Annex 8

ESMS-enhanced ROAM Process Framework

I. Project description and rationale for the ESMS-enhanced ROAM Process Framework

The project "Reversing forest degradation and deforestation and restoring forested landscapes through local multi-stakeholder management" in Myanmar is a child project of The Restoration Initiative (TRI) funded by GEF. The project includes interventions at the national level for influencing forest-related policies (outcome 1), concrete FLR actions at the local level for improving ecosystem functionality and an increasing the flow of ecosystem services to local communities (outcome 2), institutional capacity building at subnational and field level (outcome 3) and the generation and dissemination of knowledge on landscape restoration (outcome 4). The interventions at the local level will include technical strategies for restoring and managing trees and forests and economic and livelihood interventions, but the concrete intervention in each site will only be identified by the local multi-stakeholder group during project implementation through an Forest-Landscape-Restoration planning process guided by the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) framework.

Following the provisions of IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) the project has been screened on environmental and social risks. The screening resulted in the classification of the project as a moderate risk project due to a limited number of social risks and the fact that concrete restoration activities will only be decided during project implementation as part of the FLR planning process. As the identified social risks were overall considered of minor significance or are expected to be readily managed through the presented project activities and the fact that the risks are exclusively associated with the FLR interventions under outcome 2 (-to be defined as part of the ROAM planning process) led to the decision to enhance the methodological guidance of the ROAM planning process by incorporating key principles and provisions of the ESMS. It is the purpose of this document to delineate this ESMS-enhanced ROAM methodology. Such an ESMS-enhanced ROAM Process Framework is considered equivalent to an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), which would usually be required in circumstances where project activities will only be defined during the implementation phase.

II. Congruence between ROAM and ESMS

The ROAM process and how it has been adapted to the project context in Myanmar is explained in the project document in chapter 4. The description of the planning framework demonstrates that there is a strong congruence with key procedural and substantive elements of the ESMS, most notably with the ESMS risk analysis procedure and with key ESMS principles.

With regards to the risk analysis procedures the congruence can be best illustrated through the five-step ROAM process to be implemented at the township and village levels – see figure 13 of the project document (reproduced below, steps A. to E.).

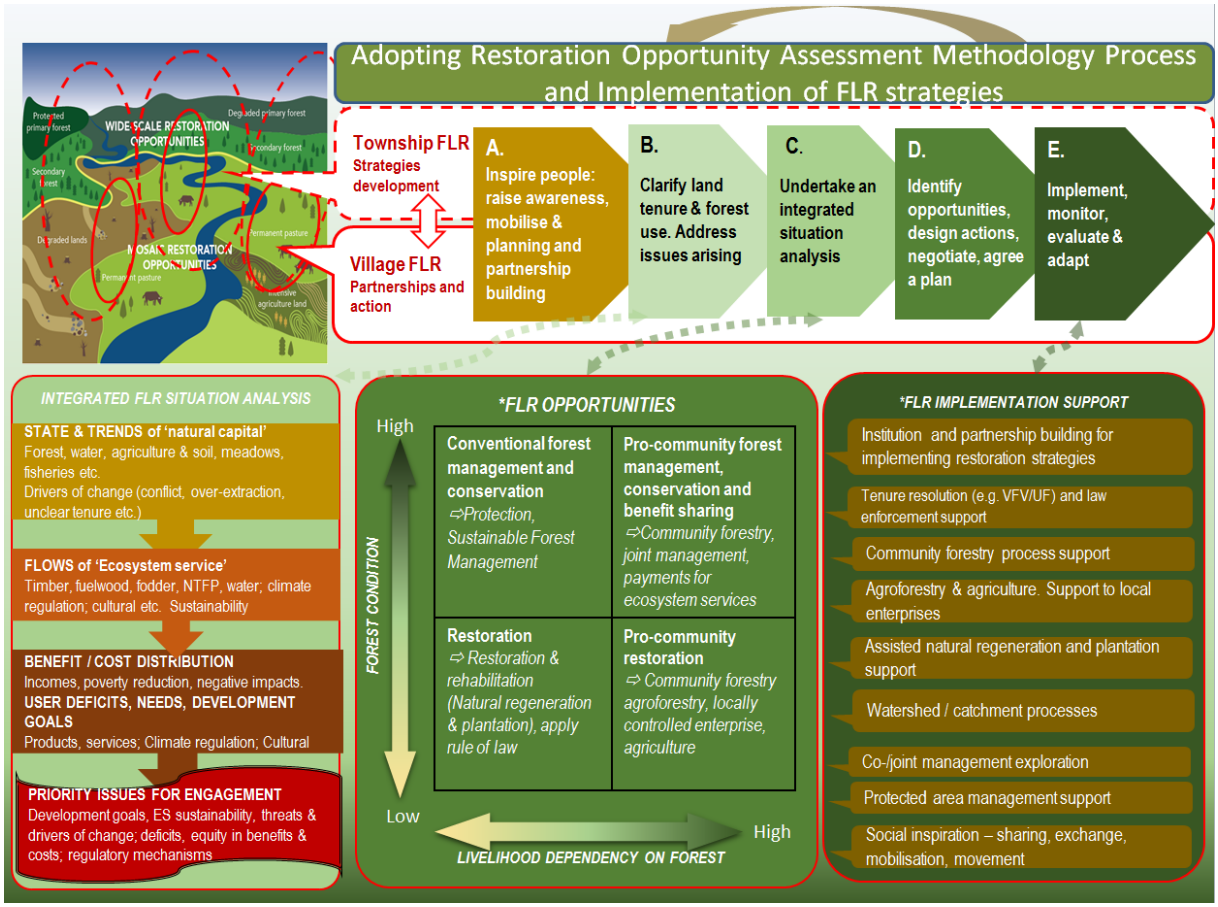

Figure 1: Theory of Change for landscape level intervention

A significant part of the analytical work carried out during these five steps is similar to what would be undertaken during a social impact assessment (SIA) as part of the ESMS review process. The steps that most strongly resemble the SIA process are the following:

- **Step B**: clarification of land tenure and forest use and addressing tenure and rights issues potentially raised by stakeholders;
- **Steps C** - integrated situation analysis: analysis of local interest and specific needs and opportunities of different social segments of the communities; identification of users' various (and possibly competing) needs for ecosystem services (timber, fuelwood, fodder, NTFPs, water, climate regulation, natural hazard, and disease regulation etc.);
- **Step D** - design actions, negotiate, agree on a plan: aims to ensure equitable sharing of costs and benefits and improve human well-being when agreeing and designing on the suite of restoration interventions.

The correspondence between the procedural and analytical approach of the ROAM process applied by the project and the ESMS is most evident regarding the following ESMS principles: (i) stakeholder engagement, on (ii) Free Prior and informed consent (FPIC), on (iii) protecting of the needs of vulnerable groups and on (iv) gender equity and women empowerment, as described below:

- **Stakeholder engagement**: The ROAM process is designed as an inclusive and participatory process with the aim to bring relevant stakeholders together for jointly setting restoration goals and identifying and planning agreed restoration opportunities. For successful implementation of the ROAM process workshops are planned at the district, township and village level to kick off the process, inspire stakeholders to support the restoration efforts and integrate the FLR principles into the forest management plan and NRRPM approaches, to identify local leaders and foster partnerships on community forest establishment and other forest management such as village firewood plantations, SME development and agroforestry and rural development;
- **Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)**: The philosophy of the ROAM process is based on the understanding that restoration opportunities and interventions are designed in a participatory way and agreed among all relevant stakeholders. While it is recognized that land-use decisions quite often involve conflicting and competing demands, the process is conceptualized in such way that if no agreement is reached the interventions would not go ahead.
- **Principle on protecting the needs of vulnerable groups**: The ROAM process and FLR interventions are intended to help rural communities work in a more cooperative manner to benefit from improved flows of needed ecosystem services that result from landscape restoration; efforts will be focused on vulnerable sectors of society to ensure they benefit directly from project activities.
- **Principle on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**: The ROAM process includes an assessment of benefits and costs of ecosystem flows to the different social groups (including gender-disaggregated information on incomes, poverty levels, negative impacts, equity) as part of the situation analysis. The project document further sets out that decisions about the FLR intervention should explicitly prioritize those that reflect women's needs.

III. ESMS Enhancements of the ROAM Process

While the above section has shown that the ROAM process presented in the project document already reflects main ESMS elements, further enhancements are necessary in order to ensure full compliance with the ESMS. These enhancements include:

- Formulating provisions for the five-step ROAM process to be implemented at the township and village levels based on the ESMS principles and considerations from the ESMS Standards.
- Adding a simplified ESMS procedures for identifying and managing environmental and social risks of the selected restoration interventions and the economic and livelihood interventions.

a) Specific provisions for the five-step ROAM process

The sections below describe ESMS provisions for each of the five steps of the ROAM process.

Step A: Inspire people, raising awareness and mobilise partnership building

In this step it will be critical to ensure that the selection and invitation of the participants for the township- and village-level workshops and the project's larger stakeholder engagement strategy will be based on an inclusive and in-depth stakeholder analysis undertaken in each site. As such it will be ensured that not only stakeholder groups from government, private sector and civil society (including community stakeholders, NGOs and CSOs) are identified that actively articulate their stake in forest restoration, but that also groups are recognized whose interests and livelihoods might be impacted (positively or negatively) by the forest restoration and management approaches promoted by the project. The latter also include stakeholders whose ability to articulate their needs and interests is less pronounced and who may have generally less access, power and influence on land use decisions processes.

The project team will design the workshop and other consultation activities in a culturally appropriate, non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive manner, free of external manipulation, intimidation or coercion. Information relevant to stakeholders will be shared in a timely manner in appropriate language and channels of communication. In village meetings, pro-active involvement of stakeholders will be institutionalized by a priori orientation of the village women what the meeting is about so that stakeholders can come prepared. The meeting facilitators will ensure that time and location are suitable for all stakeholder groups to participate, in particular for women and ethnic minorities. Wherever sensible the team will set-up separate meetings for ethnic communities and/or women in order to ensure appropriate levels of participation in the discussion or to accommodate schedules and obligations.

It is good practice to document the meetings and their participatory methods with minutes, describing topics discussed, concerns raised and potential disagreement, together with names/occupation of participants (but participants not obligated to provide names) and photography or video, where appropriate. Stakeholder consultation will also include other forms of engagement such as interviews with stakeholder or stakeholder groups, results of which should also to be documented.

Step B: Clarification of land tenure and forest use

When analysing land tenure and forest use and dependency on resources at the site-level it will be important to work with local people towards a shared understanding of present and future land tenure, ownership and rights and correlate this with state land classification and options for establishing community rights. While recognizing statutory rights it is critical that also customary rights are well understood and respected when designing FLR interventions. It is further important to shed light on the actual implementation of land rights in the specific project sites and on potential challenges or conflicts occurred in the past. Through this process grievances related to land issues may be identified, recognized and where possible managed.

Steps C: Integrated situation analysis

When identifying potential FLR sites to be analysed the project team will ensure that not only forest areas where agricultural encroachments has happened in the past (e.g. rainfed agricultural *ya* land inside the Reserved Forest) are mapped as this will most likely lead to Community Forest (CF) groups

being made up only of those individuals with claims on the agricultural parcels in the Reserved Forest; as such it would be those individuals rather than the whole community benefiting from the FLR interventions promoted by the project. Therefore, it will be important to map also natural, although degraded forest areas in need of restoration. This will allow that community forest groups can be established in order to ensure the whole community can benefit from the project's FLR interventions.

The situation analysis will need to ensure that an appropriate understanding of the development needs and dependencies on ecosystem services of vulnerable groups is achieved. The consideration of vulnerable groups will include ethnic minorities, people who are landless or displaced, elderly or disabled, children, or groups that are impoverished, marginalised or discriminated against.

This step will further provide for a gender differentiated analysis to improve the understanding of constraints, needs, and barriers faced by different genders and women specifically, their dependency on ecosystem services and forest products in particular and their current role in forest management (e.g. are women included in forest user groups and their management committees). This will not only allow identifying specific risks faced by women but also to ensure a gender differential treatment when designing FLR interventions to address a bias or disadvantage due to gender roles or norms.

While the consultation during the field work carried out in the project design phase confirmed that the population residing in the identified townships mainly belongs to the majority Burmese/ Bamar ethnic group, some minority ethnic groups (Kadu, Lisu and Kachin peoples) have been identified. In some villages the groups are mixed, in others ethnic minorities live separately, but with their agricultural land often situated in the same area. Hence the situation analysis should provide for understanding the ethnic composition of the respective villages and clarifying whether and how strongly their cultural and practices differ from the Burman group. If the presence of indigenous groups has been confirmed, appropriate representation of these groups will be ensured during the workshops. The situation analysis should also clarify gender differences of the respective ethnic groups.

Step D: Design actions, negotiate, agree on a plan

The design of FLR interventions and introduction of social institutions to achieve sustainable management of the resources in areas where communities reside will be promoted in ways that lead to improved social benefits. There will be explicit rights-based and pro-poor approaches. Rights based: CF and involvement in other activities will occur in the context of allocation of rights for local people. Pro-poor: facilitation will seek to specifically include poor and marginalised individuals, especially women, and prioritise benefit allocation to them, and try to minimise and mitigate costs falling upon them. The project design proposes strengthening participation and social inclusion in forest governance, leading to an overall positive impact on communities.

In the decision-making process about the interventions it will be ensured that principles of FPIC are followed by obtaining consent of all relevant rights-holders whether these make up a smaller or larger segment of the local society.

Given international recognition that community-based rights for collective management of a forest provide greater protection for women's participation than individual rights, priority will be given to community-based FLR interventions. When defining the institutional setting for community forest management the project team should provide for specifying or promoting the role of women. This might require activities for building women's capacity or empowering them to actively participate in these institutions. In all the restoration investments for collective use, it should be ensured that the village will, prior to the investment, prepare its own internal rules for management and sharing of the benefits ensuring safeguarding of women's rights.

It is evident that participation in the planning workshops will often be limited to the legitimate representatives elected by the communities at each project site. It is therefore essential that disclosure meetings will be organized at the community level to present the results of the workshops to a wider audience to inform them on the FLR plans and ensure their buy-in as well as feed-back on potential risks. Good practice rules for organizing and documenting community meetings are already described under steps A.

Step E: Implement, monitor, evaluate and adapt

It is understood that an effective monitoring system of the FLR interventions will be established and implemented under Output 4.2 and that action plans will be reviewed with the planning groups on an annual basis. This should include monitoring of identified environmental and social risks and effectiveness of mitigation strategy as well as checking for additional risks that may have emerged since the project start.

A project-level grievance mechanism will be established following the guidance provided by the generic IUCN ESMS grievance mechanism[1]. The mechanism which will need to reflect local customs and institutions will be described in the local language and communicated and disseminated in a culturally appropriate way to all relevant stakeholders, women and men, at the beginning of project implementation. To minimise grievances it will be essential that the project team and implementing partners are highly attuned to community concerns and provide for regular consultation during implementation, ideally with support of local or regional NGOs with a track record of successful engagement in the area.

b) Simplified procedure for identifying and managing ESMS risks

A simplified ESMS procedure will be established to ensure that the restoration interventions and the economic and livelihood interventions selected during the village level workshops are each screened for potential environmental and social risks.

The screening step will be supported by a questionnaire (ESMS questionnaire) that is designed to tease out risk issues that could give rise to potential negative impacts. It is structured in three sections.
In its **first section** the ESMS Questionnaire analyses impact issues related to the four ESMS standards:

[1] Available on IUCN website at www.iucn.org/esms

- Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions - inquiring about risk related to potential restrictions of access to or us of natural resources (even temporary);
- Standard on Indigenous Peoples - inquiring about potential adverse impacts on indigenous groups triggered by proposed restoration or economic and livelihood interventions;
- Standard on Cultural Heritage - inquiring about potential adverse impacts of FLR interventions on cultural resources, on natural features with cultural or spiritual significance and on cultural practices and
- Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources - inquiring about inadvertent adverse impacts on biodiversity including through the use of pest management practices or the deliberate or accidental introduction of alien species.

The **second section** of the ESMS Questionnaire focusses on environmental or social impacts beyond the four ESMS Standards including social risks such as health and safety issues or human-wildlife conflicts, community impacts including disturbances to patterns of social relations and social cohesion, risk of conflict between communities, groups, or individuals and potential of project benefits leading to discrimination or marginalisation of certain groups. Proposed interventions are also analysed on risks of inadvertently creating or aggravating inequalities between women and men or adversely impacting the situation or livelihood conditions of women (or other gender groups).

In the **third section** the ESMS Questionnaire addresses risks of the proposed interventions inadvertently increasing the vulnerability of ecosystem and people in the context of climate change.

If the ESMS screening identifies environmental or social risks these will be addressed by

- Analysing the probability and significance of the identified risks; if access restrictions are needed, this will involve analysing the social impacts of these restrictions on different social groups);
- Identifying alternative approaches that will allow avoiding risks;
- If risks cannot be completely avoided, developing culturally appropriate and agreed measures for mitigating the risks.

These steps will require additional consultations with the affected groups and with other concerned stakeholders and might include achieving agreement of affected groups and other relevant stakeholders about trade-offs. It is suggested that the interventions are designed with the application of the Theory of Change as guidance in order to make clear the underlying assumptions for reaching the results.

Depending on the nature of the risk this step might also require further environmental and/or social impact assessments (ESIA) and the development of mitigation measures to assist people affected by project activities in their efforts to improve or restore their livelihoods; the latter need to be documented in form of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). If the ESMS screening concludes on any ESMS Standard being triggered, the respective guidance provided in the respective ESMS Standard documents needs to be followed.
The aim is to arrive at a suite of FLR interventions for achieving intended restoration outcomes in which adverse environmental and social impacts are avoided; if complete avoidance is not feasible it

will be ensured that impacts are compensated for in a fair and agreed way, among others by designing appropriate economic and livelihood interventions.

c) Institutional Arrangements

The institutional arrangements for implementing the ESMS review procedures and for ensuring that the ESMS provisions for the five-step ROAM process are adequately followed include the following:

- High-level oversight will be provided by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) supported by ESMS experts based in IUCN regional office in Bangkok;
- The National Project Coordinator (NPC) will be responsible for implementing the ESMS screening for each FLR intervention and for relevant additional steps (e.g. strategy for avoiding impacts and identification of mitigation measures); he will provide six-monthly reports on the implementation of the ESMS-enhanced ROAM process;
- Monitoring of ESMS risks is integral part of the project's monitoring system implemented under Output 4.2;
- Technical project staff (e.g. Forest Restoration and Management Specialist, Community Forestry Support Specialist and community The Gender and Social Networking Specialist) will provide technical expertise on ESMS-relevant issues or support the NPC on consultation or other activities as needed ;
- ESMS Training is provided for all projects staff and relevant project partners during the inception phase of the project.