

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

Executive Summary

This document is a summary of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Process Framework (PF), and Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) that has been prepared for the WWF GEF project “Securing a Living Amazon through Landscape Connectivity in Southern Guyana.” This executive summary, along with the executive summary of the project’s Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), is available in English.

The full text of the ESMF and SEP is available in English on the website of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the WWF GEF Agency. Hard copies of the translated executive summaries of the ESMF and SEP will be placed in appropriate public locations within the project areas and in the PMU Office.

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Securing a Living Amazon through Landscape Connectivity in Southern Guyana 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 Guyana Project will be partially financed by the Global Environment Facility 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 Monitoring Framework (ESMF), Process Framework (PF), and Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework. **The principles and procedures of the ESMF 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 Guyana project is classified as a **“Category B” project** under the WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Categorization.

1.1. OBJECTIVE OF THE ESMF

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 WWF’s ESMF. Once the precise scope of pertinent activities is determined during the implementation phase, site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) will be developed pursuant to the guidance provided by this ESMF.

1.2. OBJECTIVE of the PF

The Project triggers WWF's Standard on Access Restriction and 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 the participation of PAP while recognizing and protecting their rights and interests, and ensuring that they do not become worse off as a result of the project.

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 is done through a participatory process involving the affected stakeholders and rightsholders. 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 IPPF

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 Makushi 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 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, yet these are not direct stakeholders to the project. Associated with the Kanuku Mountains PA project site are 11 Amerindian villages and 7 satellite communities located around the KMPA.

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 organizational 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.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section outlines the objectives of the Guyana 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.

The project’s objective will be achieved through the following three 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).

3. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

This chapter first outlines some of 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's implementation, the principles and procedures of the SIPP shall prevail in all cases of discrepancies.*

3.1. GUYANA'S POLICIES, LAWS, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Environmental protection. The Environmental Protection Act, 1996 Cap. 20: 05, 1996, and the Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2005, establishes the basic institutional and regulatory framework within which all activities that may significantly impact on the natural, social, and cultural 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 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 authorizations and monitoring the operations.

Biological diversity. Guyana ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, which entered into force in 1997. 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 utilization of genetic resources.

Forestry. The Forestry Act 2009 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 authorizations: concessions, exploratory permits, use permits, community forest management agreements and afforestation agreements.

Indigenous peoples. 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.

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:

(i) Standard 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 adverse environmental and social impacts that may occur as a result of project activities are expected to be site-specific, negligible and easily mitigated, but the precise location and impact of specific activities cannot be determined at this stage. Site-specific ESMPs will be prepared as required, based on principles and guidelines of the ESMF.

(ii) Standard on Protection of Natural Habitats

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.

(iii) Standard on Involuntary Resettlement

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.

(iv) Standard on Indigenous Peoples (IPs)

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.

(v) Standard on Community Health, Safety and Security

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 Labor and Working conditions will also be issued, due to the construction activities proposed in Component 1 of the project.

(vi) Standard on Cultural Resources

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, then this Standard will not be triggered and no Plan created.

(vii) Standard on Accountability and Grievance System

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.

(ix) Standard on Public Consultation and Disclosure

This standard requires meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, occurring as early as possible and throughout the project cycle. It requires the Project Team to provide relevant information in a timely manner and in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to diverse stakeholders. This standard also requires that information concerning environmental and social issues relevant to the project is disclosed for at least 30 days prior to implementation, and 45 days if there are Indigenous Peoples in the project area. WWF will disclose safeguards documentation on its Safeguards Resources web page. The final safeguards documents should 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 languages and in a culturally appropriate manner, to facilitate awareness by relevant stakeholders that the information is in the public domain for review.

(x) Standard on Stakeholder Engagement

This standard details the necessary requirements for meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of projects. The project has prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Annex 4 of the Project document) that will be implemented during the project.

3.3. GAPS BETWEEN GUYANA'S LAWS & POLICIES AND 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 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.

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.

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: (i) 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; (ii) contamination of agricultural lands: earth excavated (spoil mass) from small civil works, if not properly disposed will contaminate the nearby agricultural land; (iii) disturbance of natural habitats, which may result in the loss of bio-diversity or loss of protected species; and (iv) 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: (i) 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; (ii) inappropriate usage of new seed varieties that may cause degradation of soil and damage to the local vegetation, reduce soil fertility, etc.; (iii) inappropriate usage of pesticides and fertilizers that may degrade the soil, cause damage to the local vegetation and untargeted species, produce waste, and may lead to eutrophication of downstream water bodies. This may include misuse of agrochemicals by farmers due limited knowledge on safe use and handling of pesticides. (iv) contamination of water sources; (v) contamination of agricultural lands: Earth excavated (Spoil mass) from small civil works, if not properly disposed will contaminate the nearby agricultural land; (vi) disturbance of natural habitats, which may result in the loss of bio-diversity or loss of protected species; (vii) cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem.

An 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
<i>Adverse impacts of construction-related activities (Outputs 1.1.1. & 2.1.5.)</i>			
Noise disturbance: 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"> • Noise level control should be performed before the start up of construction activities; • The equipment should be fitted with appropriate noise devices that will reduce sound level; • The construction work should not be permitted during the nights, the operations on site shall be restricted to the hours 7am—7pm; • Vehicles that are excessively noisy shall not be operated until corrective measures have been taken; 	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards & Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>
Air quality: 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"> • Construction site, transportation routes and materials handling sites should be water-sprayed on dry and windy days; • Construction materials should be stored in appropriate and covered places to minimize dust; • Before allowing vehicles on site, fitness and emission test of the vehicle shall be performed; • Vehicle loads likely to emit dust need to be covered; • Workers should wear protective masks if dust appears; 	<p>EPA officers</p> <p>Safeguards & Gender Officer</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle speed should be restricted within the construction site; • 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; • Burning of debris from ground clearance shall be prohibited. 	
<p>Waste: generation of waste as a result of construction activities. This may also include the</p> <p>Contamination of agricultural lands: 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"> • Identification of the different waste types at the project site (soil, asphalt, food, etc.); • 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; • Proper containers/waste bins should be provided at the project site; • Dumping of waste on the sides of the road, on private land, or in other non-designated places should be prohibited; • Dumping waste shall be prohibited on fragile slopes, forests, religious or other culturally sensitive areas or areas where livelihood is derived; • Collection, transportation and final disposal of all waste should be undertaken regularly (weekly) • 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; • All construction materials should be covered during the transportation to avoid waste dispersion; • The options for reuse/recycling of the generated waste streams should be taking into consideration (e.g. excavated soil, etc.); • Burning of construction waste should be prohibited. 	<p>EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors</p> <p>EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environment-friendly toilet (e.g., pit toilet) should be made available for project workers, built with locally available materials <p>After construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All waste shall be removed from the project site and the camp site shall be reclaimed to the previous existing condition 	
Water quality: Contamination of local water sources may occur due to wastewater and sewage from construction sites	Short term	<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"> • An environment-friendly toilet (e.g., pit toilet) and washing facilities should be made available, built with locally available materials • Open defecation in the vicinity of project sites should be prohibited • Throwing waste in water sources should be prohibited • Possible hazardous waste (motor oils, vehicle fuels, lubricants) should be collected separately and authorized entity should be transporting and disposing the hazardous waste; <p>After construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pit toilets are dismantled and pits are covered and closed. • All waste is removed from the project site 	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
Disturbance of natural habitats	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

Cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem (e.g., grazing areas are diminished)	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • Removal of trees and plants needs to be done in an environmentally sustainable way (e.g., removal of branches); • Burning of trees and other plants should be avoided. 	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
Cutting down of vegetation: 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
<i>Adverse Impacts as part of restoration and productive practices initiatives (Output 2.1.5.)</i>			
Introduction of new seed varieties cause degradation of soil and damage to the local vegetation, reduce soil fertility, etc.	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess appropriateness of seeds in terms of biodiversity, water efficiency, local needs, survival, etc. • Ensure that only compatible and non-invasive seeds are planted 	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors
Pesticides and fertilizers 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	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess appropriateness of pesticides and fertilizers in the local context. • Build the capacity of executing partners to ensure full awareness and knowledge regarding the usage and impacts of selected pesticides and fertilizers. 	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors

waste, and may lead to eutrophication of downstream water bodies.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that no accidental damage is caused to local vegetation or untargeted species. • Ensure proper selection of sites as to avoid damaging natural habitat. • 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. • The project will not fund nor include the promotion or usage of pesticides. • 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). 	
Cutting down of trees and plants may negatively affect the ecosystem (e.g., grazing areas are diminished)	Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • Removal of trees and plants needs to be done in an environmentally sustainable way (e.g., removal of branches); • Alternative agricultural areas shall be identified; • Burning of trees and other plants should be avoided. 	EPA officers Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors

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.

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.

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 labor, 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 labor, 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. **Mitigation measures are specified in Table 3 below.**

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 Ac 2006, 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.

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 neighboring 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.

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).

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 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.

Child labor

There might be risks of child labor in project activities as children from local communities are commonly engaged in labor-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.

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.

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.

(c) Summary of Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table 3. Adverse Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Potential impact	Proposed mitigation measures	Responsible party
1. Changes in the current access and usage rights of natural resources in project sites (access to agriculture areas, collection of firewood, fishing, hunting)	<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 & Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p>
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.	<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 & Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p>
3. Occupational health and safety as a result of occupational hazards during construction works and due to increased exposure to COVID-19.	<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,</p>	<p>Safeguards & Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p>

	<p>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"> 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. Ensure regular health screening for the workers pre and during construction activities Ensure that no underage workers, or children are engaged Ensure decent work conditions, including an appropriate salary, working hours, accommodation and food for workers shall be provided to all workers 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 Implement a grievance mechanism for workers (and their organizations, where they exist) to raise workplace concerns <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>	Selected contractors
<p>4. Local community's health and safety as a result of occupational hazards during the construction activities and due to increased exposure to COVID-19.</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 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"> Ensure the safety of all project-related equipment, in line with the requirements above; 	<p>Safeguards & Gender Officer</p> <p>EPA Officers</p> <p>PAC Officers (for KMPA)</p> <p>Selected contractors</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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; Avoid dumping any waste or otherwise contaminating community sources of water supply and water quality; Provide information to local communities on construction activities and plans. <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>	
5. Conflicts between migrant workers and community members over local resource usage (firewood for cooking, water for drinking and washing), safety and GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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 Skilled local workers shall be employed in project activities to the extent possible. 	Safeguards & Gender Officer & local government authorities
6. Access to cultural sites and resources may have to be restricted as a result of project activities.	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.	Safeguards & Gender Officer ; local government authorities
7. Child labor: it is culturally habitual that children help their parents with farming, fishing or other project-relevant activities.	The project team will carry out awareness raising among local stakeholders to explain the risks of child labor, and ensure that children are not engaged in any project-related works.	Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors

8. Gender-based violence	<p>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 organizations, 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.</p>	<p>Safeguards & Gender Officer Selected contractors</p>
9. Exclusion of IP communities from legislative processes	<p>The Revised PA Act will be developed in a participatory process, in consultation with all key stakeholders. The revisions will reflect the recommendations of Amerindian communities and include a public review process.</p>	

4.1. PROCESS FRAMEWORK: LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION MEASURES (PF)

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 by the project with opportunities to restore their livelihoods to at least pre-project levels and will be part of the decision-making process of what this restoration includes.

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 HHs affected due to access restriction to natural resources, a social assessment (SA) process based on participatory consultations with affected peoples will be carried out. This SA will yield 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, as well as 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 known as a Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) will be prepared if livelihoods will be negatively affected by project activities. LRPs are elaborated after holding further meaningful consultations with affected peoples and stakeholders in order to provide tailored livelihood support and benefit-sharing for affected persons, groups and communities based on feedback from the consultations.

- *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 Councilors.

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.

4.2. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE’S PLANNING FRAMEWORK (IPPF)

(a) IP Population of Project Sites

Amerindians 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 Amerindian population grew from 40,343 to 68,819. This represents a significant increase of 70.6 per cent. Specifically, Amerindians account for more than three-quarters of the populations of Region 9 (89.2 percent) (Guyana Census Report, 2002).

(b) 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.

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.

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.

(c) Mitigation Planning and Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) development

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.

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.

WWF's Policy on Indigenous People requires a careful preparation of an IPP with the participation of affected communities, regardless of whether project affected IPs are affected adversely or positively. This entails:

1. Screening to confirm and identify affected IP groups in the project areas;

2. Social analysis to improve the understanding of the local context and affected communities;
3. A process of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) with the affected IPs' communities in order to fully identify their views and to obtain their broad community support to the project;
4. Development of project-specific measures to avoid adverse impacts and enhance culturally appropriate benefits.

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.

5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

In the ESMF, this section lists prohibited project activities and details the institutional arrangements, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and other involved parties. Community engagement and the inclusion of indigenous and vulnerable people are important parts of this section, which makes clear the responsibilities for project implementation while ensuring that all groups, especially project affected peoples and vulnerable groups, are represented.

5.1. PROCEDURES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

In advance of the initiation of any project activity, the PMU should fill in detailed information regarding the nature of each project activity into the activity-level ESS Screening and, if the activity falls into one of the excluded categories, it will be deemed ineligible for funding under the Project.

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).

5.3. STAKEHOLDERS' ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES IN ESMF IMPLEMENTATION

(a) General

The institutional implementation arrangement for the project 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, which will provide programmatic guidance and quality assurance.

(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 analyze 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

The project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) provides detailed guidelines on the engagement of various stakeholders and outlines a range of specific stakeholder organizations and actors that should be engaged. Full details regarding workshops, stakeholder meetings, field-level consultations (including meetings with a range of local stakeholders, community groups, site visits, field inspections, and focus group discussions), presentations and interactions are provided in the SEP, of which a summary has also been translated for disclosure to stakeholders.

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 Makushi 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.

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 many communities and individuals residing within or in the vicinity of project sites, thus presenting the need for an efficient and effective Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that collects and responds to stakeholders' inquiries, suggestions, concerns, and complaints. As an integral part of the project, the GRM will assist the PMU in identifying and addressing the needs of local communities and, as such, 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 unless the grievance is severe enough to warrant that or the complainant feels it is in their own best interest. 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 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 are not 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; and (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., government officials) would be allowed access to the complaints' log book.

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 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. In addition to the project-specific GRM, a complainant can submit a grievance to the WWF GEF Agency. 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. 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>.

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.