



**ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK & PROCESS FRAMEWORK & INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

**Securing a Living Amazon through Landscape Connectivity in Southern Guyana (GEF ID: 10288; WWF GEF ID G0019)**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
ESSF	Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
IPPF	Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework
KMCRG	Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group
KMPA	Kanuku Mountains Protected Area
NRDDB	North Rupununi District Development Board
NRW	North Rupununi Wetlands
NWFPs	Non-wood forest products
PAC	Protected Areas Commission
PAP	Project Affected People
PF	Process Framework
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SIPP	Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures
SLWM	Solid and Liquid Waste Management
SRDC	South Rupununi District Council
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Amazon Biome encompasses 6.70 million km<sup>2</sup> and is shared by eight countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana and Suriname), as well as the overseas territory of French Guiana (WWF, 2009). More than 40 percent of the rainforest remaining on Earth is found in the Amazon and it is home to at least 10 percent of the world's known species, including endemic and endangered flora and fauna. In addition, the Amazon River is the largest river basin in the world and accounts for 15% of the world's total river discharge into the oceans, flowing for more than 6,600 km and with its hundreds of tributaries and streams supporting a plethora of species, including over 3,000 fish species, 427 species of mammals, 1,300 species of birds, 100,000 invertebrates and 40,000 species of plants contained within the flooded ecosystem. More than 16,000 tree species within the Amazon Forest regulate temperature, precipitation and humidity, and are linked with regional climate patterns through hydrological cycles. Collectively, the Amazon contains 90-140 billion metric tons of carbon, the release of even a portion of which could accelerate climate change.

To support this globally significant landscape, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program (ASL) II in 2019, led by the World Bank as the GEF Agency. The program's objective is to improve integrated wetland management and conservation of ecosystems in targeted areas in the Amazon region, and includes Child Projects in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname. The proposed Child Project, **Securing a Living Amazon through Landscape Connectivity in Southern Guyana** (hereinafter: the **Child Project**), aims to strengthen landscape connectivity through improved management of the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA) and North Rupununi Wetlands (NRW) in southern Guyana, within Administrative Region 9 - Upper Takutu, Upper-Essequibo.

The area constitutes a globally significant biodiversity hotspot with a unique seasonal hydrological connection to the Amazon watershed, and a significant concentration of Indigenous peoples and titled lands with current and ancestral ties to these sites. Interventions for sustainable land and water management will secure the ecological integrity of the KMPA (thus reducing habitat fragmentation) and the maintenance of hydrological connectivity in the NRW, which is important for Indigenous livelihoods and biodiversity, and continued flow of ecosystem services. Interventions will also contribute to better planning decisions, thus ensuring that productive activities do not result in habitats becoming fragmented or hydrological connectivity being lost. Overall, this ensures that a large tract of contiguous land that supports forest and hydrological connectivity for key species (e.g. Jaguar, harpy eagle, giant river otter, arapaima and other fish) and local people is secured.

The Child Project will be partially financed by the Global Environment Fund and WWF is the implementing agency for this proposed GEF project. Hence, the WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF), as detailed in the Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP), apply to the project, and require the preparation of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Process Framework (PF), and Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF).

**The principles and procedures of the ESMF/PF/IPPF apply only to project activities that are funded through GEF.**

In general, the anticipated adverse environmental and social impacts on the population that resides within project affected areas are site-specific, reversible and can be readily mitigated. Thus, the project is classified as a “**Category B**” project<sup>1</sup> under the WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Categorization.

The overall Executing Agency for the Child Project is the Environmental Protection Agency of Guyana.

The Project comprises two sites: the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA) and the adjacent North Rupununi Wetlands (NRW). To the north of the NRW is the Iwokrama Forest reserve and to the south of the KMPA site are Indigenous lands, state lands and the Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area (see Figure 1). The two sites are described in Section 2.2 below.

### 1.1. Objective of the Environmental and Social Management Framework

The preparation of this ESMF was required in accordance with the WWF’s ESSF in order to identify and manage the environmental and social risks and impacts of the Guyana Child Project. The ESMF aims to outline the principles, procedures, and mitigation measures for addressing environmental and social impacts associated with the project in accordance with the laws and regulations of Guyana and with the ESSF.

Since the precise scope of activities that will be implemented as part of the project will only be determined during the implementation phase, site-specific social and environmental impacts are uncertain at this stage. Thus, the development of site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) is currently not feasible, and an ESMF is necessary to set out procedures for addressing potential adverse social and environmental impacts that may occur during project activities. Site-specific ESMPs will be developed pursuant to the guidance provided by this ESMF during project implementation.

The specific objectives of the ESMF include the following:

- Carry out a preliminary identification of the positive and negative social and environmental impacts and risks associated with the implementation of the Project.
- Outline the legal and regulatory framework that is relevant to the Project implementation.
- Specify appropriate roles and responsibilities of actors and parties involved in the ESMF implementation.
- Propose a set of preliminary recommendations and measures to mitigate any negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.
- Develop a screening and assessment methodology for potential activities, that will allow an environmental/social risk classification and the identification of appropriate safeguards instruments.
- Set out procedures to establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation and efficacy of the proposed mitigation measures.
- Outline requirements related to disclosure, grievance redress, capacity building activities, and budget required for the implementation of the ESMF.

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<sup>1</sup> A project may be designated as Category A (full or comprehensive Environment and Social Impact Assessment [ESIA] is required), Category B (partial assessment is required), or Category C (no further assessment is required).

## 1.2. Objective of the Process Framework

The Project triggers the WWF's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement as it may restrict or otherwise affect access to natural resources and the livelihood activities of project affected people (PAP). This Process Framework (PF) describes the process by which affected communities participate in identification, design, 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 rights and interests and ensuring that they do not become worse off as a result of the project. Specifically, the PF will:

- 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 design, implementation and monitoring, in collaboration with the local communities and adapted to the local context.
- Identify the potential negative impacts of the restriction on the surrounding communities.
- Specify the criteria for eligibility of economically displaced persons to receive compensation benefits and development assistance (no physical displacement will be allowed under this project).
- Describe the mitigation measures required to assist the economically displaced persons in their efforts to improve their livelihoods, or at least to restore them, in real terms, while maintaining the sustainability of the park or protected area, will be identified.
- Establish the grievance procedure or process for resolving disputes to natural resource use restrictions, in collaboration with the local communities and adapted to the local context.
- Describe the participatory monitoring arrangements with neighbouring community members.

As the project intends to enhance the livelihoods and resilience of indigenous peoples and local communities, the allocation of project benefits among local community members is particularly important. 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 PF will ensure that mitigation of any negative impacts from project investments through a participatory process involving the affected stakeholders and rightsholders. In the case of Indigenous communities, this will include a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process as detailed in the IPPF. It will also ensure that any desired changes by the communities in the ways in which indigenous peoples exercise customary tenure rights in the project sites would not be imposed but should emerge from a consultative process.

## 1.3. Objective of the Indigenous People Policy Framework

The project will take place on lands customarily, legally titled and used by a number of Indigenous communities as well as non-indigenous people. The Indigenous Peoples (IPs) within the project area include the Macushi Indigenous peoples, who live in 21 communities, consisting of approximately 7000 persons in the North Rupununi (also North Rupununi Wetlands) and the Wapishana Indigenous Peoples in the Central and South Rupununi, communities contiguous to the KMPA. There is also a small population of Indigenous Wai-Wai peoples, which live in Kanashen Village that is located to the south of the project sites, though these peoples are not direct stakeholders to the project. Associated with the Kanuku Mountains PA project site are 11 Indigenous villages and 7 satellite communities located around the KMPA. The population of these 11 communities and 7 satellites is not known.

Based on WWF's Policy on Indigenous Peoples, as well as the laws of Guyana, the people affected by this project would thus be considered Indigenous, ethnic or tribal minorities. An Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework thus has to be prepared.

The objective of the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) is to clarify the principles, procedures and organisational arrangements to be applied to indigenous peoples for the project. This framework will serve as a guideline to the Project Team to (a) Enable them to prepare Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs) for specific activities proposed consistent with WWF's Environment and Social Safeguard Integrated Policies and Procedures, (b) Enable IPs to benefit equally from the project, and (c) Engage affected IPs in a Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) process.

#### 1.4. ESMF/PF/IPPF Preparation Methodology

The ESMF/PF/IPPF was prepared relying on a thorough desk review analysis, as well as consultations with project stakeholders carried out between September and October 2022:

A local consultant and team including the EPA, PAC and WWF conducted eight community consultations in clusters with community participants traveling to a central location.

A total of 178 (94 male, 84 female) people from 28 communities participated in the eight consultations; 34 communities were invited including Rupunau, Sand Creek, Shea, Mururanau, Katoka, Simonie, Annai, Surama, Wowetta, Kwatamang, Aranaputa, Yakarinta, Massara, Kwaimatta, Toka, Rupertee, Rewa, Apoteri, Crashwater, Yupukari, Fly Hill, Kaicumbay, Quatata, Moco Moco, St. Ignatius, Quarrie, Kumu, Parikwarwaunau, Nappi, Hiowa, Parishara, Shulinab, Quiko and Meriwau. The communities which did not attend were Annai, Wowetta, Aranaputa, Shea, Crashwater and Meriwau; this was due to conflict with prior activities, poor road / impassable road conditions.

The consultations were an opportunity for executing agencies to provide information on the proposed project and for the local consultant to collect data necessary for the development of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the Safeguards Policy. Community participants were engaged and expressed interest in the project.

Inputs and feedback provided by consultations participants were integrated into the project documents and into this ESMF.

**In order to avoid duplications and for ease of reference, the ESMF, PF, and IPPF components are combined into a single document.**



## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This chapter outlines the objectives of the Guyana Child Project, its components, milestones, and major supported activities.

### 2.1. Project Objectives and Components

The project objective is ‘to strengthen landscape connectivity through improved management of the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area and North Rupununi Wetlands in southern Guyana.’ In particular, the project will work to integrate productive activities (forestry, agriculture, tourism) and sustainable land and water management considerations – so that the landscape’s long-term environmental health, functioning and associated ecosystem services are secured, while at the same time ensuring the landscapes provide livelihood and productive benefits.

The project will work in two landscapes, both of which balance productive use and ecosystem management/protection. The first is the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA). The KMPA is an IUCN Category VI Protected Area; therefore, the area promotes both the conservation of ecosystems and habitat and the use of natural resources in a sustainable manner. Local communities, including Indigenous communities, live near the PA and access the PA for traditional use. The second target landscape is the North Rupununi Wetlands (NRW). The NRW has a number of land uses (agriculture, logging, fishing, etc.), is bisected by the singular, national road throughfare, and is under a range of management regimes (indigenous titled lands, private lands, concessions granted through government agencies, state land). The wetland is also of regional and global significance, hosting important biodiversity and associated ecosystem services, as well as supporting hydrological connectivity (e.g., portals) between the Amazon and Essequibo River systems during the rainy season.

In KMPA, the project theory of change is that if infrastructure (rangers’ quarters and multi-use center), monitoring tools and equipment, and increased capacity of the Protected Area Commission (PAC) site-level team (through workshops, trainings, and exchanges) is in place, then PAC will have a stronger site level presence and will more effectively manage threats identified in the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT). If a resource use map and land-use plan for KMPA is developed, relying on a participatory approach through community consultation Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice surveys (which include traditional use and needs), and support from resource users and the communities, as well as training of community and government staff in holistic landscape management that incorporates traditional knowledge, environmental data etc., then the proper planning and capacity for sustainable use of natural resources in KMPA will be in place.

In NRW, the theory of change is that if through a robust consultation process, an active and representative multi-stakeholder platform is formed and receives salient, up-to-date and credible socioeconomic and environmental data, then this platform can support a participatory, integrated planning process (that may include, for example, land use planning and zoning) that promotes sustainable land and water management of the NRW. A long-term and representative governance mechanism shall be in place to guide better management of productive uses while securing the integrity and functioning of the wetlands. All activities shall be implemented to support environmentally sustainable production and wetland functioning/management.

The project’s objectives will be achieved through the following four inter-connected components:

- **Component 1:** Improving the management of the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA). Specifically, the project will support the strengthening of protected area management at the site level, with the involvement of Indigenous communities living around and utilizing the resources of the protected area. The project aims to accomplish this by: strengthening technical capacities of PA staff and other stakeholders; enhancing infrastructure and equipment for site-level management; enabling the continued involvement of local communities in PA management; and improving planning for sustainable natural resource-use within the PA.
- **Component 2:** Improving the management of the NRW landscape. Given that the landscape is allocated for productive uses by multiple stakeholder groups, the project will develop, through participatory approaches, an integrated wetland management strategy, which incorporates strategies for multi-stakeholder planning and decision-making, participatory resource monitoring, reduction of threats and pressures, and sustainable resource use practices and livelihoods. The project will also support the execution of activities in line with the sustainable management of land and water resources in the landscape, including community-based resource monitoring, sustainable use of forest resources, governance and capacity building, livelihoods and research.
- **Component 3:** Supporting a review of the PA Act, to identify gaps and develop recommendations for consideration by the Government.
- **Component 4:** Addressing regional and national coordination, cooperation, monitoring and evaluation, and knowledge sharing of experiences and lessons learned through the wider network of ASL initiatives.

## 2.2. Project Area Profile

The Child Project area lies in southern Guyana, within Administrative Region 9 - Upper Takutu, Upper-Essequibo. It is a globally significant biodiversity hotspot with a unique seasonal hydrological connection to the Amazon watershed, and a significant concentration of Indigenous peoples and titled lands with current and ancestral ties to these sites. The Project comprises two sites: the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA) and the adjacent North Rupununi Wetlands (NRW). To the north of the NRW is the Iwokrama Forest Reserve and to the south of the KMPA site are Indigenous lands, state lands and the Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area (see Figure 1). The two sites are described below.

### **Site 1: Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA)**

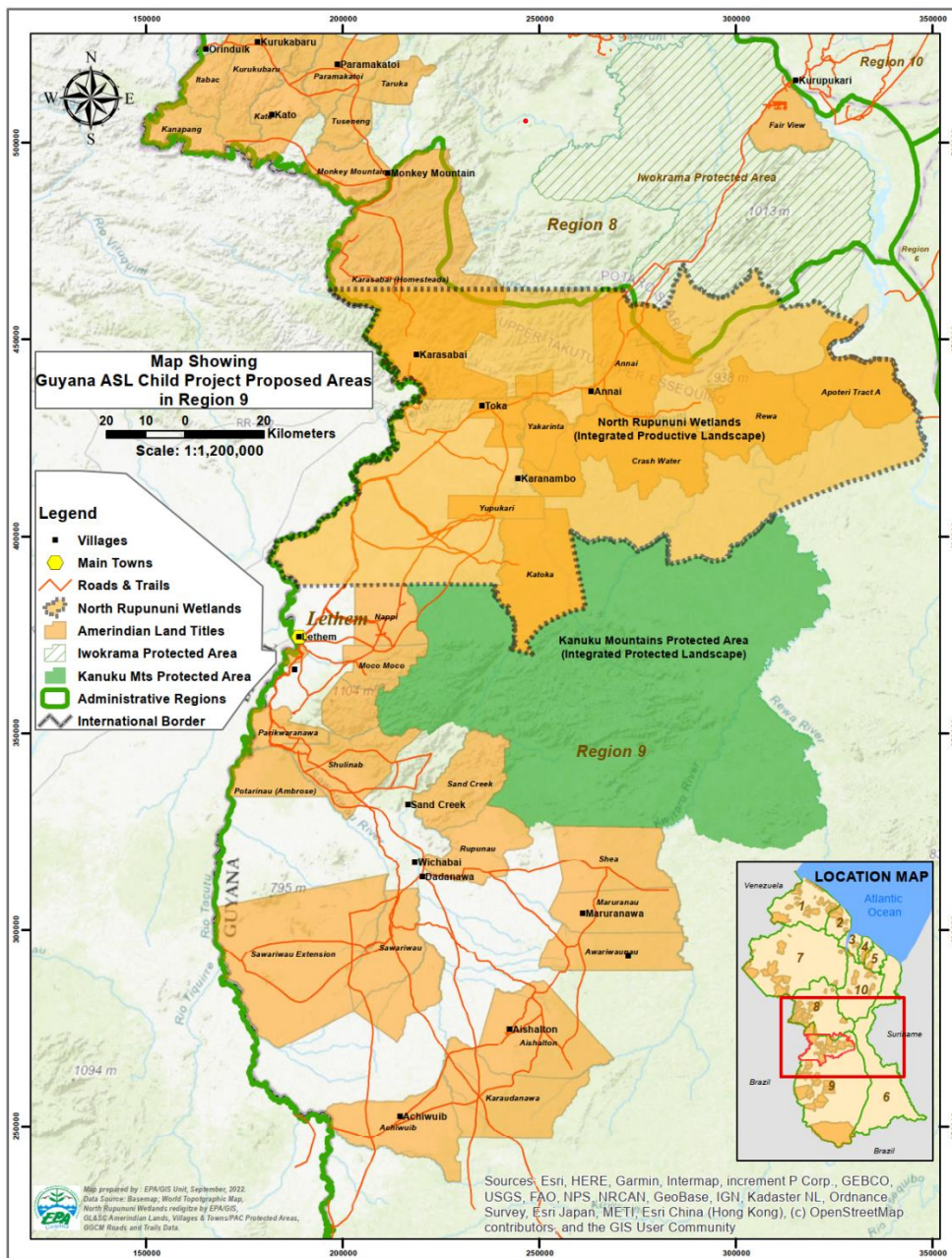
The Kanuku Mountains Protected Area is the second-largest Protected Area of the National Protected Areas System, which also consists of the Kaieteur National Park, Shell Beach Protected Area, Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation, Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area, (the only Indigenous owned Protected Area in Guyana) and the urban parks in Regions 3 and 4. The Kanuku Mountains are located in the Rupununi and are adjacent to the NRW. The enactment of the Protected Areas Act in 2011 provided the legal mechanism for the recognition and declaration of the KMPA as one of Guyana's national protected areas. It was established to conserve its high biodiversity and its environmental services so that it can contribute to the social and economic security of present and future generations of local communities, people in the wider region and further to all Guyanese. Please see the KMP Act for more detailed description.

### **Site 2: North Rupununi Wetlands (NRW)**

The NRW is located to the north of the Kanuku Mountains, within Administrative Region 9 - Upper Takutu, Upper-Essequibo, and encompasses approximately 9,018 square kilometers. The NRW is under a variety of land-uses (including commercial agriculture for rice, tourism, and logging) and land ownership, with a mosaic of titled community and Indigenous lands (see Figure 1 for a map of Indigenous titled lands), leased state-lands, state lands and private lands.

Finally, wetlands, including the NRW, are important for their role in carbon sequestration, and are effective carbon sinks.

**Figure 1: Map of Child Project Area: North Rupununi Wetlands and Kanuku Mountains Protected Area**



### 2.3. Demographic information

The project sites are located in Administrative Region 9 – Upper Takutu Upper Essequibo. The population of Region 9 is 24,238. The main administrative hub of the Region is the town of Lethem. The town is adjacent to the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area and is a mixed of Indigenous, Afro, Indo, Chinese, Brazilian etc. In the North Rupununi (also North Rupununi Wetlands) mainly Macushi Indigenous people live in 21 communities, which consists of approximately 7000 persons.

In the South Rupununi the population is made up of Indigenous Wapishana; there is a small population of Indigenous Wai-Wai peoples, which live in Kanashen Village, which is to the south of the project sites. Associated with the Kanuku Mountains PA project site are 11 Indigenous villages and 7 satellite communities located around the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area (KMPA). The population of these 11 communities and 7 satellites is not known (see KMCRG's Draft 5-year plan).

### 2.4. Indigenous Peoples and Vulnerable Groups

See Section 4.5. below.

### 2.5 Economic activity

#### **KMPA**

In KMPA, indigenous Macushi and Wapishana peoples live in the area around the protected area and practice traditional fishing, gathering of timber and non-timber forest products, and subsistence hunting within the protected area. Tourism and small-scale commercial fishing may also be practiced in the area.

The use of lands in KMPA for subsistence farming activities by the indigenous communities is a traditional practice which under the PA Act is allowed and actively exercised by the local people. Shifting agriculture is practiced; and part of the preparatory process of creating the farms involves the use of fire to burn and clear forest and unwanted vegetation and enrich the soil with nutrients for better growth of crops after planting.

For communities around the KMPA, as in the NRW, wood harvesting and gathering are still the primary source of housing and other building materials, as very few villagers can afford to purchase sawn lumber for building, or zinc or other imported materials for roofing. Whether round wood or sawn boards are used, the forest is still the only source for timber and many other materials for construction. In the KMPA, these actions are allowed at subsistence levels. There are no current timber concessions in the KMPA, however, some communities adjacent to the mountains have been extracting timber from within their titled lands for commercial purposes.

#### **NRW**

The NRW is the traditional home of the Indigenous Macushi people, who live in twenty-one communities within the area: Apoteri, Rewa, Crashwater, Annai, Surama, Wowetta, Rupertee, Kwatamang, Toka, Yakarinta, Massara, Kwaimatta, Yupukari, Kaikumbe, Kwatata, Katoka, Simone, Nappi, Parishara, Haiowa, and Moco-Moco (these include both main and satellite communities). These communities remain highly dependent on the natural resources of the NRW. Traditional livelihood activities are still being practiced, including subsistence farming, fishing, hunting and gathering of non-timber forest products, cattle rearing, brick making, craft and hammock making.

In the project site the main small to subsistence scale economic activities in the project areas include:

- Hunting and Fishing – the culture and livelihood of Indigenous communities are tied to these practices. Men primarily hunt and fish whilst women are involved in the preparation and marketing of the catch. Fishing supports local livelihoods and is an economic activity in indigenous and local communities; fish is also an important part of local culture and diet in the NRW. In the past, overharvesting depleted populations of arapaima due to commercial demand. Many species have declined as a result of overharvesting; a correlation analysis in the area reveals a very strong positive relationship between the most frequently hunted species and those perceived to be less abundant than they were ten years ago.
- Subsistence Agriculture - Shifting agriculture is practiced; and part of the preparatory process of creating the farms involves the use of fire to burn and clear forest and unwanted vegetation and enrich the soil with nutrients for better growth of crops after planting. Kitchen gardens are also established, and some farming is done in savannah areas. Cassava is one of the primary staples cultivated. Men and women together or men singly plant the crops. The crop is then tended to and harvested mainly by women. Cattle and small ruminants are also reared by indigenous communities. The rearing of small animals such as chickens is usually done by females while men are mostly responsible for the care of larger animals such as cattle and goats.
- In parts of the North Rupununi, rice is being cultivated at commercial scales and the extensive cultivation of soya bean and other crops has been proposed. Soils in these areas are nutrient poor and require frequent inputs of fertilizers in order to maximize crop yields. The pesticides used for pest control along with the fertilizer run-off can contaminate water sources. Such large-scale activities result in habitat conversion and will affect the hydrology and ecosystem services delivered by the NRW if their placement and management are not effectively guided.
- Small-scale ecotourism operations – Some indigenous villages have established and operate ecotourism operations including establishment of guesthouses and eco-lodges and providing tours. For instance, Rewa and Surama have developed vibrant nature-based tourism enterprises which caters to both local and international markets. Men work mainly as tour guides, groundsmen and owners and tour operators. Women work as cleaners, servicers, and in the kitchen. Women have also been trained as tour guides and some currently work as tour guides. Women are also able to sell their crafts and agro-processing products to tourists. Annai, Aranaputa, Wowetta, Yupukari, and other communities in the NRW are also involved in community based tourism. Sport fishing is a growing tourism opportunity for Apoteri and Rewa.
- Artisanal Mining – Residents of communities practice traditional mining or ‘pork-knocking’ as it is locally known, and which is not mechanized. Under the Amerindian Act 2006 any member of an indigenous village or community has traditional mining privilege to carry out artisanal mining. The Act notes that to exercise this privilege, the individual must obtain the permission of the Village Council and comply with applicable laws.
- Crafts – Non-timber forest products such as Nibbi and Kufa may be made into jewellery; hammocks are made from local cotton. Women’s interaction with the environment and natural resources of the area is largely for the extraction of NTFP which they utilize for making of crafts.
- Agro-processing is done in all of the villages. Women are primarily involved in agro-processing which is mainly concentrated on cassava and its by-products, cassava bread, farine, cassareep and tapioca. Some processing of peanuts is also done. Women are also involved in producing

crabwood oil, coconut oil, and cashew nuts. Women are primarily involved in labour-intensive agro-processing activities. Older children of the household may also assist in agro-processing activities. Men are involved in producing honey.

- Shops, small grocery retail, sewing and employment with governmental agencies (e.g. health and education) are also done. Women manage small shops/bars/snackettes along the roadside, which sell rations, local garden produce, food and catering. Local transportation, bus, boat and motorcycle, are business opportunities mostly run by men.
- Logging is also practiced. Logs are used in the construction of houses and for boat making. There are a few small-scale commercial logging operations in the project area which are permitted and regulated by the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). There are a few logging cooperatives with community members: Aranaputa Loggers, Macushi Yemkun Cooperative, Rupununi Timber Association. These adhere to GFC. Small and community-based loggers are also active within the landscape and are regulated by the GFC. Small community-based loggers utilize reduced impact logging practices (RIL) but they are not required to implement RIL to the extent that is required by large forest operators, which may result in forest degradation. Small-scale commercial forestry is conducted by Surama, and other communities such as Apoteri and Wowetta are interested. Most community loggers are aware of GFC regulations and practice selective harvesting, even for home use.
- Growing small businesses include fuel, mechanic and tyre shops, motorcycle repair, information technology "copy shop", clothing and shoes, bars, restaurants, and places to socialize.

## 2.6. Flora & Fauna

The KMPA is a densely forested protected area that combines savannah, wetlands, and mixed forest habitat, making it a biodiversity hotspot. It comprises approximately 4% of Guyana's total forested area. The Rupununi, where the KMPA is located, is considered to be one of Guyana's most ecologically diverse areas. The region is home to approximately 70% (155 species) of mammals, 53% (419 species) of birds, and 26% (1,577 species) of plant species recorded in Guyana. It is documented as having the second-highest bat diversity (89 species) of any protected area in the world and holds 70% of the 25 bird species considered to be endemic to the Guiana Shield (PAC, 2015). 99% of the KMPA's 611,000 hectares are covered in forest, making it important for carbon sequestration (10.4% of Guyana's irrecoverable carbon by mass is in PAs) and climate regulation; 1% is savannah. The Kanuku Mountains are separated into the Western and Eastern Kanukus by the north-south course of the Rupununi River.

The NRW hosts a remarkable level of vertebrate diversity, including 70% (1,414) of all vertebrates recorded in Guyana, outrivalling estimates in other wetlands such as Botswana's Okavango and Brazil's Pantanal by 48% and 35% respectively and consists of a mixture of seasonal/intermittent flooded savannahs and freshwater bodies, including rivers, streams, creeks, marshes and lakes. These savannahs of the North Rupununi (and those of the wider Rupununi) contain the rarest ecosystem type in Amazonia - the Guianan Savannah, of which the Rupununi Savannah is the world's largest surviving example. The wetlands are recharged annually during the May to September wet season, as both rainfall and run-off from the surrounding highlands and main river channels, inundate the savannah

s and forests.

Flooding during the rainy season creates a complex hydrological connection between the Amazon and Essequibo River systems and allows for the exchange of fauna, and it maintains water and food security for 21 Indigenous Macushi communities, which have approximately 7,000 inhabitants. This flooding and hydrological connection replenishes fish stocks, recharges water sources, allows for the exchange of fauna, particularly freshwater fishes thereby increasing diversity, and promotes gene flow. The continuation of these processes which maintain the ecological integrity of the wetlands are important for the Macushi people as they continue to rely on its resources for food, medicine, housing, income, culture, and their way of life.

A 2014 assessment of wildlife usage of three adjacent Indigenous communities in the North Rupununi recorded that 73 animals (including freshwater fishes) and 164 plant species, as well as several unidentified species, were regularly used by the communities for various purposes. Initial mapping of key hydrological mechanisms and flow pathways was undertaken by WWF, Cobra Collective and community members, via drone surveys and ground-truthing, but detailed understanding of species movements, water quality dynamics and how vital hydrological connections are being impacted by climate change and changes in land use are poorly understood (Cobra Collective, 2020).

## 2.7. Local Governance & Decision-making

The project area is in Region 9, locally known as “The Rupununi” after the major river (Rupununi River) which runs from the south of the landscape to the north, and eventually flows into the Essequibo River. The entire landscape is a seasonally flooded wetland and made up of a mosaic of savannah and forest types as well as land use and land users. The overall administration of Region 9, are the responsibility of the Regional Office and Chairman of Region 9. Indigenous titled lands are governed by the Amerindian Act which is under the purvey of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. Lands between these are governed by the various actors including the state and private lease holders.

The town of Lethem is governed by the Mayor and Town Council.

Indigenous villages, including the South Rupununi District Council are titled Indigenous land, and are governed by the elected council and toshao, under the Amerindian Act of 2006. Individual villages have village rules, most of which are not gazetted (law), but there is provision for this under the Amerindian Act. For the most part, villages and their leaders use their rules and the Amerindian Act for governance.

The 21 communities of the North Rupununi are voluntary members of a community based, non-governmental, representative organisation, the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDDB). NRDDDB has a Memorandum of Understanding as well as a Collaborative Management Agreement for the Iwokrama Forest, with the Iwokrama International Centre.

When the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area was being formed, the communities adjacent to the proposed protected area formed the Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group (KMCRG), based on the NRDDDB model. KMCRG has a strong working relationship with Conservation International.

The Kanuku Mountains Protected Area is managed by the Protected Areas Commission which uses the Protected Areas Act to govern of all of Guyana’s PAs. Each PA has a management plan.

Both NRDDDB and KMCRG are registered Friendly Societies and are governed by their by-laws. Aranaputa Village in the North Rupununi, is a member of the NRDDDB, but is not a titled Indigenous Village; villagers consider themselves mixed coast-landers and Indigenous. The community is administered as a

Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC) and governed by a chairperson and council; the administrative body governing NDCs is the Ministry of Local Government.

Yupukari Village and its satellites are both NRDDDB and KMCRG members. Some communities which are in South Rupununi District Council, which are contiguous to the PA, are also members of the Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group. Rewa and Apoteri are NRDDDB members but on the northern boundary of the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area, and access this area for traditional resource use as well as for tourism purposes. The upper Rewa River is part of the KMPA and is also used by other community members and stakeholders for recreational and traditional resource use.

NRDDDB and SRDC have a Memorandum of Understanding and try to communicate for collaboration of social and environmental benefit, but often distance and funds to support meetings are a challenge.

The National Toshao's Council was formed by the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, under the Amerindian Act of 2006; NTC meets at least annually and brings together leaders of all Indigenous villages in Guyana.

The entities of NTC, NRDDDB, KMCRG, SRDC have an elected executive, with day to day office administration being run by a secretariat. The secretariats are funded by different partner organisations as well as grants from successful project proposals. Each entity holds statutory meetings which leaders from constituent community attend. Attendees usually include Toshao, counsellor, women and youth representative. Attendance of women and youth rep may depend on the distance of the community to the meeting site and availability of transportation.

#### **KMPA**

KMPA is one of five protected areas under the NPAS. The KMPA is classified as IUCN Category VI (i.e., a protected area with sustainable use of natural resources). Its management is guided by a management plan (2015-2021), which is required in accordance with Article 76 of the Protected Areas Act and whose contents are detailed in Part VI of the Protected Areas Act. The Protected Areas Commission (PAC) is responsible for the management of the KMPA. This is done with indigenous communities adjacent to the PA. Land use planning is managed by Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) and supported by Regional Democratic Councils and other state agencies such as the Central Housing & Planning Authority (CH&PA), Guyana Forestry Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, Hydromet Department, Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture also support management and governance. Through their respective legislation, these state agencies lead the day-to-day management of specific state land areas and freshwater systems.

Day to day management of the KMPA is led by a Technical Director with overall responsibility for the management of the site. The Site Based Team comprises of the Site Coordinator, Senior Ranger, Protected Areas Officer and a Team of Rangers. Additionally, other technical and non-technical staff based at the Commission's Head Office provide relevant support to the Site Team. The PAC depends heavily on the support of local authorities in the Region 9 to effectively implement the KMPA management plan, inclusive of Government agencies, regional authorities, private sector and NGOs. The key and most important stakeholders are the communities located around the KMPA, who depend on these 'Mountains of Life' for their sustenance and well-being.

Twenty-one (21) indigenous communities live adjacent to the PA and are important stakeholders and key to the overall successful management of the area. As such, the PAC is working strategically to build



stronger, more inclusive partnerships in order to maintain the health of the PA as well as livelihood opportunities for communities. The PAC has maintained continuous stakeholder engagements, especially stakeholder meetings, education camps, and awareness using environmental education materials and packages, while Covid-19 has prevented the PAC's individual community meetings.

Communities around the KMPA have organized themselves into an umbrella body - the Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group (KMCRG) to support decision-making, planning and management of the PA, with the PAC. The KMCRG was established in 2006 and comprises leaders of the eleven main Kanuku Mountains Villages. The KMCRG played a leading role in the boundary delineation and management process for the KMPA.

The KMCRG is also receiving support from Conservation International-Guyana, through its [Amazonia Verde Project](#) (2021-2025), towards ensuring they are empowered to develop and carry out their own initiatives to conserve their forests and support livelihoods. This is in keeping with communities' local knowledge and governance systems (knowledge management and advocacy; sustainable value chains; improved management of IPLC lands; and capacity building). This CI-Guyana support is also extended to the NRDDDB and other IPLC groups in the wider region.

## **NRW**

Management of the NRW lies with multiple government agencies including EPA, GFC, GLSC, GWCMC, Ministry of Agriculture (depending on the resource-use issue to be addressed). Indigenous communities are key to the area's overall management, but is limited to the management of resources on their titled lands. CI-Guyana has drafted a strategy as well as a joint strategy with WWF-Guianas to guide CI and WWF's efforts within Region 9; and NRDDDB is guided by an action plan (2019-2021) which covers several thematic areas including the wetlands.

The lands of all twenty-one communities within the NRW have been titled and governed by the Amerindian Act of 2006. This enables communities to make decisions regarding resource use. Resource use within titled lands is under the purview of the community, but often guided by national regulations. It is important to note that communities, however, do not have ownership of sub-surface resources or to rivers and waterways, and the use of forestry produce from village lands by non-residents are subject to regulation from the GFC.

## **Indigenous Community Governance**

Under the Amerindian Act, Indigenous people can practice traditional resource-use in areas beyond their titled lands such as state-owned lands. Titled lands are managed by Village Councils that are elected by community members to serve for a period of three years. These elections are held in accordance with the provisions of the Amerindian Act, 2006. The Toshao coordinates village activities including observances of religious activities and other communal activities and is responsible for permitting access of non-indigenous persons into the community and for hosting those persons. Decisions are community based and formally endorsed by the Toshao. Hunting is not specifically regulated by the Toshao, but there are areas designated and recognized by the community for specific resource extraction, some of which may be ancestral or family grounds.

Elections to fill the position of Toshao and Councillors are held every two years. Elections are supervised by the Regional Democratic Council. The Amerindian Act (2005) gives elected village officials similar

powers to that of their counterparts in the local government structure in non-Indigenous areas. The functions of the Village Council are set out in the Amerindian Act (2005) as:

1. Represent the Community
2. Act in the best interest of the Community
3. Provide advice and strategic direction to the Community
4. Hold for the benefit and use of the Community all rights, titles and interests in or over Community lands
5. Promote the sustainable use, protection and conservation of Community lands and the resources on those lands
6. Encourage the preservation and growth of Amerindian culture
7. Ensure that places and artefacts located which hold sacred or cultural values to the Community are protected and cared for
8. Protect and preserve the Community's intellectual property and traditional knowledge;
9. Nominate Councillors or other members of the Community to accompany the Toshao to meetings of the Regional Democratic Council, or to attend meetings on behalf of the Community; and
10. Ensure that proper accounts and financial records are kept.

The Toshao receives a stipend from central Government for performing the functions mandated under the Amerindian Act.

Each elected Toshao (Village leader) represents their village's interest on a regional body - the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB). The NRDDB was established in 1996 and registered as a trust in 2001. Its role and function as described in the NRDDB Constitution and Trust Deed is as follows: "NRDDB will be a fully autonomous body free of any party political, religious or other institutional affiliation. It will represent the interests of its constituent communities and will facilitate the development of these. It will be established as a non-governmental, not-for-profit, community-based organisation which will act as the umbrella for convening the elected representatives of the North Rupununi communities" (NRDDB, 2021). The NRDDB provides a mechanism for community leaders to meet, discuss, and make decisions relating to the NRDDB operation, management of lands and resources, community planning and development, youth empowerment etc. It has also been a long-standing advocate for the protection and management of the wetlands. Elected Tshaos, including those that represent communities associated with the NRW, also represent their community's interest at the national level as part of the National Tshaos Council (NTCS). The NTC has been established as a body corporate (under the Amerindian Act, 2006) to support good governance; protection, conservation and sustainable management of village lands and natural resources; social, cultural and economic well-being of communities; and represent the interest of communities.

The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, through the Amerindian Act (2006) supports governance and management of indigenous communities in the areas of health, education, cultural and economic well-being, and sustainable use of resources. One area of support has been enabling communities to develop their Village Improvement Plans.<sup>2</sup> The plans cover a period of 10 years, up to 2027, and identifies the communities development priorities for implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> All villages should have a VIP. Development of 10-year plans (2018 - 2028) were led by the then Ministry of Indigenous People's Affairs; technical support was provided by WWF in the NRW and CI in the south communities. Plans are now being called "Village Sustainability Plans" by the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. It is not clear if Plans are currently being revised or if the old plans are being rebranded.

### ***The practice of local governance & decision-making***

Consultations held as part of the ESMF/IPPF/PF preparation inquired whether the abovementioned principles of local governance are followed in practice, and all consultation participants confirmed that the local governance structure outlined in the Amerindian Act is indeed applicable in practice.

Information on public issues is disseminated through community representative bodies: North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB); Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group (KMCRG); and South Rupununi District Council (SRDC). These organisations are respected equally, however, the first two are community-based organisations, the SRDC is a legally recognised and established body under the Amerindian Act 2006.<sup>3</sup> Decision making is democratic, and the organisations hold quarterly statutory meetings. Some communities are members of two organisations due to overlap in land and resource use. Rewa and Apoteri are not members of the KMCRG but feel they are stakeholders as they reside north of the KMPA and are traditional resources users of the PA and that they should be included in KMCRG. They shall also be consulted in this project as both stakeholders of the NRW and the Kanuku Mountains Protected Areas.

Based on community consultations, organisational challenges with respect to community engagement in local decision-making include finances to host and attend meetings (borne by the agency), timely communication, gaps in methods of communication (cell phone, internet, radio), youth not wanting to take up leadership roles and participate in development. Participants agreed that the best way to disseminate information is by contacting the Toshao through letters, WhatsApp, Facebook, and HF radio. Email communication is less applicable.

## **3. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

This chapter first outlines the laws and regulations of Guyana and the WWF's SIPP that are applicable to the project, and then discusses gaps between Guyana's laws and regulations and the SIPP. **For the purposes of the project implementation, the principles and procedures of the SIPP shall prevail in all cases of discrepancies.**

### **3.1 Guyana's Policies, Laws, Regulations Guidelines**

#### **3.1.1. Environmental management**

Environmental management in Guyana has been governed through the Environmental Protection Act, 1996, Cap. 20:05, Laws of Guyana and the Environmental Protection Regulations 2000, the Health and Safety Act 1997 and the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Act 2000 and Regulations. Each is summarized below.

The Environmental Protection Act, Cap. 20: 05 establishes the basic institutional and regulatory framework within which all activities that may significantly impact on the natural, social, and cultural

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<sup>3</sup> SRDC is a legally recognized body of a District Council and falls under the Amerindian Act. Instead of having individual title, the communities came together under one name and governing body for the governance of their traditional territory (which includes lands outside of the legal boundary). They communities are: Parikwarinai, Potarinai, Baitoon, Katur, Shiriri, Shulinab, Katoonari, Sawariwao, Sand Creek, Rupunau, Shea, Murarunau, Awarewaunau, Aishalton, Karaudarnau, Parabara, Achawib. Some of these communities are members of the KMCRG and directly affected by the activities taking place in the KMPA and this project.

environments are assessed. The Act also provides that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be the central coordinating agency for environmental management in the relevant sectors in Guyana.

The EPA was created through the Environmental Protection Act, 1996 and is mandated to oversee the effective management, conservation, protection and improvement of the environment. It also requires that the Agency takes the necessary measures to ensure the prevention and control of pollution, assessment of the impact of economic development on the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Part IV of the Act requires all developers of any project listed in the Fourth Schedule or other projects that may significantly affect the environment to apply to the EPA for an Environmental Authorization. The Application Form, which must be accompanied by the prescribed fee and a project summary which must include a description of the project as well as information regarding location, size, duration of the project, and potential environmental impacts. The EPA will review the information and assess whether or not the project should be exempted from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. Once a decision has been made, the EPA will publish a notice to the public in at least one daily newspaper informing them of EPA's position, thereby allowing the public to participate in the decision-making process.

The Environmental Protection Act, 1996 is supported by several subsidiary Environmental Protection Regulations. These Regulations were developed to regulate and control the activities of development projects during construction and operation. The EPA has the responsibility to ensure the compliance of all new and existing activities to these Regulations by issuing the required authorisations and monitoring the operations. These regulations include the following.

**The Environmental Protection (Authorisations) Regulations (2000).** These Regulations require development activities/facilities pertaining to industry (e.g. manufacturing, processing, handling, transport, storage, disposal) to be authorized by EPA, with specified conditions to avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental impacts. It also provides for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) where necessary (Regulation 3). The EPA determines which projects require environmental authorisations on a case-by-case basis. The authorization process for both new and existing facilities including variances are outlined in these Regulations, Part 3, Section 17 and 20.

**The Environmental Protection (Air Quality) Regulations (2000).** In accordance with these Regulations anyone who emits any air contaminant in the construction, installation, operation, modification or extension of any facility related to industry, commerce, agriculture or any institution shall apply to the EPA for an environmental authorization at least ninety days before the date on which the emission is to commence. In accordance with these Regulations, the EPA is responsible for establishing the desirable air pollution limits. In this regard, the Agency is guided by and utilizes the WHO and United State Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) allowable limits.

**The Environmental Protection (Water Quality) Regulations (2000).** These Regulations require an environmental authorization for construction, installation, operation, modification/extension of facilities that discharge effluents. Requirements and guidelines on the discharge of effluents and disposal of sludge are provided. The EPA and Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS) developed Interim Guidelines for Industrial Effluent Discharges into the Environment and these are currently being used by the EPA. These set limits for key parameters for industrial effluent discharges and also considers key water chemistry parameters such as temperature, pH etc. The EPA also adopts the WHO and USEPA standards for surface and potable water when applicable. Draft Water Quality Guidelines have also been developed by the EPA but have not been finalized to date.

**The Environmental Protection (Noise Management) Regulations (2000).** Under these Regulations, operations that emit noise in the execution of various activities such as construction, transport, industry, commerce and any institution are required to apply to the Agency for an environmental authorization. The EPA is responsible for the establishment of standards for permissible noise levels in industry, construction and other areas. The EPA may grant authorization for noise emission unconditionally or subject to conditions and may require environmental audit procedures. The GNBS and the EPA together with other relevant agencies, developed standards for noise emissions into the environment. Residential, Institutional, and Educational daytime and night-time decibel limits are 75 and 60 respectively. Industrial and transportation limits are set at 100 and 80 dB, Commercial at 80 and 65, Construction at 90 and 75, and Recreational at 100 (between 18:00-01:00hrs), and 75 (01:00-08:00hrs).

**The Environmental Protection (Hazardous Wastes Management) Regulations (2000).** These Regulations outline the rules and procedures for transport, storage, treatment and disposal of hazardous wastes and are intended to ensure, through the environmental authorization process, that all operations that generate, transport, treat, store and dispose of hazardous wastes are managed in a manner that protects human health and the environment. The Regulations allow for the provision of information on the types of facilities and quantity of hazardous waste generated, treatment standards and efforts to reduce the waste generated. An Emergency Preparedness Plan is required for anyone who operates a hazardous waste facility.

**The Environmental Protection (Litter Enforcement) Regulations (2013).** These Regulations provide for the enforcement against litter offences. It is an offence under these regulations to (a) place litter in a public place; (b) permit or cause another person to litter a public place; or (c) have litter on private premises that pose a health risk. The fine for an individual found littering in a public place is \$50,000, while for body corporate it is \$100,000. A fixed penalty of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) is offered to offenders who accept liability for the offence committed. Under the Litter Prevention Regulations, the NDCs and RDCs are to provide receptacles in public places. Further, every Council is required to make appropriate provision for the prompt, efficient and regular emptying of the contents of the receptacles and for the removal and disposal of those contents.

**The Environmental Protection (Expanded Polystyrene Ban) Regulations (2016).** The EPA in 2016 established a ban on extended polystyrene (styrofoam) food service containers. The Regulations prohibit the importation, manufacture and sale of expanded polystyrene food service products. Persons or businesses that breach these regulations shall be liable upon summary conviction to a fine of no less than \$50,000. The EPA currently enforces the importation and manufacture of styrofoam food service containers. It will later in the year enforce the sale as well.

### 3.1.2. Biodiversity

#### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

Guyana ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity on November 21, 1992 and which entered into force on November 12, 1997. The country is also party to the convention's two protocols: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (accession June March 16, 2008) and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and benefit sharing (accession October 12, 2014). The National Focal Point and the Implementing Agency is the EPA.

The objectives of the Convention include the conservation of biological diversity (defined as the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic

ecosystems and the ecological complexities of which they are part including diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems), the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

The “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” (GBF) adopted in December 2023, updates countries commitment to biodiversity, which includes four goals and 23 targets by 2030. The GBF prescribes effective conservation and management of at least 30% of the world’s lands, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans, in areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and services. It prioritises ecologically-representative, well-connected and equitably-governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation, effectively recognising indigenous territories.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety aims to ensure the safe handling, transport and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health. It was adopted on 29 January 2000 and entered into force on 11 September 2003.

The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way. It entered into force on 12 October 2014, 90 days after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification.

The provisions of the Convention apply to areas within the limits of national jurisdiction of contracting parties. Contracting parties are required under Article 7 of the Convention to identify processes and activities which have or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and to monitor their effects through sampling and other techniques. Parties are, also as far as is possible and as appropriate, required to establish protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity. In areas adjacent to these protected areas, environmentally sound and sustainable development should also be promoted. Article 8 requires that degraded ecosystems be rehabilitated and restored and the recovery of threatened species be done through the development and implementation of plans or management strategies. Contracting parties are also required to regulate or manage relevant processes or activities where a significant adverse effect on biological diversity has been determined.

Article 10 of the Convention supports the integration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources in national decision-making and the support of local populations to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas where biological diversity has been reduced. The avoidance or minimizing of adverse transboundary effects is also considered important and should be addressed by the introduction of environmental impact assessments of proposed projects that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity. Article 10 also requires the exchange of information and consultation on activities likely to significantly adversely affect the biological diversity of other States and notification to such States of imminent or grave danger to biological diversity within areas under the jurisdiction of such States.

A National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP) 2012 – 2020 was developed in consultation with key stakeholders. The NBSAP highlighted nine (9) strategic objectives with priority actions to guide and support the country’s actions for sustainable utilisation and conservation of biodiversity, the plan sets out the vision, the roles, duties and obligations of the state and its citizens and the actions to protect, conserve, use sustainably and share equitably the benefits arising from biodiversity. With the finalisation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the NBSAP is expected to be updated.

## ***Low Carbon Development Strategy***

Guyana is committed to developing a green economy to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources and balance economic growth with preservation of the country's environmental treasures for generations to come. Guyana's commitment to green growth has been demonstrated by its pioneering environmental international partnerships and its status as a signatory to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Numerous national documents reflect principles that support the green economy, including the country's National Determined Contribution (NDC), the Low Carbon Development Strategy, Climate Resilience Strategy Action Plan (CRSAP), Guyana's renewable energy transition plan, Climate change resilience strategy and adaptation plan, National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation and National Adaptation Strategy for the Agricultural Sector.

In 2009, Guyana launched the first Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), setting out a vision for inclusive, sustainable development - while simultaneously maintaining the country's forests, about 85% of the country's territory. The 2009 LCDS, and its 2013 update, highlighted the opportunity for Guyana to create a world-leading model for maintaining forests, receiving payments for globally significant forest climate services, and investing those payments in a low carbon economy.

The LCDS 2030, launched in July 2022, outlines the country's plans to continue advancing Guyana's payment for forest climate services model and investing new revenues in its low carbon economy - while at the same expanding the vision to include Guyana's other globally significant ecosystem services. As with the original vision, the expanded vision seeks to combine sustainable and equitable development in Guyana with enabling the country to play an outsize role in protecting globally vital ecosystems. Towards that goal, Guyana is now working to create an ecosystems economy which achieves the right balance between potentially competing developmental models. This is one of the core challenges faced by the country, and to meet it, in the coming years, Guyana will advance: low-impact mining and forestry to enhance employment and income generation opportunities; forest climate services through which the value provided by Guyana's forests to the world is recognized; Guyana's next generation of ecosystem services such as water management, and biodiversity protection.

The LCDS 2030 sets out four inter-linked objectives for Guyana, the first three of which were the basic objectives of the LCDS since 2009 and the fourth of which was added to reflect new local and global realities:

1. *Value Ecosystem Services*: Over time, Guyana aims to integrate with global mechanisms that value the country's globally significant ecosystem services including biodiversity, water management and ocean or marine resources. In the immediate term, Guyana's efforts will focus mainly on forest climate services, and the value Guyana provides the world in the fight against climate change, continuing with the three-phase approach first set out in 2009.
2. *Invest in Clean Energy and Stimulate Low Carbon Growth*: Revenues from carbon (and potentially other ecosystem services) markets, along with other national resources will be invested in:
  - a. National Low Carbon Priorities. These are set out in the LCDS and an accompanying LCDS Investment Plan.
  - b. Community-produced Village Sustainability Plans (VSPs). A dedicated 15% of carbon market revenues will be available for community-led programmes for indigenous peoples

and local communities (IPLCs). These will be set out in Village Sustainability Plans or equivalent, put together by communities themselves.

Overall, this investment will see Guyana undergo one of the world's most ambitious energy transitions and grow the economy up to five-fold, while keeping greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation at around 2019 levels. This can be done through the replacement of expensive, polluting, heavy fuel oil with natural gas as a bridge to an energy system built mainly from hydropower, solar and wind power.

3. *Protect Against Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss:* In 2015, Guyana concluded a comprehensive Climate Resilience Strategy and Action Plan (CRSAP). However, this was not updated since then, so some of its recommendations need further analysis. Based on the outcomes of this analysis, Guyana will start a new set of priority investments in drainage and irrigation, sea defences, mangrove restoration, flood and drought measures to address the potential harm to households and businesses from climate change.
4. *Align with Global Climate and Biodiversity Goals:* Implementing the LCDS will advance progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as well as a series of multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements. Moreover, since the production of the 2009 LCDS, Guyana has discovered oil and gas, which has transformed the country's development prospects. Guyana will act strategically and responsibly as the sector develops, supporting global energy security while diversifying and decarbonising Guyana's domestic economy and investing in development priorities for all Guyanese, including health, education and low-carbon opportunities. At the same time, the Government will advocate internationally for a strong global carbon price and the removal of subsidies on fossil fuel to incentivise the lowest carbon, most cost-effective oil and gas in the global marketplace in line with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement - under which there will be demand for decades to come. In parallel, Guyana will advance progressive policy to exceed recognised global standards for flaring and mandate the use of best technology in the Oil and Gas sector to limit its environmental impact.

The document guides that an expanded National Protected Areas System (NPAS) is needed to safeguard currently unprotected ecosystems like wetlands and savannahs; to conserve vulnerable species; to preserve crucial ecosystem services for Guyanese citizens, like an abundant supply of clean drinking water; to ensure the long-term connectivity of Guyana's rivers and forests; to scale up promising new economic activities like eco-tourism; and to offset the impacts of extractive industries. Expanding the NPAS will also help Guyana meet global biodiversity targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Leaders Pledge for Nature.

The LCDS 2030 informs that Guyana is committed to expanding the protected areas, initially to 17% then to 30% by 2030, comprising of both terrestrial and marine protection.

To achieve these goals the Government will:

- coordinate a transparent, multi-stakeholder process to establish new protected areas in Guyana's terrestrial and marine territory;
- establish equitable protected areas that benefit local communities and involve them in management;
- establish science-based protected areas that protect a representative sample of the country's natural treasures;



- establish effective protected areas that are well-staffed, well-equipped, and well-funded;
- establish integrated protected areas that advance multiple other goals of the LCDS;
- complement the NPAS with Other Effective Conservation Measures, to protect priority areas via conservation mosaics that balance strict protection of core areas with sustainable resource use in adjacent areas;
- diversify Guyana’s protected areas portfolio with a range of categories and governance types (with special focus on areas that are managed by local peoples and areas that are co-managed with local peoples);
- leverage Guyana’s legacy as the “Land of Many Waters” to assume global leadership in pioneering freshwater conservation areas and mechanisms.
- establish Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) as part of the ongoing programme of expanding the Protected Areas System.

### 3.1.3. Protected Areas

Articles 25 and 36 of Guyana's Constitution require protection of flora, fauna, water and other natural resources. The Protected Areas Act (2011) as stated in this legislation is “An Act to provide for the protection and conservation of Guyana’s natural heritage and natural capital, its creation, management and financing of a national system of protected areas; the maintenance of ecosystem services of national and global importance including climate regulation, ...”. Guyana’s National Protected Areas System (NPAS) is therefore relatively new, having only been established in 2011 with the passing of the Act.

This legislation also created two entities to support the national system; the Protected Areas Commission (PAC), established in 2012 is responsible for overseeing the NPAS, and the Protected Areas Trust (PAT), established in 2014 is responsible for raising and allocating funding for the NPAS. The PAC is responsible for establishing, managing, maintaining, promoting and expanding the National Protected Areas System in Guyana. The PAC’s mandate includes monitoring and regulating activities; conservation of natural and cultural heritage; the use of resources within protected areas; preparing, developing and effectively implementing management plans; providing support to indigenous and local communities; and promoting stakeholder involvement in these processes.

Guyana’s Protected consists of areas designated as national protected areas, urban parks, privately managed areas and indigenous lands or “Amerindian protected areas” under the request of the Village Council and the Commission. The Protected Areas Act secures traditional rights of Indigenous communities within all national protected areas.

The process for establishing a protected area within the NPAS, including requisite baseline information, boundary definition and stakeholder engagement is detailed in Part IV of the Protected Areas Act. As defined in Article 76 of the Protected Areas Act, all NPAs are required to have management plans, the contents of which are detailed in Part VI of the Protected Areas Act.

### 3.1.4. Forest management

**Forestry Act Cap 67:01.** The Forestry Act **Cap 67:01** sets a regime for the sustainable management of the state forests, by providing State forests through concessions for forest activities, including the

conservation of biological diversity and environmental services provided by the forest. The second part of the Act provides for the issuance of five types of state forest authorisations: concessions, exploratory permits, use permits, community forest management agreements and afforestation agreements. This section also addresses compliance with occupational health. The Act prohibits acts that could cause forest fires in State Forest areas and allows the GFC to declare certain areas to be fire protection areas. The Act places emphasis on value added activities by addressing issues of quality control through legally binding codes of practice which can be subject to amendments from time to time. Issues of under-pricing, unlawful exportation of forest produce, trade of timber in contravention to the GFC's guidelines, and procedures for ownership of concession areas and change thereof, are also outlined in the Act.

State Forests are to be declared by public notice under s. 3 of the Act, and exclude:

- village lands as identified under the Amerindian Act, 2006
- Iwokrama Rainforest
- Kaieteur National Park

A particular feature of the Act is that it supports sustainable, multi-purpose utilisation of the Forests and incorporates conservation and protection principles into State forests. Additionally, the Act contemplates the use of State forests for eco-tourism, but does not identify control measures such as carrying capacity.

The 2009 Forestry Act allows logging concessions to be issued over untitled traditional lands. Indigenous Peoples are thus in the same position as other citizens of Guyana with respect to these land, with the financial benefits from leases to these lands will accrue to the lessee and royalties and management fees are paid for the benefit of Guyana.

**Guyana Forestry Commission Act 2007.** The Guyana Forestry Commission Act 1979 was repealed and replaced by the Guyana Forestry Commission Act 2007. The functions of the Commission as defined in the act include:

- To provide advice on various forest related issues and on formulation of forest policy
- To prepare plans, codes of practice, and guidelines for the conservation and management of forests
- To research, collate, analyse, prepare and disseminate data, statistics and other information about forests and all aspects of forestry including forest ecology and the use of forest produce
- To inspect, certify and accredit services for quality control of forest produce.

**Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting 2018.** The Code of Practice for Forest Operation was developed by the Guyana forestry Commission (GFC) for State Forest Authorisation (SFA) holders. It provides guidelines and standards on Sustainable Forest Management, pre-harvest planning, road construction, harvesting operation, camp and operational hygiene among others.

### 3.1.5. Chemical use and pesticides

There are a number of legal instruments governing chemical use including pesticides. As maintenance and clearing under the project will be done manually or mechanically no pesticides will be procured or used as a result of the project. The legislation is included here for completeness sake.

**Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Act, 2000.** The management of chemicals in Guyana is governed by the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Act 2000 (No.13 of 2000). This Act provides for the establishment of the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board, which comprise representatives from

the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Environmental Protection Agency and other representatives from the private sector and non-governmental organisation.

A Secretariat has been established for the management of pesticides and toxic chemicals with the administrative head being the Registrar of Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals. All chemicals used in Guyana must be registered by the Board. The decision to register or not is done based on registration submission to the Board. The relevant documentation are examined along with international guidance and previous decisions emanating from international agencies such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent for Certain Hazardous Chemicals in International Trade, European Union and United States of America Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

**Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals (Amendment) Act 2007 (No. 13 of 2007).** This Amendment provides for the regulating of exports and accession to international Agreements governing pesticides and toxic chemicals management by providing for the adoption of Agreements containing legally binding instruments.

### 3.1.6. Wildlife Protection

#### **Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA)**

The SPA Protocol, used as a means of regionalizing global conventions such as the CBD, utilizes an ecosystem approach to conservation by protecting rare and fragile ecosystems and the endangered species it houses. Through its Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit, assistance is given for the establishment of protected areas to ensure attainment of the objectives of the SPA Program to significantly increase the number and improve the management of national protected areas and species in the region and assist the Governments of the region, on request, to develop guidelines for the establishment and management of such areas. The Protocol extends to the Convention Areas as well as water courses extending up to the freshwater limit or watersheds designated by the parties. It urges when necessary, the establishment of protected areas in instances where it is necessary to protect:

- representative types of coastal and marine ecosystems of adequate size to ensure their long-term viability and to maintain biological and genetic diversity
- habitats and their associated ecosystems critical to the survival and recovery of endangered, threatened or endemic species of flora or fauna
- the productivity of ecosystems and natural resources that provide economic or social benefits and upon which the welfare of local inhabitants is dependent and
- areas of special biological, ecological, educational, scientific, historic, cultural, recreational, archaeological, aesthetic, or economic value, including, in particular, areas whose ecological and biological processes are essential to the functioning of the Wider Caribbean ecosystems.

In the application of protection measures, each party is urged to progressively take such measures in accordance with its national laws and international law as are appropriate for:

- the regulation or prohibition of the dumping or discharge of wastes and other substances that may endanger protected areas

- the regulation or prohibition of coastal disposal or discharges causing pollution, emanating from coastal establishments and developments, outfall structures or any other sources within their territories
- the regulation or prohibition of fishing, hunting, taking or harvesting of endangered or threatened species of fauna and flora and their parts or products
- the prohibition of activities that result in the destruction of endangered or threatened species of fauna or flora and their parts and products, and the regulation of any other activity likely to harm or disturb such species, their habitats or associated ecosystems
- the regulation or prohibition of any activity involving a modification of the profile of the soil that could affect watersheds, denudation and other forms of degradation of watersheds, or the exploration or exploitation of the subsoil of the land part of a marine protected area
- the regulation or prohibition of industrial activities and of other activities which are not compatible with the uses that have been envisaged for the area by national measures and/or environmental impact assessments pursuant to Article 13
- any other measure aimed at conserving, protecting or restoring natural processes, ecosystems or populations for which the protected areas were established

If any rare or fragile ecosystems are encountered within the area being exploited the ecosystem approach to conservation will be utilized to manage that rare or fragile ecosystem.

#### **Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (2016)**

This Act provides for the protection, conservation, management, sustainable use, internal and external trade of Guyana's wildlife. It established and incorporated the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission and identifies the power of the Minister to give directions to the Commission. The functions of the Commission and duties of the Commission are detailed in the Act which established a Wildlife Scientific Committee and detailed the functions of Wildlife Scientific Committee.

The Act recognizes the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission as the CITES Management Authority for Guyana. The mandate of the Commission, according to the act, includes development and recommendation of strategies in the field of conservation, management and sustainable use of species of wildlife, consulting with the Wildlife Scientific Committee on the scientific aspects of the conservation, management and sustainable use of species of wildlife, developing, implementing and monitoring collaborative arrangements for the conservation, management and sustainable use of wildlife and coordinating in consultation with stakeholders, the establishment and maintenance of wildlife conservation and management plans and programs. This project involves no trade in wildlife. The sole aspect of this Act applicable to this project relates to the plans for the management of the biological resources located within project sites.

#### **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)**

This convention was established in 1972 to control international trade of live and dead animals and plants through the issuing of permits/certificates for such trade. Requirements for the establishment of Scientific and Management authorities; regulation of trade in specific species via permits and certificates and maintenance of records of trade are detailed in the convention. The legal obligations under CITES is now with the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2016.

### 3.1.7. Involuntary Resettlement

The Acquisition of Land for Public Purposes Act 2001 (Chapter 62:05). This Act empowers the Government of Guyana through the Minister of public Works to acquire any area for the proposed construction of a public work whether or not there is any building or erection on said land. The Act also provides mechanisms for the compensation to owners for the acquisition and damage done to such lands during public works and allows them if dissatisfied with the compensatory measures to use arbitrators to settle grievances. Assessment of compensation is done by the courts and the assessment may include disturbance to lessees of the land.

The Town and Country Act Planning Act (Chapter 20:01). This Act empowers the Minister of Local Government to access and acquire lands for public use including roads, passageways and other uses. It provides for the compensation of injured parties in an entire section Part 1V which outlines the mechanisms for compensation and betterment including the terms of assessment of damages and injuries.

Valuations of assets to be displaced is done by the Valuation Office, Ministry of Finance. Part III of 28:04 Valuation for Rating Purposes Act (Annex) outlines the valuation process.

### 3.1.8. Labour, Occupational Health and Safety

The Constitution of Guyana outlines labour rights, including:

- (1) Article 40 of the Constitution lays down a number of fundamental rights including the right to life, liberty, security of the person and the protection of the law, freedom of conscience, of expression and of assembly and association, protection of the privacy of one's home and property and from deprivation of property without compensation;
- (2) Pursuant to Article 22 of the Constitution, every citizen has the right to work and its free selection in accordance with social requirements and personal qualifications. He or she has the right to be rewarded according to the nature, quality and quantity of his work. Women and men have the right to equal pay for equal work;
- (3) Article 29 of the Constitution states that "women and men have equal rights and the same legal status in all spheres of political, economic and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex is illegal". In addition, the Constitution lists a number of women's rights, such as the access to academic, vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion, paid leave for mothers and expectant mothers;
- (4) In accordance with Article 140 of the Constitution, no person shall be held in slavery or servitude, nor be required to perform forced labour;
- (5) Article 147 specifically recognizes freedom of association and the right to form trade unions.

Labour legislation relevant to the project is summarized in the Labour Management Procedure (LMP), including:

- Occupational Safety and Health act 1997
- The Holidays with Pay Act
- The Wages Council Act
- Accidental Deaths and Workmen's Injuries (Compensation) Act
- The Licensed Premises Act
- The Public Utility Undertakings and Public Health Services Arbitration Act
- Labour (Conditions of Employment of Certain Workers) Act

- Employment of Young Persons and Children Act
- Factories Act No. 30 of 1947
- The Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act

As regards occupational health and safety, the provisions for registration and regulation of industrial establishments and for occupational safety and health of persons at work are enshrined in the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1997. The Act covers areas such as administration, safety and health, hazardous chemicals, physical and biological agents, notifications of accidents and occupational diseases, offenses, penalties, and procedures.

In keeping with the laws and regulations, a description of the established management procedures to monitor and manage occupational health and safety hazards is critical for this project. The Contractors will need to comply with the requirements of this Act and Regulations.

### 3.1.9. Cultural Heritage

#### **Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972**

The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the World Heritage Convention) was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972. The Convention aims to encourage the identification, protection, and preservation of earth's cultural and natural heritage. It recognizes that nature and culture are complementary, and that cultural identity is strongly related to the natural environment in which it develops.

The Convention provides for the protection of those cultural and natural 'properties' deemed to be of greatest value to humanity. It is not intended to protect all properties of great interest, importance or value, but rather a select list of the most outstanding of these from an international viewpoint. The Convention recognizes that nations have a duty to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, presentation, and transmission to future generations of their cultural and natural heritage. By adhering to the Convention, nations pledge to conserve not only the World Heritage Site(s) situated within their territories, but also to improve the protection of their national heritage. Article 1 and 2 of the convention define cultural and natural heritage as follows:

1. Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science
2. Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science
3. Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

#### Natural Heritage

1. Natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view
2. Geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation

3. Natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

Guyana accepted the convention on June 20, 1997 and in accordance with this convention, The National Trust of Guyana was established to preserve Guyana's Natural/cultural Heritage. The Amerindian Research Unit at the University of Guyana is the technical leader in the archaeological aspects of cultural heritage.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

The Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 notes that some cultural knowledge and practices may depend on biodiversity and its components, and therefore specifically recognises the cultural value of biodiversity alongside its ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, recreational and aesthetic values. These cultural services should be considered in ESIA, particularly when considering linkages between cultural heritage and biodiversity, and between environmental and social impact assessment (including well-being). This is particularly so for some indigenous and other communities whose traditional and spiritual activities depend on the maintenance of particular biodiversity features.

Article 8(j) of the Convention makes provision to protect the knowledge and practices of indigenous and local communities who rely on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Article 10(c) protects and encourages customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices. The Convention also requires that benefits from the use, for commercial purposes, of traditional knowledge and/or practices should be shared fairly and equitably with the owners of such knowledge (Article 15(7)).

#### **3.1.10. Indigenous People**

##### **Relevant national policies on IPs**

##### **Amerindian Act No. 6 of 2006**

The Amerindian Act of 2006 was assented to by the President on 14th March, 2006 and came into operation in April 2006. The Act provides for the recognition and protection of the collective rights of Amerindian Villages and Communities, mechanisms for good governance within Amerindian Villages and Communities and the granting of land to these Villages and Communities. The Act defines words used in the Act such as 'miner', 'mineral', 'mining activities' and 'traditional mining privilege'. There is a Part of the Act that provides for several matters relating to the entry and access to Amerindian Villages and Communities.

Provisions in the act govern how village lands are acquired and the rights and privileges that are attached to them. Village lands may not be disposed of except as provided in the Act. An existing Amerindian Village may have its Village lands extended on application in writing in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Amerindian Village and Village land status may be accorded an Amerindian Community on Application made, if it has been in existence for at least twenty-five (25) years and if at the time of application and for five (5) years immediately preceding its application, it consisted of at least one hundred and fifty (150) persons.

In the project area indigenous villages have legal ownership of lands through communal title, which is provided for under the Amerindian Act, 2006. The Act also provides for extensions of titled land to be granted and which some communities are in the process of seeking extensions. Legal ownership allows

indigenous communities to manage and make decisions regarding their resources. However, as noted above, communities, do not have ownership of sub-surface resources or to rivers and waterways, and the use of forestry produce from village lands by non-residents are subject to regulation from the GFC. It is important to note that resource use is not only confined to titled lands, but also extends to customary use areas that they have traditionally used. Indigenous people can exercise their 'traditional rights' to use of resources in these areas, in accordance with the provisions of the Amerindian Act, 2006. The PA Act 2011 also reinforces the provisions for communities' traditional use of resources in protected areas.

#### Protected Areas Act of 2011

The PA Act provides for protection of traditional rights of indigenous communities in the use of national protected areas, prescribing that management authorities may enter into agreement with indigenous communities for sustainable use of the PA, exercising traditional rights, spiritual and sacred practices; and reporting any threats to these rights.

#### **Requirements of FPIC (Free and Prior Informed Consent) of IPs**

The concept FPIC has emerged as an international human rights standard that recognizes the collective rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination and to their lands and territories. FPIC is usually considered as a collective right of indigenous peoples to make decisions through their own freely chosen representatives and customary or other institutions and to give or withhold their consent prior to the approval by government, industry or other outside party of any project that may affect the lands, territories and resources that they customarily own, occupy or otherwise use. It is thus not a stand-alone right but an expression of a wider set of human rights protections that secure indigenous peoples' rights to control their lives, livelihoods, lands and other rights and freedoms.

Guyana has no explicit legal and policy provision on FPIC. however, the Amerindian ACT, 2006 makes provision for protection/safeguards of indigenous people's rights by way of obtaining consent and conducting consultations with the village council to conduct official business/visit an Indigenous village; establishing and managing a protected area (PA); conducting scientific research; utilisation of natural resources such as minerals and the forests, national agencies such as the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may facilitate these consultations between miners, foresters and the villages. The Nagoya protocol of which Guyana is a signatory also provides for FPIC.

The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean- the Escazu Agreement shall be considered. On April 18, 2019, Guyana became the first country in the Region to ratify this Agreement.

### **3.2 WWF Safeguards Standards and Procedures Applicable to the Project**

WWF's safeguards standards require that any potentially adverse environmental and social impacts are identified, and avoided or mitigated. Safeguards policies that are relevant to this project are as follows.

#### **Policy on Environment 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 Child Project focuses on conservation, and its environmental and



social outcomes are expected to be generally positive. 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 precise 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.

### **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.

The KMPA and NRW areas, where project activities will be carried out, provides ecosystem services and livelihood to project affected communities. The mainstay of these communities is agriculture, fishing, and wood harvesting, and they are thus directly dependent on natural resources.

This policy is triggered as the proposed Project directly targets protecting and restoring natural habitats; including through improved PA management plans, improved logging practices, and strengthening local communities' ability to conserve the natural resources they depend on. Additionally, the construction activity proposed in Component 1 related to the KMPA management could have an impact on biodiversity if adequate mitigation measures are not in place. Prior to construction of any new building, an Environmental Impact Assessment must be conducted in accordance with WWF safeguards and Guyanese law, and has been included in the project budget.

### **Policy on Involuntary Resettlement**

The WWF 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, including through assessment of all viable alternative project designs and, in limited circumstances where this is not possible, economically 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 is not allowed under WWF policy. However, the project might lead to certain access restrictions (e.g. as a result of negotiating through FPIC-based consultations the establishment of collaborative management arrangements for wetlands and the updated management plan for the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area). Given that the activities proposed under the project include, but are not limited to, protected area management, improved wetlands management and changes in timber use on community lands, WWF's policy on Involuntary Resettlement is triggered because the Project will help define and thereby potentially restrict access to natural resources and livelihoods activities. Mitigation measures will be taken to reduce and mitigate such impacts, in accordance with the guidance provided in the ESMF/PF and IPPF as applicable.

### **Policy on Indigenous Peoples**

The WWF policy requires ensuring that indigenous 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 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.

The project will take place on lands customarily and or legally owned and used by a number of indigenous communities, and therefore this Policy has been triggered. The Indigenous Peoples within the project area include the Macushi Indigenous peoples, who live in 21 communities, consisting of approximately 7000 persons in the North Rupununi (also North Rupununi Wetlands) and the Wapishana indigenous peoples in in the South Rupununi. There is also a small population of Indigenous Wai-Wai peoples, which live in Kanashen Village, which is to the south of the project sites. Associated with the Kanuku Mountains PA project site are 21 Indigenous communities, which includes 11 villages and 10 satellite communities located around the KMPA. Of this set, Katoka plus one satellite and Yupukari plus three satellites are also communities associated with the NRDDDB/North Rupununi Wetlands.

This policy is triggered to ensure the Project respects Indigenous Peoples' rights in the project areas, including their rights to 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 participatory and consultative approach. Indigenous peoples live in and/or have cultural, spiritual and economic ties all areas where Project activities will happen, and in most cases are the majority populations in those areas.

As the project activities will only be confirmed during the first six months of implementation, and true FPIC processes were not established with communities during the ProDoc stage due to the ongoing COVID pandemic restrictions, an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework will be prepared as part of the ESMF to conform to WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Framework. To avoid duplications and simplify the safeguards process, the IPPF constitutes a separate chapter of this ESMF. The Indigenous Peoples Plan(s) will be co-created with communities during the first six months of project implementation with the guidance of the Safeguards & Gender Officer, who will be hired as part of the PMU.

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

This Standard ensures that the health and security of communities are respected and appropriately protected. The Guidance on Labour 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 labour rights of project-employed workers are observed, as indicated in Annex 1: 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.

This Standard is triggered due to construction activities in Component 1. Additionally, it is triggered because of necessary safety protocols related to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic. To compliment this Standard, a Guidance Note on Labour and Working conditions will also be issued, due to the construction activities proposed in Component 1 of the project.

### **Standard on Pest Management**

The project will not allow the procurement or use of formulated products that are in World Health Organisation (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. The project will follow the recommendations and minimum standards as described in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (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. Thus, this standard is not triggered by the project.

### **Standard on Cultural Resources**

This Standard requires that Cultural Resources (CR), which include archaeological, paleontological, historical, architectural, and sacred sites (e.g., graveyards, burial sites, sites of unique natural values, etc.) are appropriately preserved and their destruction or damage is appropriately avoided.

Depending on the final Project activities decided upon in collaboration with communities and other stakeholders in Year 1, this Standard may be triggered, and a plan created to mitigate identified risks in partnership with potentially affected stakeholders. If no risks are identified with communities or with the Amerindian Research Unit, then this Standard will not be triggered and no Plan created.

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

Project-affected communities and other interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time to the Project Team and WWF. The PMU will be responsible for informing project-affected parties about the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism. Contact information of the PMU and WWF will be made publicly available. Relevant details are also provided in the Grievance Redress section of this ESMF/PF/IPPF.

In addition to stakeholders having access to national level grievance and redress mechanisms, the WWF GEF Agency mechanism and the GEF Agency Mechanisms for Conflict Resolution and Accountability, a project level Grievance Mechanism will be created and implemented for this Project. 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. This GRM will be created within the first three months of project implementation and socialized with stakeholders at the first opportunity following its creation.

### **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 45 days prior to implementation. WWF will disclose safeguards documentation, including this ESMF and associated IPPF and PF and the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan on its

Safeguards Resources web page. The final safeguards documents should also be published on national websites of the Implementing Agencies 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.

### **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) that will be implemented during the project.

### 3.3 Gaps between Guyana's laws and policies and the WWF's SIPP

Several gaps can be identified between Guyana's laws and policies and the WWF's requirements.

- **Natural habitats:** Natural habitats are not specifically required to be assessed in the EIA. **Mitigation measure:** impacts on natural habitats will be assessed in line with WWF's requirements and in compliance with this ESMF.
- **Community health and safety:** Public health legislation does not specifically impose requirements for development and infrastructure projects. **Mitigation measure:** ESMPs developed under the project will aim to address all community health and safety issues that arise during execution and operation of the project.
- **Involuntary resettlement:** Guyana's legislation does not allow for PAP consultation in the compensation options; does not allow non-cash compensation options such as alternative land allocation; Valuation of lost assets considers depreciation and hence not at replacement cost; does not make mention of compensating non-titleholders (tenants, encroachers and squatters). **Mitigation measure:** compensation for loss of access to livelihoods or any other forms of economic resettlement will be undertaken in compliance with this ESMF. Land acquisition will be prohibited and no project activities will require to acquire privately-owned lands.
- **Indigenous peoples:** The provision of FPIC and broad community support in relation to IPs is present in the Amerindian Act legislation, yet it may not be fully aligned with the FPIC requirements of this ESMF and IPPF. **Mitigation measure:** project activities that target or affect IPs will be implemented in line with this ESMF and IPPF.

**For the purposes of the project, the provisions of the WWF's SIPP shall prevail over Guyana's legislation in all cases of discrepancy, even those not mentioned explicitly in this section.**

## 4. ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The project seeks to strengthen landscape connectivity through improved management of the Kanuku Mountains Protected Areas and examine management options in North Rupununi Wetlands in southern Guyana, and it is expected to result in positive environmental outcomes. Adverse environmental impacts are expected to be minimal.

### 4.1 Activities Triggering Adverse Environmental Impacts

Minor and site-specific negative environmental impacts may result from activities under Component 1: Integrated Protected Landscapes, and Component 2: Enhanced Resilience of Local Communities to Climate Change.

#### **Activities under Output 1.1.1: Infrastructure, furnishing and communication equipment to support effective management of the KMPA, including ranger's quarters and multipurpose building**

This Output is part of Component 1, which aims to address the barriers of '*Limited capacity and infrastructure to support effective management of the KMPA*'; and '*Limited promotion of conservation-compatible land uses in the KMPA*'.

Activities under this output will include the construction and furnishing of staff quarters and a multipurpose center for research, education and training, which are required to complete the infrastructural needs of the KMPA. The infrastructure will be located across from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC)'s building in Lethem, facilitating improved intergovernmental communication and interaction with this agency. The increase in site level presence, infrastructure, equipment, and services to be provided by these facilities will improve the capabilities of site level staff, responsible for the daily operation and monitoring of ecological targets, to conduct their tasks more efficiently.

The construction of a multipurpose center and rangers' quarters will be completed as part of the project but the raw materials, water and energy to be consumed are not considered significant. The whole construction will take place in the township of Lethem, on state owned land. Infrastructure construction will be conducted following all relevant national environmental and social requirements as well as tendering and procurement requirements, and in line with this ESMF and national requirements.

#### **Activities under Output 2.1.5: Wetland management activities with local communities and other stakeholders in North Rupununi Wetlands to support SLWM practices—restoration and productive practices activities**

The project will support a number of strategies aimed at supporting Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) practices in the NRW. The precise initiatives to be funded under the project will be determined during execution, based on the wetland management strategy and a set of key criteria. Initiatives that may be included and might trigger adverse environmental impacts are as follows:

- (1) Restoration initiatives (natural regeneration, tree planting, nature-based solutions, removal of small dams in the NRW portal, bridges or culverts to reduce impacts of road development) to maintain wetland functioning.
- (2) Introduction of sustainable practices in the areas of agroforestry, tourism etc.

These potential activities may trigger adverse environmental impacts, as specified below.

## 4.2 Adverse Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The adverse environmental impacts of activities envisioned as part of Output 1.1.1 may include adverse impacts on agricultural and forest land, water sources, and vegetation. Such adverse impacts may include:

- Construction related impacts (e.g., pollution, dust, noise, waste, etc.) arising from civil works—excavation, waste and material management at site during construction or rehabilitation activities.
- Contamination of water sources from runoff of construction sites or improperly managed black water management.
- Contamination of agricultural lands: Earth excavated (spoil mass) from small civil works, if not properly disposed will contaminate the nearby agricultural land.
- Disturbance of natural habitats, which may result in the loss of biodiversity or loss of protected species.
- Cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem (e.g., forest areas and agricultural areas are diminished).

The adverse environmental impacts of activities envisioned as part of Output 2.1.5 may include:

- Construction related impacts (e.g., pollution, dust, noise, waste, etc.) arising from civil works—excavation, waste and material management at site during construction or rehabilitation activities.
- Inappropriate usage of new seed varieties that may cause degradation of soil and damage to the local vegetation, reduce soil fertility, etc.
- Contamination of water sources.
- Contamination of agricultural lands: Earth excavated (Spoil mass) from small civil works, if not properly disposed will contaminate the nearby agricultural land.
- Disturbance of natural habitats, which may result in the loss of bio-diversity or loss of protected species.
- Cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem.

A detailed overview of these impacts, potential mitigation measures, and responsible authorities is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Anticipated Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Potential impact	Impact scale	Proposed mitigation measures	Responsible party
<b><i>Adverse impacts of construction-related activities (Outputs 1.1.1. &amp; 2.1.5.)</i></b>			
<b>Noise disturbance:</b> Possible noise disturbance as a result of outdoor equipment usage and transportation vehicles driving around the construction site	Short term	<p>Pre-construction: requirements to limit noise pollution should be included in the bidding documents, as a precondition for the contractor’s selection</p> <p>During construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise level control should be performed before the start-up of construction activities;</li> <li>• The equipment should be fitted with appropriate noise devices that will reduce sound level;</li> <li>• The construction work is in a commercial zone, and while some construction activities will take place at night, noise will be minimized during these hours;</li> <li>• Vehicles that are excessively noisy shall not be operated until corrective measures have been taken;</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>
<b>Air quality:</b> dust as a result of construction works and possible emissions from transportation vehicles	Short term	<p>Pre-construction: requirements to limit emissions should be included in the bidding documents, as a precondition for the contractor’s selection</p> <p>During construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction site, transportation routes and materials handling sites should be water-sprayed on dry and windy days;</li> <li>• Construction materials should be stored in appropriate and covered places to minimize dust;</li> <li>• Before allowing vehicles on site, fitness and emission test of the vehicle shall be performed;</li> <li>• Vehicle loads likely to emit dust need to be covered;</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers should wear protective masks if dust appears;</li> <li>Vehicle speed should be restricted within the construction site;</li> <li>Regular maintenance of the vehicles and construction machinery should be performed in order to reduce any leakages of motor oils, emissions and dispersion of pollution;</li> <li>Burning of debris from ground clearance shall be prohibited.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Waste:</b> generation of waste as a result of construction activities. This may also include the</p> <p><b>Contamination of agricultural lands:</b> Earth excavated (Spoil mass) from small civil works, if not properly disposed will contaminate the nearby agricultural land</p>	Short term	<p>Pre-construction: requirements for appropriate waste management should be included in the bidding documents, as a precondition for the contractor's selection</p> <p>During construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification and assessment of the different waste types at the project site (soil, asphalt, food, kitchen, grey and black water, etc.);</li> <li>Ensure that camps are located away from existing stream, river, or water sources, and that no discharge from camps is made into nearby water bodies;</li> <li>Proper containers/waste bins should be provided at the project site;</li> <li>Dumping of waste on the sides of the road, on private land, or in other non-designated places should be prohibited;</li> <li>Dumping waste shall be prohibited on fragile slopes, forests, religious or other culturally sensitive areas or areas where livelihood is derived;</li> <li>Collection, transportation and final disposal of all waste at city, municipal, or regional waste management facility should be undertaken regularly (weekly)</li> <li>Possible hazardous waste (motor oils, vehicle fuels, etc.) should be collected separately and authorized collector and transporter should be sub-contracted to transport and finally dispose;</li> <li>All construction materials should be covered during the transportation to avoid waste dispersion;</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p> <p>EPA officers Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The options for reuse/recycling of the generated waste streams should be taking into consideration (e.g. excavated soil, etc.);</li> <li>● Burning of construction waste should be prohibited.</li> <li>● An environment-friendly toilet (e.g., pit toilet) should be made available for project workers, built with locally available materials</li> </ul> <p>After construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All waste shall be removed from the project site and the camp site shall be reclaimed to the previous existing condition</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Water quality:</b> Contamination of local water sources may occur due to wastewater and sewage from construction sites</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Pre-construction: requirements for appropriate measures to prevent water contamination should be included in the bidding documents, as a precondition for the contractor's selection.</p> <p>During construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An environment-friendly toilet (e.g., pit toilet) and washing facilities should be made available, built with locally available materials</li> <li>● Open defecation in the vicinity of project sites should be prohibited</li> <li>● Throwing waste in water sources should be prohibited</li> <li>● Possible hazardous waste (motor oils, vehicle fuels, lubricants) should be stored in impervious containers and collected separately and authorized entity should be transporting and disposing the hazardous waste;</li> </ul> <p>After construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pit toilets are dismantled and pits are covered and closed.</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer Selected contractors</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All waste is removed from the project site</li> </ul>	
<b>Disturbance of natural habitats</b>	Long term	The project is designed to prevent adverse impacts to biodiversity and natural habitats. Infrastructure works will be part of the project, but construction will take place in the town of Lethem and new buildings will be located on a site where other buildings are being constructed for use by the protected area authority.	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer
<b>Cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem (e.g., grazing areas are diminished)</b>	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that no accidental damage is caused to local vegetation—major trees that are supposed to be cut shall be clearly marked, and only marked trees will be cut;</li> <li>Removal of trees and plants needs to be done in an environmentally sustainable way (e.g., removal of branches);</li> <li>Burning of trees and other plants should be avoided.</li> </ul>	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
<b>Cutting down of vegetation:</b> cutting down of trees and other vegetation for construction purposes	Long term	<p>Pre-construction: Design the construction in a way that minimizes the need to cut down trees (by selecting proper activity sites and ensuring that damage to vegetation is minimized on each selected site)</p> <p>During construction: Ensure that no accidental damage is caused to local vegetation</p> <p>Major trees that are supposed to be cut shall be clearly marked, and only marked trees will be cut;</p> <p>After construction: Replant trees after construction</p>	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
<b><i>Adverse Impacts as part of restoration and productive practices initiatives (Output 2.1.5.)</i></b>			
<b>Introduction of new seed varieties</b> cause degradation of soil and damage to the local vegetation, reduce soil fertility, etc.	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess appropriateness of seeds in terms of biodiversity, water efficiency, local needs, survival, etc.</li> <li>Ensure that only compatible and non-invasive seeds are planted</li> </ul>	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer

			Selected contractors
<p><b>Pesticides and fertilizers</b> might be inappropriately treated as part of the Nature-based Solutions and degrade the soil, cause damage to the local vegetation and untargeted species, produce waste, and may lead to eutrophication of downstream water bodies.</p>	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess appropriateness of pesticides and fertilizers in the local context.</li> <li>● Build the capacity of executing partners to ensure full awareness and knowledge regarding the usage and impacts of selected pesticides and fertilizers.</li> <li>● Ensure that no accidental damage is caused to local vegetation or untargeted species.</li> <li>● Ensure proper selection of sites as to avoid damaging natural habitat.</li> <li>● Comply with FAO’s 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.</li> <li>● The project will not fund nor include the promotion or usage of pesticides.</li> <li>● 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).</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>
<p><b>Cutting down of trees and plants</b> may negatively affect the ecosystem (e.g., grazing areas are diminished)</p>	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure that no accidental damage is caused to local vegetation—major trees that are supposed to be cut shall be clearly marked, and only marked trees will be cut;</li> <li>● Removal of trees and plants needs to be done in an environmentally sustainable way (e.g., removal of branches);</li> <li>● Alternative agricultural areas shall be identified;</li> <li>● Burning of trees and other plants should be avoided.</li> </ul>	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>

### 4.3 Activities Triggering Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

While project activities aim to strengthen integrate productive activities (forestry, agriculture, tourism) and sustainable land and water management considerations of local communities, they may also result in some minor adverse social impacts.

Specifically, adverse social impacts may result from the following activities:

- **Activities under Output 1.1.1: Infrastructure, furnishing and communication equipment** to support effective management of the KMPA, including ranger's quarters and multipurpose building

Activities under this output will include the construction and furnishing of staff quarters and a multipurpose center for research, education and training, which are required to complete the infrastructural needs of the KMPA.

- **Activities under Output 1.1.2: Zoning/Land-Use Planning within the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area**, Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices surveys, resource use map, and new land use plan for the KMPA with indigenous communities.

The objective of this Activity is to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources inside KMPA through the development and implementation of land use plans for the KMPA. Sustainable land use can only be achieved through proper planning and with support from resource users. As such, developing land and sustainable resource use plans for inside the KMPA is important and must be done with the participation of communities.

The intention is to use baseline and updated data gathered from the KAP surveys and RUM processes to design and implement a gender-responsive land use planning process for the KMPA in partnership with local communities and other stakeholders. The data from baseline Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Surveys (KAP) will assist in the identification of the key zones including those adjacent to target communities that should be included in land use planning. The process will be highly participatory and developed collaboratively with communities and will ensure contributions from all stakeholders, including differentiated land and resource uses by men and women, and FPIC processes with indigenous communities.

The end product will be a clearly defined map and data based showing the various zones in the KMPA and the type and level of activities that will be allowed for each zone. This will be done to support more sustainable natural resource use, and will consider potential uses beyond traditional use (e.g. tourism). The Amerindian Act will continue to protect community rights to access the PA for traditional use.

- **Activities under Output 2.1.3: Phase III, Development of management plan/strategy for NRW:** Integrated management planning for the NRW with collectively defined strategies and implementation structure.

Building on data from completed assessments under Output 2.1.1, data collected during the spatial analysis process and through stakeholder consultations, the multi-stakeholder platform, led by EPA and with the support of consultants, will undertake a planning process for integrated management of the NRW. The governance mechanism developed by stakeholders during the process will inform roles and responsibilities in relation to long-term management of the area.

- **Activities under Output 2.1.5: Wetland management activities with local communities and other stakeholders in North Rupununi Wetlands to support SLWM practices**

The project will support a number of strategies aimed at supporting SLWM practices in the NRW. The exact initiatives to be funded under the project will be determined during execution, based on the wetland management strategy and a set of key criteria. Activities will include small grants to strengthen livelihoods, traditional practices, capacity building, and management for SLWM and sustainable use of forest resources strengthened to support SLWM practices in the landscape.

- **Activities under Output 3.1.2.: Revised PA Act, defined in consultation with stakeholders, presented to Cabinet for Review and tabling in Parliament**

The project will support the preparation of regulatory text and Revised PA Act in consultation with all key stakeholders, based on recommendations and following a public review. The Revised PA Act would have a direct impact on the socio-economic conditions of local IP communities in all project areas.

#### 4.4 Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Potential adverse social impacts of activities envisioned as part of Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.3, and 2.1.5 may include the following:

- Output 1.1.1 (Infrastructure, furnishing and communication equipment to support effective management of the KMPA, including ranger's quarters and multipurpose building): occupational and community health and safety, child labour, and gender-based violence.
- Output 1.1.2 (Zoning/Land-Use Planning within the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area): restrictions of access to livelihoods, social conflicts related to land usage and beneficiary selection, restriction of access to cultural resources.
- Output 2.1.3 (Development of management plan/strategy for NRW): restrictions of access to livelihoods, social conflicts related to land usage and beneficiary selection, restriction of access to cultural resources.
- Output 2.1.5 (Wetland management activities with local communities and other stakeholders in NRW): social conflicts related to land usage and beneficiary selection, occupational and community health and safety, child labour, and gender-based violence.
- Output 3.1.2 (Revised PA Act): exclusion of relevant IP communities and local stakeholders.

Further details regarding each of these impacts is provided below.

##### 4.4.1 Restrictions of Access to Livelihoods

Activities under outputs 1.1.2 and 2.1.3 will result in a new land-use plan for KMPA and new management plan/strategy for NRW. While both plans will be developed in a highly participatory manner, with full participation and collaboration from local community members, they may nonetheless result in restrictions of access to livelihoods for certain community members. These livelihoods may include hunting, fishing, wood harvesting, subsistence agriculture, and eco-tourism activities that are practiced by local communities.

It shall be noted that traditional use rights are protected under the Amerindian Act 2006, and PA Act thus project activities cannot lead to restrictions of these rights. Commercial use of resources for example mining and logging are not permitted in the KMPA.

**Mitigation measures.** Any livelihood restrictions must be agreed upon with the communities in a FPIC process, and if any of the activities implemented under Outputs 1.1.2 (with respect to KMPA) and 2.1.3 (with respect to NRW) would negatively impact sources of economic income or other types of livelihoods of affected communities, full and timely compensation from project funds shall be provided to all affected individuals, irrespective of their formal land title, in accordance with the Process Framework (see section 4.4 below). The type, means and process of compensation shall be agreed upon with the communities and calculated in compliance with FPIC based on the replacement value of these livelihoods (market value plus any replacement costs). The process shall be coordinated by the Safeguards & Gender Officer.

Project activities that affect traditional economic livelihoods and practices should only be undertaken following the FPIC process and upon consultation with all affected individuals—representatives of local communities, local authorities and other actors who are affected or have a stake in the usage of relevant land plots. If such negative impacts are unavoidable, the procedures outlined in the Process Framework shall be followed.

#### 4.4.2 Social Conflicts related to Land Usage and Beneficiary Selection

The development of new land use plans for KMPA and integrated management planning for NRW may generate conflicts among the communities. The introduction of wetland management initiatives for some of the project stakeholders may lead to conflicts related to the criteria utilized for beneficiary selection. Further, local communities may reject PA activities in KMPA, and/or landscape management planning in NRW out of concern for land claims and extensions, and resource access. Key stakeholders may not be willing to participate in NRW integrated landscape management planning process. Throughout the course of the project, there may also be changes in village leadership that result in lack of collaboration with project activities. In some cases, conflicts with respect to rights of access to natural resources may arise between neighbouring communities, and some local communities expressed concerns with regards to “outsiders” that exploit their natural resources without title or permission. Such outsiders may constitute visitors from Georgetown, Lethem, Brazil, or tourists from other countries.

The project is designed explicitly to address these challenges and provide stakeholders with different opinions, needs and rights the ability to come together and co-design management solutions that will work for everyone. The following mitigation measures shall be specifically followed:

##### **Mitigation measures:**

- Project activities that may trigger conflicts and tensions among communities and vis-à-vis outsiders will only be undertaken upon consultation with all affected individuals—representatives of local communities, local authorities and other actors who are affected or have a stake in the usage of relevant land. The PMU will undertake a series of consultations in the first 6 months of the project to validate the project activities and adjust as needed. The activities were preliminarily agreed through the KMPA management planning process. FPIC processes will be followed, and the community engagement process will account for changes in village leadership, and ensure new leaders are properly involved.
- Plans for the implementation of wetland management activities shall be developed in a participatory, inclusive, and consultative manner to ensure that access rights and benefits are agreed upon among community members. It is particularly important to engage in these consultations vulnerable community members (e.g., women, youth, disabled, etc.) and IP groups.

The Safeguards & Gender Officer shall develop criteria for beneficiary selection in a participatory manner, seeking input and feedback from all stakeholders, putting special emphasis on the engagement of vulnerable community members (e.g., women, youth, disabled, members of single-headed households, etc.). The criteria for beneficiary selection should then be clearly outlined and widely publicized among community members.

#### 4.4.3 Occupational and Community Health and Safety

The project is likely to engage temporary workers for construction, rehabilitation, and restoration activities, as part of Outputs 1.1.1 and 2.1.5, and such activities would be carried out in the vicinity of local communities.

Construction activities may expose workers to a variety of occupational health and safety (OHS) risks and accidents. Further, young men and women may be taken to town with the promise of work without proper terms or contract or without knowledge of work expectations, and health and safety standards.

With regards to community health and safety, project activities may adversely affect the health and safety of the affected community, and put pressure on—already scarce—community resources. For instance, the quality and supply of water to local communities may be degraded, and safety risks may arise from construction activities and from the potential usage of hazardous materials. The influx of temporary workers in project sites may generate conflicts with local communities. First, temporary workers may place an additional strain on the local natural resources in case of using forest resources for cooking, or water resources for drinking, cleaning, and washing. Second, the presence and influx of temporary workers may also result in increased safety risks for local communities and gender-based violence risks.

Both workers' and community health may also be at risk due to increased exposure to COVID-19 as a result of participation in project activities (for the workers) or residence in the vicinity of these activities (for the community).

Community consultations and workshops are planned for the project. This could expose communities and other stakeholders to COVID-19. COVID-19 restrictions may limit effective engagement with stakeholders – particularly local communities (as a result of, for example, travel restrictions).

#### **Mitigation measures:**

With regards to occupational health and safety, the Safeguards & Gender Officer and the implementing contractors shall provide a safe and healthy work environment, taking into account physical, chemical or biological risks that may be inherent in project activities, and specific threats to women. They shall also take steps to prevent accidents, injury, and disease arising from, associated with, or occurring in the course of work by minimizing, as far as reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards. In a manner consistent with good international industry practice, the implementing contractor shall (i) identify potential hazards to workers, particularly those that may be life-threatening; (ii) provide preventive and protective measures, including modification, substitution, or elimination of hazardous conditions or substances; (iii) train workers as necessary; (iv) document and report occupational accidents, diseases, and incidents; and (v) undertake emergency prevention, preparedness, and response arrangements. Specific mitigation measures are outlined in Table 2 below.

With regards to community health and safety, the Safeguards & Gender Officer and the implementing contractors shall evaluate the risks and impacts to the health and safety of the affected community during the implementation of project activities, and shall establish preventive measures to address them in a manner commensurate with the identified risks and impacts. Project activities shall prevent adverse

impact on the quality and supply of water to local communities, ensure the safety of construction infrastructure and equipment, introduce protective mechanisms for the use of hazardous materials; and undertake all necessary emergency preparedness and response measures.

Consultations will only be undertaken in compliance with national and local guidelines, and with COVID-19 precautions in place. This may involve, for example, small group sizes, the use of testing, and PPE. The PMU will develop guidance on COVID protocols in the two project areas. In all cases, continued attention will be given to ensuring the voices of IP, women, youth, and any underrepresented community members.

It shall be ensured that temporary workers are made aware of local culture and traditions, as well as the legal consequences of harassment and intimidation, especially with regards to sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Local communities shall be made aware of the engagement of temporary workers in project sites. Strict monitoring shall be carried out to ensure conflicts are minimized. Local skilled workers should be employed in project works to the extent possible.

Specific measures are outlined in Table 2.

#### 4.4.4 Restriction of Access to Cultural Resources

Cultural resources within and associated with the project area include physical resources such as sacred sites; intangible resources such as TEK, subsistence ways of life, language, folklore (indigenous people have lived in the in the area centuries and their ways of life are connected to the resources of the landscape); and natural cultural resources including plants and animals that have cultural and spiritual significance). Access to these resources may be restricted due to the development of new land use plans for KMPA and integrated management plans for NRW.

**Mitigation measures.** Temporary restrictions related to access to or usage of sacred sites should only be undertaken upon consultation with the indigenous communities, in line with the guidelines provided in Chapter 4.5 Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF). Permanent denial of access will be prohibited and no activities that may result in the denial of access to sacred sites can be approved under the project.

#### 4.4.5 Child labour

There might be risks of child labour in project activities as children from local communities are commonly engaged in labour-related activities supporting their parents. Given that this is a traditional practice, such risk can also arise as part of project activities unless mitigation measures are undertaken.

**Mitigation measures.** Staff hired as part of the PMU will be highly qualified individuals hired under Guyanese labour laws. Those contractors and laborers who are hired for the construction of the buildings as part of Component 1 and as part of the wetland management activities (Output 2.1.5) will follow national procurement/tendering processes and guidelines for the Recruitment of Contractors. However, due to the prevalence of child labour in the area, it is possible that the project could inadvertently hire a child who was sent to find work by their parents. Careful screening of all applicants will help to mitigate this risk.

#### 4.4.6 Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence is prevalent in the country and the project areas. GBV takes the form of rape, incest, sexual abuse, and physical violence. There have also been reported cases of trafficking in persons reported in the region and project areas. The violence is mainly perpetrated on women and girls by men



and boys. It has the potential to affect the project activities negatively since women's participation in project activities may be hindered by them suffering from isolation and ill mental and physical health.

Women's empowerment and change in household dynamics resultant from project activities can lead to increased domestic violence due to men feeling threatened or displaced. The project has several activities including physical construction works that will see the introduction of project staff (construction workers, project management staff, and trainers and consultants) persons from outside the communities which can lead to instances of sexual harassment and exploitation. These staff can also introduce or exacerbate certain consumption practices such as the use of alcohol which can result in increased gender-based violence.

**Mitigation measures.** The project will screen all project workers and conduct gender-based violence training for all project field staff. The training which is a part of the project's gender action plan will focus also on project staff becoming allies in the recognition and prevention of gender-based violence and how to assist victims by referral to the national gender-based violence referral pathway. All project staff including project management staff, construction workers, partner organisations, and contractors will be required to participate in gender-based violence mandated training. Workers on the physical works component of the project (Outputs 1.1.1 and 2.1.5) will be required to sign a code of conduct which will include anti- sexual harassment and gender-based violence clauses.

#### 4.4.7 Exclusion of IP communities from legislative processes

As part of Output 3.1.2., the project will support the preparation of regulatory text and Revised PA Act. The Revised PA Act would have a direct impact on the socio-economic conditions of local IP communities in all project areas. However, it raises a risk that indigenous communities may not be fully involved in the development of the Revised Act and their perspectives might not be fully captured.

**Mitigation measures.** The Revised Act will be developed in a participatory process, in consultation with all key stakeholders. The revisions will reflect the recommendations of Indigenous communities and include a public review process.

#### 4.4.8 Summary of Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table 3. Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Potential impact	Proposed mitigation measures	Responsible party
<p><b>1. Changes in the current access and usage rights of natural resources in project sites (access to agriculture areas, collection of firewood, fishing, hunting)</b></p>	<p>Full and timely compensation shall be provided to all affected individuals, irrespective of their formal land title, in accordance with the Process Framework (see section 4.4 below). Compensation shall be agreed upon with the communities and calculated based on the replacement value of these livelihoods (market value plus any replacement costs).</p> <p>Project activities that affect traditional economic livelihoods and practices should only be undertaken upon consultation with all affected individuals—representatives of local communities, local authorities and other actors who are affected or have a stake in the usage of relevant land plots. If such negative impacts are unavoidable, the procedures outlined in the Process Framework shall be followed.</p>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p>
<p><b>2. Social tensions resulting from changes in land usage rights and selection criteria of local households that would benefit from project activities. Vulnerable community members may thus be further marginalized.</b></p>	<p>Project activities that may trigger conflicts and tensions among communities should only be undertaken through community consultations that will be organized by professional facilitators. Special efforts will be undertaken to proactively engage the most vulnerable community members.</p> <p>The PMU will undertake a series of consultations in the first 6 months of the project to validate the project activities and adjust as needed. The activities were preliminarily agreed through the KMPA management planning process. FPIC processes will be followed, and the community engagement process will account for changes in village leadership, and ensure new leaders are properly involved.</p> <p>Clear and transparent criteria for beneficiary selection shall be developed in an inclusive manner, putting special emphasis on the engagement of vulnerable community members (e.g., women, youth, disabled, members of single-headed households, etc.). Special attention should also be paid to the engagement of IP groups. The criteria for beneficiary selection should then be clearly outlined and widely publicized among community members.</p>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p>

<p><b>3. Occupational health and safety as a result of occupational hazards during construction works and due to increased exposure to COVID-19.</b></p>	<p>Project technicians and the implementing contractors shall provide a safe and healthy work environment, taking into account physical, chemical or biological risks that may be inherent in project activities—especially off-shore. They shall also take steps to prevent accidents, injury, and disease arising from, associated with, or occurring in the course of work by minimizing, as far as reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards. In a manner consistent with good international industry practice, the implementing contractor shall (i) identify potential hazards to workers, particularly those that may be life-threatening; (ii) provide preventive and protective measures, including modification, substitution, or elimination of hazardous conditions or substances; (iii) train workers as necessary; (iv) document and report occupational accidents, diseases, and incidents; and (v) undertake emergency prevention, preparedness, and response arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Workers shall only be employed when full and adequate terms of contract are provided to them in advance, and only after they get fully sensitized regarding work conditions and expectations.</li> <li>● Ensure regular health screening for the workers pre and during construction activities</li> <li>● Ensure that no underage workers, or children are engaged</li> <li>● Ensure decent work conditions, including an appropriate salary, working hours, accommodation and food for workers shall be provided to all workers</li> <li>● Ensure that workers are employed on the principle of equal opportunity and fair treatment, and there is no discrimination with respect to any aspects of the employment relationship, such as recruitment and hiring, compensation (including wages and benefits), working conditions and terms of employment, access to training, job assignment, promotion, termination of employment or retirement, and disciplinary practices</li> <li>● Implement a grievance mechanism for workers (and their organisations, where they exist) to raise workplace concerns</li> </ul> <p>With regards to COVID-19, advisories on precautionary, exigency, and emergency measures by WHO and the government health authority will be heeded and complied with. These will be brought to the attention of all project personnel and anyone doing personal transaction with any project staff for the purpose of having a common understanding and as much as possible mutual agreement of the need for and benefits of compliance.</p>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer EPA Officers PAC Officers (for KMPA) Selected contractors</p>
<p><b>4. Local community’s health and safety as a result of occupational hazards during the</b></p>	<p>Project and the implementing contractors shall evaluate the risks and impacts to the health and safe/ty of the affected community during the implementation of project activities, and</p>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer EPA Officers</p>

<p><b>construction activities and due to increased exposure to COVID-19.</b></p>	<p>shall establish preventive measures to address them in a manner commensurate with the identified risks and impacts.</p> <p>Project activities shall prevent adverse impact on the quality and supply of water to local communities, ensure the safety of construction infrastructure and equipment, introduce protective mechanisms for the use of hazardous materials; and undertake all necessary emergency preparedness and response measures.</p> <p>Specific measures include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the safety of all project-related equipment, in line with the requirements above;</li> <li>● Minimize the use of hazardous materials, and ensure that community members are not exposed to them. In case that the use of such materials is necessary, provide sufficient notice to local community members and inform them on safety and protection measures;</li> <li>● Avoid dumping any waste or otherwise contaminating community sources of water supply and water quality;</li> <li>● Provide information to local communities on construction activities and plans.</li> </ul> <p>With regards to COVID-19, advisories on precautionary, exigency, and emergency measures by WHO and the government health authority will be heeded and complied with. These will be brought to the attention of all project personnel and anyone doing personal transaction with any project staff for the purpose of having a common understanding and as much as possible mutual agreement of the need for and benefits of compliance.</p>	<p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>
<p><b>5. Conflicts between migrant workers and community members over local resource usage (firewood for cooking, water for drinking and washing), safety and GBV</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Workers shall be made aware of local culture and traditions, as well as the legal consequences of harassment and intimidation, especially with regards to sexual harassment and gender-based violence.</li> <li>● Local communities shall be made aware of the engagement of temporary workers in project sites.</li> <li>● Strict monitoring shall be carried out to ensure conflicts are minimized</li> <li>● Skilled local workers shall be employed in project activities to the extent possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer &amp; local government authorities</p>
<p><b>6. Access to cultural sites and resources may have to be restricted as a result of project activities.</b></p>	<p>Temporary restrictions related to access to or usage of sacred sites should only be undertaken upon consultation with the indigenous communities, in line with the guidelines provided in Chapter 4.5 Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF). Permanent denial of access will</p>	<p>Safeguards &amp; Gender Officer;</p>

	be prohibited and no activities that may result in the denial of access to sacred sites can be approved under the project.	local government authorities
<b>7. Child labour: it is culturally habitual that children help their parents with farming, fishing or other project-relevant activities.</b>	The project team will carry out awareness raising among local stakeholders to explain the risks of child labour, and ensure that children are not engaged in any project-related works.	Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
<b>8. Gender-based violence</b>	The project will screen all project workers and conduct gender-based violence training for all project field staff. The training which is a part of the project's gender action plan will focus also on project staff becoming allies in the recognition and prevention of gender-based violence and how to assist victims by referral to the national gender-based violence referral pathway. All project staff including project management staff, construction workers, partner organisations, and contractors will be required to participate in gender-based violence mandated training. Workers on the physical works component of the project (Outputs 1.1.1 and 2.1.5) will be required to sign a code of conduct which will include anti- sexual harassment and gender-based violence clauses.	Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
<b>9. Exclusion of IP communities from legislative processes</b>	The Revised PA Act will be developed in a participatory process, in consultation with all key stakeholders. The revisions will reflect the recommendations of Indigenous communities and include a public review process.	

## 4.5 Process Framework: Livelihood Restoration Measures

Project activities under Outputs 1.1.2 and 2.1.3 may result in restrictions of access to livelihoods and natural resources for local communities. Any change related to land use, access to water sources, access to hunting and fishing areas, or access to firewood shall be based on free and prior informed consultations of the affected communities and relevant authorities, which must be conducted prior to finalizing any of the changes.

If such a change negatively impacts sources of economic income or other types of livelihoods of affected communities, full and timely compensation shall be provided to all affected individuals, irrespective of their formal land title. All affected communities and households around the project-supported areas will be provided with opportunities to restore their livelihoods to at least pre-project levels.

Livelihoods-related support during project implementation will be provided to the households (HH) of all communities within the targeted areas. This process will be organized in the following manner:

- Screening

The Safeguards & Gender Officer, with the support of EPA officers, will undertake screening of all planned activities for likely access restrictions to local communities. This will include both communities that reside in project-affected areas or rely on the natural resources within project areas, and any community members that may lack land title.

- Social assessment

If the screening confirms and identifies households affected due to access restriction to natural resources, a social assessment (SA) process based on participatory consultations with affected peoples will be carried out. The SA will generate the necessary baseline information on demographics, social, cultural, and economic characteristics of affected communities, as well as the land and territories that they have traditionally owned or customarily used or occupied, and the natural resources on which they depend. The SA will assess potential impacts and the extent of restriction of access to resources along with suitable mitigation and enhancement measures including options for alternative access to similar resources.

- Livelihood Restoration Plans

Based on the findings of the screening and social assessment, an action plan usually known as Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRP) will be prepared after holding further meaningful consultations with affected peoples and stakeholders which will provide tailored livelihood support and benefit sharing for affected persons, groups and communities.

The LRPs will be site-specific and include the following issues: (1) identifying and ranking of site-specific impacts; (2) setting out criteria and eligibility for livelihood assistance; (3) outlining the rights of persons who have been either customarily or legally/illegally using forest, water, or land resources for subsistence to be respected; (4) describing and identifying available mitigation measures alternatives, taking into account the provisions of applicable local legislation, and the available measures for mitigation promoted via project activities and considering any additional sound alternatives, if proposed by the affected persons; (5) outlining specific procedures on how compensation can be obtained.

- Mitigation measures as part of the LRPs

Participatory and inclusive consultations should be carried out with affected communities, individuals, and stakeholders to agree on the allocation of alternative livelihood. Eligibility criteria should be established according to guidelines provided in Chapter 4.4 Process Framework.

Alternative livelihood schemes should be discussed, agreed upon and provided for affected persons/groups. The livelihood options to be built on and be based upon the traditional skills, knowledge, practices and the culture/world view of the affected peoples/groups and persons.

Affected persons should be provided project-related livelihood support and other opportunities as part of the planned project activities. These may include activities implemented as part of

Output 2.1.5: “Wetland management activities with local communities and other stakeholders in North Rupununi Wetlands to support SLWM practices—restoration and productive practices activities.”

An accessible and efficient grievance redress mechanism should be established and made functional (see Chapter 5.9 of this ESMF/PF/IPPF).

Special attention should be made to tailoring these mitigation measures to the needs of IP groups, in line with the guidelines provided in Chapter 4.5 of this ESMF/PF/IPPF. While some of them may be interested in the mitigation measures outlined above, others may necessitate an alternative approach (e.g., allocation of alternative agricultural areas or preserving access to wood collection, fishing, hunting, etc.). Any proposed measures should be closely coordinated with PAPs to ensure that they fully reflect their needs and priorities.

- Compensation

In case that compensation is awarded, it shall be agreed upon as part of a FPIC process. In case that monetary compensation is awarded, it shall be calculated based on the replacement value of these livelihoods (economic market value plus any replacement costs) in a participatory manner and following FPIC, by community representatives and the Safeguards & Gender Officer, in collaboration with the EPA, PAC, KMCRG, Toshao and Councillors.

In cases where compensation will consist of the allocation of alternative resources (e.g., alternative agricultural areas), measures will include identification of these resources with the active involvement of the affected persons/ communities and assistance to access these resources. This should also be determined as part of a FPIC process.

Detailed procedures on how compensation should be calculated and awarded should be provided in each site-specific LRP based on local conditions.

## 4.6. Indigenous People Planning Framework (IPPF)

### 4.6.1 IP Population of Project Sites

Indigenous Peoples form the bulk of Region 9 population and are the fourth largest ethnic group in Guyana and account for 9.2 per cent of the 751,223 persons in Guyana (Guyana Census Report, 2002). Between 1980 and 2002, the Indigenous population grew from 40,343 to 68,819. This represents a significant increase of 70.6 per cent. Specifically, Indigenous Peoples account for more than three-quarters of the populations of Region 9 (89.2 percent) (Guyana Census Report, 2002)

There are three Indigenous groups in Region 9 which make up the majority of persons living in the Region – Macushi, Wapishana, and Wai-Wai. However, the population of the project site is mainly Macushi and Wapishana. Each indigenous group has their own language, but also speak English. Loss of traditional language has been a challenge that these groups face. While the majority of the population are Christian, many Indigenous people are also animists, who believe that everything, both animate and inanimate have a spirit; spirits they believe exist and referred to as Kanaima.

The Macushis and Wapishanas drifted from Brazil into Guyana from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Most likely, they crossed in the area of the Ireng River and began settling in the north part of the Rupununi savannahs. Later, the Wapishanas began to migrate to the south of the Kanuku Mountain. Some historians believe that they did so to avoid the slave-raiding Indigenous tribes who came from the Rio Negro and Rio Branco regions of Brazil. There is evidence that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries both the Macushi and Wapishana villages erected defences against these raids. It is possible, too, that the Wapishanas moved away from the north savannahs because they and the Macushis had become enemies. In the 1780s, more Macushis and Wapishanas who were living in the Rio Branco region of Brazil fled to Guyana to escape from the Portuguese who were forcibly attempting to place them in mission settlements. Smaller groups from decimated tribes from the same region of Brazil also moved into Guyana and joined up with either the Macushis or Wapishanas after this period.

The Macushi People live in the northern portion of the Rupununi in Region 9, and are mostly known for their relationship and influence over the Iwokrama Programme Site and their strong interest in the conservation and sustainable management of the North Rupununi Wetlands and the functioning of the North Rupununi District Development Board (initially set up to relate with Iwokrama). Some Macushi villages that border the Kanuku Mountains are also part of the Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group established initially to relate with the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area.

The Wapishana People live in the south-central portion of the Rupununi in Region 9. They are known for their very strong interest and advocacy in securing territorial lands that link their titled village lands together and gives them access rights and a certain level of veto power over land use decisions over the South Rupununi outside of their titled village lands. Shulinab or "Macushi" is the furthest south Macushi village. Communities south of it are Wapishana. The Wapishanas are the first Indigenous group to establish a District Council under the Amerindian Act (2006) and were instrumental along with some Macushi Villages in establishing the Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group. CI worked with these communities to form the KMCRG as a mechanism to communicate with communities for development of management planning, and the structure of KMCRG was based on the NRDDDB model.

In the North Rupununi there are 21 Indigenous communities within the project site and for the KMPA site, 18 Indigenous communities are located within the site. Communities utilize resources of the project site. Indigenous villages have communal land titles and there is an ongoing process led by the MoA to grant titles and extensions to other villages that satisfy the requirements of the Amerindian Act 2006. It is important to note that resource use is not only confined to titled lands, but also extends to customary use areas that they have traditionally used. Indigenous people can exercise their traditional rights to use of resources in these areas, in accordance with the provisions of the Amerindian Act, 2006. The Protected Areas Act 2011 also provide for the exercise of traditional rights within protected areas.

Indigenous peoples in Guyana are vulnerable and marginalized for various reasons including geographical location, culture. Other factors which contribute to indigenous people being disadvantaged include: women have lower rates of employment; many adolescents stop their formal education without completing secondary school (even though many indigenous boys and girls attend primary school); the



adolescent birth rate in Region 9 is 6.5%, almost twice the national average of 3.9%; child marriages are prevalent in the region with 6.1% marrying before the age of 15 and 41.3% attaining the age of 18 years.

#### 4.6.2 Project Impacts on IP Groups

The project is expected to have a positive impact on lands and resources that are important to and owned by indigenous people and indigenous people will be part of the decision-making process regarding these resources. The rights of indigenous peoples will not be negatively affected as they have legal rights to land and legal rights to practice traditional use of resources in areas beyond their titled lands. IP communities will be able to take advantage of all project activities and opportunities.

There are expected to be no distinct adverse impacts as a result of project activities on one IP group or the other. The potential negative impacts and associated mitigation measures that are listed in Section 4 may thus apply to all IP groups.

The presence of IPs in the project sites require a social assessment to generate the necessary baseline information on demographics, social, cultural, and political characteristics of affected IP communities as well as the land and territories that they have traditionally owned or customarily used or occupied, and the natural resources on which they depend. A social assessment process was carried out as part of the preparation of safeguard documentation, drawing on desk review and field visits and consultations.

As IP groups constitute the main population group in the project area, they will both take advantage of the project's positive effects and its potentially adverse impacts. Based on stakeholder consultations, no group among the IP population seems to be disadvantaged vis-à-vis other IP groups.

The FPIC of IPs to project activities will be sought during the first six months of the project, before project activities commence.

The following opportunities have been identified that will benefit indigenous people: 1. Livelihood improvement; 2. Improving the management of resources on their titled lands; 3. Participation in decision-making; 4. enabling the transmission of traditional knowledge and language. The project strives to ensure that both men and women benefit from project activities.

#### 4.6.3 Mitigation Planning

The following steps should be followed to screen and assess the project's potential social and environmental risks including project restriction of access to resources & livelihood, and to prepare the required management plans for avoiding, and where avoidance is not possible, reducing, mitigating and managing potential adverse impacts. The screening, social assessment, planning and implementation of the management plans (IPPs and LRPs) and their monitoring and evaluation will be the responsibilities of PMU using project budget allocated for project activities. As part of this, the PAC Act shall also be complied with, and existing processes regarding mitigation planning with KMPA shall be relied upon.

The mitigation planning steps are as follows:

1. Identification of specific activities under components 1 & 2 (PMU)
2. Screening of the activity using the Screening Tool (attached in Annex 1) and questions in Box 1 below (Safeguards & Gender Officer, with support from EPA Officers, PAC, Toshao, etc.).
3. Outcomes of the screening exercise would be:

- a) Scenario 1: If screening indicates Project restriction of access to resources and sources of livelihood and other impacts on IPs/marginalized groups and also confirms FPIC requirement (using the Box 1 template), conduct social assessment of the activity.
  - b) Scenario 2: If Screening conforms no impacts on IPs, prepare an action plan to continue consultations with IPs and include their feedback while designing and implementing the activities.
4. If FPIC required => Start process of obtaining FPIC with the affected IPs for the activity/subproject that required FPIC (See box 2 for steps and process;

If FPIC is NOT required => Initiate process for preparation of IPP for the activity impacting IPs

If IPs' livelihoods are affected, initiate process for designing LRP (See Section 4.5.) to restore livelihood and ensure access to common resources where access to common resources and sources of livelihood of local communities are restricted by execution of the specific activity.

5. Implement IPP; FPIC agreed action plan/IPP and LRPs.

#### 4.6.4 Steps for Formulating an IPP

WWF's Policy on Indigenous People requires that, regardless of whether Project affected Indigenous Peoples are affected adversely or positively, an IPP needs to be prepared with care and with the full and effective participation of affected communities.

The requirements include screening to confirm and identify affected IP groups in the project areas, social analysis to improve the understanding of the local context and affected communities; a process of free, prior, and informed consent with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities in order to fully identify their views and to obtain their broad community support to the project; and development of project-specific measures to avoid adverse impacts and enhance culturally appropriate benefits.

Minimum requirements for project working in areas with IPs are:

- Identification of IPs through screening;
- Assessment of project impacts;
- Consultations with affected IP communities following an FPIC process as determined in partnership with relevant IP communities that seeks to obtain their broad community support;
- Development of sites specific indigenous peoples plan (IPP) to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits; and
- In activities with no impacts, the requirements could be limited to consultations during implementation to keep local communities informed about project activities and documentation of all consultations held.

#### 4.6.5 Social Assessments

WWF's Policy on Indigenous People requires screening for indigenous peoples to assess risks and opportunities and to improve the understanding of the local context and affected communities.

As mentioned in Section 4, the following activities may result in adverse impacts on local communities, which primarily consist of IPs:

- Output 1.1.2 (Zoning/Land-Use Planning within the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area): restrictions of access to livelihoods, social conflicts related to land usage and beneficiary selection, restriction of access to cultural resources.
- Output 2.1.3 (Development of management plan/strategy for NRW): restrictions of access to livelihoods, social conflicts related to land usage and beneficiary selection, restriction of access to cultural resources.

These activities may require site-specific Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs) to ensure equitable project benefits sharing with indigenous communities present at the project sites. For this purpose, screening and a social assessment (SA) will be conducted in consultation with the IP communities to identify project-affected IPs, potential impacts, and severity of impact among the different IP groups affected by each activity and ensure that the proposed mitigation are appropriate.

The social assessment should gather the following information about IP individuals affected for each project activity: overview of the indigenous communities affected by the project, project activities as they relate to the local communities, how project implementation will address the particular circumstances of Indigenous Peoples, and how they will participate and be consulted during implementation.

#### 4.6.6 Development of Indigenous Peoples' Plans

Based on the results of the social assessments, an Indigenous Peoples' Plan shall be developed for each project site.

The contents of the IPP will depend on the specific project activities identified and the impacts these activities may have on Indigenous Peoples in the project area. As a minimum, the IPP should include the following information:

- ✓ Description of the Indigenous Peoples affected by the proposed activity;
- ✓ Summary of the proposed activity;
- ✓ Detailed description of IPs' participation and consultation process during implementation;
- ✓ Description of how the project will ensure culturally appropriate benefits and avoid or mitigate adverse impacts;
- ✓ Budget;
- ✓ Mechanism for complaints and conflict resolution; and
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation system that includes monitoring of particular issues and measures concerning indigenous communities.

For project activities that may result in changes in IPs' access to livelihoods (these primarily constitute access to grazing areas, firewood collection, and access to water resources and rivers), the provisions of the Process Framework (Section 4.4) should be followed in parallel to the IPP.

#### 4.6.7 Free, Prior and Informed Consent Framework

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is an approach for ensuring that the rights of indigenous peoples are guaranteed in any decision that may affect their lands, territories or livelihoods. It ensures that they have the right to give or withhold their consent to these activities without fear of reprisal or coercion, in a timeframe suited to their own culture, and with the resources to make informed decisions.

FPIC is composed of four separate components:

- Free—Without coercion, intimidation, manipulation, threat or bribery.
- Prior—indicates that consent has been sought sufficiently in advance, before any project activities have been authorized or commenced, and that the time requirements of the indigenous community’s consultation/consensus processes have been respected.
- Informed—Information is provided in a language and form that are easily understood by the community, covering the nature, scope, purpose, duration and locality of the project or activity as well as information about areas that will be affected; economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts, all involved actors, and the procedures that the project or activity may entail.
- Consent—The right of indigenous peoples to give or withhold their consent to any decision that will impact their lands, territories, resources, and livelihoods.

The processes of consultation and obtaining FPIC will be applied to all the aspects of the project (financed under WWF) that affect the rights of IPs. FPIC will be required on any matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, territories (whether titled or untitled to the people in question) and traditional livelihoods of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Thus, FPIC is integral to the execution of the proposed project, as the project areas includes diverse indigenous stakeholder communities. WWF recognizes the strong cultural and spiritual ties many indigenous peoples have to their lands and territories and committed to strengthen these ties in all WWF/GEF funded projects. FPIC gives indigenous peoples the freedom to determine their own development path promoting conservation sustainably. The following checklist (Box 1) may assist in helping to determine whether some Project activities may require an FPIC process.

**Box 1. Checklist for appraising whether an activity may require an FPIC Process**

1. Will the activity involve the taking, confiscation, removal or damage of cultural, intellectual, religious and/or spiritual property from indigenous peoples?
2. Will the activity adopt or implement any legislative or administrative measures that will affect the rights, lands, territories and/or resources of indigenous peoples (e.g. in connection with the development, utilisation or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources; land reform; legal reforms that may discriminate de jure or de facto against indigenous peoples, etc.)?
3. Will the activity involve natural resource extraction such as logging or mining or agricultural development on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples?
4. Will the activity involve any decisions that will affect the status of indigenous peoples’ rights to their lands/territories, resources or livelihoods?
5. Will the activity involve the accessing of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities?
6. Will the activity affect indigenous peoples’ political, legal, economic, social, or cultural institutions and/or practices?
7. Will the activity involve making commercial use of natural and/or cultural resources on lands subject to traditional ownership and/or under customary use by indigenous peoples?

8. Will the activity involve decisions regarding benefit-sharing arrangements, when benefits are derived from the lands/territories/resources of indigenous peoples (e.g. natural resource management or extractive industries)?
9. Will the activity have an impact on the continuance of the relationship of the indigenous peoples with their land or their culture?
10. Will the interventions/activities restrict on access to NTFPs, timber, lands, etc. and other sources of livelihoods and community resources?

If the answer is 'Yes' to any of these questions in Box 1, it is likely that FPIC will be required of the potentially affected peoples for the specific activity that may result in the impacts identified in the questions. When an FPIC process is required, a stakeholder consultation process will need to be initiated to define and agree on an FPIC process. The indigenous peoples who may be affected by the Project will have a central role in defining the FPIC process. The consultation process should be launched as early as possible to ensure full, effective and meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples.

All consultations with indigenous peoples should be carried out in good faith with the objective of achieving agreement or consent. Consultation and consent are about indigenous peoples' right to meaningfully and effectively participate in decision-making on matters that may affect them. Consultations and information disclosure are integral parts of FPIC process and any development support planning for IPs to ensure that the priorities, preferences, and needs of the indigenous groups are taken into consideration adequately. With that objective in view, a strategy for consultation with IPs has been proposed so that all consultations are conducted in a manner to ensure full and effective participation. The approach of full and effective participation is primarily based upon transparent, good faith interactions, so that everyone in the community is empowered to join fully in the decision-making process. It includes providing information in a language and manner the community understands and, in a timeframe, compatible with the community's cultural norms.

The affected IPs will be actively engaged in all stages of the project cycle, including project preparation, and feedback of consultations with the IPs will be reflected in the project design, followed by disclosure. Their participation in project preparation and planning has informed project design and will continue to actively participate in the project execution. Once the IPP or LRP is prepared, it will be translated into local languages (if possible) and made available to them before implementation.

The PMU shall ensure adequate flow of funds for consultation and facilitation of planned activities within the IPP. Project brochures and pamphlet with infographic containing basic information such as sub-project location, impact estimates, and mitigation measures proposed, and implementation schedule will be prepared, translated into a language understandable to the IPs, and distributed among them.

A range of consultative methods will be adopted to carry out consultation including, but not limited to: focus group discussions (FGDs), public meetings, community discussions, and in-depth and key informant interviews; in addition to the censuses and socioeconomic surveys.

The key stakeholders to be consulted during screening, impact assessment; design and implementation of IPP, LRP and Process Framework (PF) include:

- All affected persons belonging to IPs/marginalized groups;
- Ministry of Agriculture, EPA, PAC, KMCRG, NRDDDB, Regional Office #9, tourism representative;
- Local government representatives (Toshao and Councillors).

The project will ensure adequate representation of each group of stakeholders mentioned above while conducting consultations using various tools and approaches.

The views of IP communities are to be considered during execution of project activities, while respecting their current practices, beliefs and cultural preferences. The outcome of the consultations will be documented into the periodical reports and included in project's trimester progress reports. The PMU with support of the Safeguards & Gender Officer will also ensure that affected persons are consulted and informed about the outcome of the decision-making process and will confirm how their views were incorporated.

### **Procedures to seek FPIC**

Project interventions and activities affecting the indigenous peoples, whether adversely or positively, therefore, need to follow a process of free, prior, and informed consent, with the affected indigenous peoples in order to fully identify their views and to obtain their broad community support to the project; and development of project-specific measures to avoid adverse impacts and enhance culturally appropriate benefits.

Community involvement is a critical component of FPIC, as FPIC is a collective process, rather than an individual decision. In practice, FPIC is implemented through a participatory process involving all affected groups that is carried out prior to the finalization or implementation of any project activities, decisions or development plans. FPIC is established through good faith negotiation between the project and affected IPs. A facilitator should support this process, a person who will be available throughout the Project, who speaks the necessary languages and is aware of the project context.

Box 2 below outlines some generic steps to be followed for FPIC with the affected IPs in order to obtain their broad community support.

#### **Box 2. Steps for Seeking FPIC from Project Affected Indigenous Peoples**

1. Identify communities, sub-groups within communities, and other stakeholders with potential interests/rights (both customary and legal) on the land or other natural resources that are proposed to be developed, managed, appropriated, utilized, or impacted by the proposed project activity.
2. Identify any rights (customary and legal) or claims of these communities to land or resources (e.g., water rights, water access points, or rights to hunt or extract forest products) that overlap or are adjacent to the site(s) or area(s) of the proposed project activity;
3. Identify whether the proposed project activity may diminish the rights, claims, or interests identified in Step 2 above and also identify natural resources that may be impacted by this project and the legal and customary laws that govern these resources;
4. Provide the details of proposed project activities to be implemented along with their likely impacts on IPs either positively or negatively, as well as the corresponding proposed mitigation measures in a language or means of communication understandable by the affected indigenous peoples;
5. All project information provided to IPs should be in a form appropriate to local needs. Local languages should usually be used and efforts should be made to include all community members, including women and members of different generations and social groups (e.g. clans and socioeconomic background);

6. Selection of facilitator, who will be available throughout the Project, who speaks the necessary languages and is aware of the project context, and is culturally and gender-sensitive. The facilitator should be trustworthy to affected indigenous peoples. It will also be helpful to involve any actors which are likely to be involved in implementing the FPIC process, such as local or national authorities
7. If the IP communities are organized in community associations or umbrella organisations, these should usually be consulted.
8. Provide sufficient time for IPs' decision-making processes (it means allocate sufficient time for internal decision-making processes to reach conclusions that are considered legitimate by the majority of the concerned participants)
9. Support a process to create a mutually respected decision-making structure in cases where two or more communities claim rights over a project site.
10. If FPIC is not familiar to the community, engage in a dialogue to identify existing decision-making structures that support the principles underlying FPIC.
11. Identify the community-selected representative(s) or "focal people" for decision making purpose-- identification of the decisionmakers and parties to the negotiation.
12. Agree on the decisionmakers or signatory parties and/or customary binding practice that will be used to conclude the agreement, introducing the chosen representatives, their role in the community, how they were chosen, their responsibility and role as representatives;
13. Reach consent, document IPs' needs that are to be included into the project, and agree on a feedback and a project grievance redress mechanism. Agreements reached must be mutual and recognized by all parties, taking into consideration customary modes of decision-making and consensus-seeking. These may include votes, a show of hands, the signing of a document witnessed by a third party, performing a ritual ceremony that makes the agreement binding, and so forth;
14. When seeking "broad community consent/support" for the project, it should be ensured that all relevant social groups of the community have been adequately consulted. When this is the case and the "broad" majority is overall positive about the project, it would be appropriate to conclude that broad community support/consent has been achieved. Consensus building approaches are often the norm, but "broad community consent/support" does not mean that everyone has to agree to a given project;
15. When the community agrees on the project, document the agreement process and outcomes including benefits, compensation, or mitigation to the community, commensurate with the loss of use of land or resources in forms and languages accessible and made publicly available to all members of the community, providing for stakeholder review and authentication;
16. The agreements or special design features providing the basis for broad community support should be described in the Indigenous Peoples Plan; any disagreements should also be documented; and
17. Agree on jointly defined modes of monitoring and verifying agreements as well as their related procedures: how these tasks will be carried out during project implementation, and the commission of independent periodic reviews (if considered) at intervals satisfactory to all interest groups.

#### 4.6.8 Disclosure

The final IPPF and PF and site specific IPPs and LRP will be disclosed on the website of the EPA as the executing agency and the website of WWF and made available to affected IPs; information dissemination and consultation will continue throughout project execution. Summaries of IPPs and mitigation measures proposed in IPPs will be translated into the local language and paper copies will be made available to the affected persons in the office of relevant local authorities.

#### 4.6.9 Institutional and monitoring arrangements

The Safeguards & Gender Officer will be responsible for the development and implementation of the IPPF and IPP, with support from the EPA, PAC, KMCRG NRDDDB and local authorities (e.g., Toshaos) on logistical matters (e.g., conducting field visits, reaching out to IP communities, convening meetings, etc.).

The Safeguards & Gender Officer will periodically report on the implementation of the IPPF/IPP to the PMU's National Project Manager, PSC, and WWF US. Monitoring and reporting will be undertaken together with reporting on the other ESMF commitments (as indicated in Section 5.5).

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 5.1. Procedures for the Identification and Management of Environmental and Social Impacts

The following activities will not be financed by the project. This includes activities that:

- 1 Lead to land management practices that cause degradation (biological or physical) of the soil and water. Examples include, but are not limited to: the felling of trees in core zones and critical watersheds; activities involving quarrying and mining; commercial logging; or dredge fishing.
- 2 Negatively affect areas of critical natural habitats or breeding ground of known rare/endangered species.
- 3 Significantly increase GHG emissions.
- 4 Use genetically modified organisms or modern biotechnologies or their products.
- 5 Involve the procurement and/or use of pesticides and other chemicals specified as persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention or within categories IA, IB, or II by the World Health Organisation.
- 6 Develop forest plantations.
- 7 Result in the loss of biodiversity, alteration of the functioning of ecosystems, and introduction of new invasive alien species.
- 8 Involve the procurement or use of weapons and munitions or fund military activities.
- 9 Lead to private land acquisition and/or physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation of people, including non-titled and migrant people.
- 10 Contribute to exacerbating any inequality or gender gap that may exist.
- 11 Involve illegal child labour, forced labour, sexual exploitation or other forms of exploitation.
- 12 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.



- 13 Negatively impact areas with cultural, historical or transcendent values for individuals and communities.

In advance of the initiation of any project activity, the PMU should fill in detailed information regarding the nature of the activity and its specific location in the Safeguards Eligibility and Impacts Screening form (Annex 3). Part 1 of this form comprises of basic information regarding the activity; Part 2 contains basic “pre-screening” questions. If the response to any of the questions in these two parts is “Yes”, the activity will be deemed ineligible for funding under the project. The executing partners will thus be required to change the nature or location of the proposed activity so that it complies with all safeguards requirements and all responses at the Safeguards Eligibility and Impacts Screening form are negative.

If the activity is deemed eligible according to Part 2, an environmental and social screening procedure will be carried out in accordance with Part 3 of Safeguard Eligibility and Impacts Screening format, which is based on the WWF’s SIPP and applicable Guyana laws and regulations. The executing partners shall respond to the specific questions in Part 3 of the form, provide general conclusions regarding the main environmental and social impacts of each proposed activity, outline the required permits or clearances, and specify whether any additional assessments or safeguard documents (e.g., ESMP) should be prepared.

Issues that are considered as part of this environmental and social screening include the following:

- a. Need for government-land acquisition;
- b. Environmental impacts (e.g., dust, noise, smoke, ground vibration, pollution, flooding, etc.) and loss or damage to natural habitat;
- c. Social impacts: identification of vulnerable groups, impacts on community resources, impacts on livelihoods and socio-economic opportunities, restrictions of access to natural resources, land usage conflicts, etc.; and
- d. Health and safety issues (both for workers and for local communities).

The screening of each activity should be undertaken by the Safeguards & Gender Officer. If the screening process indicates that additional assessments or safeguards documents shall be prepared, these should be carried out by the executing partners prior to the start of activities.

If the screening reveals adverse environmental or social impacts that may arise from the planned activity, an ESMP should be prepared. The ESMP should be prepared by the Safeguards & Gender Officer.

## 5.2. Guidelines for ESMP Development

In case that the Environmental and Social screening process identifies any adverse environmental or social impacts as a result of specific project activities, the Safeguards & Gender Officer in collaboration with the PAC, EPA, Toshao of villages affected by project activities and other relevant stakeholders, should develop a site- and activity-specific ESMP. The ESMP should be prepared before the initiation of the project activity and closely follow the guidance provided in this ESMF.

The ESMP should describe adverse environmental and social impacts that are expected to occur as a result of the specific project activity, outline concrete measures that should be undertaken to avoid or mitigate these impacts, and specify the implementation arrangements for administering these measures (including institutional structures, roles, communication, consultations, and reporting procedures).

The structure of the ESMP should be as follows:

- (i) A concise introduction:** explaining the context and objectives of the ESMP, the connection of the proposed activity to the project, and the findings of the screening process.
- (ii) Project description:** Objective and description of activities, nature and scope of the project (location with map, construction and/or operation processes, equipment to be used, site facilities and workers and their camps; bill of quantities if civil works are involved, activity schedule).
- (iii) Baseline environmental and social data:** Key environmental information or measurements such as topography, land use and water uses, soil types, flow of water, and water quality/pollution; and data on socioeconomic conditions of the local population, indigenous populations and governance structures, gender dynamics, language and other relevant information. Photos showing the existing conditions of the project sites should also be included.
- (iv) Expected impacts and mitigation measures:** Description of specific environmental and social impacts of the activity and corresponding mitigation measures. In case of restrictions of access to livelihoods, this section should also integrate measures that are prescribed by the LRP (see section 4.4 for details).
- (v) ESMP implementation arrangements:** Responsibilities for design, bidding and contracts where relevant, monitoring, reporting, recording and auditing.
- (vi) Capacity Need and Budget:** Capacity needed for the implementation of the ESMP and cost estimates for implementation of the ESMP.
- (vii) Consultation and Disclosure Mechanisms:** Timeline and format of disclosure.
- (viii) Monitoring:** Environmental and social compliance monitoring with responsibilities.
- (ix) Grievance Mechanism:** Provide information about the grievance mechanism, how PAPs can access it, and the grievance redress process.
- (x) A site-specific community and stakeholder engagement plan:** In order to ensure that local communities and other relevant stakeholders are fully involved in the implementation of the ESMP, a stakeholder engagement plan should be included in the ESMP. Specific guidelines on community engagement are provided in Part 11.2 below.

### 5.3. Stakeholders' Role & Responsibilities in the ESMF Implementation

#### (a) General

The proposed implementation arrangement includes EPA as the lead Executing Agency (EA), PAC and GFC as project executing partners, a Project Steering Committee, and WWF as the GEF Agency.

The project will include the following institutional actors:

**Project Steering Committee (PSC):** A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be formed to serve as the oversight, advisory, and support body for the project. The PSC provides overall guidance for the implementation of the project. It is responsible for approving annual work plans and budgets and reviewing and approving any changes to the project strategy alongside WWF GEF Agency.

In terms of membership, the PSC will include representatives from the EPA (EA), Protected Areas Commission (PAC), Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (FTCI), Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC), as well as a representative from the NGOs active in the area (on a rotating basis), North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB), Kanuku Mountains Community Representative Group (KMCRG). The PSC will be chaired by the EPA. WWF GEF Agency will maintain observer status.

**The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** will be the Lead Executing Agency (EA) responsible for overseeing the implementation of project activities, including disbursing and administering funds (to be confirmed pending due diligence process) to project execution partners for the implementation of specific outcomes/outputs/activities. In setting up this structure, the EA will enter into grant agreements with each executing partner. Grant agreements will outline the financial, technical, reporting, and other requirements for the executing partner.

As part of its responsibilities, the EA will establish the Project Management Unit. The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of project activities and fulfilment of its goals. The PMU will consist of staff identified below; a Finance Officer from the EA will be assigned to the PMU with responsibility for the financial reporting of the project.

- **Project Manager/Technical Advisor:** Oversee the project implementation (full-time basis) under the guidance of the PSC and with support of WWF.
- **Project Assistant / Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer:** Provide assistance (full-time basis) to the Project manager Manager/Technical Advisor in the overall implementation of the project. Responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation framework of the project. Provide technical assistance to EA and co-executing partners in relation to monitoring and reporting.
- **Technical Officer:** Provide assistance (full-time basis) to the Project manager Manager/Technical Advisor in the implementation of the project, including field-based monitoring.
- **Safeguards and Gender Officer:** Provide assistance (full-time basis) to the Project manager Manager/Technical Advisor on stakeholder engagement, coordination of ESS plans implementation and gender considerations.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer:** Responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation framework of the project. Provide technical assistance to EA and co-executing partners in relation to monitoring and reporting.
- **Financial Officer:** Responsible for managing the financial reporting of the project (preparation of budgets, quarterly/annual reports)

**WWF-GEF Agency:** WWF-US, through its WWF GEF Agency, will: (i) provide consistent and regular project oversight to ensure the achievement of project objectives; (ii) liaise between the project and the GEF Secretariat; (iii) report on project progress to GEF Secretariat (annual Project Implementation Report); (iv) ensure that both GEF and WWF policy requirements and standards are applied and met (i.e. reporting obligations, technical, fiduciary, M&E, safeguards); (v) approve annual workplan and budget; (vi) approve budget revisions, certify fund availability and transfer funds; (vii) organize the midterm and terminal evaluation and review project audits; (viii) certify project operational and financial completion, and (ix) provide no-objection to key terms of reference for project management unit.

## (b) Safeguards Implementation

Specific arrangements and responsibilities related to the implementation of environmental and social safeguards requirements, as stated in this ESMF/PF/IPPF are as follows:

### **Project Technical Committee:**

- Overall oversight and monitoring of compliance with safeguards commitments.
- Support and specific recommendations on specific safeguard issues if needed.

### **WWF GEF Agency:**

- Overall oversight and monitoring of compliance with safeguards commitments.
- Support and provide recommendations on specific safeguard issues as needed.

### **Safeguards & Gender Officer**

- Overall responsibility for compliance with ESMF/PF/IPPF Safeguards and other annexed documents of this report;
- Ensuring that bidding documents and contracts include any relevant particular clauses or conditions relevant to environmental and social safeguards as set out in this ESMF. It is particularly important to include in bidding documents requirements related to occupational health and safety.
- Reporting on safeguards implementation and compliance to the PSC and WWF GEF Agency.
- Screening all project activities to identify social and environmental impacts;
- Reviewing annual work plans and budgets and analyse planned community/individual sub-projects and their environment/social impacts, in order to identify safeguards risks and initiate screenings of activities;
- Preparing site-specific ESMPs as needed;
- Monitoring contractors' compliance with safeguards requirements;
- Conducting consultation meetings with local stakeholders as required, informing them, updating them on the latest project development activities; Ensuring that consultations with local communities are carried out in an inclusive and participatory manner, and are well documented;
- Carrying out field visits as necessary to monitor the implementation of project activities and their compliance with safeguard requirements;
- Disclosure of safeguards documents;
- Monitoring the state of safeguards implementation, and ensure that sub-projects are implemented in accordance to best practices and guidelines set out in the ESMF;
- Identifying and liaising with all the stakeholders involved in environment and social related issues in the Project;

- Operate the project’s Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), including compiling and reporting on project-related grievances, monitoring grievance resolution, and closing the feedback loop with the complainant.
- Providing capacity support to the PMU and other project-related stakeholders on environmental and social issues;
- Providing execution assistance and advise the EPA as necessary on safeguards related issues including adaptive management.
- Reporting on overall safeguards performance to the Project Steering Committee, WWF GEF Agency and other stakeholders as necessary.

## 5.4 Community Engagement

Public consultation and participation in the process of implementing project activities are essential because they provide local IP communities with an opportunity to participate in both the design and the implementation of activities.

WWF’s requirements include an environmental and social impact study with the participation of Indigenous Peoples to assess risks and opportunities and improve understanding of the local context and affected communities; a process of consultation with affected indigenous communities to fully identify their views and obtain their free, prior and informed consent to project activities that affect them; and developing and including elements of a project-specific Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), with measures to avoid negative impacts and enhance culturally appropriate benefits in each project.

### ***Consultations during project preparation***

Extensive stakeholder consultations were held to derive detailed understanding of the project situation and formulate the project execution strategy in detail. Stakeholder engagement took place on the initial project strategy (the initial project sites were located to the east of the current project areas). During PIF stage, WWF-Guianas consulted with government agencies, NGOs and concessionaires. During project development, a kick-off workshop was held on 18 September 2019 with representatives from government agencies, Toshaos from three indigenous communities (Rewa, Crashwater, and Apoteri), NRDDDB, KMRG, logging concessionaires and non-governmental organisations. Additional consultations were held with Indigenous communities (Crashwater, Rewa and Apoteri) and groups (NRDDDB, Fair View, KMCRG, Iwokrama); loggers; miners; and government agencies.

The project strategy was adjusted and approved by Government towards the end of 2020. Full stakeholder engagement on the revised strategy was limited due to COVID-19. While ongoing engagement was conducted with government partners throughout development of the project strategy (especially EPA, PAC, and GFC), consultation with the Indigenous communities was limited by travel restrictions and lack of teleconferencing facilities, which made virtual interviews and teleconferencing impossible in some situations. The project therefore relied on Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with representative groups such as NRDDDB and Iwokrama.

The following consultations took place virtually and were hosted by EPA: Meeting with Field Museum representative (13 September 2021); Meeting with CI-Guyana and Iwokrama representatives (28 September 2021); Conversation with representative of North Rupununi District Development Board

(NRDDB) based in North Rupununi, Region 9 (29 September 2021); Meeting with Region 9 Regional Chairman -Mr. Bryan Allicock (18 October 2021); Validation Workshop (7 February 2022).

### ***Consultations as part of ESMF preparation***

Community consultations were carried out between September 22 to October 5, 2022 by a local consultant who was accompanied by a team of representatives from the EPA, PAC and WWF. Overall, a total of 178 (94 male, 84 female) people from 28 communities participated in the eight consultations; 34 communities were invited including, Rupunau, Sand Creek, Shea, Mururanau, Katoka, Simonie, Annai, Surama, Wowetta, Kwatamang, Aranaputa, Yakarinta, Massara, Kwaimatta, Toka, Rupertee, Rewa, Apoteri, Crashwater, Yupukari, Fly Hill, Kaicumbay, Quatata, Moco Moco, St. Ignatius, Quarrie, Kumu, Parikwarwaunau, Nappi, Hiowa, Parishara, Shulinab, Quiko and Meriwau. The communities of Annai, Wowetta, Aranaputa, Shea, Crashwater and Meriwau could not attend due to conflict with prior activities or poor road / impassable road conditions.

Community participants were engaged and expressed interest in the project. General feedback from the consultations included but is not limited to:

- (1) Villagers want to ensure sustainable resource management but are not clear on what the KMPA management plan encompasses;
- (2) Villagers are interested in monitoring and research but ongoing training is necessary;
- (3) Villagers are vulnerable to development (socio and economically)
- (4) Indigenous people see themselves as part of the landscape and natural resources and also feel that the environment itself is vulnerable to unsustainable use by Indigenous and non -Indigenous people and development;
- (5) There are existing Community Based Management Plans and resource maps which should be integrated into the project;
- (6) Project focal points should be located at NRDDB, KMCRG and SRDC and these locations should also be a hub for communication and information dissemination;
- (7) In-depth community consultations per community must be conducted at the start of the project implementation, Macushi and Wapishan translators should be used and a special effort through interactive activities such as sports, should be made to engage youth and women's should be made.

Inputs and feedback provided by consultations participants were integrated into the project documents and into this ESMF.

### **Consultations during project implementation**

Building on consultations conducted as part of project preparation, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed for the project, in order to ensure appropriate and consistent involvement of project stakeholders in every stage of the project implementation, supporting effective communication and working relationships. The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for engaging stakeholders and ensure that the views and inputs of stakeholders are taken into consideration throughout project implementation.

Stakeholder engagement will include meetings and consultations to capture perspectives, gaps, needs and opportunities related to the project. It will also involve training, workshops and research and monitoring activities. Different stakeholders will require specific engagement strategies; project partners may be engaged through email, meetings, social media, but many of the stakeholders who reside outside of urban areas, especially Indigenous and rural people, have limited and intermittent access to communication as well as gaps between communication media. In all cases, hard copy of letters in the appropriate languages should be sent to all Indigenous and rural stakeholders, requesting and or inviting them to meetings. This should be done at least 2 weeks in advance. Follow up can then be done via social media, telephone, text and WhatsApp. Leaders often travel to a City centre once a week or so and can download messages then.

During project implementation, local communities in the project area will be regularly consulted on the following subjects:

- ✓ Choice of sites for carrying out specific activities;
- ✓ Choice of wetland management technologies and practices;
- ✓ Choice of the workforce to be recruited;
- ✓ Choice of selection criteria to determine the beneficiaries of project activities (given that benefits have to be allocated equally);
- ✓ Choice of IPs' representatives in the various decision-making structures.

The Safeguards & Gender Officer will be responsible for convening and leading the meetings. All meeting will be documents, and their minutes will be provided to the PMU, PSC, and WWF.

FPIC Consultations are discussed in Section 4.5(i) and details regarding stakeholders that shall be involved in consultations are provided in the SEP.

## 5.5. Monitoring

The compliance of project activities with the ESMF will be thoroughly monitored by various entities at different stages of preparation and implementation.

- **Monitoring at the project level**

The overall responsibility for implementing the ESMF and for monitoring compliance with the Project's environmental safeguard activities lies with the PMU. The Safeguards & Gender Officer at the PMU shall oversee the implementation of all field activities and ensure their compliance with the ESMF. The Safeguards & Gender Officer shall also provide the PMU staff with technical support in carrying out environmental and social screenings and preparing ESMPs and any other necessary documentation. The Safeguards & Gender Officer shall also monitor the project's grievance redress mechanism (GRM) and assess its effectiveness (i.e., to what extent grievances are resolved in an expeditious and satisfactory manner).

The Safeguards & Gender Officer will also be responsible for reporting on overall safeguards compliance to the PMU's Director and M&E Officer, the Project Steering Committee, EPA, WWF GEF Agency.

- **Monitoring at the field activity level**

The Safeguards & Gender Officer shall closely monitor all field activities, and ensure that they fully comply with the ESMF and with the terms and conditions included in the environment clearances issued by the Guyanese national authorities. The Officer is also fully responsible for the compliance of all external contractors and service providers employed as part of the project with the safeguards requirements outlined in the ESMF/PF/IPPF and ESMP (as applicable). The Safeguards & Gender Officer will provide the M&E Officer at the PMU with monthly monitoring reports. **Disbursement of project funds will be contingent upon their full compliance with the safeguards requirements.**

- **Monitoring at the GEF implementing and implementing agency level**

The WWF as the project’s implementing agencies, and EPA 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). Based on these, WWF will prepare the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports that will be submitted to GEF.

## 5.6. Communications and Disclosure

All affected communities and relevant stakeholders shall be informed about the ESMF requirements and commitments. The executive summary of the ESMF will be translated into the Macushi and Wapishani languages via various audio channels (e.g., local radio station and social media), since local languages are primarily oral and written direct translation may not be possible. The social media pages (e.g., Facebook) of the PAC shall also be utilized.

Hard copies of the ESMF will be placed in appropriate public locations and in the PMU. The Safeguards & Gender Officer at 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.

During the implementation of the project, activity-specific ESMPs shall be prepared in consultation with affected communities and disclosed to all stakeholders prior to project concept finalization. All draft ESMPs shall be reviewed and approved by the PMU in consultation with the PSC and WWF GEF Agency in advance of their public disclosure. The PMU must also disclose to all affected parties any action plans prepared during project implementation, including gender mainstreaming.

Disclosure should be carried out in a manner that is meaningful and understandable to the affected people. For this purpose, the executive summary of ESMPs or the terms and conditions in environment clearances should be disclosed on the EPA and WWF websites.

The disclosure requirements are summarized in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Disclosure framework for ESMF related documents**

Documents to be disclosed	Frequency	Where
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Environment and Social Management Framework	Once in the entire project cycle. Must remain on the website and other public locations throughout the project period.	On the website of EPA and WWF, as well as the social media pages of the PAC. Copies should be available at the PMU Office and at site-level and/or through NRDDDB, KMCRG, and other local community organisations, as applicable.
Environmental and Social Management Plan/s	Once in the entire project cycle for every activity that requires ESMP. Must remain on the website and other disclosure locations throughout the project period.	On the website of EPA and WWF, as well as the social media pages of the PAC. Copies should be available at the PMU Office and at site-level and/or through NRDDDB, KMCRG, and other local community organisations, as applicable.
Safeguards Monthly Progress Report	Monthly	PMU
Minutes of Formal Public Consultation Meetings	Within two weeks of meeting	On the website of the EPA, as well as the social media pages of the PAC. Copies should be available at the PMU Office and at site-level and/or through NRDDDB, KMCRG, and other local community organisations, as applicable.
Grievance redress process	Quarterly, throughout the project cycle	On the website of the EPA. Copies should be available at the PMU Office and at site-level and/or through NRDDDB, KMCRG, and other local community organisations, as applicable.

### 5.7. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

It is highly recommended to carry out capacity building activities of project implementing entities to comply with the requirements of this ESMF/PF/IPPF, as well as deliver trainings to affected communities' representatives, leaders, and members to enhance their capacity to take a meaningful part in project related activities and consultations.

### 5.8. Grievance Mechanisms

The project will have a direct and tangible effect on a large number of communities and individuals residing within or in the vicinity of project sites. There is thus a need for an efficient and effective Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that collects and responds to stakeholders' inquiries, suggestions, concerns, and complaints. The GRM shall constitute an integral part of the project and assist the PMU in identifying and addressing the needs of local communities. The GRM should be constituted as a

permanent and accessible institutional arrangement for addressing any grievances arising from the implementation of project activities.

It is in the interest of the project to ensure that all grievances or conflicts that are related to project activities are appropriately resolved at the lowest appropriate level, without escalation to higher authorities or the initiation of court procedures. Project affected communities will therefore be encouraged to approach the project's GRM if they feel it is the appropriate level to safely address their grievance.

The GRM will operate based on the following principles:

1. **Fairness:** Grievances are assessed impartially, and handled transparently.
2. **Objectiveness and independence:** The GRM operates independently of all interested parties in order to guarantee fair, objective, and impartial treatment to each case.
3. **Simplicity and accessibility:** Procedures to file grievances and seek action are simple enough that project beneficiaries can easily understand them and in a language that is accessible to everyone within a given community, especially those who are most vulnerable.
4. **Responsiveness and efficiency:** The GRM is designed to be responsive to the needs of all complainants. Accordingly, officials handling grievances must be trained to take effective action upon, and respond quickly to, grievances and suggestions.
5. **Speed and proportionality:** All grievances, simple or complex, are addressed and resolved as quickly as possible. The action taken on the grievance or suggestion is swift, decisive, and constructive.
6. **Participation and inclusiveness:** A wide range of affected people—communities and vulnerable groups—are encouraged to bring grievances and comments to the attention of the project implementers. Special attention is given to ensure that poor people and marginalized groups, including those with special needs, are able to access the GRM.
7. **Accountability and closing the feedback loop:** All grievances are recorded and monitored, and no grievance remains unresolved. Complainants are always notified and get explanations regarding the results of their complaint. An appeal option shall always be available.
8. **Complainants' safety and protection:** It should be ensured that complainants suffer no repercussions as a result of their complaints and their safety shall be guaranteed.

Complaints may include, but not be limited to, the following issues:

- (i) Allegations of fraud, malpractices or corruption by staff or other stakeholders as part of any project or activity financed or implemented by the project;
- (ii) Environmental and/or social damages/harms caused by projects financed or implemented (including those in progress) by the project;
- (iii) Complaints and grievances by permanent or temporary workers engaged in project activities.

Complaints could relate to pollution prevention and resource efficiency; negative impacts on public health, environment or culture; destruction of natural habitats; disproportionate impact on marginalized and vulnerable groups; discrimination or harassment; violation of applicable laws and regulations; destruction of physical and cultural heritage; or any other issues which adversely impact communities or

individuals in project areas. The grievance redress mechanism will be implemented in a culturally sensitive manner and facilitate access to vulnerable populations.

The project's GRM will be administered by the PMU. The Safeguards & Gender Officer will be in charge of the operation of the GRM at the PMU, and will be responsible for collecting and processing grievances. No external entities (e.g., local government officials) would be allowed access to the complaints' log book.

The GRM will operate according to the following guidelines.

- (1) Submitting complaints:** Project affected people, workers, or interested stakeholders can submit grievances, complaints, questions, or suggestions to the PMU through a variety of communication channels, including phone, regular mail, email, text messaging/SMS, or in-person, by visiting the local PMU offices.
- (2) Processing complaints:** All grievances submitted to the PMU shall be registered and considered. A tracking registration number should be provided to all complainants. To facilitate investigation, complaints will be categorized into four types: (a) comments, suggestions, or queries; (b) complaints relating to nonperformance of project obligations and safeguards-related complaints; (c) complaints referring to violations of law and/or corruption while implementing project activities; (d) complaints against authorities, officials or community members involved in the project management; and (e) any complaints/issues not falling in the above categories.
- (3) Acknowledging the receipt of complaints:** Once a grievance is submitted, the Safeguards & Gender Officer shall acknowledge its receipt, brief the complainant on the grievance resolution process, provide the contact details of the person in charge of handling the grievance, and provide a registration number that would enable the complainant to track the status of the complaint.
- (4) Investigating complaints:** The Safeguards & Gender Officer will assign the complaint for the investigation of relevant authorities. For instance, complaints on land issues would be directed for investigation at the local Village Council or the local village leaders. The PMU should ensure that the investigators are neutral and do not have any stake in the outcome of the investigation. A written response to all grievances will be provided to the complainant within 10 working days. If further investigation is required, the complainant will be informed accordingly and a final response will be provided after an additional period of 10 working days. Grievances that cannot be resolved by grievance receiving authorities/office at their level should be referred to a higher level for verification and further investigation.
- (5) Appeal:** In the event that the parties are unsatisfied with the response provided by the GRM, he/she will be able to submit an appeal to the EPA within 10 days from the date of decision. In the event that the parties are unsatisfied with the decision of the appeal committee, the parties can submit their grievances to the Court of Law for further adjudication. Complainants may also approach the Ombudsman in case of an unfair treatment.
- (6) Monitoring and evaluation:** the Safeguards & Gender Officer shall submit a quarterly report with full information on the grievances they received to the M&E Officer at the PMU. The report shall contain a description of the grievances and their investigation status. A similar report should be prepared by the M&E Officer with regards to grievances that were submitted directly to the PMU's Director. Summarized GRM reports shall constitute part of the regular project progress reporting, and shall be submitted to the PSC and WWF GEF Agency. These reports should also be

available on the websites of EPA and WWF GEF Agency, providing all personal identifiable information has been removed.

Information about channels available for grievance redress shall be widely communicated in all project affected communities and to all relevant stakeholders. The contact details (name, phone number, mail and email address, etc.) of the PMU shall be disseminated as part of all public hearings and consultations, in the PMU, in the local media, in all public areas in affected communities, and on large billboards in the vicinity of project activity sites and workers' camps.

The GRM seeks complement, rather than substitute, the judicial system and other dispute resolution mechanisms. All complainants may therefore file their grievance in local courts or approach mediators or arbitrators, in accordance with the legislation of Guyana.

A grievance can also 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

Stakeholders may also submit a complaint online through an independent third-party platform at <https://report.whistleb.com/sw/wwf>.

In addition to the project-specific GRM, a complainant can submit a grievance to the GEFConflict Resolution Center. For more information on how to do this, please see: <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/conflict-resolution-commissioner>

## 5.9. Budget

The EMSF implementation costs, including all costs related to compensation to project affected people, will be fully covered from the project budget. It will be the responsibility of the PMU to ensure that sufficient budget is available for all activity-specific mitigation measures that may be required in compliance with the EMSF.

A permanent and full-time Safeguards & Gender Officer will be employed by the PMU for the full project period. It is also recommended to recruit an international safeguards consultant who will monitor the overall implementation of safeguards requirements on an annual basis.

Budget for travel costs and workshops and meetings for safeguards monitoring (including travel, workshops and meetings) will be included in the overall monitoring and evaluation budget under Component 4 of the project.

## Annex 1. Safeguard Eligibility and Impacts Screening

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.

The tool will be filled out by the Safeguards & Gender Officer and reviewed by the Safeguards Specialist. The decision on whether a Site-Specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and/or Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) are required shall be made by the Safeguards & Gender Officer in consultation with the WWF GEF Agency Safeguards Specialists, based on the information provided in this screening form, as well as interviews with PMU staff, EPA, local communities, and any other relevant stakeholders.

### Part 1: Basic Information

1	<b>Activity Name</b>	
	<b>Description of Activity (“sub-activities”)</b>	
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	

(Move to Part 2 after filling in all information in the table above)

### Part 2: Eligibility Screening

No.	Screening Questions: <i>Would the project activity</i>	Yes	No	Comments/ Explanation
1	Lead to land management practices that cause degradation (biological or physical) of the soil and water? Examples include, but are not limited to: the felling of trees in core zones and critical watersheds; activities involving quarrying and mining; commercial logging; or dredge fishing.			
2	Negatively affect areas of critical natural habitats or breeding ground of known rare/endangered species?			

3	Significantly increase GHG emissions?			
4	Use genetically modified organisms or modern biotechnologies or their products?			
5	Involve the procurement and/or use of pesticides and other chemicals specified as persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention or within categories IA, IB, or II by the World Health Organisation?			
6	Develop forest plantations?			
7	Result in the loss of biodiversity, alteration of the functioning of ecosystems, and introduction of new invasive alien species?			
8	Involve the procurement or use of weapons and munitions or fund military activities?			
9	Lead to private land acquisition and/or the to physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation of people, including non-titled and migrant people?			
10	Contribute to exacerbating any inequality or gender gap that may exist?			
11	Involve illegal child labor, forced labor, sexual exploitation or other forms of exploitation?			
12	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?			
13	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 3

If at least one question answered as “yes”, the project activity is ineligible and the proponent can reselect the site of project activity and do screening again.

### Part 3: Impacts screening

Answer the questions below and follow the guidance to provide basic information regarding the suggested activity and describe its potential impacts.

No.	Would the project activity:	Yes/No	Provide explanation and supporting documents if needed
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**Environmental Impacts**

1	Result in permanent or temporary change in land use, land cover or topography.		
2	Involve clearance of existing land vegetation  If yes, number of trees to be cut down: Species of trees: Are the trees protected: Total land area of vegetation cover removed: Estimated economic value of the trees, crops and vegetation to be cut down / removed and any replacement costs (e.g., fees, registration, taxes): <i>Provide additional details:</i>		
3	Does the activity involve reforestation or modification of natural habitat? If yes, will it involve use or introduction of non-native species into the project area?		
4	Will pesticides be used? If so, are they on the list of those excluded by the Stockholm Convention?		
5	Result in environmental pollution? This may include air pollution, liquid waste, solid waste, or waste as the result of earth moving or excavation for example		
6	Trigger land disturbance, erosion, subsidence, or instability?		
7	Result in significant use of water, such as for construction?		
8	Produce dust during construction and operation?		
9	Generate significant ambient noise?		
10	Increase the sediment load in the local water bodies?		
11	Change on-site or downstream water flows?		
12	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)?		
13	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?		

14	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>			
15	Negatively impact existing tenure rights (formal and informal) of individuals, communities or others to land, fishery and forest resources?		
16	Operate where there are indigenous peoples and their lands/territories/waters are located? OR Operate where any indigenous communities have close cultural/spiritual or land use relationships? If yes to either, answer questions below:		
	a. Has an FPIC process been started? b. Will any restrictions on their use of land/territories/water/natural resources be restricted?		
17	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?		
18	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?		
19	Operate where there are any cultural heritage or religious or sacred sites that may be impacted by the project?		
20	Undermine the customary rights of local communities to participate in consultations in a free, prior, and informed manner to address interventions directly affecting their lands, territories or resources?		
<b>Labor and Working Conditions</b>			
21	Involve hiring of workers or contracting with labor agencies to provide labor? If yes, answer questions a-b below.		
	c. Are labor management issues prevalent in the landscape? d. Are illegal child labor issues prevalent in the landscape?		
22	Involve working in hazardous environments such as steep, rocky slopes, areas infested with poisonous animals and/or disease vectors?		



<b>Minorities and Vulnerable Groups</b>			
23	Negatively affect vulnerable groups (such as ethnic minorities, women, poorer households, migrants, and assistant herders) in terms of impact on their economic or social life conditions or contribute to their discrimination or marginalization?		
24	Stir or exacerbate conflicts among communities, groups or individuals? Also considering dynamics of recent or expected migration including displaced people, as well as those who are most vulnerable to threats of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.		
<b>Occupational and Community Health and Safety</b>			
25	Involve any risks related to the usage of construction materials, working high above the ground or in canals where slopes are unstable?		
26	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)		
27	Generate societal conflicts, increased risk of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment or pressure on local resources between temporary workers and local communities?		
28	Work in areas where forest fires are a threat? If yes, how recently was the last one?		
29	Work in areas where there the presence or history of vector-borne diseases (some examples include malaria, yellow fever, encephalitis)		
<b>GBV/SEAH Risks</b>			
30	Is there a risk that the project could pose a greater burden on women by restricting the use, development, and protection of natural resources by women compared with that of men?		
31	Is there a risk that persons employed by or engaged directly in the project might engage in gender-based violence (including sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment)? The response must consider risks not only at		

	the beneficiary level, but also to workers within all the organisations receiving GEF funding.		
32	Does the project increase the risk of GBV and/or SEAH for women and girls, for example by changing resource use practices or singling out women and girls for training without complimentary training/education for men? The response must consider all workers within the organisations receiving GEF funding.		
33	Does any mandated training for any individuals associated with the project (including project staff, government officials, park rangers and guards, other park staff, consultants, partner organisations and contractors) cover GBV/SEAH (along with human rights, etc.)?		
<b>Conflict Sensitivity and Risks</b>			
34	Are there any major underlying tensions or open conflicts in the landscape/seascape or in the country where the landscape/seascape is situated? If yes, answer a-d below		
	<p>a. Is there a risk that the activities interact with or exacerbate existing tensions and conflicts in the landscape/seascape?</p> <p>b. Do stakeholders (e.g. implementing partners, rights holders, other stakeholder groups) take a specific position in relation to the conflicts or tensions in the landscape/seascape or are they perceived as taking a position?</p> <p>c. How do stakeholders perceive the IA/EA and its partners in relation to existing conflicts or tensions?</p> <p>d. Could the conflicts or tensions in the landscape/seascape have a negative impact on the activities?</p>		
35	Could the activities create conflicts among communities, groups or individuals?		
36	Are some groups (stakeholders, rights holders) benefiting more than others from the activities? And if so, how is that affecting power dynamics and mutual dependencies?		
37	Do the activities provide opportunities to bring different groups with diverging interests positively together?		

List of documents to be attached with Screening form:

1	Layout plan of the activity and photos
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2	Summary of the activity proposal
3	No objection certificate from various departments and others relevant stakeholders

**Screening Tool Completed by:**

Signed:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Screening Conclusions [TO BE COMPLETED BY Safeguards & Gender Officer]**

i. Main environmental issues are:

ii. Permits/ clearance needed are:.

iii. Main social issues are:

iv. Further assessment/ investigation needed and next step.

a. Need for any special study:.....

b. Preparation of ESMP (main issue to be addressed by the ESMP):.....

c. Preparation of LRP (main issue to be addressed by the LRP):.....

d. Any other requirements/ need/ issue etc:

**Screening Tool Reviewed by:**

Signed:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exclusion list**

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

1. Lead to land management practices that cause degradation (biological or physical) of the soil and water. Examples include, but are not limited to: the felling of trees in core zones and critical watersheds; activities involving quarrying and mining; commercial logging; or dredge fishing.
2. Negatively affect areas of critical natural habitats or breeding ground of known rare/endangered species.
3. Significantly increase GHG emissions.
4. Use genetically modified organisms or modern biotechnologies or their products.
5. Involve the procurement and/or use of pesticides and other chemicals specified as persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention or within categories IA, IB, or II by the World Health Organisation.
6. Develop forest plantations.
7. Result in the loss of biodiversity, alteration of the functioning of ecosystems, and introduction of new invasive alien species.
8. Involve the procurement or use of weapons and munitions or fund military activities.
9. Lead to private land acquisition and/or physical displacement and voluntary or involuntary relocation of people, including non-titled and migrant people.
10. Contribute to exacerbating any inequality or gender gap that may exist.
11. Involve illegal child labor, forced labor, sexual exploitation or other forms of exploitation.
12. 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.
13. Negatively impact areas with cultural, historical or transcendent values for individuals and communities.