

	FAO Regional Representative: Ms. Kundhavi Kadiresan e-mail: <a href="mailto:FAO-RAP@fao.org">FAO-RAP@fao.org</a> Tel: (+66) 2 697 4000
Office of the Inspector General (OIG)	To report possible fraud and bad behaviour by fax, confidential: (+39) 06 570 55550 By e-mail: <a href="mailto:Investigations-hotline@fao.org">Investigations-hotline@fao.org</a> By confidential hotline: (+ 39) 06 570 52333

## 11 ESMF IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

### 11.1 Steps and procedures in ESMF implementations

In order to ensure that the environmental and social issues are addressed properly in accordance and in compliance with the FAO, WWF and GEF policies, all project activities shall undergo screening, assessment, review, and clearance process before execution of the project activities. The following steps will be followed for ESMF implementation.

#### Step 1: Environmental and social risk screening of project activities

- During the development of the annual budget/work plans, the National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will conduct a screening of the project activities using the screening tool in Annex 5: Screening Tool. Based on the screening, he/she will determine if the development of a site-specific ESMP or Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) is needed, and if any additional mitigation measures need to be included in the ESMF.
- Whenever management measures/plans are developed and/or when project intervention areas are determined, the National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will conduct an additional screening and consultations to identify stakeholders (in particular vulnerable groups, which may include by example ethnic minorities, poorer households, migrants, and assistant herders) that may be negatively impacted by the project and any identify environmental and social risks. In such case, a site-specific ESMP or LRP will be prepared or additional mitigation measures included in the ESMF (see Step 2 below).
- When contracts are issued by the PMU, they also need to be screened for environmental and social risks by the Safeguards and Gender Specialist and mitigation measures implemented in line with this ESMF.

#### Step 2: Development of safeguard documents

- If risks are identified in Step 1 that require the development of additional safeguards documents (site-specific ESMP or LRP or additional mitigation measures included in the ESMF), the National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will lead the development of these documents in close consultation with PMU staff and relevant local stakeholders.
- If deemed required, additional experts from the PMU or external consultants will be engaged to support the development of the ESMPs/LRPs. The process may involve mapping of local level or community resources and their utilization.
- Project activities that may potentially have negative environmental or social impacts will not begin until the necessary mitigation measures or ESMPs/LRPs are in place.

### Step 3: Review, approval, and disclosure of safeguard documents

- Once agreed to by local stakeholders, the PMU will submit the subproject/activity safeguards documents to the National Project Director at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), as well as FAO (LTO and Budget Holder) and WWF (WWF Mongolia and WWF-US), for approval.
- MET, FAO and WWF will be requested to provide feedback within a reasonable timeframe in order not to delay project implementation.
- The approved safeguards documents will be translated into Mongolian language and will be disclosed on the website of MET. Local stakeholders will also be consulted and debriefed, and provided with copies of the documents.

### Step 4: Environmental and social risk management

- During project implementation, the Safeguards and Gender Specialist will support and ensure implementation of the mitigation measures as outlined in the ESMF/ESMPs/LRPs. Other project staff and consultants are also made aware of the mitigation measures and will support their implementation. A dedicated training on environmental and social safeguards and on the ESMF will be organized for PMU staff and consultants at the beginning of project implementation.

### Step 5: Monitoring and reporting

- The Safeguards and Gender Specialist will be responsible for continuous monitoring of the safeguards activities and safeguards documents, and will report on their status in the six-monthly Project Progress Reports (PPRs) and the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports. He/she will also provide inputs to the Mid-Term Review and the Terminal Evaluation of the project.

## 11.2 Monitoring

The compliance of project activities with the ESMF will be thoroughly monitored at different stages of project implementation.

(i) *Monitoring at the project level.* The overall responsibility for monitoring compliance with the project's safeguard activities lies with the PMU. The Safeguards and Gender Specialist in the PMU shall oversee the implementation of all project activities and ensure their compliance with the ESMF.

(ii) *Monitoring at the field activity level:* The Safeguards and Gender Specialist shall closely monitor all field activities, and ensure that they fully comply with the ESMF. Project staff, consultants and contractors are also fully responsible for the compliance with the safeguards requirements outlined in the ESMF.

(iii) *Monitoring at the GEF implementing and executing agency level: FAO and WWF as the project's implementing agencies, and MET as the executing agency and chair of the Project Steering Committee,* are responsible to oversee compliance with the ESMF.

In order to facilitate compliance monitoring, the PMU will include information on the status of ESMF implementation in the six-monthly Project Progress Reports (PPRs) and the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports.

## 12 CAPACITY BUILDING

The project's capacity building needs, and measures to address them, are summarized below.

Capacity gap	Actions required	Responsible
Lack of professional detailed measurement surveys in rural settings, especially in pastoral livelihood for assessing the bearing capacity of pastures	Engagement of a qualified safeguards specialist for the inventory of losses of the project affected assets/access to land.	PMU
Lack of safeguards capacity for management planning/ access restrictions, implementation and compliance monitoring	Engagement of a social safeguards specialist within the PMU, supervised by the National Project Manager	PMU
Lack of knowledge and experience in implementing safeguards and livelihood restoration measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of Soum Citizen's Meeting</li> <li>• Raise awareness of and train project staff and other national and local stakeholders</li> </ul>	National Safeguards and Gender Specialist

## 13 DISCLOSURE

All affected communities and relevant stakeholders shall be informed about the ESMF requirements and commitments. The ESMF will be translated into Mongolian and made available on the websites of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), the FAO Disclosure Portal, as well as the websites of the WWF US and WWF Mongolia. Hard copies of the ESMF will be placed in appropriate public locations. The PMU will be responsible to raise community awareness regarding the requirements of the ESMF, and will also ensure that all external contractors and service providers are fully familiar and comply with the ESMF and other safeguards documents. For high-risk projects, FAO releases the draft ESIA no later than 60 days prior to project approval. WWF requires that all final safeguards documents are disclosed for at least 30 days, (or if Indigenous Peoples exist in the project area, for at least 45 days) before project concept is finalized, in a place accessible to key stakeholders, including project-affected groups and CSOs, in a form and language understandable to them.

## 14 BUDGET

The following budget items for ESMF implementation are to be included in the project budget.

Item	Amount
<i>Project Staff and Consultants</i>	
1. National Project Manager	No extra budget required
2. Knowledge Management and M&E Specialist	No extra budget required
3. National Safeguards and Gender Specialist (or Consultant team dedicated to this work)	USD 80,000 (over 4 years)* *To be reassessed after Year 2.
4. National Agriculture Expert	No extra budget required
5. National Experts for livestock-animal breeding, veterinary, rangeland, ecology and institutional development	No extra budget required – may be involved when needed.
<i>Other items</i>	
1. Capacity building	No extra costs required; can be done by PMU staff and consultants.
2. Process Framework implementation	No extra costs required; compensation measures can be incorporated in planned project activities, value chain activities, risk funds, etc. LRPs will be prepared by Safeguards and Gender Specialist, with the support of other project staff/consultants.
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>USD 80,0000</b>

## 15 ANNEXES

### List of Annexes

Annex 1: Process Framework

Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework

Annex 3: Environmental Code of Practice

Annex 4: Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups

Annex 5: Screening Tool

Annex 6: List of Mongolian National Standards (MNS) applicable to the ESMP

Annex 7: Terms of Reference

Annex 8: References

## Annex 1: Process Framework

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

Land degradation is one of the world's most pressing environmental problems, happening at an alarming pace, and it will worsen without rapid remedial action. Globally, about 25 percent of the total land area has been degraded. Despite the low population pressure, more than 70 percent of the land surface of Mongolia is affected by land degradation. This has been caused by a combination of natural factors (extreme weather and climate change), and human-induced impacts such as overgrazing and increasingly, mining.

In order to contribute to reducing land degradation in Mongolia, the parties are planning to implement the Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia project. The project is part of a global program led by FAO, the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes. The project will support the transformation of Mongolia's Eastern Steppe ecosystems to a resilient landscape that enhances biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization, restores soil fertility, and reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The project interventions will take place in nine counties (soums) of the three eastern provinces (aimags) of Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar, as shown in the map below (Figure 1). In addition, the project will include national and provincial level activities.

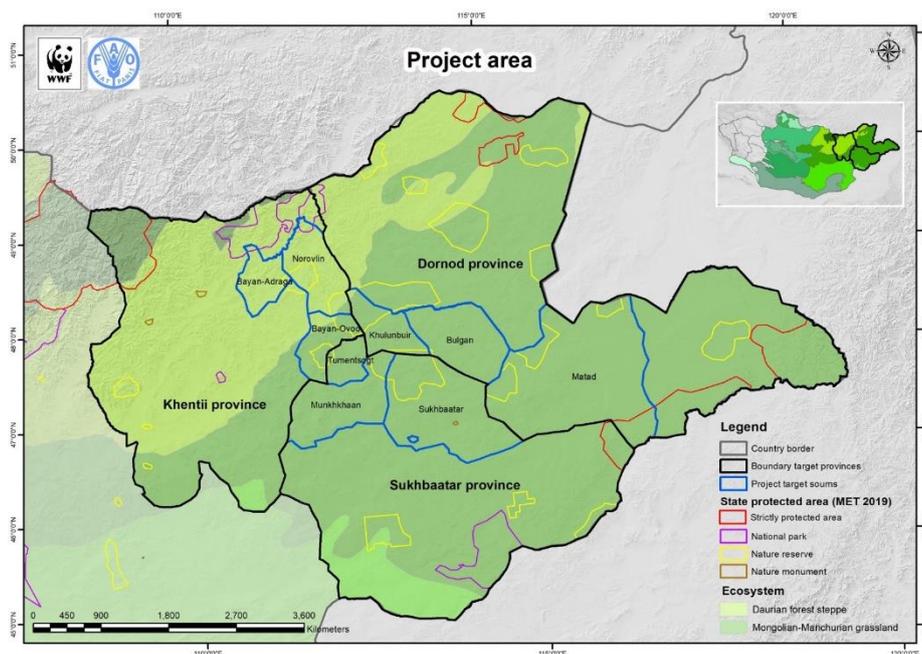


Figure 1. Project target area

The project will be divided into four components, as follows.

Under **Component 1**, the project will strengthen cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration for integrated land management planning and monitoring. It will also support incorporation of land degradation and biodiversity considerations into the ongoing land management planning process; and will support the ongoing policy reform to promote sustainable land use.

Under **Component 2**, the project will strengthen sustainable dryland management in Eastern Mongolia through a three-pronged approach. First, the project will promote environmentally friendly,

climate-smart crop and fodder production. Second, the project will work with local herder and forest communities in the target area to implement and scale up sustainable management and restoration of rangelands and forest patches. And third, the project will support partnerships between herder groups/cooperatives, local government and private sector to develop value chains and access to markets for sustainably produced livestock products.

Under **Component 3** of the project, the management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas will be strengthened to support survival of the Mongolian gazelle, the White-naped Crane, and other iconic migratory species. Priority interventions will be implemented to support enhanced management and connectivity of these protected areas, along with conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men) and sustainable financing mechanisms of the protected areas.

**Component 4** of the project will support effective project coordination, as well as the systematic creation and sharing of knowledge on sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation at the provincial, national and global levels. The project will also aim to strengthen LDN target monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

The proposed GEF project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), who will have the overall executing and technical responsibility of the project. The MET will act as the Lead Executing Agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the sub-agreements signed with FAO and WWF.

## **1.2 Social risks and safeguards of the Project**

The Project was classified as high risk according to FAO's ESS 6 Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement, as a Category "B" to WWF's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement.<sup>15</sup> An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been conducted to assess the extent and breadth of social impacts and risks, including Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement and determine safeguard measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts with the participation of the affected persons.

FAO and WWF policies prohibit forced evictions which include acts involving the coerced or involuntary displacement of individuals, groups, or communities from homes and/or lands and common property resources that were occupied or depended upon, thus eliminating or limiting the ability of an individual, group or community to reside or work in a particular dwelling, residence, or location without the provision of and access to, appropriate forms of legal and other protection. In addition, the project will exclude financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation.

While the proposed project is unlikely to cause displacement of people, the project might lead to certain access restrictions. Given that the activities proposed under the project include, but are not limited to, protected area management and pastureland management and restoration, FAO's environmental and social standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement and WWF's policy on Involuntary Resettlement were triggered because the Project will help define and thereby potentially restrict access to natural resources and livelihoods activities.

During the ESIA field work, guided by the policy instruments of FAO and WWF<sup>16</sup>, the Consultant has carried out the following activities as required:

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<sup>15</sup> Environmental and Social risk certification (Annex I1)

<sup>16</sup> WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards: Annex 6, page 61

- Assess the nature and magnitude of the social and economic impact of the project, including any displacement or restriction of access to economic or social assets;
- Assess the legal framework covering resettlement and the policies of the government and implementing agencies;
- Review experience with similar operations;
- Discuss with those responsible for resettlement the policies and institutional, legal, and consultative arrangements for resettlement, including measures to address any inconsistencies between Government or Executing Agency and WWF's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement; and
- Discuss any technical assistance to be provided.

Consultations and site observations were conducted in the soums and baghs of the Project, the Consultant have met local authorities, local communities and CBOs such as savings group, herders' groups, forest groups and carried out consultations with project affected people, in a culturally appropriate, inclusive manner and in relevant local fora. Different herder households were also visited and consulted regarding the challenges being faced by them and conflicts between herders and crop farmers, the current issues relating to accessibility of pastures and water sources.

## 2. Project Affected Persons

A total of 7169 people live in 2211 households in three target *soums* of Dornod *aimag*, 10731 people in 3241 households in 3 target *soums* of Sukhbaatar and 6959 people in 2173 households of 3 target *soums* of Khentii *aimag* respectively. Thus, a total of 24841 people live in 7625 households in 9 target *soums* of the project. 13257 men make up 53.4 percent of the population while 11584 women make up 46.6 percent.

### 2.1 Description of the affected persons

The Project affected persons are resource-dependent herder communities in nine Project sites. Mongolian herders are nomadic and herding is considered as land-based livelihood because of pastoral resources required, which include pastures, water sources, campsites, animal shelters, hay cutting grounds, salt licks and stock driveways. Under Mongolian conditions, a division of pastures into spring-, summer-, autumn- and winter-pastures is necessary for sustainable pasture management. Winter and spring camps are chosen for availability of some shelter and access to forage and water. Access to summer and autumn pasture is less contested than to winter camps and, traditionally within a *soum* or *bag*, are usually communally used. Migration circuits and extent depend on the availability of water source and adequate grazing land. Now, with limited water sources, herders' migration is restricted by access to water.

**Nomadic herder households** (5,093 in Dornod, 7,948 in Khentii and 7,770 in Sukhbaatar) pasture their own livestock over four seasons of the year and make a living using their animal husbandry products as well as acting as **hired herder households**. Herder households make up 41.7 per cent of total families of Sukhbaatar, 31.6 per cent of Khentii and 20.7 per cent of Dornod *aimags* respectively (*Source: NSO, 1212.mn*)

According to the NSO circular of 2017 on the agriculture sector, people aged 35-44 made up 28.5 per cent of all livestock-breeders, aged 25-34 24 per cent, aged 45-54 20.3 per cent, aged 55-64 11.1 per cent, aged 15-24 10.6 per cent and aged 65 and over 5.6 per cent.

Since 2012, NSO has been providing data on the total households with livestock including, herder households and non-herder families with livestock.

Table 1. Herders, herder households and non-herder households with livestock in target *soums*, 2013 and 2018

Soum	Herders		Herder households		Non-herder households with livestock		Total households with livestock	
	2013	2018	2013	2018	2013	2018	2013	2018
Bulgan	505	687	260	430	79	31	339	461
Matad	499	600	250	400	197	139	447	539
Khulunbuir	397	420	210	260	129	156	339	416
Munkhkhaan	1191	1,444	600	830	274	244	874	1074
Sukhbaatar	1124	1,089	540	640	146	182	686	822
Tumentsogt	436	215	220	280	201	177	421	457
Bayan-Adarga	522	594	260	350	86	138	346	488
Bayan-Ovoo	467	530	250	350	77	83	327	433
Norovlin	519	625	260	370	110	73	370	443
Total	<b>5660</b>	<b>6204</b>	<b>2850</b>	<b>3910</b>	<b>1299</b>	<b>1223</b>	<b>4149</b>	<b>5133</b>

Source: NSO, 1212.mn

Total number of herder-households in target *soums* increased by 37.2 per cent while the number of herders increased by only 9.6 per cent during 2013-2018. This is possibly because of various reasons including, new families registered out of divided households and family members who live separately engaged in different jobs. The total number of non-herder (non-nomadic) households with livestock in target *soums* hardly changed, even though the number has been increased in Khulunbuir, Sukhbaatar, Bayan-Adarga, Bayan-Ovoo *soums*.

In recent years, the number of households is increasing as more and more young herder families live in two places creating “sub-families”. For instance, there are 70 sub-families registered in Sukhbaatar *soum* of Sukhbaatar *aimag* out of total 978 households. 138 single-member households were registered there.

Main income sources of herders remain meat, cashmere and dairy products sold through middleman to some extent, as there is no reliable and convenient trading/marketing network. Local decision-makers believe that it would be more profitable if cooperatives or groups get together for diverse and marketable products rather than pursuing the household production.

Mongolian herders are neither indigenous people nor tribal people, but they have similarity to those people as living in areas of high biodiversity and the most preserved ecosystem. They are key players in managing traditional lands to support biodiversity conservation and ecological processes that maintain their lives and livelihoods. Traditional herders’ organizations, in other words, community based organizations (CBOs) have existed for centuries. These include:

- The hot ail which normally consists of 2-3 households, usually but not always related, who share a winter and spring camp area and assist each other in production activities. Each hot ail has an acknowledged leader who is usually the most experienced male herder;
- The neighborhood group or people of one place consists of 4 to 40 hot ail who organized informally to coordinate their use of pasture and hay-making land, water, and other natural resources. There are regional variants such as one-valley communities or individual water well-

using groups, depending on local ecological conditions. The member families or their forebears may have lived close by one another for generations, having inherited customary use rights in specific seasons. The neighborhood group would also have an acknowledged leader, who would play an important role in the settlement of local disputes (e.g. over pasture or water resources).

Therefore, if the Project involves restriction of access to natural resources, the affected people may be not a single herder household, but herder groups or hot ails. It is important that potential impacts recognized early and appropriate actions taken to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

Furthermore, the affected people may include ethnic minorities (see Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework).

## **2.2 Potential social and economic impacts from restrictions of access to natural resources**

Based on the consultations and discussions with the project affected people in the Project sites described above, the following observations have been made from social safeguards perspectives.

### ***Conflicts between crop farmers and herders***

Livestock herding was a primary living source for the Project affected people who reside in the Project site. Herders hold the large proportion of the cattle, horses, sheep and goats and livestock are grazed on different pastures in different seasons. Due to the natural variability in precipitation and forage growth local patterns of resource use can vary widely from one year to another, spatial boundaries tend to be permeable and dynamic. Winter and spring camps are chosen for availability of some shelter and access to forage and water. In some Project sites land under winter and spring shelters were allocated for herders, entitling them to possess and use the winter camps for an identified period stated in the Land Certificate<sup>17</sup>. Access to summer and autumn pasture is less contested than to winter camps and, traditionally within a soum or bagh, are usually communally used. Migration circuits and extent depend on the availability of water source and adequate grazing land.

Persisting conflicts between crop farmers and herders were observed in the baghs (Saikhan bagh of Bayan-Adraga soum) where crop farming was active at the time of the visit. Conflicts include, but not limited to:

- Restricted access to pasture during planting and harvesting period between 1 May - 1 October annually. During this period, herders are not allowed to graze their livestock within of 500 meters close to crop field.<sup>18</sup> This causes hardship to herders if their winter/spring shelters are located nearby to crop land, by prohibiting their migration to a winter camp till 1 October and forcing to leave a spring camp early, before 1 May, when weather temperatures and condition prohibits such move.
- Herders graze their livestock nearby cropland, let their livestock intrude into cropland, in most cases, causing significant damages to crop yield.

In some project soums visited, although land was planned and allocated for crop production<sup>19</sup>, at the time of the visit crop field was idle and livestock grazing was allowed. The following proposed activities under the Project will support crop companies/farmers may lead to full utilization of allocated crop

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<sup>17</sup> Possession rights are minimum 15 years, and usage rights are maximum 5 years.

<sup>18</sup>Article 24.2 Law of Mongolia on Crop Farming

<sup>19</sup> Article 15.1 Law on Crop Farming "Crop land registered in the Unified Land Pool of Mongolia shall be possessed and used for crop farming purposes on the basis of an agreement in accordance with the land legislation." As stipulated in Article 30.1 of Law on Land "The state-owned land may be given possession to Mongolian citizens, economic entities and organizations for duration of 15 to 60 years. The land possession certificate may be extended for not longer than 40 years at a time."

lands thus entail access restriction for pasture to graze livestock if winter and spring shelters are present in the surrounding area:

- **Activity 2.1.2.1:** Provide technical assistance to local governments and crop companies/farmers to enable them to provide the required technologies and inputs for environmentally friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production. Efforts will also be made to improve post-harvest and storage practices;
- **Activity 2.1.2.4:** Implement environmentally friendly, gender-sensitive and climate-smart crop and fodder production practices based on guidelines and training developed under Activity 2.1.1.3 (such as reduced/minimum tillage, windbreaks and other natural barriers to prevent wind and water erosion, cover crop, and irrigation techniques etc.)

Conflict resolution measures taken by crop farmers as expressed by herders themselves were; (i) hiring a member of herder family as a security guard to prevent crop land from livestock intrude, (ii) at the end of harvest season permitting to graze livestock in the crop field or use crop-residues. Best ways to solve the existing conflict as both parties agreed were fencing off a crop field, however, the cost is too high to bear for crop farmers, and it also has a disadvantage if not planned thoughtfully, would cause an access restriction to local communities too. Therefore, it is required that access road and livestock passage need to be designed, where necessary negotiating through highly participatory consultations with herder groups and local communities.

### ***Degraded pasture forces herders to migrate long distances or reduce livestock numbers***

Fully 88 percent (115 million ha) of Mongolia's territory is considered agricultural land, of which 98 percent (113 million hectares (ha)) is pasture and less than 1 percent (651,000 ha) is considered arable. Recent studies show that about 70 percent of Mongolia's pasture areas are degraded to some extent, of which over 22.4 million ha of pastures, of which 19.5 percent are eroded. Researchers and government officials recognize that land degradation is directly related to the number of animals. The pressure animal numbers exert on land is exacerbated by the lack of professional agricultural land management throughout the system.<sup>20</sup>

Although pasture degradation threatens their livelihood, many herders are not too keen to move long distances, because (i) access to basic social services, i.e., health and education service will be distanced; (ii) connectivity to cellular communications will be lost; and (iii) isolated from soum center thus might left out from public and social events and assistances; and (iv) cost of travelling increases ultimately. Moreover, although blessed with a huge territory of agricultural land, lack of water resources make impossible to utilize remote pasture. Herder households cannot afford to dig a well, a few wealthy herders can, however, they tend to restrict other herders use the well.

Moreover, the Government programs and regulations on the pasture rehabilitation and management are overlapping and conflicting, and their implementation at soum level creates unsettling consequences. A soum agricultural specialist gave a recent example of the conflict that can exist between hay makers and livestock herders. At the soum level, agricultural specialists are responsible for allocating and managing pastures while the Governor distributes hayfields. Summer pasture can be used as hay fields, which creates potential conflict. In the example given, hay making was granted on land that was also being used as summer pasture. The double allocation was not communicated and when hay making started, livestock were still grazing the pasture and damaging the cut hay. A second example involved in-migrants from western aimags. These new families camp on land next to crops and hay fields and graze without tenure or permission. These in-migrant herders registered as a single member family in soum or not registered at all are mostly hired by wealthy or resourceful

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<sup>20</sup> Debra Resmussen and Charles Annor-Frempong, 2015, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND MARKETING , <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/23353/Agricultural0productivity0and0marketing.pdf?sequence=1>

person living outside the Project soums, and raising cattle for farming (cows and bulls) and entertainment (racing horses).

The most prominent action taken in response to pasture degradation was to discourage an increase of livestock numbers, and to support improvement of breed quality and increasing marketability of livestock production. However, limiting livestock numbers without proper planning and support to herders, may lead to undesired outcomes – pushing herder households to impoverishment thus expanding rural to urban migration, and excavating many urban problems in cities of Mongolia. It is required to provide the right mixture of incentives and disincentives to promote good land and pasture management. The Project is planned to provide support to herder and farmer groups and cooperatives to enhance capacity for processing, marketing and sale of agricultural products. Interventions will be targeted at enabling herders/farmers to increase the value of their livestock, in order to facilitate efforts to reduce the stocking density (and provide incentives for a balanced herd composition and turnover and improved animal health and breeding).

The proposed project activities below, may lead to changes in the existing pasture management and can contribute to the existing social and economic problems caused by land management measures in the Project soums, and may entail adverse impacts on the livelihood of herders, if not engaged herders and consulted with them in participatory manner at the project design and planning phase.

- **Activity 2.2.2.2:** Develop climate-resilient seasonal rotational grazing/resting/reserve pasture management and restoration plans and pasture use agreements in a participatory process, in line with the soum development objectives and in conformity with local specificities.
- **Activity 2.2.2.3:** Implement pasture management and restoration plans or agreements through climate-resilient rangeland management (e.g. grazing practices, water supply, hay and fodder production etc.) and restoration/rehabilitation interventions.
- **Activity 2.2.5.2:** Develop (or improve existing) plans for sustainable forest management and riparian forest restoration.
- **Activity 2.2.5.3:** Implement interventions for sustainable forest management, such as:
  - Reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation.
  - Thinning.
  - Fire prevention.
  - Reduced grazing in forest areas.
  - Protection/rehabilitation of riparian forest.

The local administrative specialists with responsibilities for land management, especially land specialists admitted that they neither have knowledge on international standards of land acquisition and resettlement nor resources for safeguarding affected peoples' livelihood. Moreover, the consultant companies licensed with providing design, drawing and planning of urban development, mostly outsourced, provide a consulting service to Soum Governors assisting in developing Soum Development Master Plan for the nearest 10 or 15 years. There is greater need for capacity building of aimag and soum land specialists and urban planning consultants and training for herders to improve their knowledge and skills to better manage pasture resources and improve productivity.

### ***Restriction on livelihood activity***

The Project sites are located in national and local protected areas and have the most picturesque untouched natural habitat. Herders living on the protected areas graze their livestock in pastures for environmentally sensitive areas, such as protected areas, wildlife sanctuary, critical habitat, reserve forest etc., on the basis of Rangeland Use Agreements for the sustainable management of pasture by enforcing seasonal rotational grazing and resting schedules, long term agreements for the

maintenance of rangeland health and plans to adjust and reduce stocking rate to rangeland carrying capacity agreed between herders and the protected area administration.

Herders consulted expressed their views on the matter that although, a biological growth of livestock is accepted, given the limited resources of pasture it is almost unmanageable to expect a such growth, then household size and consumption increases by year to year as children grow up, thus making their livelihood vulnerable. Once herders have extended family, newly established young families are not allowed to possess winter and spring shelters in the protected area neighboring to their parents in hot ail. Therefore, they live nearby to their parent's hot ail to sustain social support networks<sup>21</sup> not possessing winter and spring camps, which usually allocated outside of the protected area and owning livestock. Also there is no legal regulation on inheritance of pasture land and winter and spring camp areas if they move away from their parents hot ail, they are not entitled for the land in the protected area after parents' ceases. Moreover, mechanic increase of livestock is prohibited, therefore, herders in the protected areas cannot have supplementary income for their household working as assistant herders to wealthy households<sup>22</sup>. In fact, herding is the only employment skill they have and that cannot be utilized for a living.

Moreover, according to the package of Laws on Environmental Protection many income supplementary activities dependent on natural resources are prohibited in the protected areas (see Section on Legal and regulatory framework). The proposed activities under the Project may strengthen the existing restriction of access to natural resources and suggest further restrictions on livelihood activities, which include:

Under Component 3, Outcome 3.1, the project aims to increase the management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas to support survival of Mongolian gazelle and other iconic migratory species. The Component 3 also involve investments, in particular small-scale equipment and tools for biodiversity monitoring and restoration activities in NRs and LPAs, small infrastructure for NR boards, and investments in developing processing and marketing capacities for buffer zone communities:

- **Output 3.1.1:** Assessment to enhance landscape connectivity and management of globally important biodiversity in the target landscape conducted and incorporated into local plans.
  - **Activity 3.1.1.2:** Based on the assessment, incorporate measures to ensure overall landscape connectivity improvement and key/umbrella species conservation into aimag and soum land management plans and NR and LPA management plans, ensuring free migration of key/umbrella species in line with international guidelines and national standards, and taking into consideration potential climate change impacts
  - **Activity 3.1.1.3:** Provide technical assistance for implementation of the conservation measures to ensure ecosystem integrity (in coordination with Outputs 3.1.3 and 3.1.4) and regular monitoring.
  - **Activity 3.1.3.2:** Implement priority interventions on-the-ground in line with management plans developed under Activity 3.1.2.3.
  - **Activity 3.1.4.2:** Plan and implement priority interventions in LPAs and other critical patch ecosystems.
- **Output 3.1.2:** Management plans for NRs developed or updated in a participatory process involving local governments and stakeholders ensuring landscape level management.
- **Output 3.1.3:** Priority interventions implemented in target NRs in line with management plans.

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<sup>21</sup> For young families with young children support of parents and parents-in-laws is crucial to upbringing their children in light of available health and pre-school education services in the vicinity.

<sup>22</sup> It is a widely exercised practice in Mongolia, that urban households keep a few livestock in relative's livestock for their household consumption, letting the relative use livestock products as a remuneration for grazing their livestock.

- **Output 3.1.4:** Community-centred conservation interventions implemented in LPAs in connectivity areas and other critical patch ecosystems to secure connectivity of ecosystems and key migratory species.

As stipulated in the Project Docs, the proposed Project activities will not require land acquisition, and will not cause **physical** (the affected persons must move to another location) and **economic** (the affected persons became unable to continue the pre-displacement economic activities) **displacement**. Although herders' livelihood is land-based and dependent on the natural resources, unlike the Tsaatan ethnic group, they are not attached to the certain land or area to sustain their livelihood. Even if certain restrictions of access to legally designated protected areas are put in place, herders can still carry on herding their livestock in NR and on replacement pasture provided in surrounding area<sup>23</sup>. Moreover, the affected persons and local authorities consulted affirmed that no persons and household in the local community dependent solely on use of natural resources, such as wood timber, nut and fruit collecting etc. are present in the Projects sites. Some people take up these activities occasionally when harvest is good, as a supplementary income to main household income. Therefore, it is envisaged that the Project activities will not cause economic displacement.

However, the Project Docs affirm that restriction to livelihoods or access to natural resources may occur, and this will eventually only occur with the consent of the affected people and following a decision made with all required information at hand. Nevertheless, its impacts are manageable, the Project will strive to not cause adverse impacts on livelihood of the affected people and take necessary actions to avoid and mitigate negative impacts if occurs. According to FAO's ESS 6 Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement, and WWF's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement, the Project has been assessed to have moderate risk associated with resettlement and displacement and classified as Category B. Resettlement instrument is required for projects with Category B impacts involving the involuntary restriction of access to legally designated parks, protected areas, forest and cropland.

This Process Framework was prepared in consultation with appropriate stakeholders, including project-affected peoples and communities. The intent of the framework is to ensure transparency and equity, in the planning and implementation of activities by the project. This framework details the principles and processes for assisting communities to identify and manage any potential negative impacts of the project activities. Since the exact social impacts will only be identified during project implementation, the Process Framework ensures that mitigation of any negative impacts from project investments through a participatory process involving the affected stakeholders. It also ensures that any desired changes by the communities in the ways in which local populations exercise customary tenure rights in the project sites would not be imposed but should emerge from a consultative process.

The Process Framework defines the key steps for participation of key stakeholders, in particular local communities in project related activities and decisions, namely through social screening, community orientation and mobilization, mapping of local level or community resources and their utilization, development of investment plans at the village level and mitigation of possible social impacts, participatory monitoring and feedback, conflict resolution, etc. It also defines institutional arrangements for implementation of the participatory framework, including staffing, training and capacity development.

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<sup>23</sup> Refer to Ethnic Groups Planning Framework

### 3. International and National framework on Involuntary Resettlement

#### 3.1 Legal and Regulatory Framework of Mongolia

##### 3.1.1 Laws Regulating Protected Areas, Water and Forest Zones

**The Law on Protected Areas** of 15th, November, 1994 and the Law Buffer Zone of Protected Areas Nature Protection of 23rd October, 1997 classify protected areas and determine their management conditions. State protected areas are classified as follows: 1) strictly protected area, 2) national parks, 3) nature reserves and national monuments.

This law regulates relations concerning utilization of and taking areas under special protection, preservation and protection of natural landscape in order to keep particular features of natural zones and belts, their peculiar formation, forms of rare and threatened fauna and flora, historical and cultural sites and natural sightseeing as well as studying and identifying their evolution. The law provides the establishment of protected area systems at national and local level, and establishes management regulations for nationally protected areas (State SPAs).

Foreign legal entities, international organizations, foreign citizens, stateless persons and Mongolian foreign invested entities are prohibited from using land in special protected areas except for specific research projects; Law on the Protected Areas, Art 33.1, 33.2.

Only Mongolian citizens, business entities and organizations have to right to use land in limited zones of conservation areas and natural parks, nature reserves and monuments. However, this right is subject to several conditions related to the purpose of use, the term and conditions that the use is not harmful to environment. The duration of land use contracts in special areas is five years with one possible extension of up to five years; and land fees in specially protected area are three times higher than regular fees.

**Water Law 2004** regulates relations pertaining to an effective use, protection, and restoration of water and water basin. A water reservoir is an area located in a 50 and 200-meter perimeter from a river. The Law on Water has introduced the legal basis for basin management and the legal mandate of Water Basin Organizations was described in Article 19. The Law is quite specific on the composition of the Basin Council, as it is called. The modified law, the Law on Water (2012), further clarifies a number unresolved issues and introduces Water Basin Authorities, which are technical offices operating with professional support and guidance from the Water Authority and responsible for implementation of all water management activities within the respective water basins. It has 5 chapters including Protection of water resources and its quality, habitat restoration. Through the law, protection of water resource and quality, protection and effective use of water resources during drought and desertification periods and incentives for water protection and restoration are reflected in article 31, 32, and 35.

**The Forest Law 2007 (amended in 2012)** and determines the existing conditions and regimes of forest reservoirs. Pursuant to these laws, a forest reservoir is an area located within a 100-meter perimeter from the outskirts of a body of forest. Private ownership of land within a forest reservoir is prohibited; but it is possible to use and possess land within these territories. In general, land fees of lands in forest are twice regular fees.

**Environmental Protection Law 1995** (approved in 1995 and amended in 2012) regulates individuals, organizations and the Government on environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources such as water, forest, pastureland, biodiversity, etc. A recent amendment to the Environmental Protection Law creates a more favorable condition for engaging local communities in sustainable natural resource management by providing security of tenure and giving Community

Based Organizations (CBOs) legal status. CBOs that re-emerged on the pastoral commons to revive pastoral mobility were recognized in the civil law of Mongolia, a manifestation of the recognition by government of the crucial role that resource users, local communities and customary institutions play in sustainable land management and NRM in the vast territory of the country. Another amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection regulates the organizational form, tenure rights and responsibilities of user groups (Nukhurlul) for forest resources.

**Environmental Assessments Law 2011** - The purpose of this Law is to protect the environment, prevent ecological imbalance, ensure minimal adverse impacts on the environment from the use of natural resources, and regulate relations that may arise in connection with the assessment of environmental impacts of and approval decisions on regional and sectoral policies, development

### *3.1.2 Laws regulating land affairs*

**Law on Land 2002** regulates possession, use of land by a citizen, entity and organization, and other related issues. Land can only be owned by citizens of Mongolia. The land law distinguishes among three types of rights in land: “land ownership,” “land possession,” and “land use.” Land ownership, unlike use or possession, includes the right to dispose of the land.

The Law on Land outlines the powers of government, including the acquisition of land and compensation processes. The law also outlines the rights of land users/possessors. There are requirements for requirement for consultation with affected populations re: new laws & regulations (General Administration Law), b) procedures in place for complaints/grievances.

The primary responsibility for implementing the Land law rests with Aimag and Soum officials, and interpretation and application of the land law in allocating pastoral resources, particularly winter camp sites and winter pastures to users have been varied, random and unregulated in terms of group size, length of possession and arrangements on access by others.

With respect to pastureland specifically, Article 54.2 states that “summer and autumn settlements (campsites) and pastures shall be allocated to baghs and hot ails and shall be used collectively.” It is implied that any land owned by the state and not owned or possessed by individuals or economic entities, and not reserved for special uses by the government, is “common tenure” land, available for joint use by residents of the jurisdiction in which it is located. Under Article 6.2 the following types of land, regardless of whether they are given into possession or use, shall be used for common purpose under government regulation: 1) pasturelands, water points in pasturelands, wells and salt licks; 2) public tenure lands in cities, villages and other urban settlements; 3) land under roads and networks; 4) lands with forest resources; 5) lands with water resources. These provisions protect the rights of all herders to access these essential resources.

Chapter Three sets out the rights of sum governments to control implementation of land legislation, to approve land management planning within their territory and to take state land not in use by citizens or economic entities for special needs. Soum governments are empowered to “to monitor whether users and possessors of local lands make efficient and rational use of them and land resources, and whether they protect the land in compliance with the law and contracts; to make decisions to resolve conflicts between them and to organize enforcement of these decisions”; to make decisions on land possession and use by citizens, and to collect land fees on land possessors and users.

Chapter Five specifies how land may be given for possession or use and the conditions for requesting and receiving land for possession or use. Significantly, nowhere does the land law provide for land ownership, as defined in Chapter One. Only land possession and use are discussed. The law

specifies a routine procedure for applying for land possession rights. The rights and obligations associated with land possession and transfer are also spelt out.

Article 54.10 specifies that disputes arising in relation with use of pastureland shall be resolved by discussing them on Bagh Public Khurals based on traditional land use practices and customs of herders. If an agreement cannot be reached, the issue shall be resolved by governors of soums.

Article 63 specifies the processes for settling land disputes, provides for compensation for damage to land and fines for violations of the legislation. In general, disputes that cannot be resolved by the parties themselves are referred to the next highest level of government; disputes among bags to the sum governor, disputes among sums to the aimag governor, and so on.

The proposed Law of Mongolia on Pastureland provides for possession of winter and spring pastures (Article 4.1.3) by herder groups only, and sets out the conditions for, and rights and responsibilities associated with possession.

**Land Fee Law 2007** The purpose of this law is to charge fees to citizens, business entities, and organizations using state-owned land, and to regulate the fees paid to the state budget. Mongolian citizens, business entities, or organizations possessing or using land based on contracts made according to the terms and conditions of the Land law, and foreign diplomatic missions and consular offices, representative agencies of international organizations, foreign legal bodies and citizens can all enter agreements for the use of state land by paying land fees. This law is used extensively at local level by Aimags and Soums to assess and collect land fees from tour operators operating ger camps (traditional tents) and other resort facilities.

### **3.2 FAO and WWF Policy on Involuntary Resettlement** (including access restrictions/economic displacement)

All WWF efforts that involve resettlement are first and foremost under the guidance of the WWF Network's **Community Rights and Resources Policy**,<sup>2</sup> which is used to assess, address, and monitor potential resource access and use restrictions and involuntary resettlement impacts of proposed projects. The Community Rights and Resources Policy further includes measures to avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement and help ensure that project-affected persons improve or at least restore their standard of living. WWF prohibits forced eviction without the provision of and access to appropriate forms of legal and other protection.

For these reasons, it is the WWF Network's policy to ensure that:

- Adverse social or economic impacts on resource-dependent local communities resulting from conservation-related restrictions on resource access and/or use are avoided or minimized;
- Resolution of conflicts between conservation objectives and local livelihoods is sought primarily through voluntary agreements, including benefits commensurate with any losses incurred; and
- Through these measures, involuntary resettlement is avoided or minimized, including through assessment of all viable alternative project designs and, in limited circumstances where this is not possible, displaced persons are assisted in improving or at least restoring their livelihoods and standards of living relative to pre-displacement or pre-project levels (whichever is higher).

#### Consultations

All projects requiring resettlement activities by necessity must include active engagement with effected communities. In the context of resettlement actions, the Community Rights and Resources Policy includes specific provisions on consultation with project-affected people on any resettlement-

related impacts, including that “WWF will (in addition to the measures above) design, document, and disclose a participatory process before appraisal for: (a) preparing and implementing project components, (b) establishing eligibility for mitigation measures, (c) agreeing on mitigation measures that help improve or restore livelihoods in a manner that maintains the sustainability of the park or protected area, (d) resolving conflicts, (e) monitoring implementation.”

### Mitigation Measures

For projects that involve involuntary resettlement or involuntary restrictions of access to natural habitats resulting in adverse impacts on the livelihoods of project communities, the Project Team will have to prepare a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) or Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) and/or Process Framework as part of project preparation. If a RAP is prepared, it must include the following:

- Efforts made to minimize displacement,
- Census and socioeconomic survey results,
- All relevant local laws and customary rights that apply,
- Resettlement sites,
- Income restoration institutional arrangements, an implementation schedule,
- Participation and consultation,
- Accountability and grievance,
- Monitoring and evaluation, and
- Costs and budgets.

### Resettlement Involving Indigenous Peoples

In addition to the above policy, the WWF Network’s Policy on Indigenous Peoples (first adopted in 1996 and updated in 2008; see chapter on Policy on Indigenous Peoples) recognizes the right of indigenous peoples not to be removed from the territories they occupy, and adopts the FPIC as the standard for consultations regarding interventions affecting indigenous territories and resource rights, including protected areas and for situations in which relocation is considered necessary as an exceptional measure.

### Disclosure

Resettlement Action Plans and/or plans to address involuntary restriction on access to protected areas must be disclosed and in a place and language accessible to key stakeholders, including project-affected groups and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), for at least 30 days (or if indigenous peoples exist in the project area, for 45 days) before project design is finalized.

## **4. Eligibility and Entitlement of the Project Affected Persons**

### **4.1 Criteria for eligibility of affected persons and measures to assist the affected persons**

The Process Framework describes how the local communities will participate in establishing criteria for eligibility for assistance to mitigate adverse impacts or otherwise improve livelihoods. The criteria developed in the Table below needs be refined, during implementation when site-specific plans are prepared. The eligibility criteria determine which groups and persons are eligible for livelihood support and mitigation measures. The criteria also distinguish between persons utilizing resources opportunistically and persons using resources for their livelihoods, and between groups with customary rights and non-residents or immigrants.

A cut-off date for eligibility for compensation needs to be established early in the process to prevent a subsequent inflow of people into the affected area. This date will be established with the som government and could be the start of a census taken as part of the development of the Livelihood

Restoration Plan<sup>24</sup>. Persons who move in the Project site after the cut-off date are ineligible for compensation and livelihood support measures.

As stated in WWF's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement, types of the affected people eligible for compensation and livelihood support measures include:<sup>25</sup>

- Displaced persons with formal legal rights generally defined by the possession of individual freehold titles duly recorded in title registries and cadastral records in most countries.
- Displaced persons whose rights are not formal or legal but whose claims are recognized under national laws. In some countries the process of land ownership has not been fully formalized but there are people who have inherited, occupied, and utilized the land for generations who may not have titles simply because the state has not issued them.
- Displaced persons without formal legal rights. This category includes squatters, tenants, sharecroppers, and wage laborers who depend on the land acquired.

The Framework also identifies vulnerable groups and describe what special procedures and measures will be taken to ensure that these groups will be able to participate in, and benefit from, project activities. Vulnerable groups<sup>26</sup> are groups that may be at risk of being marginalized from relevant project activities and decision-making processes, such as groups highly dependent on natural resources, forest dwellers, ethnic minority groups or households without security of tenure, assistant herders, the unemployed, mentally and physically handicapped people or people in poor physical health, and the very poor.

The Process Framework describes how groups or communities will be involved in determining measures that will assist affected persons in managing and coping with impacts from agreed restrictions. The common objective is to improve or restore, in real terms, to pre-displacement levels, their livelihoods while maintaining the sustainability of the park or protected area. However, in some circumstances affected communities may agree to restrictions without identifying one-for-one mitigation measures as they may see the long-term benefits of improved natural resource management. They may also forego practices in place of obtaining more secure land tenure and resource use rights.

The Project plans to implement livelihood support activities, under Outcome 2.3, the project will aim to enhance and strengthen value chains, public-private partnerships and access to markets that can support sustainable grazing practices. Value chains for sustainable agricultural (including livestock) products will be identified and developed in partnership with private companies. Technical and business development support will be provided to herder and farmer groups and cooperatives to enhance capacity for processing, marketing and sale of agricultural products. Interventions will be targeted at enabling herders/farmers to increase the value of their livestock, in order to facilitate efforts to reduce the stocking density (and provide incentives for a balanced herd composition and turnover and improved animal health and breeding). The project will strengthen capacities of women and men engaged in the small and medium enterprises (SMEs), cooperatives and household production, taking into account differentiated needs and requirements. The following are some of the activities that the project is likely to improve livelihood of the project affected persons:

- **Activity 2.2.3.1:** Establish or strengthen risk funds or other financing mechanisms (such as user fees or local tax) to finance pasture management activities (co-financed by local government or herder

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<sup>24</sup> WWF Environment and Social Safeguards: Annex 6, page 67

<sup>25</sup> WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards: Annex 6, page 67

<sup>26</sup> Refer to Social and Gender Analysis Report (Annex Q1)

groups). This will take into account existing good practices, such as the communal monetary fund established in Bayan-Adragaa soum.

- **Activity 2.2.3.3:** In close collaboration with the WB Livestock Commercialization Project, provide technical assistance to strengthen animal health services, and livestock breeding and feeding practices, in target soums (including outreach to herders), with a view to strengthen quality rather than quantity of livestock and reduce grazing load.
- **Activity 2.3.1.2:** Provide technical and business development support to herder groups/ cooperatives to enhance capacity for processing, marketing and sale of livestock products (such as cashmere and meat). The project will initially work with 9 herder groups/ cooperatives (one per soum), and will then aim to replicate or scale up good practices.
- **Activity 3.1.3.3:** Provide technical assistance and inputs for conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men), such as beekeeping, growing medicinal plants, and nature-based tourism in buffer zone/adjacent areas.

Entitlement matrix was developed based on the above proposed livelihood support activities under the Project and the consultations with the project affected herders and review of experience with similar operations, national and international.

**Table 2. Proposed Entitlement Matrix**

Type of Loss	Eligible Persons	Compensation and rehabilitation measures	Implementation
<i>1. Land for winter/spring shelters</i>			
Note: The project interventions shall <u>not</u> lead to (temporary or permanent) loss of land for winter/spring shelters. The project explicitly excludes financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation. Winter/spring shelters are allowed in NRs. NR and pasture management plans shall not include any measures that would lead to loss of land for winter/spring shelters.			
<i>2. Pasture land</i>			
Partial loss of winter, spring, autumn and summer pastures (such as in wetland areas that are important sites for cranes; pasture restoration sites)	All herders, titled and non-titled, migrant and assistant	Replacement pasture land with water source;  In case travel distance has increased, livelihood support measures are to be identified to compensate for any loss (through the LRPs).	Consultation with herder groups or hot ail in the vicinity of the replacement land to be allocated and obtain their consent prior to allocation of the land  Soum Governor's Office / agricultural specialist together with soum land specialist shall allocate the replacement land
Temporary restriction on use of winter, spring, autumn and summer pastures	All herders, titled and non-titled, migrant and assistant	Replacement pasture land with water source;  If replacement pasture land is not required by the affected herders, fodder preparation and hay making support shall be provided to hot ails or herder groups agreed to share their pastures with the affected herders along	Consultation with herder groups or hot ail in the vicinity of the replacement land to be allocated and obtain their consent prior to allocation of the land  Soum Governor's Office / agricultural specialist together with soum land specialist shall allocate the replacement land

Type of Loss	Eligible Persons	Compensation and rehabilitation measures	Implementation
		with the affected herders.	
<i>3. Access to forest areas</i>			
Temporary and permanent restriction on grazing livestock in forest and riparian areas	All herders, titled and non-titled, migrant and assistant	Replacement pasture land with water source if required; Support to fodder preparation and hay making shall be provided	Support measures shall be identified through consultation with affected herders and herders in neighboring hot ail or herder groups.
<i>4. Access to water sources</i>			
Temporary and permanent restriction on grazing livestock in near natural water sources i.e., rivers, springs and lakes	All herders, titled and non-titled, migrant and assistant	Provide an alternative water source, well or water point, the cost associated building the water point shall be covered by the Project (co-funding by local government to be identified)	Location of an alternative water points shall be explored in consultation with the affected herders
<i>5. Limit livestock number to be grazed in national and local protected areas</i>			
Restriction on increase of livestock number (voluntary only)	All herders, titled and non-titled, migrant and assistant	Provide livelihood support activities proposed under the Project	Livelihood support activities shall be discussed with the affected herders and final decisions will be made by Soum Citizen's Meeting.

### **Proposed Process for Livelihood Restoration Plans**

The following process is proposed:

1. The National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will be closely involved in the implementation of outputs related to crop farming, pasture management, and NR/LPA management (Outputs 2.1.2, 2.2.2 and 3.1.2, in particular).
2. During the development of the annual budget/work plans, the National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will conduct a screening of the project activities using the screening tool in Annex 5: Screening Tool. Based on the screening, he/she will determine if the development of a site-specific ESMP or Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) is needed, and if any additional mitigation measures need to be included in the ESMF.
3. Whenever management measures/plans are developed and/or when project intervention areas are determined, the National Safeguards and Gender Specialist will conduct an additional screening and consultations to identify stakeholders (in particular vulnerable groups, such as ethnic minorities, poorer households, migrants, and assistant herders) that may be affected by access restrictions/economic displacement. In such case, an LRP will be developed based on the guidance above, and compensation measures will be proposed.

4. If needed, this will involve mapping of local level or community resources and their utilization. A socio-economic survey and inventory of losses of the project affected assets/access to land will be conducted. The Safeguards and Gender Specialist will conduct detailed consultations to ensure all Project Affected Persons (PAPs) are identified.
5. A cut-off date for eligibility for compensation will be established early in the process to prevent a subsequent inflow of people into the affected area. This date will be established with the Soum Government and could be the start of a census taken as part of the development of the LRP. The process will be communicated to local stakeholders via local meetings and a public notice displayed at the soum center.
6. The LRP, including compensation measures and livelihood support activities, will be discussed and elaborated in detail in consultation with the PAPs, and approved by the Soum Citizen's Meeting. The compensation measures will be funded by the project (with co-financing from local government, where possible) and are limited to the duration of the project implementation. Where replacement pasture needs to be provided, this shall be agreed with the Soum Governor's Office and shall be implemented beyond the project duration.
7. The project activities which result in access restriction will not begin until the necessary LRPs are in place, and all LRPs must be fully implemented by the time the project is formally concluded.

The Soum Citizen's Meeting will act as the decision-making body for the Livelihood Restoration Plans.

All affected people regardless of type of loss and land title are entitled to receive livelihood support activities under the Project. In addition to the above mentioned activities that the project proposed to improve livelihood of the project affected persons, herders consulted during ESIA identified the following livelihood support activities:

a/ Engage in environmental protection:

- Cooperation in groups for forest cleaning and protection; selling fire woods to soum center residents; gathering and sale of wild fruit and nuts;
- Production of tree seedlings, the establishment of tree nurseries and planting or selling saplings to soum and aimag center residents;
- Protection of wild animals, surveying and observation of nature with incentives or remuneration;
- Planting vegetation to enrich and diversify grazing pasture land or hayfield;
- Work as National Rangers

b/ Increase livestock production

- Production of felt and delivery to markets
- Collaborative production and marketing of local brand milk products, improved packaging and labelling of dairy products
- Establish livestock slaughtering point and delivery of products to city meat markets.

c/ Increase income and livelihood diversification

- Work in crop farm as a security person
- Planting fodder vegetation in small part of crop farming land

In addition, the project will seek to implement the following conflict resolution measures suggested by herders, in consultation with crop farmers/crop companies; (i) hiring a member of herder family as a

security guard to prevent crop land from livestock intrude, (ii) at the end of harvest season permitting to graze livestock in the crop field or use crop-residues.

#### 4.2 Capacity building for the implementation of Policy on Involuntary Resettlement (including access restrictions/economic displacement)

Land acquisition practice in rural Mongolia affecting pasture and herders' livelihood is scarce, except for a few mining cases, i.e., mining companies acquired land through negotiation with herders when pasture land located in or close to mining sites. These cases are kept under wraps, not much information available on how this affected herders and mitigation measures taken. Therefore, capacity building of aimag and soum land and agricultural specialists are crucial for the successful implementation of this Process Framework and preparation of Livelihood Restoration Plan, also Soum Development Plans in the future. Since the Project includes an institutional capacity building subcomponent, which aims at strengthening capacity at all levels under the Output 1, it is advisable to integrate international safeguard standards and principles in the planned trainings. The following outputs shall integrate Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement Policy, for instance working group members established under Output 1.1.1. shall be trained; the guidelines developed under Output 1.1.2 shall include measures to mitigate the risk of involuntary resettlement/access restrictions/economic displacement etc.:

- **Output 1.1.1** Cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder working groups established under existing committees at national and aimag levels to facilitate participatory, adaptive landscape planning and management in the existing land-use planning process.
- **Output 1.1.2** Guidelines for science-based, integrated land management planning, assessment and monitoring developed and local stakeholders trained.
- **Output 1.1.3** Aimag- and soum-level land management plans developed incorporating ecologically sensitive, participatory landscape management (grazing, forest and other natural resources), through local consultations and ensuring gender equality and inclusiveness.
- **Output 1.1.4** Regular monitoring of land use, land degradation and biodiversity in target soums conducted by local government officers and/or local volunteers.

Table 3. Identified capacity needs

Capacity gap	Actions required	Outcome
Lack of professional detailed measurement surveys in rural settings, especially in pastoral livelihood for assessing the bearing capacity of pastures	Engagement of a qualified safeguards specialist for the inventory of losses of the project affected assets/ access to land.	Screening of the area for the access restrictions;  Exact impacts are measured and documented with the presence of affected person and local authorities.
Lack of safeguards capacity for management planning/ access restrictions, implementation and compliance monitoring	Engagement of a social safeguards specialist within the PMU, supervised by the National Project Manager	Minimized project impact; Ensured project compliance with social safeguards.
Lack of experience in implementation of livelihood restoration measures	Engagement of Soum Citizen's Meeting	None of the affected herders livelihood will be adversely affected

In addition, the Process Framework shall be translated into Mongolian language and explained in simple terms to soum stakeholders at the beginning of project implementation. The term “access restrictions/economic displacement” rather than “resettlement” shall be used to avoid confusing stakeholders.

## **5. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism**

### **Project-level grievance mechanism**

The affected persons may raise a grievance/complaint at all times to the Project Management Unit and MET. The project will establish a grievance mechanism at field level to file complaints during project inception phase. Grievances will be received through three channels; (i) via direct phone line / email dedicated to receive complaints at Project Management Unit; (ii) Soum Project Coordinator; and (iii) Bagh Governor. Affected local communities should be informed about the grievance mechanism and how to make a complaint.

Contact information and information on the process to file a complaint will be disclosed in all meetings, workshops and other related events throughout the life of the project. In addition, it is expected that all awareness raising material to be distributed will include the necessary information regarding the contacts and the process for filing grievances.

The Safeguards and Gender Specialist in the PMU will be designated as the key officer in charge of the Grievance Redress Mechanism. This will include the following key responsibilities:

- a. Act as the focal point in the PMU on Grievance Redress issues and facilitate the resolution of issues within the PMU;
- b. Create awareness of the Grievance Redress Mechanism amongst all the stakeholders through public awareness raising;
- c. Assist in redress of all grievances by coordinating with the concerned parties;
- d. Maintain information on grievances and redress;
- e. Monitor the activities of MET and PMU on grievances issues; and prepare the progress for monthly/quarterly reports.

The grievance mechanism includes the following stages:

- The first tier of redress mechanism involves the receipt of a complainant at the Soum level. The stakeholders are informed of various points of making complainants (bagh governor, soum project coordinator and direct phone line) and the PMU collect the complaints from these points on a regular basis and record them. This is followed by coordinating with the concerned people to redress the grievances. The Local Soum Project Coordinators will ensure that any complaints filed with the Bagh or Soum Governor’s Office will also be recorded by the project.
- The stakeholders will be made aware that they may still seek legal recourse in parallel while filing a grievance with the project. In particular, they will be made aware of the 10-day deadline for court matters related to land issues in Mongolia.
- The Safeguards and Gender Specialist in the PMU, in close collaboration with the NPM will be responsible for recording the grievance and how it has been addressed if a resolution was agreed.
- If the situation is deemed too complex by the Safeguards and Gender Specialist and the NPM, or the complainer does not accept the resolution, the complaint must be sent to a higher level (as described below), until a solution or acceptance is reached.

- For every complaint received, a written proof will be sent within ten (10) working days; afterwards, a resolution proposal will be made within thirty (30) working days.
- All complaint received, its response and resolutions, must be duly registered.
- If the complainant does not accept the resolution, the complaint must be sent to a second tier of redress mechanism as described below.
- Note: The complainant does not necessarily have to follow the defined levels, i.e. the complaint can be addressed directly at any of the defined levels or steps.

### **Internal process**

- Level 1:** Project Management Unit (PMU). The complaint could come in writing/email or orally/via phone to the National Project Manager directly. At this level, received complaints will be registered, investigated and solved by the National Project Manager. If complaints are filed with the local Bagh or Soum Governor's Office, the PMU will also be informed and the complaint will be addressed by the PMU if it cannot be solved directly by the local offices.
- Level 2:** If the complaint has not been solved and could not be solved in level 1, then the NPM elevates it to the FAO Representative in Mongolia and the WWF focal point.
- Level 3:** Project Steering Committee (PSC). The assistance of the PSC is requested if a resolution was not agreed in levels 1 and 2.
- Level 4:** FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and WWF GEF Agency. If necessary, the FAO Representative will request the advice of the Regional Office to resolve a grievance or will transfer the resolution of the grievance entirely to the regional office, if the problem is highly complex. Similarly, the WWF focal point will transfer the grievance to the WWF GEF Agency, if no resolution can be reached at levels 1 to 3.
- Level 5:** Only on very specific situations or complex problems, the FAO Regional Representative will request the assistance of the FAO Office of the Inspector General, who follows its own procedures to solve the problem. A grievance can also be filed with the Project Complaints Officer (PCO) at WWF.

## Annex 2: Ethnic Groups Planning Framework

### Contents

#### Background and Introduction

The project “*Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia*” (“Eastern Steppe project”) is part of a global program led by FAO, the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (SFM/Drylands IP). In Mongolia, the project is jointly led by FAO and WWF, and will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in collaboration with other partners.

The objective of the project is to reverse and prevent dryland ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss through an inclusive, integrated landscape and value chain approach securing multiple environment benefits and sustainable, resilient livelihoods in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia. The project interventions will be implemented in nine counties (*soums*) of the three eastern provinces (*aimags*) of Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar, as well as at the aimag and national level. The project will be divided into four components, as follows.

Under **Component 1**, the project will strengthen cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration for integrated land management planning and monitoring. It will also support incorporation of land degradation and biodiversity considerations into the ongoing land management planning process; and will support the ongoing policy reform to promote sustainable land use.

Under **Component 2**, the project will strengthen sustainable dryland management in Eastern Mongolia through a three-pronged approach. First, the project will promote environmentally friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production. Second, the project will work with local herder and forest communities in the target area to implement and scale up sustainable management and restoration of rangelands and forest patches. And third, the project will support partnerships between herder groups/cooperatives, local government and private sector to develop value chains and access to markets for sustainably produced livestock products.

Under **Component 3** of the project, the management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas will be strengthened to support survival of the Mongolian gazelle, the White-naped Crane, and other iconic migratory species. Priority interventions will be implemented to support enhanced management and connectivity of these protected areas, along with conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men) and sustainable financing mechanisms of the protected areas.

**Component 4** of the project will support effective project coordination, as well as the systematic creation and sharing of knowledge on sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation at the provincial, national and global levels. The project will also aim to strengthen LDN target monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

The proposed GEF project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), who will have the overall executing and technical responsibility of the project. The MET will act as the Lead Executing Agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the sub-agreements signed with FAO and WWF.

#### 1. Objectives

Although the Social and Gender Analysis (Annex Q1 of the Project document) concluded that no indigenous peoples are present in the project site, the *buryad* ethnic groups have been considered

as such by some stakeholders in the past (including other donor-funded projects).<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the Project required to carry out further analysis on impacts of the Project on indigenous peoples, and on whether the Indigenous Peoples Policy should apply to the Project.

The consultant conducted a social impact assessment (SIA) to analyze the safeguard issues on Indigenous peoples as highlighted in the Project documents and obtain broad community support through free, prior and informed consultations in order to update the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for the GEF funded “Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” Project. This report was prepared in consultation with potential project beneficiaries (local authorities, communities, and ethnic groups) through a participatory social assessment and in partnership with the agencies responsible for various facets of ethnic group issues. In order to get broad community/ethnic group support, consultations took place in the Project site soums and bagh where certain ethnic groups reside. It was based on the principles underlying the rights of indigenous/tribal people free, prior and informed consultations in accordance with FAO Environmental and Social Standard 9 Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage (FAO ESS 9) and WWF Statement of Principle on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation (WWF policy).<sup>28</sup> The consultation and assessment ensures that social engagement, inclusiveness and ethnic groups’ issues are incorporated into project planning, design, implementation and monitoring. It also ensures that the project’s benefits are equally distributed in a culturally appropriate manner and that negative impacts are avoided.

The Consultant has undertaken a process of consultations with the ethnic groups during project preparation with the aim to (i) inform them about the project, (ii) fully identify their views, (iii) inform/adapt the project design, and (iv) obtain free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples to project activities if applicable and, if its development is required, the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP).

## **2. Legal Framework**

### **2.1 National Legal and Policy Framework**

More than 30 ethnic groups are living in Mongolia. The population consists of two distinct ethnic groups, the khalkh (83.8%) and kazakh (3.8%), and several Mongol groups distinguished by dialects of the language and culture from the dominant khalkh people, which include durvud (2.6%), bayad (2.0%) and buriad (1.4%)<sup>29</sup>. In addition to Kazakhs there are some other small groups of Turkic-speaking minorities and indigenous peoples in the western and northern parts of Mongolia: Uzbeks (0.01%), Tuva (0.1%), Urianhais (0.9%) and Hotons (0.4%) (*source 2020 Census 1212.mn*).

Most of Mongolia’s ethnic groups share similar customs, traditions and systems of production as the Khalkh, with the exception of the predominantly Muslim and linguistically differentiated Kazakhs in Bayan-Ulgii aimag of western Mongolia, and traditionally nomadic reindeer-herding Tsaatan peoples in Khuvsgul aimag in the north. Kazakh people are considered as an ethnic minority groups because of differences of language, culture and religious beliefs from the dominant mongol ethnic group, and Tsaatan people residing in western taiga of Khuvsgul aimag are considered as indigenous people as their livelihood is based on reindeer-herding and hunting.

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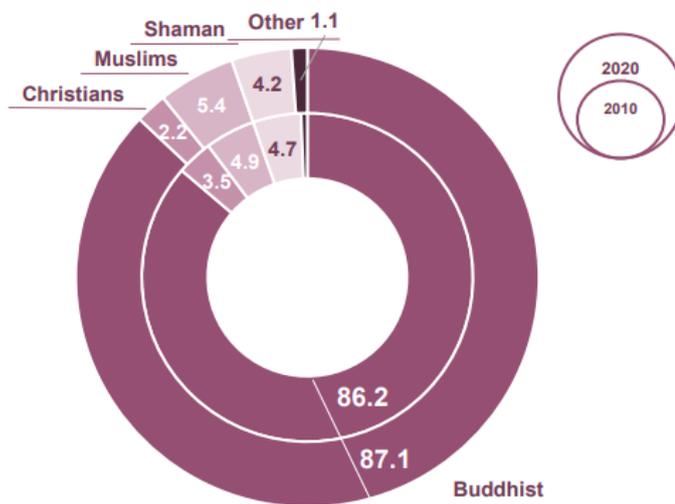
<sup>27</sup> Annex J: Indigenous Peoples, page 121 of Project document

<sup>28</sup> The right to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) has been recognized for indigenous/tribal peoples alone, however, in practice, the principles underlying FPIC are increasingly extended to local communities and project-affected communities as well. This extension is consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which recognizes that both indigenous and local communities have rights to FPIC.

<sup>29</sup> Population census 2020, National Statistics Office

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, 59.4 percent of the population aged 15 years and over were religious and 40.6 percent were non-religious. 87.1 percent of the religious people were Buddhists. Even though Buddhism was the largest religion, the majority of religious youth aged 15-19 were Christians and Muslims. Religious and non-religious beliefs differed among ethnic groups. 84.7 percent of the Kazakh people were religious and 81.9 percent of them were Muslims.

FIGURE 3. POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER, BY RELIGION, 2020



Source: 2020 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS OF MONGOLIA /summary/, 1212.mn

The Constitution of Mongolia recognizes rights of diverse ethnic people and stipulates “no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of ethnic origin, language, race, age, sex, social origin and status, property, occupation and post, religion, opinion and education. Everyone should have the right to act as a legal person.” (Constitution of Mongolia, 1992, Article 14, Chapter 2).

Constitutional declaration has been elaborated further in other branch laws, as such Labor Law of Mongolia obliged employers not discriminate against persons on grounds of sex, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, while performing their tasks and exercising their powers. Moreover, processing of personal data revealing ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs are discouraged in many social settings, such as hiring, promoting and admitting in various social institutions and providing public services.

Government of Mongolia has approved policies and programs on protecting rights of ethnic groups and support their unique lifestyle. Dual language education program has been developed for young children from Kazakh, Tuva and Tsaatan (Dukha) ethnic groups and supported them learn and study on their mother tongue for primary education.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the Government has implemented various programs targeted only reindeer-herding Tsaatan people live in the Sayan Mountains around Lake Khuvsgul in northern Mongolia. Because Tsaatan people can be identified as indigenous people in Mongolia. In 1955, 53 tsaatan households lived in taiga between Mongolian and Russian border were granted Mongolian citizenship. Their livelihood and lifestyle is distinctive from the other ethnic groups in Mongolia and fully relied on taiga and reindeers. Tsaatan people do not live the Project area of influence.

Government of Mongolia has approved a program to support of tsaatan ethnic groups with its resolution No. 255 dated 17 December 2008. Within this program, mongol gers and sun batteries

<sup>30</sup> Tuva language program has been approved by Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Resolution #387 dated on 2005.

were provided to each 62 households for their easy stay at soum center, and two room community building was built for their easy access to the bagh meeting, each household received 10 goats for restocking, 20 reindeer were purchased from Russian Taiga to improve breeding, 6 tsaatan students received scholarship to study at the university, etc.

Tsakhia Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia issued a decree for the protection of the livelihood and identity of Tsaatan ethnic group on 29 March, 2013. It was the first time the President spoke out for the protection and support of an ethnic group in Mongolia. The President initiated monthly allowances equivalent to minimum living standards of the region to all adult tsaatan persons and 50% of the minimum living standards to all children up to age 18 and ordered the Government provide employment for tsaatan people as national rangers in the Red Taiga and Tengis-Shishged river basin national protected areas and tuition fees of tsaatan students studying in higher education institutions fully paid by the Government.

#### Box. Tsaatan (Dukha) – Mongolian indigenous people

"The government declared the Tsaatans' hunting ground a part of the national protected parks. It's now off-limits so they can't hunt anymore". As compensate, each family was paid about \$150.

"It's a bit sad because these are traditional hunters and the reindeer need to move.

"When you pay them off like that, you're destroying a part of their culture."

To further add to the Dukhas' woes, the number of the reindeer they're so dependent on has dwindled dramatically due to diseases and lack of available treatment.<sup>31</sup>

Tsaatan people still receive a monthly allowance to date under the Resolution #A/198 of Minister of Labor and Social Protection dated on 10 July, 2018. Amount of monthly allowance is equal to the minimum living standards of khangai region for adults and half for children under age 18. This social benefit policy for tsaatan people was developed to mitigate negative impacts of the Government conservation policy on national protected areas that adversely affect tsaatan people's livelihood by forbidden hunting and fishing, restricting herding reindeers from most of the area.<sup>32</sup>

## 2.2 FAO and WWF policies on Indigenous Peoples

### 2.2.1 Definition of the Indigenous peoples

There are several international agreements and declarations that have progressively reinforced the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights. Two of the most prevalent instruments to ensure the well-being, protection and survival of indigenous peoples are: the 1989 ILO Convention 169 (ILO Co. 169) and the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

FAO and WWF adhere to the ILO Co. 169 for the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights when determining the relevance of the GEF Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples to this project. Indigenous peoples are defined by ILO Convention No. 169 as: (a) tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; or (b) peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest

<sup>31</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/dukha-last-reindeer-people/index.html>

<sup>32</sup> <https://theconversation.com/conservation-policies-threaten-indigenous-reindeer-herders-in-mongolia-121729>

or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

FAO abides by the following criteria when considering indigenous peoples:<sup>33</sup>

- Priority in time, with respect to occupation and use of a specific territory;
- The voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness, which may include aspects of language, social organization, religion and spiritual values, modes of production, laws and institutions;
- Self-identification, as well as recognition by other groups, or by State authorities, as a distinct collectivity; and
- An experience of subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination, whether or not these conditions persist.

WWF adopts the statement of coverage contained in International Labour Organization Convention 169 (ILO), which includes both indigenous and tribal peoples. Characteristics of indigenous and tribal peoples include:

- Social, cultural and economic ways of life different from other segments of the national population;
- Traditional forms of social organization, political institutions, customs and laws;
- Long-term historical continuity of residence in a certain area;
- Self-identification as indigenous or tribal;
- Relative political marginalization; and
- Special ties, and relationships with their customary lands and resources, closely connected to their cultural identity.

Since there is no universally accepted official definition on “indigenous people” self-identification as indigenous or tribal is widely regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups.

### **2.2.2 Safeguard principles and requirements**

The WWF Network’s policy on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation: WWF Statement of Principles – is to ensure that indigenous rights are respected in WWF’s work, that indigenous peoples do not suffer adverse impacts from projects, and that they receive culturally appropriate benefits from conservation. WWF must ensure that:

- Projects respect indigenous peoples’ rights, including their rights to FPIC processes and to tenure over traditional territories;
- Culturally appropriate and equitable benefits (including from traditional ecological knowledge) are negotiated and agreed upon with the indigenous peoples’ communities in question; and
- Potential adverse impacts are avoided or adequately addressed through a participatory and consultative approach.

### **3. Ethnic groups present in the Project sites**

Indigenous refer to ethnic group or a collection of ethnic groups who are perceived to be native of the region. But in Mongolia’s case, native people or Khalk ethnic group makes the majority of the population and, in opposite, the minorities are other ethnic groups except Khalkh.

In this case, ethnic groups other than Khalkh will be considered as ethnic minorities which are people with barga, buryat, dariganga and uzemchin ethnic origins living in the Project area. Since no

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<sup>33</sup> FAO of United Nations, Indigenous Peoples and FAO Allies for sustainable development in the context of climate change, May 2020, page 6

indigenous people were living in the Project Area, the consultant has assessed Project impacts on ethnic groups compared with other local communities.

### **3.1 Description of ethnic groups**

Population in the eastern region of Mongolia is relatively homogenous compared to the western region in terms of ethnic composition; 73.8% of population are khalkh, 12.1% dariganga, 10.2% and buriad. The project target areas include among others *khalkh*, *buriad*, *barga*, *uzemchin* and *dariganga* people.

#### ***Uzemchin people***

The Uzemchin is an ethnic group mentioned in Mongolian history since the middle of the 16th century. Until mid of the 20th century they were living in China's Inner Mongolia and some moved to Mongolia in 1945. They settled in Baruun-Urt, Erdenetsagaan and Tumentsogt soums of Sukhbaatar aimag and Bayantumen, Sergelen and Bulgan soums of Dornod aimag. A total of 2,577 uzemchin people were registered in the 2010 census, and the recent 2020-year census reports that 2,308 people identified themselves as uzemchin. Currently, 74.6% of uzemchin people of Mongolia live in Dornod aimag.

Uzemchin people are nomadic herders identical to khalkh herders and make dairy products except for yogurt. They wear distinctive traditional costume and name differently parts of costume, for example, a hand covering part of the deel is called "weights" or "hooves" as oppose to "fist" in khalkh people. Unlike other ethnic groups, they use a canopy called a "strainer" that wraps around the front of the shoe to protect the knees. The top of the winter hat was adorned with a six-pointed ram, buttoned, and a red turban.

#### ***Dariganga people***

The Dariganga people live in the southwestern part of Sukhbaatar aimag, Ongon, Khalzan, Asgat, Dariganga, Bayandelger, Tuvshin Shiree, Uulbayan and Naran soums. According to the 2010 census, 27,412 people were reported to have dariganga ethnic origin, but the number had risen to 36,419 in the recent 2020-year census. 67.2% of dariganga people of Mongolia persons live in Sukhbaatar aimag.

In the late 1690s, when the Khalkh Mongol came under the rule of the Manchus, the Dariganga people recruited from Tsahar, Khalkh, and Oirat to herd the iron herd of the Manchu Khan as they were known for their herding skills and strong physiques. Over the years, these people have been mixed up and considered a different ethnic group because of their own culture, which differs from other ethnic groups in terms of material and cultural differences, such as clothing, jewelry, and wedding customs. Linguistically, it is almost indistinguishable from the Khalkh Mongolian dialect. Dariganga people is famous throughout Mongolia for its herding techniques and handicrafting skills for gold and silver jewelries.

#### ***Barga people***

Barga is an ancient Mongolian tribal people lived under Mongolian Empire's rule as recorded in history books dating back to 13th century. In 1939, Barga people living near borderline of China and Mongolia were forced to join Soviet–Japanese border conflicts. The unclear border definition between New Barga Left Banner and Dornod (where Barga originally lived) was the major excuse for the start of Battles of Khalkhin Gol. Some barga people moved to Khulunbuir soum, Dornod aimag in 1946. Bargas are currently living in Gurvanzagal and Khutulbuir soums of Dornod aimag, Sergelen, Bayan and Bayantsagaan soums of Tuv aimag, Ikh-Uul, Urgamal and Santmargats soums of Zavkhan

province and Uulbayan and Bayanterem soums of Sukhbaatar aimag. A total of 2,605 barga people were registered in the 2010 census, and the recent 2020-year census reports that 2,832 people identified themselves as barga ethnic origin. 66.6% of barga people of Mongolia live in Dornod aimag.

The melodious talk of the Bargas is closer to the Buryat melody.

### **Buryat people**

Buryat is an ancient aimag of Mongolian ethnic origins, speaks in Mongolian language. Today, the Buryats live in three countries. It is registered in Russia and Mongolia as "Buryat" and in China as "Mongol". Most Buryats 461,389 live in the Republic of Buryatia, Russia, 45,087 people in Mongolia (2010 census), and about 10,000 Buryats in China.

As of census 2020, a total of 45,615 people were identified themselves as buryat ethnic origins.

- 37.5% of buryat people of Mongolia live in Ulaanbaatar city
- 37.4% live in Bayandun, Bayan-Uul, Dashbalbar, Tsagaan-Ovoo soums of Dornod aimag,
- 12.1 percent live in Batshireet, Binder, Dadal, Norovlin and Bayan-Adarga soums of Khentii aimag.
- 1.9% live in Tsagaan-Uur and Hankh soums of Khuvsgul aimag
- 1.7% live in Yeruu soum of Selenge aimag
- 1.7% live in Darkhan-Uul aimag
- 1.4% live in Orkhon aimag
- 1.2% live in Teshig soum of Bulgan aimag
- 1.1% live in Mungunmorit soum of Tuv aimag,

Buryats live mainly in houses, and engage in haymaking, hunting and cattle breeding. In addition to being famous for making butter by churning machine, baking a bread, and making jam, they are also known for singing duet songs, play dialogue, dancing, and telling legends at festivals.

### **3.2 Findings of the consultation with ethnic groups**

All the ethnic groups in the project's areas share a common socio-economic base, that is, they rely heavily on herding activities and natural resources for their livelihoods. However, their levels of access to modern socio-economic development varies from one location to another depending on how the government allocates common resources and provides support to such areas. The government does promote the preservation of ethnic culture including, traditional clothing and ethnic dialects, and supports celebration of diversity through festive activities as such folklore singing and demonstration of tradition.

Each ethnic group has its own dialect, custom and cultural characteristics, but not one of these groups have their own territory within the country. Instead all the ethnic groups share common territory and have lived together peacefully for many generations. Each of the groups is distinctive in ways that are sometimes readily apparent and at other times are not open to direct observation.

Box 2. Ethnic Groups in the Project soums and their views on ethnicity

	Project soums	Ethnic groups	Consultations
<b>Dornod aimag</b>	Bulgan	Uzemchin, khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of families has fallen because a lot of them have been synthesized with the mainstream community.</li> </ul>

	Khulunbuir	Barga, khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barga ethnic group moved in 1946 in Khulunbuir, where khalkh people were living and mixed up quickly, adapting in new customs and cultures, barga tradition has been forgotten over the years. Today I identify myself as a barga person because of my ancestors were.</li> </ul>
	Matad	Khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ethnicity is not written on the National ID, but it is not something that we hide. It is actually a source of pride, and we love to distinguish ourselves by wearing different national costume.</li> <li>Some of the differences are very little, some even have a different language. But we all make a Mongol family.</li> </ul>
Khentii aimag	Bayan-Adarga	Buryat, khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buryad people in my soum differ by their way of processing dairy products and making hay, otherwise they have no difference in language. Young people particularly, do not like to be differentiated.</li> </ul>
	Bayan-Ovoo	Khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would consider any attempt of distinguishing people by their ethnic differences as a provocation to split the national unity</li> </ul>
	Norovlin	Buryat, Khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No difference among young people as they are all Mongols and they do marry each other.</li> <li>A very few people<sup>34</sup> live in soum anyway, and if we are divided as khalkh and buryat, can't imagine what would happen. Actually, today we are divided by political parties, too bad.</li> </ul>
Sukhbaatar aimag	Munkhkhaan	Khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethnicity is neither making hardship in our life nor helping us in anyway. It is just my parents told me that they were. Therefore, I identify myself as khalkh.</li> </ul>
	Sukhbaatar	Khalkh, Dariganga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nowadays, people do not like to be distinguished by ethnicity and it would be appropriate to be called as Mongols.</li> <li>Some families keep a double-mouth stove inherited from Dariganga culture.</li> </ul>
	Tumentsogt	Uzemchin, Khalkh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't feel any different from khalkh people, I married a khalkh man, there were anything he and I would do differently because of our ethnic origins. Why we still use this ethnic origin, I don't get it.</li> </ul>

The consultant has assessed the social and cultural habitats of the ethnic groups present in the project sites guided by FAO ESS9 and the WWF policy and has concluded that none of the ethnic groups in the Project site qualifies as “indigenous peoples” and supports the statement of Social and Gender Analysis (Annex Q1) “None of these ethnic groups belong to “indigenous” as they all distinguished primarily by certain cultural elements and dialects of the Mongolian language. And they are neither discriminated against nor regarded as vulnerable because of bearing a barga, uzemchin, dariganga, and buryat ethnicity”.<sup>35</sup> The international instruments on Indigenous Peoples Policy, including FAO and WWF, recognize self-identification of ethnic groups as an Indigenous people is an important criterion for determining indigenous status. However, none of the ethnic groups in the project site self-identified themselves as indigenous peoples.

<sup>34</sup> Refers to soum population, generally, soums with less than 5,000 population considered as a small administrative unit in Mongolia. See Table 2 in Appendix attached.

<sup>35</sup> Social and Gender Analysis, Annex Q1, page 29

Kazakh ethnic minority group and tsaatan (dukha) indigenous peoples do not live in the project area of influence. Fewer Kazakh people may live in the area, but they would not create separate grouping as most of them speak Mongolian and are exposed to Mongolian culture and synthesized with the mainstream community. Therefore, at this stage, the Project is not required to obtain free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) and prepare an Indigenous Peoples Plan.

As proposed the project will support the transformation of Mongolia's Eastern Steppe ecosystems to a resilient dryland landscape and ecosystem sustaining inclusive, resilient and sustainable livelihoods and securing multiple environment benefits. To achieve transformational change, the project will employ an integrated and inclusive approach that enhances biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization, builds landscape and livelihood resilience, and restores land quality and living standards. The ethnic groups in the project areas broadly support "Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia" as the proposed activities under the Project serves best interests of the local people, to preserve their motherland and untouched nature and pass on to their descendants.

#### **4. Ethnic Minority Engagement Strategy**

The Project benefits are designed to be shared widely by local communities, herders and agricultural farmers and the expected Project outcomes are "*increased area under sustainable land and water use, restoration and conservation of critical biodiversity and ecosystems, which, in turn, will lead to livelihood, resilience, biodiversity (BD), sustainable land management (SLM) and climate change mitigation (CCM) benefits and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)*"<sup>36</sup> in nine projects soums.

As a precautionary approach, the consultant suggests taking the following actions to ensure the participation of the affected communities in culturally appropriate ways and ensure adequate participation of vulnerable groups<sup>37</sup> and ethnic groups and to avoid unforeseen local conflicts.

- a) In line with the principle of FPIC, consultations shall be conducted on all soums and baghs, where ethnic people live in, prior to the Project Implementation<sup>38</sup>, when the project site-specific plan has been developed. However, the extent of consultations could be limited to (i) inform about the project activity prior to its implementation, (ii) ask for local communities' views on the planned activity, and (iii) ensure that they will not be affected adversely during project implementation. Participation of ethnic groups that are considered as a minority within the soum and bagh, shall be assured in the consultations.
- b) All trainings shall also ensure ethnic groups participation apart from equal participation of women and men, in the following project sites (i) Bulgan (uzemchin) and Khulunbuir (barga) soums of Dornod aimag; (ii), Bayan-Adraga (buryat) and Norovlin (buryat) soums of Khentii aimag; and Sukhbaatar (dariganga) and Tumentsogt (uzemchin) soums of Sukhbaatar aimag.
- c) Under the Project Activity 2.3.1.2 the criteria for the selection of herder groups for "technical and business development support to enhance capacity for processing, marketing and sale of livestock" shall include the group diversity and composition, i.e., age, sex, wealth and ethnic origins.
- d) Under the Project Activity 2.2.3.3 dariganga people's herding skills needs to be shared, possibilities of utilizing barga and uzemchin sheep for improving livestock production are explored, with a view to strengthen quality rather than quantity of livestock and reduce grazing

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<sup>36</sup> FAO-WWF-GEF PROJECT DOCUMENT, page 42

<sup>37</sup> Vulnerable groups were identified in the Social and Gender Analysis Report. Refer to page 28 of the Report

<sup>38</sup> Please refer to footnote 28.

load in order to support ethnic groups to preserve their tradition and celebrate diversity in local communities.

This shall be done in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner in order not to create any new conflicts. The project shall have a sensitive approach towards various ethnic groups.

### Box 3. Advantages of Barga and Uzemchin sheep

It is possible to increase the marketability of Barga and Uzemchin rams of Dornod aimag. The characteristics of this breed are that the meat and fat are highly developed, adapted to the unique natural conditions, good pasture use and fertility. The Barga and Uzemchin breeds of meat and fat sheep were approved as a breed in 1990, and based on the results of research on the sheep, they were approved as an independent breed by Order No. 126 of the Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry in 2012.

Barga and Uzemchin sheep are well adapted to steppe grazing conditions, have a strong body, deep chest, high body, tail without camp, and meat and fat. 1.2 kg of wool is obtained from adult rams, 1.1 kg from ewes, 1.2 kg from ewes and 1 kg from female ewes. The weight of male sheep is 47.1 kg, carcass weight is 22.2 kg, meat yield is 47.1 percent and it is resistant to diseases. In autumn, breeding rams increase by 77-82 kg, ewes by 51.1-59 kg, and breeding ewes by 57.7-61.6 kg, or 20-33 percent in spring. In normal years, the mortality rate of this breed is 0.2-0.4 percent.

The PMU, and Safeguards and Gender Specialist, with support from the Knowledge Management and M&E Specialist, will be responsible for periodically monitoring the implementation of the strategy along with Gender Action plan.

## 5. Complaint and Grievance Redress Mechanism

In the event that there is a complaint, the ethnic groups' reported that they have their own preferred mechanism for problem resolution, which can be integrated in to the grievance redress mechanism (GRM) of the Project. All of the consulted people shared the same view that if any issues arise, whether they are related to the Project activities or any other social and environmental aspects, the ethnic groups will firstly consider amongst themselves whether the issue can be resolved internally, within herder groups and/or forest groups. The respected, senior-aged persons in the group can play an important role in problem resolving, and members of the group usually follow their advice. This first stage of mediation is preferred by all of them so as not to bring up issues unnecessarily and avoid complications. If the issue cannot be dealt with internally, they will then bring it up verbally with the Soum Project Coordinator or the other designated contact persons handling complaints. If the issue cannot be resolved, then the next formal step shall be as indicated in the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism. All of the consulted persons share the same view on both informal and formal grievance procedures.

Table 1. Ethnic groups of Mongolia in the Project aimags, census 2020

Ethnicity	Total		Khentii aimag		Sukhbaatar aimag		Dornod aimag	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Khalkh	2 659 985	83.8%	68793	89.0%	37479	59.6%	57660	70.3%
Kazakh	119 045	3.8%	539	0.7%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Durvud	83 719	2.6%	398	0.5%	126	0.2%	492	0.6%
Buryat	45 615	1.4%	5509	7.1%	189	0.3%	17060	20.8%
Bayad	63 775	2.0%	255	0.3%	189	0.3%	164	0.2%
Dariganga	36 419	1.1%	524	0.7%	24525	39.0%	1722	2.1%
Uriankhais	29 021	0.9%	836	1.1%	63	0.1%	82	0.1%
Zakhchin	37407	1.2%	60	0.1%	63	0.1%	164	0.2%
Darkhad	24549	0.8%	30	0.0%	63	0.1%	246	0.3%
Torguud	15596	0.5%	40	0.1%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Uuld	14666	0.5%	36	0.0%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Khotons	12057	0.4%	8	0.0%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Myangad	8125	0.2%	24	0.0%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Barga	2832	0.1%	34	0.0%	0	0.0%	1886	2.3%
Uzemchin	2308	0.1%	13	0.0%	189	0.3%	1722	2.1%
Kharchin	154	0.0%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Tsakhhar	11		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Khotogoid	8583	0.3%	6	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Eljigen	1034	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Tsaatan	208	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Sartuul	2023	0.1%	28	0.0%	0	0.0%	82	0.1%
Tuva	2354	0.1%	8	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Khorchin	39		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Uzbek	202	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Khalimag	16		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Tumed	32		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Sunud	14		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Khamnigan	384	0.0%	76	0.1%	0	0.0%	246	0.3%
Khoshuud	382	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Tuved	1		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Balba	14		1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other	16	0.1%	17	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Source: Census 2020

Table 2. Population in the project sites, by aimags, soums and baghs, 2019

Aimags	Soums and baghs	Total	Male	Female
Khentii aimag	Bayan-Adraga soum	2462	1254	1208
	Bagh #1, Saikhan	614	313	301
	Bagh #2, Jargalant	435	230	205
	Bagh #3, Adarga	574	296	278
	Bagh #4, Duurlig	839	415	424
	Bayan-Ovoo soum	1894	966	928
	Bagh #1, Delgerkhaan	420	223	197
	Bagh #2, Naran	449	230	219
	Bagh #3, Sumber	487	244	243
	Bagh #4, Javkhlant	538	269	269
	Norovlin soum	2596	1355	1241
	Bagh #1, Bayan-Ulziit	565	295	270
	Bagh #2, Angirt	347	193	154
Bagh #3, Onon	576	300	276	
Bagh #4, Jargalant	1108	567	541	
Dornod aimag	Bulgan soum	1968	1066	902
	Bagh #1, Undor Khoshuu	622	297	325
	Bagh #2, Khulsan Shand	541	306	235
	Bagh #3, Bayan-Uul	288	185	103
	Bagh #4, Chuluut	517	278	239
	Matad soum	3296	2020	1276
	Bagh #1, Jargalant	450	245	205
	Bagh #2, Bayankhangai	510	268	242
	Bagh #3, Tumenkhaan	1009	626	383
	Bagh #4, Buyan-Undor	469	293	176
	Bagh #5, Menen	211	139	72
	Bagh #6, Erdenebadrakh	647	449	198
	Khulunbuir soum	1868	961	907
Bagh #1, Bayan-Ulziit	651	334	317	
Bagh #2, Batkhaan	639	329	310	
Bagh #3, Bayan-Uul	578	298	280	
Sukhbaatar aimag	Munkhkhaan soum	4845	2454	2391
	Bagh #1, Bayanterem	1020	523	497
	Bagh #2, Bayan-Uul	929	466	463
	Bagh #3, Bayantsagaan	1008	538	470
	Bagh #4, Bayasgalant	1203	580	623
	Bagh #5, Burentsogt	685	347	338
	Sukhbaatar soum	3393	1826	1567
	Bagh #1, Bayangol	768	418	350
	Bagh #2, Khailaastai	682	334	348
	Bagh #3, Khulgar	1056	547	509
	Bagh #4, Lanz	474	265	209
	Bagh #5, Shinebulag	413	262	151
	Tumentsogt soum	2486	1242	1244
Bagh #1, Lhumbe	795	409	386	
Bagh #2, Bayantsagaan	669	345	324	
Bagh #3, Bayan-Ovoo	504	237	267	
Bagh #4, Bayantsogt	518	251	267	

Source: NSO, 1212.mn

Table 3. Population and households in the project aimags and soums, 2018

Aimags, soums	Population			Households		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Dornod</b>	82,295	41,629	40,666	24,552	13,505	11,047
Bulgan	1,927	1,038	889	665	-	665
Matad	3,373	2,144	1,229	924	-	924
Khulunbuir	1,869	970	899	622	-	622
<b>Sukhbaatar</b>	62,611	31,577	31,034	18,268	5,420	12,848
Munkhkhaan	4,828	2,461	2,367	1,459	-	1,459
Sukhbaatar	3,389	1,812	1,577	1,016	-	1,016
Tumentsogt	2,496	1,252	1,244	766	-	766
<b>Khentii</b>	77,664	39,228	38,436	25,172	8,930	16,242
Bayan-Adarga	2,524	1,279	1,245	787	-	787
Bayan-Ovoo	1,888	968	920	599	-	599
Norovlin	2,547	1,333	1,214	787	-	787

Source: NSO, 1212.mn

## **Annex 3: Environmental Code of Practice**

### **Environmental Code of Practice for Small Civil Works**

#### **GENERAL**

##### **The Objective**

The Environmental Code of Practices (ECOP) aims to ensure compliance with national laws and environmental and social safeguard guidelines of FAO and WWF and provides guidance to the planning and implementation of the mitigation measures to erase or minimize adverse environmental impacts caused by implementation of the proposed activities under “Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” project (the project).

Specifically, the main purpose of this ECOP is to mitigate and minimize potential negative environmental impacts from primarily from small-scale infrastructure in NRs.

##### **Legality**

The ECOP is not supported by legal system of Mongolia. Thus, the ECOP does not have legal power to constitute EIAs or EMPs required by national laws as well as FAO and WWF environmental guidelines. Therefore, the ECOP can only be applied to activities that are legally not required to conduct EIA.

According to the national environmental impact legislations, baseline reports for general EIA (GEIA) has to be submitted to aimag Environment and Tourism Agencies (EPTA) and other relevant stakeholders including local communities of target soums/baghs and to the client for review and official comments. The aimag EPTA will issue official general EIA (GEIA) conclusion.

If it is required by GEIA, the project implementer is obliged to develop detailed EIA to be submitted to Environment and Tourism Agency (ETA) or MET for review and final approval.

##### **The Scope**

Overall, the project has the objective to conserve resilient dryland landscape and biodiversity that sustain inclusive, resilient livelihoods and secure multiple environmental benefits. In order to achieve this objective, numerous activities are planned. Some of these activities may have direct or indirect negative or positive impacts on the local environment and society. It has to be noted that the environmental impacts of the project are expected to be mostly positive.

Environmental and social safeguard guidelines of FAO and WWF cover extensive range of subjects including environmental, social, gender, natural disaster hazard, health and safety issues. This ECOP is mainly focused on environmental aspects as the Process Framework, Livelihood Restoration Plan and other documents sufficiently target social issues of the project.

The ECOP is an integral part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). It sets out standard practices and procedures for managing the potential negative impacts on local environment and rural communities of all civil works to be carried out.

Although the ECOP is based on the national laws and FAO and WWF Environmental and social safeguard guidelines, it serves as internal procedural document for the project and its contractors who will implement the project activities that pose minor impacts to surrounding environment.

Moreover, the ECOP does not replace or prevent development and enforcement of EIAs for its target activities, if EIA will be legally required by local authorities.

The Contractor cannot rely on complying with the code as a defense, if unlawful environmental harm cause will be caused.

### **The ECOP Beneficiaries**

The project may finance small-scale civil works related to infrastructure of NRs facilities and small-scale civil works interventions, such as renovation/rehabilitation of which may be financed under Component 3 by the project.

The ECOP provides guidance to the planning and implementation of the mitigation measures to be carried out by the contractor during the civil works activities. Moreover, it is a guide for various parties involved in the contract management such as PMU, Soum Governments, Bagh Leaders, and community groups.

*By developing and following an environmental management plan or system your business can demonstrate that all reasonable care is being taken to avoid causing environmental harm. Your business will be able to use this reasonable care, or due diligence, as a defense for compliance purposes.*

### **Control measures**

Suggested control measures are examples of ways of achieving the performance outcome and are considered minimum requirements for complying with this code of practice. In some cases, a number of compliance control measures may be listed for one process. In these cases, contractors are advised to aim for the control measure or combination of control measures that is most likely to achieve the performance outcome for that process. Alternatively, contractors may be able to meet a performance outcome in a manner that is not listed in this code of practice (effectively choosing your own control measure).

The environmental objectives relevant to the civil works for infrastructure are as follows:

- The activity will be operated in a way that protects the environmental values of air, waters, soil and wildlife;
- The activity will be operated in a way that protects the livelihood and cultural values of neighboring communities;
- The activity will be operated in a way that protects the environmental values of the acoustic environment; and
- Any wastes generated, transported, or received as part of carrying out the activity are managed in a way that protects environmental values.

Environmental management plan or system identifies environmental risks caused by the operation and puts activities in place to manage these risks.

## **Documentation**

The ECOP will be included as a separate annex in all bidding and contract documents. The Contractor will be made aware of and commit to this obligation and know that cost for implementation of the proposed measures is part of the construction cost. The ECOP also recommends simple measures to prevent impacts on the environment and people hygiene from latrine installation/operation, which will be done by contractors or local community members and community groups.

It sets out practices and procedures for managing the potentially negative impacts on the environment and rural communities and enhancing the positive impacts. The ECOP will be an integral part of all bidding and contract documents and contractors will have to make organizational and financial reservations to ensure compliance with the requirements of the ECOP.

This ECOP serves as main baseline for the project activities with minor or limited impacts, however it can be revised or improved depending on the specifics of contracted works.

## **The Project Interventions**

The project will implement priority interventions on-the-ground in line with management plans. This may include, but is not limited to, the implementation of BD monitoring plan, target communication events and trainings for local people and school children, restoration/rehabilitation of wildlife and nature resources, improving professional skills and capacity, and development of community based eco-friendly small business and strengthening of PA administration infrastructure (Output 3.1 - Activity 3.1.3.2).

The following protected areas will be supported as they are located within the project target site.

1. Toson Khulstai Nature Reserve;
2. Khar Yamaat Nature Reserve;
3. Bayantsagaan tal Nature Reserve;
4. Ulz goliin Ekh Nature Reserve;
5. Menengiin Tsagaan Khooloi Nature Reserve;
6. Jaran Togoo tal A and B part Nature Reserve; and
7. Valley of Khurkh-Khuiten rivers Local Protected Area.

The key purpose of this ECOP is to mitigate and minimize potential negative environmental impacts from primarily from small-scale infrastructure in NRs (Output 3.1.3). Also, some minor social impacts are foreseen.

As strengthening of the quality rather than the quantity of livestock and reduction of the grazing load are essential in the success of sustainable use of drylands, the technical interventions will have to be supported by the willingness of various stakeholders to actively participate.

This assistance will not be limited to technical interventions but may include information on the use of various financing mechanisms by herder groups to finance pasture management activities, technical assistance to strengthen animal health services, and livestock breeding and feeding practices.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Construction Supervision**

The responsibility for managing civil work or construction will be the contractor. The contractor shall appoint Environmental Manager who will be responsible for monitoring and auditing compliance of the projects with all environmental commitments set out in this ECOP and any other relevant environmental legislation.

### **Local Community Liaison**

The Contractor or the contractor's representative is to inform the neighbors affected by their works at the close of the contract and must establish a method for affected people to discuss issues, to give feedback or to lodge complaints if issues would arise.

It may be advisable to establish a simple Local stakeholder engagement plan/approach to provide information updates to local stakeholders and interested parties. The Local stakeholder engagement plan/approach will also be the point of contact for complaints regarding construction. The Construction Manager shall act immediately on any complaints received, and shall provide feedback to the Local stakeholder engagement plan/approach on how the complaint has been resolved. This process shall be in line with GRM process of the project.

### **Overall behavioral practices during construction activities**

- Minimize any disturbance or negative impact (in terms of waste, noise and inconvenience) sometimes caused by construction sites to the immediate environment and neighboring community or businesses if any; and
- Offensive behavior and language are not allowed at or near construction sites.

### **Construction site layout and housekeeping**

In planning the civil work or construction site layout, the contractor will ensure that a "good housekeeping" policy is applied at all times, and as far as reasonably practicable; that amongst other things:

- Perimeter fencing / hoardings will be regularly inspected repaired and repainted as necessary;
- All working areas will be kept in clean and tidy condition; adequate toilet facilities will be provided for all site staff; rubbish will be removed at frequent intervals and the site is kept clean and tidy; food waste will be removed frequently; any waste susceptible to spreading by wind or liable to spreading by wind or liable to cause litter will be stored in enclosed containers;
- Open fires will be prohibited at all times; all necessary measures will be taken to minimize the risk of fires (including wildfires);
- Storage sites, fixed plant and machinery, equipment and temporary buildings will be located to limit adverse environmental effects; and
- External lighting and illumination should not affect the amenity of residents or create a nuisance as well as excess light should not fall on sensitive ecological habitats.

## Clearance of site on completion

The contractor will clear and clean all working areas and accesses as work proceeds and when no longer required for the works. At the completion of the development all temporary buildings or vehicles not required during subsequent construction works shall be removed from the site. All land, including roads, footpaths, loading facilities or other land occupied temporarily shall be made good to the satisfaction of the local authority.

## Issues and Corresponding Prevention/Mitigation Measures

### Environmental Code of Practice applicable to development, renovation or rehabilitation activities related to small scale civil works.

Issue	Environmental Prevention/Mitigation Measure
Noise during construction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan activities in consultation with communities so that noisiest activities are undertaken during periods that will result in least disturbance;</li> <li>2. Noise levels must be maintained within the national permissible limits/standards and limited to restricted times agreed to in the permit;</li> <li>3. Use noise-control methods such as fences, barriers or deflectors (such as muffling devices for combustion engines)</li> <li>4. Minimize transportation of construction materials through community areas during regular working time;</li> <li>5. Maintain a buffer zone (such as open spaces, row of trees or vegetated areas) between the project site and residential areas to lessen the impact of noise to the living quarters</li> </ol>
Soil Erosion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement suitable design (e.g. establish appropriate erosion and sediment control measures) use mulch, grasses or compacted soil to stabilize exposed areas;</li> <li>2. If the topsoil is not used directly during the operation, it will be stored in a special area;</li> <li>3. Cover with topsoil and re-vegetate construction areas once work is completed</li> </ol>
Air Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minimize dust from exposed work sites by applying water on the ground regularly</li> <li>2. Do not burn site clearance debris (trees, undergrowth) or construction waste materials</li> <li>3. Keep stockpile of aggregate materials covered to avoid suspension or dispersal of fine soil particles during windy days or disturbance from stray animals</li> </ol>
Water quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activities should not affect the availability of water for drinking and hygienic purposes</li> <li>2. No construction materials, solid wastes, toxic or hazardous materials should be poured or thrown into water bodies for dilution or disposal</li> <li>3. The flow of natural waters should not be obstructed or diverted to another direction, which may lead to drying up of river beds or flooding of settlements</li> </ol>
Solid and hazardous waste	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and transport construction waste to appropriately designated waste dump sites</li> <li>2. Maintain waste (including soil for foundations) at least 300 meters from rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands</li> <li>3. Use a secured area for refueling and transfer of other toxic fluids distant from settlement area and on a hard/non-porous surface</li> <li>4. Train workers on correct transfer and handling of fuels and other substances and require the use of gloves, boots, aprons, eyewear and other protective equipment for protection in handling highly hazardous materials</li> <li>5. Collect and properly dispose of maintenance materials such as oily rags, oil filters, used oil, etc.</li> </ol>
Environmental awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reforestation/forest patch rehabilitation. The contractor has to ensure that all replanting activities are carried out at the correct time, with the correct tree species and with the use of the appropriate techniques.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. All newly planted trees must be adequately protected against rodent and other wildlife damage.</li> <li>3. New plantings must be protected against fire damage, by using techniques such as clearing of the neighborhoods and adequate weeding</li> <li>4. Training of herder groups in the implementation of interventions such as joint patrolling and development of community based eco-friendly activities</li> <li>5. Provision of technical assistance for implementation of the conservation measures</li> </ol>
Workers Health and safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide personal protective gear for workers as necessary (gloves, dust masks, hard hats, boots, goggles)</li> <li>2. Keep worksite clean and free of debris on daily basis</li> <li>3. Keep corrosive fluids and other toxic materials in properly sealed containers for collection and disposal in properly secured areas</li> <li>4. Ensure adequate toilet facilities for workers from outside of the community</li> <li>5. Rope off construction area and secure materials stockpiles/ storage areas from the public and display warning signs. Do not allow children to play in construction areas</li> <li>6. Fill in all earth borrow-pits once construction is completed to avoid standing water, water-borne diseases and possible drowning</li> <li>7. Each construction sub-project to have a basic first-aid kit with bandages, disinfection materials, etc.</li> </ol>
Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No cutting of trees or destruction of vegetation other than after approval by local authorities</li> <li>2. No hunting, fishing, capture of wildlife or collection of plants</li> <li>3. No use of unapproved toxic materials including hazardous materials such as lead-based paints, asbestos, etc.</li> <li>4. No disturbance of cultural or historic sites</li> </ol>
General	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include facilities for proper disposal of health and biological wastes if any (syringes, blood, etc.)</li> <li>2. Encourage environmental awareness and responsibility amongst staff by providing appropriate staff training. It is your staff who will ensure that your operation remains compliant by recognizing and minimizing environmental hazards.</li> </ol>
Potential impact to cultural heritage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A chance find procedure will be included in all contracts (see below).</li> </ol>

### **Chance find procedure**

The following chance find procedure must be included in all third-party contracts (e.g. Letters of Agreement), in instances where the contracted party is assisting with implementation of the project.

If the Contractor discovers archeological sites, historical sites, remains and objects, including graveyards and/or individual graves during project implementation, the Contractor shall:

- Immediately suspend the activities in the area of the chance find;
- Delineate the discovered site or area;
- Secure the site to prevent any damage or loss of removable objects. In cases of removable antiquities or sensitive remains, a night guard shall be arranged until the responsible local authorities or the National Culture Ministry take over;
- Notify the Safeguards Specialist in the PMU who, in turn, will notify the responsible local and provincial authorities immediately (within 24 hours or less);
- Responsible local and/or provincial authorities would be in charge of protecting and preserving the site before deciding on subsequent appropriate procedures. This would require a preliminary evaluation of the

findings to be performed by government approved archeologists. The significance and importance of the findings should be assessed according to the various criteria relevant to cultural heritage; those include the aesthetic, historic, scientific or research, social and economic values;

- Decisions on how to handle the finding shall be taken by the responsible local and provincial authorities. This could include changes in the layout (such as when finding an irremovable remain of cultural or archeological importance) conservation, preservation, restoration and salvage;
- Implementation for the authority decision concerning the management of the finding shall be communicated in writing by relevant local authorities; and
- Project activities could resume only after permission is given from the responsible local or provincial authorities concerning safeguard of the heritage.

Note that the reporting of chance finds only occurs when an item/area/etc. of cultural significance is found, and is only carried out insofar as what is detailed above (i.e. reporting the find, reporting how the item/area will be treated moving forward). Reporting begins with the local level implementer (e.g. staff tasked to the implement the project within a village) notifying the PMU, after which, the Safeguards Specialist guides the process according to the instructions above (e.g. notifying the relevant government authorities).

#### Environmental Codes of Practice for Latrines installation

Issues	Environmental Measures
Latrine Location	Should be located more than 30 meters of an existing water supply wells or surface water body, unless a lack of available site area.
	Located Downstream from water resources wherever possible
	Should be located in a place where its odor cannot reach the house or the kitchen.
	The latrine pits should be at least two meters above water table, particularly where groundwater is used for drinking. The site should be well drained and above flood level.
	Should not be built upstream of a well, particularly in areas of fissured rocks such as limestones, since bacterial pollution may be carried directly to a well through cracks and joints in the rocks to a well.
Latrine Installation/ Operation	Earth up soil/pave concrete around sub-foundation to avoid stagnant water accumulating around the latrine.
	Keep the latrine floor clean by cleaning with water regularly.
	Provide hand washing facilities (water, soap) near the latrine at all time.

## Annex 4: Grants and Risk Funds Procedure for Community Groups

### The Objective

This procedure will regulate selection of beneficiaries and implementation process of the grants and contribution to risk funds.

Currently, not all community groups do not have operational bylaws and their proper enforcement. Moreover, decision making process amongst community groups is not always transparent and consistent. Therefore, this creates enabling condition to unintentionally finance environmentally unsustainable practices that might result environmental degradation and social conflicts.

“Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia” project (the project) will support mechanisms for climate resilient pasture and livestock management that secures sustainable livelihoods implemented as a part of landscape management under Output 2.2.3 and 3.1.3.

The procedural focus mainly on the following cost categories:

- Contribution to risk fund for pasture management groups (2.2.3); and
- 'Grant for eco-friendly small businesses in NR buffer zone (3.1.3).

It will establish or strengthen risk funds or other financing mechanisms (such as user fees or local tax) to finance pasture management activities (co-financed by local government or herder groups). This will take into account existing good practices, such as the communal monetary fund established in Bayan-Adraga soum (Activity 2.2.3.1).

The project will make direct financial contribution to risk fund for pasture management groups. The budget for this activity is approximately 45,000 USD or over 120 million MNT. Although the total amount is not that considerable, but this is quite rare experience by international projects to directly make financial funding to the risk funds of local community groups. The funded capital can be used quite autonomously by the herder groups and partnerships.

The project will provide technical assistance and inputs for conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men), such as beekeeping, growing medicinal plants, and nature-based tourism in buffer zone/adjacent areas (Activity 3.1.3.3).

This can have some foreseen impact financing of environmentally unsustainable practices that might harm local environment. Therefore, Green Focus Facilitator NGO (the consultant) decided to develop this Procedures for Mutual Funds Expenditure for Community Groups (the procedure). It was designed in compliance with national laws and environmental and social safeguard guidelines of FAO and WWF.

The procedure purpose is to mitigate and minimize potential negative environmental and social impacts from financing of environmentally unsustainable practices.

Project provides funding for local partnerships which meet the programme aim and are delivering clear outcomes as a result of their work. Grants are awarded to local partnerships which have identified clear development needs.

The procedure is supplementary to the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The procedure serves as internal procedural document for the project and its contractors who will implement the project activities that pose minor impacts to surrounding environment.

### **The beneficiaries**

The procedure provides guidance to the expenditure of the mutual fund to be carried out by the community groups. Moreover, it is a guide for various parties involved in the contract management such as PMU, Soum Governments, Bagh Leaders, and community groups.

The PMU, its contractors and related local authorities shall provide corresponding technical, legal and environmental expertise support to the beneficiary community group.

### Eligibility Requirements

Applying entity:

- Applicants must be citizen of target soums and aimags as defined in the Project documentation.
- Target are of the project include 9 soums and 3 cities of Khentii, Dornod and Sukhbaatar provinces.
- Applicants must agree to the Grant Terms & Conditions.

### **GRANT TERMS & CONDITIONS**

#### Grant Procedures

- Grant shall be solely used in line with purposes of this project
- Grant shall be awarded in installments, rather than one-off single sum
- The beneficiary shall responsibly disburse the fund for committed activities under project and results shall be report in timely manner before applying for the next installment. Failure of meeting this requirement may cease further financing.
- Next installments of grant will proceed further if the evaluation result that the beneficiary's activities had minimal or no adverse environmental impacts or improved environmental protection
- Any items on the "What We Don't Fund" list in the Grant Terms & Conditions shall be rejected or discontinued if it causes social and environmental adverse impact.
- To describe the terms and conditions of the funding and have it approved by the stakeholders.
- To sign a contract with the beneficiary community group, and specify his/her rights and obligations.

#### Funding Scope

- Project beneficiary must be the resident of the target soum or aimag center;
- Selection of project beneficiary shall be free from any sort of discriminations by gender, political party membership or family relationships;
- The project beneficiary community group shall have open and transparent principles to all the members and received funding should be spent for the activities supported by the majority votes of the group members;
- The funding need of the project beneficiary community group should be justified by its goals and related activities; and
- Outcome of the funded activity shall maintain sustainability after the funded activity implementation.

### Prohibited activities for the funding

- Requested activity for the funding should not expose any threats or conflicts to health and safety, livelihood and interests of other community groups;
- Due to the project overall goal, the funding shall not be spent for increasing heads of livestock;
- If the activity increases wildfire safety risks and vulnerability (specially machineries shall have a spark arrestor);
- If the activity will threaten wildlife and their habitats;
- Any activity that requires purchase and use of chemical contents;
- Activities which produce large amount of waste or do not have proper and practical waste management procedures;
- The activity violates national laws and regulations as well as FAO and WWF environmental and social requirements; and
- The equipment and tools or any other items required for the implementation of the activity should not be proposed at prices higher than the market price.

### Reporting:

- Develop and submit periodic reporting required by the project;
- Immediate communication or written reports (if necessary) is required if there are urgent or unexpected issues will occur during the funded activity implementation;
- If EIA is not required, the ECOP shall be followed accordingly and corresponding reports should be submitted to the project

## Annex 5: Screening Tool

This screening tool needs to be filled out for each activity or category of activities included in the annual work plan and budget. In addition, the screening tool needs to be completed whenever management measures or management plans are developed and/or when project intervention areas are determined (such as for pastureland restoration or forest management).

The tool will be filled out by relevant project staff and consultants and reviewed by the Safeguards and Gender Specialist. The decision on whether a Site-Specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), a Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) and/or an Ethnic Groups Plan is required shall be made by the Safeguards and Gender Specialist in consultation with the NPM, based on the information provided in this screening form, as well as interviews with PMU staff, MET, local communities, and any other relevant stakeholders.

### Part 1: Basic information

1	Description of activity	
2	Type of activity	New activity <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation of activity <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Activity location	
4	Total size of site area	
5	Activity implementation dates	
6	Total cost	

### Part 2: Eligibility screening

No.	Screening question	Yes	No	Comments / explanation
	<i>Would the project activity?</i>			
1	Lead to land management practices that cause degradation (biological or physical) of the soil and water?			
2	Negatively affect areas of critical natural habitats or breeding ground of known rare/endangered species, in or outside Nature Reserves (NRs)?			
3	Involve the development of irrigation schemes or reservoirs?			
4	Significantly increase GHG emissions?			
5	Use genetically modified organisms or modern biotechnologies or their products?			
6	Introduce crops and varieties that previously did not grow in the implementation areas?			
7	Develop forest plantations?			
8	Result in the loss of biodiversity, alteration of the functioning of ecosystems, and introduction of new invasive alien species?			
9	Procure or supply pesticides or result in an increase in the use of pesticides?			
10	Lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation of people, including non-titled and migrant people?			
11	Contribute to exacerbating any inequality or gender gap that may exist?			
12	Involve child labour?			

No.	Screening question	Yes	No	Comments / explanation
13	Adversely affect indigenous peoples' rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, and culture or heritage (physical and non-physical or intangible) inside and/or outside the project area?			
14	Negatively impact areas with cultural, historical or transcendent values for individuals and communities?			
Please provide any further information that can be relevant:				

If all answers are “No”, project activity is eligible and move to Part 2.

If at least one question answered as “Yes”, the project activity is ineligible and needs to be revised.

## Part 2: Impact screening

No.	Screening question	Yes	No	Comments / explanation
<i>Would the project activity?</i>				
<b>Environmental impacts</b>				
1	Involve clearance of existing land vegetation?			
2	Trigger land disturbance, erosion, subsidence or instability?			
3	Result in significant use of water, such as for construction?			
4	Result in environmental pollution?			
5	Generate significant amounts of solid wastes or wastewater?			
6	Produce dust during construction and operation?			
7	Generate significant ambient noise?			
8	Increase the sediment load in the local water bodies?			
9	Change on-site or downstream water flows?			
10	Negatively affect water dynamics, river connectivity or the hydrological cycle in ways other than direct changes of water flows (e.g. water filtration and aquifer recharge, sedimentation)?			
<b>Impacts on biodiversity</b>				
11	Result in negative impacts to any endemic, rare or threatened species; species that have been identified as significant through global, regional, national, or local laws?			
<b>Climate change impacts</b>				
12	Could the activity potentially increase the vulnerability of local communities to climate variability and changes (e.g., through risks and events such as landslides, erosion, flooding or droughts)?			
<b>Socio-economic impacts</b>				
13	Negatively impact existing tenure rights (formal and informal) of individuals, communities or others to land, fishery and forest resources?			
14	Restrict access to natural resources (e.g., watersheds or rivers, grazing areas, forestry, non-timber forest products) or restrict the way natural resources are used, in ways that will impact livelihoods?			

No.	Screening question	Yes	No	Comments / explanation
15	Restrict access to sacred sites of local communities (including ethnic minorities) and/or places relevant for women's or men's religious or cultural practices?			
<b>Health and safety</b>				
16	Involve any risks related to the usage of construction materials, working high above the ground or in canals where slopes are unstable?			
17	Expose local community to risks related to construction works or use of machinery (e.g., loading and unloading of construction materials, excavated areas, fuel storage and usage, electrical use, machinery operations)			
<b>Ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups</b>				
18	Undermine the customary rights of local communities to express free, prior, informed consent to interventions directly affecting their lands, territories or resources?			
19	Negatively affect vulnerable groups (such as ethnic minorities, poorer households, migrants, and assistant herders) in terms of impact on their economic or social life conditions or contribute to their discrimination or marginalization?			
<b>Community conflicts</b>				
20	Stir or exacerbate conflicts among communities, groups or individuals? Also considering dynamics of recent or expected migration including displaced people.			
21	Generate conflicts or pressure on local resources between temporary workers and local communities?			

**Screening tool completed by:**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Screening conclusions (by Safeguards and Gender Specialist):**

i. Main environmental issues are:

ii. Permits/clearance needed are:

iii. Main social issues are:

- iv. Further assessment / investigation needed and next steps
  - a. Need for any special study:
  
  - b. Preparation of ESMP or LRP (and main issue to be addressed by the ESMP):
  
  - c. Any other requirements / need / issue:

**Screening tool reviewed by:**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Exclusion list**

The following practices and activities will not be supported by the project:

1. Land management practices that cause degradation (biological or physical) of the soil and water.
2. Activities that negatively affect areas of critical natural habitats or breeding ground of known rare/ endangered species, in or outside Nature Reserves (NRs).
3. Development of irrigation schemes and construction of reservoirs.
4. Actions that represent significant increase in GHG emissions.
5. Use of genetically modified organisms, or the supply or use of modern biotechnologies or their products in crops.
6. Introduction of crops and varieties that previously did not grow in the implementation areas, including seed import/transfer.
7. Development of forest plantations.
8. Actions resulting in loss of biodiversity, alteration of the functioning of ecosystems, and introduction of new invasive alien species.
9. Procurement of pesticides or activities that result in an increase in the use of pesticides.
10. Activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation.
11. Activities that do not consider gender aspects or contribute to exacerbating any inequality or gender gap that may exist.
12. Child Labour.
13. Activities that would adversely affect indigenous peoples' rights, lands, natural resources, territories, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, and culture or heritage (physical and non-physical or intangible) inside and/or outside the project area.
14. Activities that would negatively impact areas with cultural, historical or transcendent values for individuals and communities.

## Annex 6: List of Mongolian National Standards (MNS) applicable to the ESMP

#	Name of Mongolian National Standard (MNS)
1	MNS 17.5.13. 1980. Environmental Protection: Rehabilitation of eroded land, terms and definitions
2	MNS 5914:2008. Environment. Land reclamation. Terms and definitions
3	MNS 5915:2008. Environment classification of land destroyed due to mining activities
4	MNS 5916:2008. Environment Requirements for fertile soil removing and its temporary storage during the earth excavation
5	MNS 5917:2008. Environment. Reclamation of land destroyed due to mining activities. General technical requirements
6	MNS 5918:2008. Environment. Re-vegetation of destroyed land. General technical requirements
7	MNS 4191:1993. Environmental protection standard system. Baseline climate parameters of Mongolia
8	MNS 4585:2016. Air quality. General technical requirements
9	MNS 4991:2000. Occupational safety and health. Requirement for method of determination of toxic substances concentration in the air of working zone
10	MNS 5885:2008. Acceptable concentration of air pollutant elements. General technical requirements
11	MNS 3384:1982. The general and technical requirements for sampling of air quality test
12	MNS 6063:2010. Air quality. Acceptable concentration of pollutant elements for atmospheric air in public area
13	MNS 5803:2007. Occupational safety and health. General requirements for lead content in workplace air and the workplace
14	MNS 3383:1982. Atmosphere. Terms and definitions of pollutant sources
15	MNS 17.2.1.01:1978. Atmosphere. Terms and definitions of pollutant sources generated from internal combustion engine
16	MNS 3113:1981. Atmosphere. General requirement for determining air pollutants
17	MNS 5013:2009. Petrol engine vehicle – Maximum acceptable level and measuring method of exhaust emission
18	MNS 5014:2009. Diesel engine vehicles – Maximum acceptable level and measuring methods of opacity
19	MNS 5010:2001. General requirement for measuring dust concentration in the atmosphere of work area
20	MNS 17.1.1.10:1979. Water. Water use and protection. Terms and definitions.
21	MNS 17.1.1.14:1980. Hydrosphere. Classification of water use. General requirement
22	MNS 4047:1988. Hydrosphere. Procedure for monitoring surface water quality
23	MNS 4586:1998. Water quality. General requirements
24	MNS ISO 5667-14:2000. Guidance on quality assurance of environmental water sampling and handling
25	MNS ISO 5667-3:1999. Water quality. Sampling. Part 3: Guidance on processing and storage of samples
26	MNS 3342:1982. General requirement for preventing from groundwater pollution
27	MNS ISO 5667-11:2000. Water quality. Sampling. Part 4: Guidance on sampling of groundwater
28	MNS ISO 5667-4:2001. Environment. Water quality. Part 4: Guidance on sampling from natural and man-made lakes
29	MNS ISO 5667-6:2001. Environment. Water quality. Part 6: Guidance on sampling of rivers and streams
30	MNS 6148:2010. Water quality. Maximum limit of substance contaminating the ground water
31	MNS 0900:2005. Drinking Water. Hygienic requirements, and assessment of quality and safety
32	MNS ISO 5667-5:2001. Environment. Water quality. Part 5: Guidance on sampling of drinking water and water for beverage production
33	MNS 2573:1978. Hydrosphere. Water quality parameters
34	MNS 4943:2015. Water quality. Effluent treated wastewater. General requirements
35	MNS ISO 5667-10:2001. Environment. Water quality. Part 4: Guidance on sampling of waste waters
36	MNS 6230:2010. Identification of wastewater discharge point. General requirements
37	MNS 5924:2015. Pit latrine and sewage pit. Technical requirements
38	MNS 3474:2003. Plant protection. Terms and definitions.
39	MNS 3475:2003. Plant quarantine. Terms and definitions.
40	MNS ISO 11269-1:2002. Soil quality. Methods to determine effects of the plant pollutants in soil. Part 1: Method to measure cease of plant root growth.
41	MNS ISO 11269-2:2013. Soil quality. Determination of the effects of the plant pollutants in soil. Part 2: Germination of upper plants in polluted soil.
42	MNS 5850:2008. Soil quality. Soil pollutants elements and substance

43	MNS 3297:1991. Environment protection. Soil. The norm for sanitary condition of soil in town and residential areas.
44	MNS 3298:1991. Soil. General requirements for sampling.
45	MNS 3985:1987. Soil. Sanitation parameters.
46	MNS 2305:1994. Soil. Procedure for sampling, packaging, transportation and storage.
47	MNS 5546:2005. General requirements for assessment of soil erosion and degradation of vegetation cover in pasture lands.
48	MNS 4968:2000. General requirements for production processes.
49	MNS 4930:2000. Safety of machinery. General requirements.
50	MNS 4969:2000. Organization of a training. Basic rules.
51	MNS 4643:1998. Occupational safety. Color of safety signs.
52	MNS 4994:2000. Occupational safety and health. Vibration. Requirement for general safety.
53	MNS 4994:2000. General requirements for measuring vibration.
54	MNS 5029:2011. Occupational safety and health. Label and marking of toxic and hazardous chemicals
55	MNS 5079:2001. General safety requirements for loading and unloading.
56	MNS 5105:2001. Occupational safety. Industrial hygiene. Hygiene protection areas norm, general requirements.
57	MNS 5146:2002. Occupational safety. Industrial hygiene. Electric safety. Protective conductive earth, neutralling.
58	MNS 5150:2002. Electric safety. General requirement.
59	MNS 5145:2002. Electric safety. Maximum voltage and maximum level of current.
60	MNS 5149:2002. Industrial hygiene. Power frequency electric fields. Permissible levels of field strength and requirements for control at workplaces.
61	MNS 0012.4.005:1985. Device and method for protection from noise.
62	MNS 5003:2000. General requirements for the measurements of noise.
63	MNS 5002:2000. Occupational safety and health. Noise. Requirements for general safety.
64	MNS 12.1.016:1988. Excessive noise. General safety requirements.
65	MNS 4990:2015. Occupational safety and health. Occupational hygiene. Workplace environment. Requirement of hygiene.
66	MNS 4931:2000. Personal protective equipment. Types and general requirements.
67	MNS 5621:2006. Head protection equipment-Hard hat.
68	MNS 5388:2004. Hearing protection equipment (ear plug, ear muff). General technical requirements.
69	MNS 5389:2004. Eye protection equipment-Goggles.
70	MNS 5620:2006. Respiratory protection equipment. (mask, respirator (filtering device), powered respirators).
71	MNS 5622:2011. Safety gloves. General requirements.
72	MNS 5623:2006. Foot protection equipment. Safety boots.
73	MNS 5566:2005. Protection against fire. Fire protection instrument for building. Technical requirements.
74	MNS 4244:1994. Fire safety. General requirements.
75	MNS 5390:2004. Occupational safety and health. Fire safety of electricity. General requirements.
76	MNS 5344:2011. General requirements for transportation of domestic waste.
77	MNS 5282:2003. Fire safety of petroleum products. General requirements.
78	MNS 3629:1983. Petroleum, petroleum product. Packaging, labelling and transportation.
79	MNS 4628:2013. Fuel station. General technical requirements.
80	MNS 4596:2014. Use of road signage, traffic light, protective bracket, and direction signs.
81	MNS 5342:2007. Parking lot. Classification and general requirements.
82	MNS 4597:2014. Road signs. General technical requirements.
83	MNS 6515:2015. Passages for wild ungulates altogether highways and railways in steppe and gobi areas. General requirements.
84	MNS 5645:2006. Transportation of construction materials in pieces and bulk. Classification, transportation condition. General requirements.
85	MNS 12.3.004:1983. Technical service and maintenance of vehicles. General safety requirements.
86	MNS 4598:2011. General requirement for technical condition of vehicles.
87	MNS 4601:2011. Vehicle maintenance and repair system, definitions.
88	MNS 6515:2015. General requirements for construction of Wildlife Crossings along the auto and rail roads in the steppe and Gobi regions.

## Annex 7: Terms of Reference

### Terms of reference (TOR)

#### Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Site –specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)/Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for

#### GEF “*Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia*”

### Background and Introduction

The project “*Promoting Dryland Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Conservation in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia*” (“Eastern Steppe project”) is part of a global program led by FAO, the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (SFM/Drylands IP). In Mongolia, the project is jointly led by FAO and WWF, and will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in collaboration with other partners.

The objective of the project is to reverse and prevent dryland ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss through an inclusive, integrated landscape and value chain approach securing multiple environment benefits and sustainable, resilient livelihoods in the Eastern Steppe of Mongolia. The project interventions will be implemented in nine counties (*soums*) of the three eastern provinces (*aimags*) of Dornod, Khentii and Sukhbaatar, as well as at the aimag and national level. The project will be divided into four components, as follows.

Under **Component 1**, the project will strengthen cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration for integrated land management planning and monitoring. It will also support incorporation of land degradation and biodiversity considerations into the ongoing land management planning process; and will support the ongoing policy reform to promote sustainable land use.

Under **Component 2**, the project will strengthen sustainable dryland management in Eastern Mongolia through a three-pronged approach. First, the project will promote environmentally friendly, climate-smart crop and fodder production. Second, the project will work with local herder and forest communities in the target area to implement and scale up sustainable management and restoration of rangelands and forest patches. And third, the project will support partnerships between herder groups/cooperatives, local government and private sector to develop value chains and access to markets for sustainably produced livestock products.

Under **Component 3** of the project, the management capacity of Nature Reserves (NRs) and Local Protected Areas (LPAs) in connectivity areas will be strengthened to support survival of the Mongolian gazelle, the White-naped Crane, and other iconic migratory species. Priority interventions will be implemented to support enhanced management and connectivity of these protected areas, along with conservation-based income-generating opportunities for local communities (women and men) and sustainable financing mechanisms of the protected areas.

**Component 4** of the project will support effective project coordination, as well as the systematic creation and sharing of knowledge on sustainable dryland management and biodiversity conservation at the provincial, national and global levels. The project will also aim to strengthen LDN target monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

The proposed GEF project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), who will have the overall executing and technical responsibility of the project. The MET will act as the Lead Executing Agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the sub-agreements signed with FAO and WWF. As Lead Executing Agency of the project, MET is responsible for developing the safeguards related documents during PPG phase and their implementation as per the FAO Environmental and Social

Management (ESM) Guidelines<sup>39</sup> for the FAO-financed activities, and the WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP)<sup>40</sup> for the WWF-financing activities.

The project was screened against WWF Environmental and Social Framework and classified Medium-risk projects (Category B), meaning It have potential adverse social and/or environmental impacts, and a mitigation plan in accordance with the safeguards framework will need to be developed to address these.

The major risks identified includes but not limited to :

- 1) Risk that could potentially affect indigenous peoples' rights, including free, prior, and informed consent where appropriate. Potential risk of involuntary economic displacement from access restrictions to land and natural resources; and
- 2) Potential negative environmental impacts from small civil works (primarily from small-scale infrastructure in NRs under Output 3.1.3), if not carried out properly.

At this stage of project formulation only some specific sites within the defined project area have already been determined for concrete interventions (such as the Nature Reserves). The exact location of the project interventions will remain unknown before project implementation. To streamline the Environmental and Social instruments and develop the most appropriate mitigation measures, the "framework approach" and the "site-specific approach" were adopted respectively for the entire project and the know sites .

Accordingly, the **Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)** will be composed of the following three elements:

- 1) Process Framework (to address the 1) risk of access restrictions/involuntary resettlement);
- 2) Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework and FPIC process; and
- 3) Measures to mitigate and manage any environmental impacts of the proposed activities, such as through an Environmental Code of Practice for small civil works.

Where specific project activities are already known, the site-specific plans may include:

- 1) Site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plan/Livelihood Restoration Plan, and/or
- 2) Site-specific Indigenous People Plan.

## **Objective and Rationale of the Assignment**

The objective of the assignment is to conduct an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Site –specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)/Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP

- a) The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) is a framework instrument that examines safeguards issues and impacts of the Eastern Steppe project and/or a series of sub-projects. It will ensure that adverse environmental and social impacts are avoided or appropriately mitigated and/or compensated for. The specific purposes are to: 1) establish clear procedures and methodologies for the environmental and social assessment, review, approval and implementation of interventions to be financed under the project; 2) specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to program interventions; and 3) determine the training, capacity building and technical assistance needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF.
- b) Environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) is an instrument to identify and assess the potential environmental and social impacts of a proposed project, evaluate alternatives,

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4413e.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> [https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1204/files/original/Safeguards\\_Manual.pdf?1578070066](https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1204/files/original/Safeguards_Manual.pdf?1578070066)

and design appropriate mitigation, management, and monitoring measures. Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is an instrument that details (a) the measures to be taken during the implementation and operation of a project to eliminate or offset adverse environmental and social impacts, or to reduce them to acceptable levels; and (b) the actions needed to implement these measures. The overall objectives of the Site-specific ESIA/ESMP is to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments, for the know site of the Eastern Steppe project and prepare Site-Specific Environmental Management Plans (EMPs and other plans as may be required) based on Assessment findings.

### Outputs of the Consultancy

1. Draft Environmental and social Impact Assessment/Environmental and Social Management Plan (building on the already existing analysis), including but not limited to the Site-Specific Indigenous People Plan and/or Livelihood Restoration Plan. The study should also consider the brief report on the presence and identification of indigenous peoples in the project target areas based on internationally agreed definition (estimated 2 days)
2. Draft ESMF, composed of draft Process Framework and draft Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF)/draft FPIC process, to be discussed with MET, FAO, WWF US GEF Agency and the Project Team. (estimated 8 days)
3. Field consultations to discuss draft framework and site-specific plans with local communities. (estimated 10 days)
4. A final ESIA/ESMP report and final ESMF, composed of Process Framework, Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF)/FPIC process, and Environmental Code of Practice for small civil works. Where specific project activities are already known, the ESMF will also comprise site-specific plans for the sites. Final reports should be prepared after incorporating feedback and comments received from MET, FAO, WWF US Agency and the Project Team (estimated 8 days)
5. Proposed revisions, if any, to Annex I2 Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Grievance Redress Mechanism.
6. Executive Summary of the final documents will need to be translated to Mongolian for disclosure at site level (estimated 2 days)

### Reference and guidance:

The following project documents and reports serve as a reference for the assignment (available under this [Link](#)).

- Annex A2 Project Budget
- Annex H Work Plan
- Annex I2 Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Grievance Redress Mechanism (including summary of previous consultations held)
- Annex Q1 Social and Gender Analysis (including analysis of vulnerable/marginalized groups)
- Annex S1 Report on biodiversity
- Annex S2 METT assessment
- Annex T1 Land use report (including tenure analysis)
- Annex T2 Pasture management report
- Project Document (ProDoc)

**Indigenous peoples.** The target project areas include among others *khalkh*, *buryad*, *barga*, *uzemchin* and *dariganga* people. Although the social and gender analysis (Annex Q1) concluded that the *buryad* do not consider themselves as indigenous peoples, they have been considered as such by some stakeholders in the past (including other donor-funded projects). Furthermore, the use of local and national adapted terms may differ from the indigenous peoples' terminology used at international level. As a precautionary approach, the project therefore considers that indigenous peoples are present in the project site.

FAO and WWF adhere to the ILO Convention 169 definition of indigenous peoples when determining the relevance of the GEF Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples to this project. Indigenous peoples are defined by ILO Convention No. 169 as: (a) tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; or (b) peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions. Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply.

**Access restrictions.** Given that the activities proposed under the project include, but are not limited to, protected area management and pastureland management and restoration, FAO's environmental and social standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement and WWF's policy on Involuntary Resettlement may be triggered because the Project will help define and thereby potentially restrict access to natural resources and livelihoods activities. FAO and WWF policies prohibit forced evictions which include acts involving the coerced or involuntary displacement of individuals, groups, or communities from homes and/or lands and common property resources that were occupied or depended upon, thus eliminating or limiting the ability of an individual, group or community to reside or work in a particular dwelling, residence, or location without the provision of and access to, appropriate forms of legal and other protection. In addition, the project will exclude financing any activities that would lead to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation. However, economic displacement or restriction to livelihoods or access to natural resources may occur on a voluntary basis (e.g. as a result of negotiating through highly participatory consultations the establishment of collaborative management arrangements for pastureland and/or other natural resource sustainability parameters). This however will eventually only occur with the consent of the affected people and following a decision made with all required information at hand.

### **Specific Requirements of the Process Framework**

The Consultant will develop a Process Framework (PF) to establish a process by which members of potentially affected communities participate in project components, determination of measures necessary to achieve resettlement policy objectives, and implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities. This process framework delineates the criteria and measures which MET will follow in such cases to ensure that the affected persons are assisted to restore, replace or improve their livelihood in an approach which maintains the environmental sustainability of the protected areas. The PF also establishes mechanisms for redress of grievances that may arise during implementation, based on the initial process outlined in the ProDoc.

The PF will describe the process by which affected communities participate in implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities and mitigation measures. The purpose of this PF is to ensure participation of Project Affected People (PAP) while recognizing and protecting their interests and ensuring that they do not become worse off as a result of the project. Specifically, the PF will:

- Based on the project's draft work plan and the ProDoc, describe activities that may involve new or more stringent restrictions on use of natural resources in the project area.
- Establish the mechanism through which the local communities can contribute to the project, implementation and monitoring.
- Identify the potential negative impacts of the restriction on the surrounding communities.
- Describe the avoidance/mitigation measures required.
- Describe the grievance procedure or process for resolving disputes to natural resource use restrictions.

- Describe the participatory monitoring arrangements with neighboring community members.

The intent of the framework is to ensure transparency and equity, in the planning and implementation of activities by the project. This framework would detail the principles and processes for assisting communities to identify and manage any potential negative impacts of the project activities. Since the exact social impacts will only be identified during project implementation, the PF will ensure that mitigation of any negative impacts from project investments through a participatory process involving the affected stakeholders. It would also ensure that any desired changes by the communities in the ways in which local populations exercise customary tenure rights in the project sites would not be imposed but should emerge from a consultative process.

The PF will define the key steps for participation of key stakeholders, in particular local communities in project related activities and decisions, namely through social screening, community orientation and mobilization, mapping of local level or community resources and their utilization, development of investment plans at the village level and mitigation of possible social impacts, participatory monitoring and feedback, conflict resolution, etc. It will also define institutional arrangements for implementation of the participatory framework, including staffing, training and capacity development.

### **Specific Requirements for the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework and FPIC**

The objective of the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) is to clarify the principles, procedures and organizational arrangements to be applied to indigenous peoples for the proposed project. This framework will serve as a guideline to the MET to (a) Enable them to prepare an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP for activities proposed consistent with WWF's Environment and Social Safeguard Integrated Policies and Procedures and FAO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines), (b) Enable indigenous peoples to benefit equally from the project, and (c) Engage affected indigenous peoples in a Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) process.

The main objective of this indigenous peoples planning framework is to help ensure that activities are designed and implemented in a way that fosters full respect for indigenous peoples' identity, dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, and cultural uniqueness as defined by the indigenous peoples themselves to enable them to (i) receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits; (ii) do not suffer adverse impacts as a result of the project; and (iii) are able to participate actively in the project. This IPPF safeguards the rights of indigenous peoples to participate and equitably receive culturally appropriate benefits from the project. The IPPF is also to provide for the preparation, conduct and documentation of processes related to **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)**. The IPPF should include (i) measures to ensure that affected populations receive appropriate benefits; (ii) measures to mitigate the impacts that may result from the high risk activities; (iii) measures to include representatives of the affected indigenous communities in the Project Steering Committee and decision making processes during implementation; and (iv) budgetary allocations from within the project budget to ensure the adequate implementation of the plan.

As a precautionary measure, if the identification of indigenous peoples<sup>41</sup> becomes challenging or may cause any political or cultural conflict, and/or if project beneficiaries live in mixed (indigenous and non-indigenous) communities, then the objective of the consultancy would be to propose a process of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) for all relevant communities in the project areas. This FPIC process, based on FAO's FPIC procedures, would need to be developed and would only be applied to those activities that would affect communities and would be part of the project design and any stakeholder engagement plan developed as part of the project preparation.

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<sup>41</sup> A number of local, national and regional terms are used to describe indigenous peoples, including tribes, ethnic minorities, natives, indigenous nationalities, First Nations, aboriginals, indigenous communities, hill peoples and highland peoples. While for the purpose of this project proposal the term 'indigenous peoples' will be used for simplicity throughout this text, following the completion of the IPPF, a more locally adapted term maybe adopted.

FAO and WWF adhere to a policy of FPIC based on International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The project will follow the procedures outlined in the FAO step-by-step guidelines to develop the FPIC process for the project.<sup>42</sup>

The FPIC process will aim at (i) ensuring a positive engagement of indigenous peoples in the project; (ii) avoiding adverse impacts, or when avoidance is not feasible, minimizing, mitigating, or compensating for such effects, as per the indigenous peoples agreement; and (iii) tailoring benefits in a culturally appropriate way.

### **Duration**

The duration of the consultancy work shall be 30 days. The Consultancy work will start on May 4 and terminate on June 19, 2020 – pending agreement from MET, WWF Mongolia and WWF GEF Agency regarding national and organizational orders on travel restrictions/whether it is safe to travel (given global COVID-19). If domestic travel restrictions remain in place, the consultancy will be delayed or reformulated.

### **Management and reporting arrangements**

The consultancy work will report to the MET and the consultant will work closely with the WWF Mongolia. In addition, he/she should work in close coordination with the WWF GEF Agency's Safeguards Specialist, FAO GEF Project Manager and WWF GEF Project Manager.

### **Profile and qualifications of the consultancy**

The consultant / team should have a minimum of Master's degree preferably in Sociology Anthropology coupled with natural resource management with an experience of more than 8 years in the field of, social science working on Indigenous/Ethnic Peoples issues and Resettlement issues with multilateral banks such as WB, ADB and other international organizations. S/he should have experience in preparing RAPs, RPFs IPPFs and PF. He/she should be fluent in Mongolian and able to travel to all the project sites.

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6190e.pdf>

## **Annex 1: Content of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)**

### Executive summary

- a. Project description
- b. Significant risks/issues
- c. Stakeholder engagement undertaken
- d. Mitigation measures

### Introduction

- a. Project overview and justification
- b. ESIA process

1. Project description (may include/refer to information from other project reports)
  - 1.1. Project location and siting
  - 1.2. Description of project activities
  - 1.3. Identification of stakeholders/beneficiaries
2. Environmental and social baseline (may include/refer to information from other project reports)
  - 2.1. Current state of the environment and current socio-economic conditions in the project site area
  - 2.2. Potential future changes foreseen as a result of the planned activities
3. Impact assessment
  - 3.1. Significant environmental and social impacts
  - 3.2. Ranking of risks/impacts by significance
  - 3.3. Alternatives to project to avoid/minimize impacts
  - 3.4. Unintended outcome: impacts beyond the project's area of influence
4. Mitigation
  - 4.1. Discussion of mitigation hierarchy opportunities<sup>43</sup>
  - 4.2. Indicators to monitor mitigation effectiveness
  - 4.3. Review of applicable legislation (may refer to other project reports)
5. Stakeholder consultations undertaken
  - 5.1. Consultations on significant risks/impacts and mitigation actions
6. Recommendations
  - 6.1. Proceed/do not proceed with project
  - 6.2. Recommendations

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<sup>43</sup> Management of E&S risks adheres to a mitigation hierarchy:

- a. Avoidance of the E&S risks is the priority;
- b. Where avoidance is not feasible, minimize/reduce risks to acceptable levels; and
- c. Where residual impacts remain, compensate for/offset them whenever technically and financially feasible.

## Annex 2: Content of Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)

### Annex 1: Content of the Process Framework

The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities will be determined with the participation of affected communities. The Process Framework will include the following elements:

- A. *Project background.* The Framework will briefly describe the project and local context, how the project was prepared, including the consultations with local communities and other stakeholders, and the findings of any social analysis or surveys that informed design. It will describe project activities and potential impacts from these.
- B. *Participatory implementation.* This section will detail the participatory planning process for determining restrictions, management arrangements, and measures to address impacts on local communities. The roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders and the methods of participation and decision-making should be described; decision-making may include the establishment of representative local structures, the use of open meetings, and involvement of existing local institutions. Methods of consultation and participation should be in a form appropriate to local needs.<sup>44</sup>
- C. *Criteria for eligibility of affected persons.* The Framework will describe how the local communities will participate in establishing criteria for eligibility for assistance to mitigate adverse impacts or otherwise improve livelihoods. In cases with significant consultations and social analysis during preparation, these criteria may be included in the Framework. However, in most cases they will be developed, or at least refined, during implementation. This would typically be done as part of a participatory social assessment process described above. The eligibility criteria would determine which groups and persons are eligible for assistance and mitigation measures. The criteria may also distinguish between persons utilizing resources opportunistically and persons using resources for their livelihoods, and between groups with customary rights and non-residents or immigrants.

The Framework will identify vulnerable groups and describe what special procedures and measures will be taken to ensure that these groups will be able to participate in, and benefit from, project activities. Vulnerable groups are groups that may be at risk of being marginalized from relevant project activities and decision-making processes, such as groups highly dependent on natural resources, forest dwellers, Indigenous Peoples, groups or households without security of tenure, mentally and physically handicapped people or people in poor physical health, and the very poor.

- D. *Measures to assist the affected persons.* The Framework will describe how groups or communities will be involved in determining measures that will assist affected persons in managing and coping with impacts from agreed restrictions. The common objective is to improve or restore, in real terms, to pre-displacement levels, their livelihoods while maintaining the sustainability of the park or protected area. However, in some circumstances affected communities may agree to restrictions without identifying one-for-one mitigation measures as

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<sup>44</sup> It is common to include some form of participatory social assessment to inform the decision-making process. Such an assessment could develop a more in-depth understanding of: (a) the cultural, social, economic, and geographic setting of the communities in the project areas; (b) the types and extent of community use of natural resources, and the existing rules and institutions for the use and management of natural resources; (c) identification of village territories and customary use rights; (d) local and indigenous knowledge of biodiversity and natural resource use; (e) the threats to and impacts on the biodiversity from various activities in the area, including those of local communities; (f) the potential livelihood impacts of new or more strictly enforced restrictions on use of resources in the area; (g) communities' suggestions and/or views on possible mitigation measures; (h) potential conflicts over the use of natural resources, and methods for solving such conflicts; and (i) strategies for local participation and consultation during project implementation, including monitoring and evaluation.

they may see the long-term benefits of improved natural resource management. They may also forego practices in place of obtaining more secure land tenure and resource use rights.

- E. *Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism.* The Framework should describe how conflicts involving affected persons will be resolved, and the processes for addressing grievances raised by affected communities, households or individual regarding the agreed restrictions, criteria for eligibility, mitigation measures and the implementation of these elements of the Process Framework.
- F. *Implementation Arrangements.* The Framework should describe the implementation arrangements. The roles and responsibilities concerning project implementation of different stakeholders, including the grantee, affected communities, and relevant government agencies, will be described. This includes agencies involved in the implementation of mitigation measures, delivery of services and land tenure, as appropriate and to the extent that these are known at the time of project preparation.
- G. *Monitoring and evaluation arrangements* will also be described in the Framework, with more specific details for the Plan of Action designed during implementation. The Framework should include a budget for its implementation.

## **Annex 2. Content of the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework**

The IPPF should embody the following elements:

- An introduction to the types of components, subcomponents, and subprojects likely to be proposed for financing under the project;
- A short introduction to the indigenous peoples who might be affected by the project (ethnicity, demographics, socioeconomic situation, etc.);
- The potential positive and adverse effects of the project on the indigenous peoples;
- A plan to carry out social assessments for such programs/subprojects;
- A framework to ensure FPIC and consent processes with the affected IP's communities at each stage of the preparation and implementation of the project;
- Institutional arrangements (including capacity building where necessary) for screening project-supported activities, evaluating their effects on indigenous peoples, preparing IPPs, and addressing any grievances;
- Monitoring and reporting arrangements, including mechanisms and benchmarks appropriate to the project; and
- Disclosure arrangements for IPPs to be prepared under the IPPF.

### **Part III – Stakeholder engagement plan and grievance redress mechanism**

This section will include proposed revisions, if any, to the existing Annex I2.

### **Part IV – Environmental Code of Practice**

Measures to mitigate and manage any potential negative environmental impacts from small civil works (primarily from small-scale infrastructure in NRs under Output 3.1.3).

### **Part V – Site-specific actions plans**

Where possible, site-specific action plans will be included here (Environmental and Social Management Plan/ Livelihood Restoration Plan/ Indigenous People Plan). If not possible during the project design phase, these action plans will be developed during implementation, in line with the processes described in the ESMF.

A Plan of Action is developed together with affected communities to describe the agreed restrictions, management schemes, measures to assist the displaced persons and the arrangements for their implementation. The action plan can take many forms. It can simply describe the restrictions agreed to, persons affected, measures to mitigate impacts from these restrictions, and monitoring and evaluation arrangements. It may also take the form of a broader natural resources or protected areas management plan.

The following elements and principles may be included in the plan, as appropriate:

- Project background and how the plan was prepared, including consultations with local communities and other stakeholders;
- The socio-economic circumstances of local communities/herders especially herders permanently residing in the area;
- The nature and scope of restrictions, their timing as well as administrative and legal procedures to protect affected communities' interests if agreements are superseded or rendered ineffective;
- Any relevant existing and informal co-management agreements, and/or PA and soum/bagh-level agreements or commitments;
- The anticipated social and economic impacts of the restrictions;
- The communities or persons eligible for assistance;
- Specific measures to assist these people, along with clear timetables of action, and financing sources;
- Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) procedure (if relevant);
- Protected area and water protection zone boundaries and use zones;
- Implementation arrangements, roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, including government and non-government entities providing services or assistance to affected communities;
- Arrangements for monitoring and enforcement of restrictions and natural resource management agreements;
- Clear output and outcome indicators developed in participation with affected communities.

## **Part VI – ESMF implementation**

1. Roles and responsibilities for ESMF implementation.<sup>45</sup>  
The Framework should describe the implementation arrangements. The roles and responsibilities concerning project implementation of different stakeholders, including the grantee, affected communities, and relevant government agencies, will be described. This includes agencies involved in the implementation of mitigation measures, delivery of services and land tenure, as appropriate and to the extent that these are known at the time of project preparation.
2. Roles and responsibilities for ESMF oversight.<sup>46</sup>
3. Budgetary allocations from within the project budget to ensure the adequate implementation of the ESMF.
4. Timeframes specified for each mitigation action/measure.
5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

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<sup>45</sup> MET as the Executing Agency will have the overall responsibility for the implementation of the ESMF.

<sup>46</sup> FAO will be responsible for oversight of the FAO-funded activities, and WWF will be responsible for oversight of the WWF-funded activities.

## Annex 8: References

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- GEF Project Document: DSL. Annex Q: Social and Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan, Development Horizons Foundation funded by FAO & WWF, 2020
- GEF Project Document: DSL. Annex R: Capacity assessment and development report, FAO & WWF, 2019
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- GEF Project Document: DSL. Annex T: Report on land use and pastureland management, Elbegsaikhan.D & Batkhisig.B funded by FAO & WWF, 2019
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- GEF Project Document: DSL. Annex A1: Project Results Framework (Indicators), FAO & WWF, 2020
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- GEF Project Document: DSL. Annex H. Work Plan, FAO & WWF, 2020
- Policy on Indigenous and Tribal People, FAO, 2010
- Environmental and Social Management Guidelines, FAO, 2015
- Environment and Social Safeguards: *Integrated Policies and Procedures*, WWF, 2019
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- Annex 7. Procedures for Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Policy, WWF, 2019
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- ESSF: *Standard on Cultural Resources v1.0*, WWF, 2019
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- ESSF: *Standard on Protection of Natural Habitats v1.0*, WWF, 2019
- ESSF: *Standard on Stakeholder Engagement v1.0*, WWF, 2019
- Amur Heilong Ecoregion Complex Strategic Plan 2011-2020, WWF, 2019
- Environmental and Social Risk Identification – Screening Checklist, FAO, 2019
- Annex I1: Environmental and Social Risk Certification, FAO & WWF, 2020
- Section B: Environmental and Social risks from the project – ESM Plan, FAO & WWF, 2020

ILO Convention 169, ILO, 1989

Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, FAO, 2012