



v1.1 internally approved August 2019

Note: this Standard will be subject to public consultation in Q1 of 2021 and may be revised beforehand

Standard on Environmental and Social Risk Management

Introduction

This Standard defines the steps WWF needs to take to identify and manage potential environmental and social risks and benefits associated with WWF funded activities in a landscape or seascape.

The objectives of this standard are to (1) improve planning through the identification and selection of alternatives to enhance benefits, and avoid or, if avoidance is not possible, to minimize, mitigate, offset or compensate for adverse social and environmental impacts on affected communities; and (2) Ensure effective management of environmental and social opportunities and risks at all stages of a project life cycle from conception to closure.

Requirements

1. Safeguards Risk Screening

The Safeguards Screening Tool (SST) is a first step in WWF's safeguards process. Its aim is to screen all relevant WWF activities in the landscape/seascape for potential negative social or environmental impacts and to categorize them according to level of risk (see Categorization below). The landscape/seascape Lead (ie the person appointed by the implementing office to oversee activities) will work with his/her team and relevant partners to use the SST to screen for environmental and social risks in existing and proposed new activities, and will assure that its results are reviewed by a WWF accredited Environment and Social Safeguards Reviewer ("Safeguards Reviewer"), who will review and approve the screening, and determine the activities' risk categorization as explained in the section below.

2. Risk Categorization

The Safeguards Reviewer will categorize the landscape activities into one of the following risk categories complete a Safeguards Categorization Memo for permanent filing and disclosure (see below)

- High Risk (Category A) - Likely to have significant and irreversible adverse social or environmental impacts at a large scale (such as the construction of major infrastructure). It is unlikely that WWF would implement such projects.
- High Risk (Special Consideration) - If proposed/implemented in a Fragile, Conflict-, Violence-affected State, or if there is potential for human rights abuses in addition to potential adverse social and/or environmental impacts which can be mitigated through WWF activities.
- Medium risk (Category B) - Potential adverse social and/or environmental impacts which can be mitigated through WWF activities.
- Low risk (Category C) - Likely to have minimal to no adverse social and environmental impacts, or

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outside of the scope of application of the Environmental & Social Safeguards Framework, the activities cannot be implemented, and the Landscape/Seascape team may be asked to stop (in the case of activities under implementation) or redesign the proposed activities.

In addition, WWF maintains the following “**Exclusion List**”. The following activities are considered ineligible for WWF and WWF supported projects. WWF does not permit project fund expenditures in any of the following activities:

- (i) Weapons and Munitions¹
- (ii) Military activities: Military activities are activities that (i) are conducted by members of a military; and (ii) have the preliminary purpose of national defense or public safety. Military activities do not include activities conducted by members of the military whose primary purpose is conservation, even if those activities incidentally serve a national defense or public safety purpose. Support for conservation activities conducted by members of the military must always satisfy applicable ESSF policies and standards, including WWF’s Standard on Community Health, Safety and Security.
- (iii) Harmful or exploitative forms of forced/child labor
- (iv) Formulated World Health Organization classes IA and IB Products, or formulations of Class II products, unless exclusively used by those with training and proper equipment²
- (v) Procurement or use of pesticides and chemicals specified as persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention
- (vi) Conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, especially those that are legally protected, proposed for protection, or identified as high-conservation value
- (vii) Introduction of, or increased competitiveness of, invasive species

If the potential project seeks to finance an activity listed on this **Exclusion List**, including through partners, it must be redesigned in order to proceed.

3. Impact Assessments and Management Plans

For High Risk (Category A or Special Consideration) and Medium Risk (Category B) activities, an impact assessment (e.g. Social and Environmental Impact Assessment, Socio-Economic Impact Assessment) is required, to identify impacts and mitigation measures that result in an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). This plan is in turn is incorporated into project design. Low Risk activities do not require an impact assessment or ESMP.

If an impact assessment is required, the Safeguards Reviewer will use the screening results to determine what areas should be further assessed and what content is necessary in the ESMP, for example a Access Action Plan, a Pest Management Plans, or an Indigenous Peoples Plan (please refer to relevant standards for indicative outlines for these components).

If a landscape/seascape is categorised as High Risk (Category A or Special Consideration), an independent environmental and social safeguards specialist must be engaged by the implementing office to conduct the assessment and develop the Environmental and Social Management Plan. These will be reviewed and approved by the Network Environment and Social Safeguards Unit.

¹ The restriction does not apply to field knives, bush knives, machetes and other essential field or safety gear provided to rangers. Equipment needed for research or translocation of wildlife is also permitted.

² WHO Class IA denotes Hazardous Products, Class IB denotes Highly Hazardous Products, and Class II denotes Moderately Hazardous Products.

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If a landscape/seascape is categorised as Medium Risk (Category B), the Environmental and Social Management Plan will be reviewed and approved by the Safeguards Reviewer.

See summary requirements in below table:

Risk Category	Impact Assessment and Management Plan required?	Done by Whom?	Reviewed and approved by (in addition to local and donor review/sign-off procedures):
High (A)	Yes	Independent Consultant	Office's Board, Network Unit, NET
High - Special Consideration	Yes	Independent Consultant	Office's Board, Network Unit, NET
Medium (B)	Yes	Internal	Safeguards Reviewer
Low (C)	No	N/A	N/A

4. Disclosure

All final safeguards documents noted herein, will be publicly disclosed.