

## Safeguards Compliance Memorandum

### Project Information

<b>Project Name</b>	Promoting circular solutions to single-use plastic production and consumption in Lao PDR
<b>GEF Focal Area</b>	
<b>Safeguards Categorization</b>	Low Risk (C)

### Project Description

Economic and social changes in Laos have led to a surge in single-use plastics (SUPs), overwhelming the waste management system and causing significant pollution through illegal dumping and burning. The food and beverage sector generates 50% of SUP waste, and current waste management efforts cannot keep pace with rising waste levels.

This project aligns to the Plastic Reboot goals, with an upstream, circular economy approach to reduce SUPs by promoting sustainable alternatives. It aims to create a supportive business environment for local decision-making in tourism and hospitality. Technical support will be provided to government partners to develop inclusive policies that engage women and marginalized communities. Enterprises producing plastic alternatives will benefit from incubator and accelerator programs, while market research will ensure diverse customer needs are addressed.

Implemented in Vientiane, Vang Vieng, and Luang Prabang, the project will collaborate with partners, including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), Swisscontact, Plan International, and WWF Laos. Additional funding from the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) is being sought to complement GEF activities and support downstream waste solutions.

The project objective is to Reduce the use of problematic single-use plastic food and beverage packaging and increase the market share of more sustainable alternatives through inclusive upstream and midstream approaches, targeting policymakers, private sector and local actors, and consumers. Four components were designed to achieve this objective;

1. Enabling regulatory framework for the reduction of SUPs and increase in sustainable and accessible substitutes
  - 1.1 Improved enabling environment and cross-sectoral collaboration to phase out SUPs, particularly problematic SUPs in the food and beverage sectors, and introduce environmentally & socially viable substitutes that are accessible, cost-effective and achieve circularity
2. Enterprise engagement and product/ service/ business development
  - 2.1 Understand supply chains and markets for financially and socially accessible alternatives to food and beverage SUPs in Laos
  - 2.2 Promote the enterprise development of domestically produced substitute products and services to SUPs in Laos' food and beverage sectors

### 3. Tourism and Hospitality Business Support and Marketing

3.1 Support to tourism and hospitality businesses through technical assistance and mentoring

3.2 Achieving behavior changes in purchasing and use through marketing

### 4. Knowledge management, communication and coordination

4.1. Lessons, knowledge and best practices from the project are shared across Laos, the region and globally to allow for shared learning experiences and upscaling of initiatives

4.2. Coordination with the global program

### 5. Monitoring & Evaluation

Overall, the project aims to reduce 39,697 metric tonnes of plastic pollution in international waters, improve water ecosystems, and cut 142,386 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents linked to SUP production. It will also reduce 2.278 grams of toxic equivalents and enhance waste management for 5,900 individuals, focusing on vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and marginalized communities. The project will participate in knowledge sharing, communications, and monitoring activities to align with Plastic Reboot.

### **Project Location and Salient Physical Characteristics Relevant for the Safeguards Analysis**

The project will focus on three key tourism and hospitality cities in Laos, namely Vientiane, Vang Vieng and Luang Prabang. These cities have been selected because of their population size, current resource use and waste management trends, and concentration of cultural and economic activities, including tourism.

<b>Safeguards Standard</b>	<b>Triggered</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Natural Habitats	No	
Indigenous People	No	
Restriction of Access and Resettlement	No	
Community Health, Safety and Security	No	
Pest Management	No	
Cultural Resources	No	

### Summary of Key Safeguards Issues

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

The project does not anticipate to trigger any human rights issues. In the case of conflict sensitivity, the screening identifies the potential for the project to improve sectoral collaboration. The project will address Gender equality and women's rights issues through the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan.

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

The stakeholders identified for this project are clustered into the following groups:

Level 1: persons and groups who can influence and decide the outcomes and the manner of the Project implementation or make decisions based on the outputs of the project, and mainly includes national and local government institutions and academia.

Level 2: persons and groups that participate in the project directly or indirectly, and mainly includes international and local non-governmental organizations and multilateral organizations supporting and/or implementing part of the National Plastics Action Plan (NPAP) or waste management solutions.

Level 3: the persons and groups who are targeted by the project, and consists of the private sector in the tourism and F&B industry.

Level 4: the persons and groups affected directly or indirectly by the project, including community-based organizations, and customers, end consumers.

## Monitoring and Compliance

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

## Disclosure Requirements

1) Environmental and Social Management Framework, including a project-level GRM; 2) Stakeholder Engagement Plan.	
Date received by WWF-US	21 <sup>st</sup> of March 2025
Date Disclosed on WWF-US website	25 <sup>th</sup> of March 2025
<i>In Country Disclosure</i>	25 <sup>th</sup> of March 2025
Date Disclosed on website of the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Government of Lao	<p>Lao version : <a href="http://www.cfmrv.monre.gov.la/files/ANNEX%205%20Safeguards%20and%20Stakeholder%20Engagement%20-%20FINAL_Lao.pdf#LoadPage">www.cfmrv.monre.gov.la/files/ANNEX%205%20Safeguards%20and%20Stakeholder%20Engagement%20-%20FINAL_Lao.pdf#LoadPage</a> (03/25/2025)</p> <p>English Version: <a href="https://cfmrv.monre.gov.la/files/ANNEX%205%20Safeguards%20and%20Stakeholder%20Engagement_FINAL_English.pdf#LoadPage">https://cfmrv.monre.gov.la/files/ANNEX%205%20Safeguards%20and%20Stakeholder%20Engagement_FINAL_English.pdf#LoadPage</a> (03/05/2025)</p>
Date Disclosed in localities	

Approvals

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