

# **Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project**

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)

Date: 29/04/2019

## 1. Introduction

This document presents the updated ESMP that is the result of the consultation meetings carried out during the supervision mission. This document superseded the initial ESMP that has been developed during project preparation, presented at CEO Endorsement and attached to the Project Document in its respective Appendix 10.

## 2. Projects description

The proposed project will contribute to the conservation of the Upper Guinea Forest ecosystem through the sustainable management of transboundary water basins. The Upper Guinea Forest is degrading and disappearing at an alarming rate, with adverse consequences for the quantity and quality of linked ecosystem services that underpin productivity of the land, forests and water resources. This has a direct impact on human well-being. As a consequence of the degradation, forest-dependent people struggle to sustain their livelihoods, often using non-sustainable techniques (including poaching, logging, slash and burn agriculture, and illegal mining). Under component 1 the project will support local communities in developing alternative means of income generation, which will lead to an increase in forest coverage and its related benefits both at the local (ecosystem services) and global (biodiversity, enhanced carbon sinks) levels. It will enhance local stakeholders' involvement in the management of transboundary ecosystem. The project will also reinforce regional coordination among countries with a particular focus on selected ecosystems.

In component 2 foundational capacity building and institutional reinforcement for regional ecosystem management of transboundary water systems will be supported. National inter-ministry committees would contribute to the development of a regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and subsequently to the preparation of a preliminary Strategic Action Plan. Benefits of collaboration on transboundary basin and adoption by cooperating states in a Transboundary Water Resource Management approach contribute to improve community livelihoods, targeted in component 1, and to address environmental issues. Results will lead to a net gain in forest area (including the recovery of degraded forests) as well as increased transboundary water consideration and management in regional policies.

The below table summarizes the three components (including the project management component 3).

Project: Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) - Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire		
Project Objective: Sustainable management of forest and water resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem		
Component	Outcomes	Outputs
Component 1: Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management	Outcome 1.1: Transboundary natural resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems are managed in a sustainable manner, involving local communities.	Output 1.1.1. Site-specific guidelines for restoration of productivity of tree-based systems produced to promote the use of best practices in forest and landscape restoration interventions and sedentary agricultural practices in the main production sectors affecting forest ecosystems
		Output 1.1.2. Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs
		Output 1.1.3. Improved management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas

		Output 1.1.4. Integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions
Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters	Outcome 2.1: Water resources are managed at the regional level based on transboundary institutional organs.	Output 2.1.1: National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committees established and operational
		Output 2.1.2: Improved capacities to prepare Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan
	Outcome 2.2: Technical and financial capacity of government institutions for transboundary water resource management is strengthened.	Output 2.2.1: Awareness raised on transboundary and environmental issues
		Output 2.2.2: The regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action plan with initial actions are prepared adopted at ministerial level
		Output 2.2.3: IW learn products generated and disseminated to a broad community of local, national and regional stakeholders
		Output 2.2.4: Financial resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented;
Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring	Outcome 3.1: The project is implemented	Output 3.1.1: Project management team established and functional
		Output 3.1.2: Project is monitored, evaluated and audited

The geographical scope of the project is determined through the four transboundary project sites that have been identified for component 1. These sites represent the last remnant forest stands in the MRU area. Furthermore, they are constituted of a mosaic of merely intact forest vegetation offering still sufficient habitat for the survival of the last remaining wildlife populations. A second reason for selecting these areas as project sites reposes on the fact that all the efforts of the national authorities, the international donors and NGOs are combined on these sites to conserve the last remaining biodiversity hotspots while at the same time to develop sustainable land use systems in the surrounding cultivated zones. Last, each of these forest blocks embraces several protected areas, which constitute the core areas of highest conservation worthiness, and which are linked between each other by corridors or buffer zones.

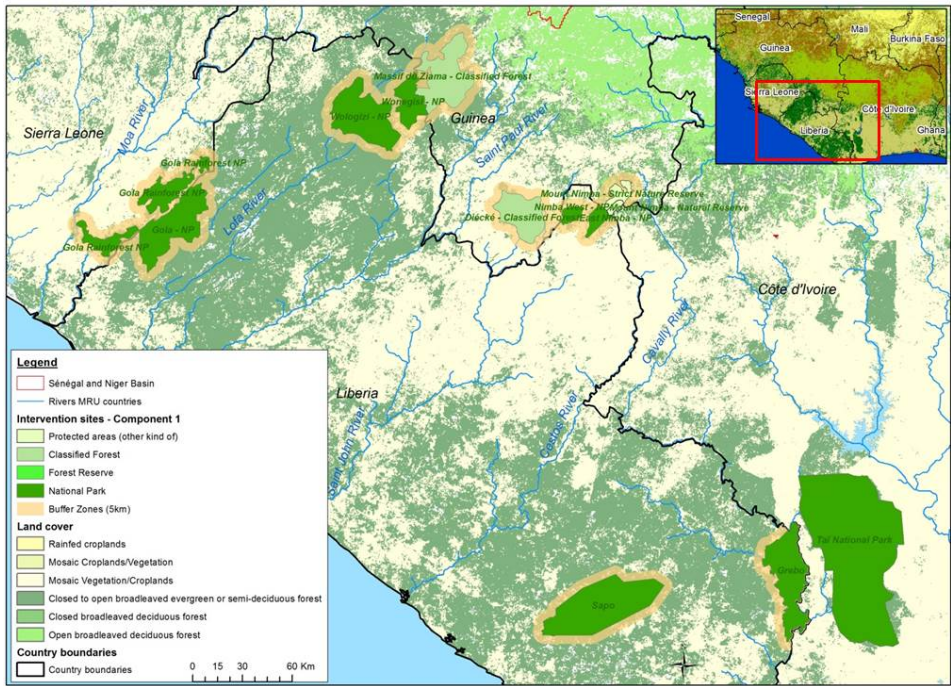
The selected sites are the following (also see map below):

Site 1: Transboundary forest block including the protected area complex of the Diecke National forest (GN), the Mt.Nimba Integrated Forest Reserves (GN/CI) and the East Nimba National Park (LB);

Site 2. Transboundary forest block including the protected area complex of the Wonegisi-Ziama National forests (LB/GN);

Site 3. Transboundary forest block and corridor including the protected area complex of the Gola Rainforest National Park (SL) and the Gola National Forest (LB);

Site 4. Transboundary forest block and corridor including the protected area complex of the Sapo National Park (LB), the Grebo National Forest (LB).



### 3. Risk classification and identified impacts

The project has been classified as **moderate risk projects** based on the following rationale:

The project aims to promote forest ecosystem management by promoting the restoration of productivity of tree-based systems and by developing integrated land use plans. It does not include any infrastructure investments but focuses on promoting of but improved forest management and agricultural practices. However, low to moderate impacts on the livelihood of local communities might be expected as some of the measures for protected areas such as (re-)classification and zoning or protected areas and development of integrated land use plans might involve restricting access to forest resources (component 1). The type and magnitude of these restrictions and their impact on livelihood can only be determined during project implementation when the restrictions are established which will be done separately for each intervention site as part of the application of the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology process (ROAM). Chapter 4a) outlines a process to be followed in case access restrictions are confirmed and impacts have been identified, including the development of an Action plan for Mitigating Impacts from Access Restrictions.

Under component 2 the project essentially supports upstream planning processes through regional transboundary Water Strategic Action Programs (SAP). This activity is not expected to pose major environmental and social impacts; however there is a need that the process sufficiently respect needs or vulnerable groups and of women.

The probability of other impacts is generally considered relatively small. However, it is advised that a site-specific screening is undertaken once the detailed activities have been defined as a result of the application of the ROAM process; and that for each site a separate ESMP is developed to capture potential impacts in a comprehensive way and devise respective mitigation measures.

## 4. IUCN ESMS Standards

### a. Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions

The following project activities might involve elements that might lead to the determination of use restrictions or the enforcement of possible restriction:

Activity 1.15 includes procurement of park/ field equipment at each site, purchase premium to support park surveillance and funding concrete protection measures on the ground.

Activity 1.16: Produce formal recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas;

Activity 1.17: Negotiate integrated land use plans in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups; negotiate and sign conservation agreements with performance based appraisals, focus restricted access to protected areas and stop encroachment, procure field equipment and material at each site

In particular, activity 1.16 might trigger the Standard in case it will be decided that access/use restrictions will be needed and in case these are enacted in form of formal regulations (hence involuntary from the perspective of users). If such land use decisions that involve restrictions would be taken by the communities as part of community-based natural resource management, this would be considered voluntary and as such not trigger the standard. Restrictions to the use of certain resources might still cause livelihood impacts for specific social groups within the communities. This will need to be analysed by the project and, if impacts have been confirmed, mitigation measures need to be provided for the groups affected by the restrictions.

Given the lack of clarity about the likelihood that restrictions will be needed in the different intervention sites, the type of possible restrictions and whether these will be considered voluntary or involuntary, the decision has been taken to refrain from developing a Process Framework. Instead a process guidance is established below that needs to be adhered to:

- As part of activity 1.14 (gathering information on human populations, socio-economic dynamics and impacts on livelihoods – which is essentially done as part of the ROAM process) an assessment about negative impacts on livelihoods from access restriction measures needs to be undertaken (following the instructions provided in the IUCN Guidance Note on Social Impact Assessment). This will allow identification of the groups affected by access restrictions and an assessment of the magnitude of impacts. Results of this step need to be reported to IUCN;
- In case significant impacts are confirmed, an Action Plan for Mitigating Impacts from Access Restrictions needs to be developed following the respective IUCN Guidance Note<sup>i</sup>. This will require, among others, assess viable alternatives to avoid restrictions, and if avoidance is not feasible, develop mitigating measures (in consultation with affected groups) and obtaining FPIC from affected groups; the Action Plan needs to be submitted to IUCN for approval.

### b. Standard on Indigenous Peoples

The Mano River Union Forests are home and provide livelihoods for around 10 million people from more than 100 different ethnic groups. Information available at this point does not indicate that some of these ethnic groups belong specifically to indigenous peoples groups. A more

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<sup>i</sup> ESMS Guidance Note on Action Plan to Mitigate Impacts from Access Restrictions, available at [www.iucn.org/esms](http://www.iucn.org/esms).

detailed analysis needs to be undertaken when selecting the sites for restoration interventions as part of the ROAM process. Results of this step need to be reported to IUCN and based on the findings from this analysis the applicability of the Standard will be reviewed again.

### **c. Standard on Cultural Heritage**

The sites could potentially harbour physical cultural resources. However, given that the project does not include any infrastructure development or other activities that involve movement of earth there are no obvious risks of damaging resources. Chance Find Procedures will be available as precautionary measure.

It cannot be fully excluded, though, that potential access restriction might affect communities in their cultural practices. This will need to be revisited once the potential need of restrictions has been determined during the ROAM process as part of the process outlined in chapter 4a).

The introduction of new agricultural/agroforestry practices might conflict with traditional practices, which will need to be carefully managed. Generic mitigation measures have been described in the ESMP table below, but will need to be specified for each site when developing the site-specific ESMPs.

### **d. Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Natural Resources**

The Standard is triggered because there is a low risk of an inadvertent introduction of non-native species. However, these risks are expected to be controlled by following the provisions of the ROAM process including the Biodiversity Guidelines<sup>ii</sup> and by diligently respecting established protocols for species introduction. There is no need to develop an Action Plan or carry out a detailed risk assessment.

## **5. ESMP Monitoring and Supervision**

The activities outlined in the ESMP table attached in Annex 1 will be monitored to track the progress in implementing the agreed mitigation measures. This is done annually and for each intervention site separately based on the provided ESMP Monitoring template in Annex 2.

Aside from progress, the effectiveness of the mitigation measures will also be monitored and results entered in the respective column in the ESMP Monitoring template. This will be based on observations and stakeholder consultations (in particular with affected groups) in order to judge the measures' effectiveness.

Annual monitoring will also identify any additional environmental or social risks that may have emerged since the project started and establish appropriate mitigation measures for any significant new risk. These risks and their mitigating measures should be added to the ESMP table (in Annex 1) and then reported on as part of annual monitoring.

The annual ESMP Monitoring Table is reviewed during the periodic project supervision missions.

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<sup>ii</sup> Beatty, C.R., Cox, N. A., and M. E. Kuzee (2018). Biodiversity guidelines for forest landscape restoration opportunities assessments.

**Annex**

<b>Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) - GENERIC VERSION (TO BE SPECIFIED FOR EACH COUNTRY)</b>					
<b>ESMS Standards</b>	<b>Triggered</b>	<b>Main issues, how they will be addressed and whether a stand-alone plan is required (e.g. Indigenous Peoples Pan, Process Framework etc.)</b>			
Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TBD	Activity 1.16 (Recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas) might trigger the Standard in case it will be decided that access/use restrictions will be needed and in case these are enacted in form of formal regulations (hence involuntary from the perspective of users). If such decisions are taken by the communities who are using the land/resources themselves, this would be considered voluntary and wouldn't trigger the standard. Access restrictions might still trigger livelihood impacts for specific social groups. This will need to be analysed and, if confirmed, mitigation measures need to be accessible for the groups affected (see section Mitigation Measures below). This will be determined during the ROAM process.			
Indigenous Peoples	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TBD	The Mano River Union Forests are home and provide livelihoods for around 10 million people from more than 100 different ethnic groups. Information available at this point does not indicate that some of these ethnic groups belong specifically to indigenous peoples groups. A more detailed analysis needs to be undertaken as part of project implementation (activity 1.14 / ROAM) when gathering socio-economic data at the local sites. Based on the findings from this analysis the applicability of the Standard will be reviewed again.			
Cultural Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TBD	(1) The sites could potentially harbour physical cultural resources. However, given that the project does not involve infrastructure development or other activities that involve movement of earth there are no obvious risks of damaging resources. Chance Find Procedures will be available as precautionary measure. (2) It cannot be fully excluded, though, that potential access restriction might affect communities in their cultural practices. This will need to be revisited once the potential need of restrictions has been determined during the ROAM process. (3) the introduction of new agricultural/agroforestry practices might conflict with traditional practices which will need to be carefully managed (see section Mitigation Measures below).			
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Natural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> TBD	The Standard is triggered because there is a low risk of an inadvertent introduction of non-native species. However, these risks are expected to be managed by diligently respecting protocols for species introduction. There is no need to develop an Action Plan or carry out a detailed risk assessment.			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Activities to comply with ESMS policy and provisions</b>		<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Implementation Responsibility</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b>Disclosure requirements</b>	Disclosure of the project document on relevant websites (IUCN, MRU and project website).			REA	May – Jun 2019
	Announcements in newspaper and radio and TV			REA	May – Jun 2019
	Presentation of the project in community meetings in the 4 landscapes			REA	May – Jun 2019
<b>Grievance mechanism</b>	Develop a grievance mechanism adapted to the socio-cultural context of each landscape that links with the IUCN-institution-wide system (available at <a href="http://www.iucn.org/esms">www.iucn.org/esms</a> ) with clear description of channels available for submitting / discussing grievance and respective escalation steps as well as methods/activities to ensure proactive solutions to grievance (before building up).			NEA with support of Barrie/Sierra Leone	May – Jun 2019



	Adapt the generic complaint template (available at <a href="http://www.iucn.org/esms">www.iucn.org/esms</a> ) to local conditions and make it accessible in the 4 sites		NEA with support of Barrie/Sierra Leone	May – Jun 2019
	Present the mechanism in the 4 landscapes in community meetings		NEA	May – Jun 2019
	Erect sign-posts based on guidance provided by IUCN (available at <a href="http://www.iucn.org/esms">www.iucn.org/esms</a> )		NEA	Jun - September 2019
<b>Gender Mainstreaming</b>				
Gender analyses / socio-economic assessments to inform gender-responsive design of project activities, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including budgeting and staffing	This will be ensured through the socio-economic assessment part of the ROAM process (described in <a href="https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44852">https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44852</a> ); the gender dimension is described in the gender-restoration guidelines (see <a href="https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2017-009.pdf">https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2017-009.pdf</a> ), For this project the assessment will be complemented by the methodological approach of the Forest Poverty Toolkit ( <a href="https://www.profor.info/content/poverty-forests-linkages-toolkit-0">https://www.profor.info/content/poverty-forests-linkages-toolkit-0</a> ) to provide an understanding of the level of dependency of community members on forest products, disaggregated by gender and by wealth.		ROAM Consultants	May – September 2019
Activities implemented by the Agency strive to provide equal opportunities for women and men to benefit	It is the pupose of the ROAM process to identify, assess and implement restoration opportunities and the gender-responsive guidelines will support the identification of opportunities that will proactively improve livelihood for the whole community in an inclusive, participatory and equitable way.	As part of ROAM	ROAM Consultants	May – September 2019
Women and men are provided equal opportunities in terms of participation and decision-making throughout the identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities implemented by the Agency	The ROAM process will ensure equal particiaption of men and women. Through the Stakeholder engagement plan the project further promote and monitor balanced and equal engagement of women and men stakeholders.	As part of ROAM	ROAM Consultants	May – September 2019
	For ensuring meaningful participation of local stakeholder in the design and implementation of activities, local consultative committees have been established in all sites with representatives of the local villages; the aim is to move towards balanced participation between men and women. Implementation and actuary attendance of meetings will need to be monitored and documented		NEA based on templates provided by REA (Patrick)	Completed
Collection of sex disaggregated data and information on gender, and the use of gender-sensitive indicators, sex-disaggregated targets and results, as relevant, are regularly incorporated in monitoring, evaluation and reporting	The project's Results Framework includes a number of indicators that are monitored by gender-disaggregated targets. Based on the results of the ROAM process a few additional indicators will need to be identified to demonstrate progress and impacts of the identified restoration measures (disaggregated by gender).	As part of project M&E	REA (Patrick)	December 2019
	Use the Project Implementation Reports (PIR) to report on activities and results relating to gender.		IA based on inputs from REA/NEA	According to PIR schedule
Improve gender mainstreaming through gender-balanced project staffing (incl.consultancy) and by ensuring that project staff and consultants have appropriate capacity and gender expertise	Staffing of REA, NEA including technical assistants as well as consultancy should provide for gender balance to the extent possible reflect to increase and MRUCountry teams have made a good effort in hiring nation coordinators		REA	ongoing

	Ensure that responsibilities for integrating gender aspects in the different project activities/tasks are explicit in job descriptions or in the terms of references of management, technical staff, and consultants		REA / NEA	ongoing
Enhance gender responsive project design and implementaiton through gender-balanced Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement Strategy/Plan to ensure increased involvement of gender-balanced representation and target partnerships with civil society groups such as women's advocacy groups (see below)		REA / NEA	See SH Eng. below
	Provide targeted capacity development, when relevant, at the local level to support and encourage women and men alike to bring their voice, needs, potential, and priorities		REA / NEA	October 2019 and continued in 2020
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	Identify and involve stakeholders as early as possible in the identification and development of project activities and sustained engagement throughout the project cycle and documented in form of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan		NEA based on templates provided by REA (Patrick)	Plan available May 2019
	Maintain and disclose public records of Stakeholder Engagement activities throughout the project cycle		REA (Patrick)	ongoing
	Use the Project Implementation Reports (PIR) to report on activities and results relating to stakeholder engagement.		IA based on inputs from REA/NEA	According to PIR schedule

#### Key Social and Environmental Impacts and related Mitigation Measures

The below impacts need to be understood as generic impacts which need to be validated in each country/site (new impacts might need to be added where relevant); also the presented measures need to be understood as generic – the actual mitigation measures will need to be tailored to the impacts and local conditions in the country/landscape. The NEA will be responsible for undertaking relevant assessments and stakeholder consultations to identify and assess impacts and develop respective mitigaiton measures. They will be supported in this tasks by Abdulai Barrie including through site visits.

Social & Environ-mental Impacts <sup>i</sup>	Mitigation measures <sup>ii</sup>	Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability <sup>iii</sup>	Costs	Implementatio n Responsibility	Schedule
Impact on peoples' livelihood through change in land use / restrictions (voluntary decision)	Land users will be involved in all decisions on land use in order to understand current use and identify ways to avoid livelihood impacts				
	Create new community forests or support existing schemes that will allow sustainable use of forest resources				
	Provide benefits (e.g. access to training, improved agricultural and agroforestry practices) to people affected by restrictions				

<sup>i</sup> If Standards are triggered and it has been decided that the mitigation measures are not presented in form of a stand-alone plan (e.g. IPP, Process Framework etc.), the measures are described in this table

<sup>ii</sup> Where mitigation measures have already been conceptualized as project activities, only the codes of the activities need to be entered (e.g. "-> see Activity 1.2.3"); columns D, E and F of the ESMP are not applicable to avoid repetition.

<sup>iii</sup> The ESMP has to confirm that proposed mitigation measures are feasible, that they are effective in providing mitigation for all affected groups and sustainable. In this column either describe how feasibility is confirmed or put v to confirm that feasibility has already been proven elsewhere and indicate where to find evidence.

Lack of land rights might prevent certain groups to benefit from support / training provided by the project	Provide for a good understanding of land rights in each landscape				
Selection of sites (e.g. production plots, training etc.) might lead to unjustified preferential treatment	Select sites based on fair and transparent criteria				
Women or vulnerable groups might not be able to access the project's benefits	Designing project benefits (e.g. training measures) based on a good understanding of needs and socio-cultural conditions of women and vulnerable groups				
Strategic Action Programmes (SAP) might not sufficiently respect needs or vulnerable groups or of women.	Methodology for the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) needs to ensure that gender dimensions and needs of vulnerable groups are appropriately addressed (e.g. water needs, vulnerabilities, health issues etc.).				
	IA will review the methodology on TDA gender, equity and access issues of the before it is executed by REA / consultants				
Low risk of inadvertent introduction of non-native species.	The project will not introduce non-native species and a rigorous protocol will be established for each site to guide species selection. The ROAM biodiversity guideline provides further guidance.				
Risk of increasing vulnerability of local communities and the ecosystem if impacts from climate change are not appropriately taken into account	Short- and long-term risks posed by climate change are considered systematically when designing agroforestry practices and other sustainable land use measures - based on established methodologies including regional climate predictions and up to date hydromet data				
Staff or consultants engaged by the project	Awareness rising, hotlines, protocol for reporting incidents				

might give rise to Gender-based violence					
<i>New ESMS risks that have emerged during project implementation</i>					

Note: The progress of implementing mitigation measures should be color-coded in column C:  
 Green = On Schedule/ Ahead of Schedule/ Completed, Orange = Slightly Delayed, Red = Delayed



<b>ESMP Progress Monitoring Template</b> <i>TO BE COMPLETED BY EXECUTING AGENCY (Grantee)</i>				
Period covered by the report:				
<b>ESMS Standards</b>	<b>Describe the progress of implementing the required tools</b> (Indigenous Peoples Plan, Action Plan Mitigation Access Restrictions etc.):			
<b>Other ESMS provisions</b>	<b>Color coding</b>	<b>Describe status of completion and evidence</b>	<b>Outstanding action and timing</b>	
<b>Disclosure:</b> Has project information been made available to all relevant stakeholders, in particular potentially affected groups?				
<b>Grievance mechanism:</b> Has a mechanism appropriate to the social context been established and explained/communicated to relevant stakeholders?				
<b>Gender Mainstreaming</b>				
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>				
<b>Social &amp; Environmental Impacts<sup>iv</sup></b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>	<b>Color coding</b>	<b>Describe status of completion, suggest solutions where problems are encountered</b>	<b>Early judgement: Does this measure seem effective?</b>

<sup>iv</sup> Column A and B are copied from the ESMP.

<i>New ESMS risks that have emerged</i>			

<i>TO BE COMPLETED BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCY (IUCN)</i>	<b>Date/Name of reviewer:</b>
<b>ESMP monitoring - main findings:</b>	<b>Status ESMP</b> <input type="checkbox"/> on schedule <input type="checkbox"/> slightly delayed <input type="checkbox"/> major delays/issues