



# Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Appraisal Stage

### **(ESRS Appraisal Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 09/20/2023 | Report No: ESRSA02999



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P179935	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	ELEMENT	2024
Operation Name	Enhancing Landscape and Ecosystem Management Project		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
India	India	SOUTH ASIA	Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
India	Government of Tripura, Government of Nagaland, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region	29-Sep-2023	20-Nov-2023
Estimated Decision Review Date	Total Project Cost		
07-Sep-2023	304,906,000.00		

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Proposed Development Objective

Improve landscape management and increase benefits for targeted forest dependent communities in Tripura and Nagaland.

B. Is the operation being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

ELEMENT has an overarching objective to increase the resilience of landscapes and forest-dependent communities in Tripura and Nagaland. The project supports the states of Nagaland and Tripura in their transition to environmentally sustainable and resilient management of landscapes and forests by addressing the root causes negatively affecting the vitality of these ecosystems. By using a “landscape approach”, i.e., taking both a geographical and socio-economic approach to managing the land, water and forest resources that form the foundation (the natural capital), the project



will support strengthening capacities of the participating state governments and local actors to restore degraded landscapes by introducing a landscape approach and helping utilize technological solutions. Degraded forest landscapes will be restored by implementing community-led integrated landscape and natural resource management plans to support improved ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, water availability, soil conservation, and wildlife habitat protection. ELEMENT will also support nature-based tourism and sustainable forest-based livelihoods by facilitating value chain improvement, market linkages and creating an enabling environment for community-based forest-linked enterprises. Project interventions aim at inclusion of tribal population and gender empowerment. Vocational development for women and youth will be prioritized during project preparation and implementation. The project will be implemented in rural areas of 15 districts of Nagaland and eight districts of Tripura. This Project has the following components: I. Strengthening Capacities for Integrated Landscape Management - This component will finance consulting services, goods, small works adopting climate responsive design and materials, and equipment, training to support the participating states' institutional capacity, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) systems in support of decision making, and infrastructure to enable government partners to operate effectively. II. Restoring Landscapes for Improved Ecosystem Services—The objective is to restore and maintain the ecological functions and productivity of the targeted landscapes. Component 2 activities involve preparation and implementation of community-led climate-resilient landscape management plans. III. Enhancing Landscape-based Value Chains for Economic Transformation—This component will provide support for creating -income and entrepreneurship opportunities by promoting processing units, market, and forward linkages along value chains of high value forest products, bio-resources, agriculture, and allied activities, and by promoting nature based tourism. IV. Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation - Funding will be provided for Project management, PMUs' staff and operational costs to deliver on the project development objectives. V. Contingent Emergency Response Component (tbc) - Reallocation of credit proceeds from other components to provide immediate recovery and reconstruction support following an eligible crisis or emergency, as needed.

## **D. Environmental and Social Overview**

### **D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings**

Tripura and Nagaland are two states located the Northeast region of India. They are classified by the Government of India as “special category states” and receive dedicated development support to address developmental challenges related to geopolitical isolation, natural resource degradation, recurring natural disasters due to fragile topography, and marginalized population.

Tripura has as a population of 3,671,032 (2011 Census) spread across eight districts. A majority of the population is dependent on agriculture, which contributes to 23% of the Gross State Domestic Product. The state has very low industrialization levels and unemployment rates are high. Tripura has 31.8% Indigenous Peoples or scheduled tribes (STs) which include 19 tribes- major tribes are Tripuris (17%), Reang (5%), Jamatia (2%), and Chakma (2%), while smaller tribal groups are Deobarma, Halam, Usai, and Bhutia to name a few. Sixteen percent of Tripura's total population and 20.9% of ST households are estimated to be multi-dimensionally poor. The tribal population is mostly concentrated in remote, sparsely populated, and relatively inaccessible areas, which are generally poor in terms of infrastructure, basic service delivery, child nutrition and health. STs in Tripura are a diverse group with unique languages and cultural heritage and customary institutions and practices. The key tribal inhabited areas are constitutionally notified as Schedule VI areas, and administered by the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council. Tripura has a geographic area of about 10,491 square kilometers (sq kms), of which about 7,721 sq. kms is covered by forests comprising nearly 73.6% of the State's total geographic area. There are six Protected Areas in Tripura which include four wildlife



sanctuaries, two national parks and one Ramsar site and eco sensitive zones (ESZ) or buffer zones. Out of the 304 watershed to be financed under the project, 283 watersheds (i.e. 93 percent by number and 77.6 percent by area) fall partially or fully in Schedule VI areas or areas administered by the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC). A combination of climate change and excessive exploitation of forest resources by communities, and shifting /slash and burn cultivation (Jhum) with shorter cycles, has severely degraded the forests leading to soil erosion and deterioration of water retention capacity. The state lost about 113,000 Ha of forests during the period of 2001-21, representing 17% of tree cover affecting a wide-ranging ecosystem services vital to Tripura's agriculture and allied activities. Tripura is hilly and has an undulating terrain, prone to increased runoff, landslides, and soil erosion as well as frequent floods and cyclones. There are several major ephemeral rivers too.

Nagaland has a population of 1,997,000 (2011 Census). Nagaland is spread across 16 administrative districts, is inhabited by 17 multi-ethnic tribal (ST) groups namely the Angami, Ao, Lotha, Sumi, Sangtam, Chang, Khamniungan, Konyak etc., cumulatively known as the Nagas. The Nagas or STs make up 89% of the total population of the state. There have been growing trends of aggregate poverty in Nagaland with 30.8% of population being multi-dimensionally poor. These include what the state classifies as backward tribes like the Yimkhuim Naga, Tuensang and Shamator to name a few. Studies have shown that each Naga village is like an independent sovereign republic governing their resources, planning their development activities, maintaining law and order through customary practices. Nagaland has a geographical area of 16,579 sq km, forests constitute about 73.9% of this area and about 97% of the forest land is owned by the communities/ clans/ tribes. There is one national park and three wildlife sanctuaries. Seventy percent of the population relies upon natural resources (agriculture and forests) for their living and face the dwindling impacts of drastic reduction in forest cover largely attributed to Jhum or shifting/ slash & burn cultivation.

## **D.2 Overview of Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

In Tripura, the project will be implemented through State Forest Development Agency (SFDA). A Project Management Unit (PMU) headed by a Project Director will be constituted at the SFDA and staffed through internal staff of the Forest Department as well as external recruits for management of financial, procurement and environmental and social risk management matters. On ground, the project will be implemented by Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at the district level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and Eco-Development Committees,. The Project Steering Committee will be chaired by the Chief Secretary, which includes the Principal Secretaries of all participating line departments. The Line Departments will provide overall guidance and support in inter-departmental coordination. Government of Tripura is also preparing the World Bank-financed Tripura Rural Economic Growth and Service Delivery Project (P178418) and is aware of the ESF requirements. However, the Forest Department is not exposed to ESF requirements. Currently SFDA is in the process of establishing a PMU by hiring specialists including an Environment Specialist, a Social Development, and a Tribal Specialist specialist and also create capacities for Environment and Social management. The project will also bolster its E&S capacities through the robust capacity development portfolio planned as part Component one and four of the project.

In Nagaland, the project will be implemented by the Society for Climate Resilient Agriculture in Nagaland (SoCRAN) under the Agricultural Production Commissioner's Office, where a PMU is being established. The PMU will also be supported by externally recruited staff in areas with skillsets outside the current capacity. It will have essential skills like financial management, procurement, project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) functions, and environmental and social (E&S) management. About 3-4 Cluster Management Units (CMUs) will also be created on the basis of landscapes finally identified by the IA to provide management, coordination and supervision support to the PMU. At the village level,



Village ELEMENT Management Committees (VEMCs) supported by Bio Diversity Management Committees, will be formed for developing and implementing the village level landscape plans, with minimum one third women members, and representation from tribal councils. The Governing Council will provide guidance in planning, and implementation of the project and enable inter-departmental coordination for better and on-time project delivery. While the GoN is implementing a number of externally funded projects, including World Bank-financed Enhancing Classroom Teaching and Resources Project (P172213) and Nagaland Health Project (P149340) and is exposed to ESF, the Implementing Agencies (IAs) under ELEMENT do not have direct prior experience with ESF implementation. The PMU headed by the Project Director, will have component-wise General Managers, apart from an Environment Specialist and a Social Development and a Tribal Specialist. Similarly, the Cluster Management Unit will also have a focal point to look at all the E&S issues in the cluster. The ESMF proposes to further improve the E&S capacities of state, cluster & district level implementing units through intensive trainings on participatory planning and monitoring, ESF and its requirements, stakeholder engagement, grievance redressal. Overall, the E&S capacity gaps at the State, District and Village levels will be addressed through ensuring that PMU is appropriately staffed, engages consultants (Project Management Consultants are envisaged to be hired), and conducts regular trainings on ESF for the PMU, district and village level teams

## II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

### A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

#### A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Substantial

The Environmental risk is rated as substantial due to: (i) geographical setting of the project in different landscapes/watersheds covering large forest areas, difficult terrain and varied hydrometeorology, and; (ii) weak capacities of the district and village level implementing agencies on ESF to assess and manage risks in the two states. That said, the potential environmental risks of the project are envisaged to be temporary, localized, predictable, manageable, reversible and can be readily mitigated as project activities are largely small to medium scale and mostly driven by the communities. The environmental risks anticipated from the project include: (i) localized air and water pollution and increased erosion and runoff and from small civil works related to small scale infrastructure development activities (such as construction of check dams, spring-shed rehabilitation, post-harvest storage, small buildings for eco-tourism, etc.); (ii) threats to biodiversity due to increased access to forests and eco-sensitive zones (ESZs) from project activities such as collection of NTFPs and sourcing of materials from forests and ESZs for nursery establishments and plantations and development of eco-tourism; (iii) potential increase in human-animal conflict due to increase accessibility to the project area, and; (iv) water and soil contamination from increased use of pesticides for afforestation, agroforestry, and nurseries promotion which may increase water and soil contamination. Private sector participation in NTFP/HVFP based livelihoods may further accentuate the impacts by promotion of monoculture and use of exotic species to achieve economy of scale. This may adversely impact the floral and faunal biodiversity but may also lead to outbreaks of pests and diseases in plantations, but they will be managed through community outreach, sensitization, and involvement of JFMCs and village Chiefs, avoiding work in periods of wildlife movement etc. The Environmental and Social Management Frameworks (ESMFs) for Tripura and Nagaland include an exclusion/negative list and a robust screening process that avoid high-risk activities. The project will also engage full time environmental experts to bridge the gap in assessing and managing risks, strengthening community institutions, and involving various stakeholders right from the planning process to implementation and management of sub-projects.

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**A.2 Social Risk Rating**

Substantial

The social risk rating is assessed to be ‘Substantial’ due to: (i) potential exclusion of vulnerable groups in planning, selection, decision making and implementation of sub-projects which can be exacerbated due to presence of ‘backward’ tribal group in Nagaland and particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) in Tripura as well as weak capacities of the district and village level institutions to manage participatory processes which are integral to sustainability of integrated landscape management; (ii) exposure of workers and communities to health and safety hazards from small civil works, pesticide use and human-wildlife conflict; (iii) temporary restriction or limitations on accessing forest resources, conserved areas which may have temporary impact on livelihood. However, physical displacement of tribal households or any adverse impacts on customary tribal lands, and cultural properties is not anticipated due to the project activities. Some of the ongoing customary traditional practices which have had long-term adverse impacts on natural resources and are deemed unsustainable would be restricted for durations that will be decided by the communities themselves through their landscape management plans, reflected in Village Grant Agreements (VGAs). Any suspension or prohibition or alteration to some such unsustainable activities that may have livelihood impacts will be addressed through Livelihoods restoration measures which will be mainstreamed in the project design itself. No major construction activities are proposed, land requirements for project activities are small in scale and will be met through public or community owned land in both the states (and will be a part of the site selection criteria). Any activity that requires land acquisition, leads to displacement or adverse livelihood impact will be in the exclusion list. Some project villages have the presence of multi-ethnic communities. Also, the scheduled areas in Tripura as well as entire areas in Nagaland have complex, traditional forest governance systems. However, the IAs have the experience of working closely with STs and with their multiple (customary) governing institutions under several government programs, as well as externally aided projects supported by international development partners, such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). To manage capacity gaps on participatory processes, major impetus of component one and two of the project is on developing the capacity of IAs (at state and district level) as well as village level community institutions and collectives on approaches and methods for community mobilization, vulnerability mapping, participatory planning and social inclusion, supporting preparation and roll out of a robust stakeholder engagement strategy and staffing the PMU/ SPMU with domain expert specialists (tribal affairs, community engagement & participatory planning), in addition to Social Development Specialists.

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**B. Environment and Social Standards (ESS) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered**

**B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards**

**ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

Relevant

ESS1 is relevant. The proposed project is anticipated to have overall positive environmental and social impacts including improved landscapes, forests and natural resource management, enhanced value chains and access to markets for timber and non-timber forest produce, improved economic opportunities for the forest-dependent communities, including scheduled tribes and women of Tripura and Nagaland. The project will be implemented in selected landscapes of 15 out of 16 districts of Nagaland and all 8 districts of Tripura based on the extent of forest/ land degradation, their potential to increase carbon sequestration, potential of the area for value-chain development and willingness of the local communities to participate in the operation. The target beneficiaries of the project include the forest fringe communities within the identified landscapes, Jhumiyas or the shifting cultivators, people engaged in



Non-Timber Forest products (NTFP) / High Value Forest products (HVFP) collection and processing, farmers, women and youth aspiring to develop enterprises around HYFPs and other commodities to be supported under Component 3 of the project. In addition, strengthened capacities of state and local institutions will enable better management of E&S risks and provide overall opportunities for community participation and social inclusion. The potential negative environmental risks and impacts of the project are summarized in the risk sections above. With a negative list and a robust screening process (that avoid high-risk activities, promotion of monoculture and introduction of alien and invasive species etc.), systems for planning and coordination at all levels, rigorous capacity development portfolio, and facilitation of community-led integrated landscape management, the risks will be duly managed through the application of mitigation hierarchy. The newly passed Forest Conservation Amendment Act 2023 is not likely to have any adverse implications on the PDO, the project activities or pose any new E&S risks for the project. A stand-alone Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) is developed. Both Tripura and Nagaland have an independent ESMF due to: i) different implementation arrangements and implementing agencies; ii) different customary and land ownership rights; iii) different constitutional provisions, and; iv) different agreements with states. The ESMF includes a section outlining existing E&S conditions and provide a schema to determine natural resources baseline which will help in project contribution in improving environmental and social conditions while managing risk and impact at the sub-project level, based on their different typologies and planned activities. The ESMF includes procedures for undertaking E&S screening of sub-projects, an exclusion / negative list that prohibits project financing and support to high-risk activities and procedures for preparing site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs). The ESMF also includes the institutional capacity needs and gaps (including staffing and skills) required to implement environmental and social standards (ESSs). In Tripura, the Joint Forest Management Committees have the mandate to manage forests under: (i) government-owned forest lands, and; (ii) community-induced forest reserves where communities have customary and legal rights for managing their forests. All measures to ensure consistency with ESS5 requirements have been integrated into the ESMF. The ESMF includes a selection criteria for community led activities, which will include provisions related to communities making land available for activities initiated by them. Since STs comprise the overwhelming majority of project beneficiaries in both states , an Indigenous-People-Planning-Framework (IPPF) is not being prepared. The ESMF and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) integrate all the requirements related to ESS7 by ensuring that all decisions related to project implementation in a given project area/village and the proposed interventions are documented in the form of village work-plans, landscape management plans and are a priori formally agreed to by representative village institutions as VGAs before actual implementation. This may also include seeking consent from local institutions on restricting or prohibiting customary activities that are deemed unsustainable or degrading and which could adversely impact the livelihoods of some forest dependent households. However, all such activities or their suspension will have to be understood, duly consented upon and formally agreed to, before being made part of the project intervention strategy in a given location. State-level SEPs prepared for Nagaland and Tripura identify village communities, forest dependent people, community institutions, landowners and users, farmers and Members of SHGs, Producer Organisations, farmer Groups as the affected parties while the landless, women farmers, members of the backward tribes and PVTGs are identified as the disadvantaged groups. SEPs outline the strategies to be followed to ensure awareness and participation of the affected and disadvantaged groups from planning to the implementation of the sub-projects. This includes: (i) need to seek endorsement of stakeholders in all project villages before initiating implementation, (ii) using culturally appropriate means of communication, and; (iii) undertaking a training needs assessment and delivering skills/capacities to ensure inclusion in the local language and using local dialects. State specific Labor Management Procedures (LMP) will also be prepared and adopted before the engagement of any project workers (direct, contracted or community workers). LMPs will provide guidance on the working conditions and terms of employment





of the direct and contracted workers engaged at the PMUs and CMUs as well as those deployed at select construction sites in the project. The LMPs will also provide guidance on how community workers will be engaged, including the terms of their engagement. The state-level Environment and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) lists responsibilities for reporting on progress in implementation of the ESF requirements, implementation of E&S staffing, E&S Screening, ESMP, including any ESS related plans required, if needed, establishment and operationalization of agreed GRM mechanisms, processes and timelines for obtaining of requisite statutory clearances.

**ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

Relevant

ESS10 is relevant. The project has a component on participatory landscape management which requires outreach, mobilization, and defined roles of communities in planning, implementation, and monitoring of project activities. The SEPs for the two states have been prepared and include: (i) a detailed mapping of stakeholders (communities and institutions, vulnerable households) and their engagement needs with respect to the project; (ii) a communication strategy that includes use of culturally appropriate content, language, and mediums (Kokbrook and Bengali in case of Tripura and Nagamese- English and relevant Naga dialects in Nagaland); (iii) tools of engagement to ensure regular information dissemination, dialogue and participation, while ensuring transparency, and accountability; (iv) capacity development of project teams and village institutions on participatory planning, implementation and monitoring; (v) provision for a dedicated grievance redressal mechanisms to handle project specific grievances, including those related to SEA/SH and revisiting the GRM periodically to test its effectiveness to respond to the stakeholders requirements, and; (vi) periodic monitoring and reporting on the stakeholder engagement activities. The project will also pay special attention to address any potential barriers to the most vulnerable groups to meaningfully participate in the project. The SEPs ensure that all engagements with the tribal communities are culturally appropriate and representative village institutions are consulted at each major project milestone in the village- (i) during the preparation of larger landscape management plans, (ii) during preparation of village work plans, (iii) before the signing of the VGA and (iv) during collective project reviews. A screening template is being prepared under the ESMFs and shall be endorsed by the Village Committee for the sub-projects. The ways of engaging stakeholders during implementation as proposed in draft SEP will be consulted with the identified stakeholders (including vulnerable and disadvantaged) during the appraisal and the outcomes will be updated in final version.

**ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions**

Relevant

ESS2 is relevant. Project interventions involves engagement of direct, contracted and community workers to carry out the project activities. The planned scale of civil works under the project is limited and may not require prolonged deployment of large-scale contracted workers at a given site. In the project areas, most of the construction will be small scale and involve creation of post-harvest storage and processing infrastructure. The labour is expected to be a mix of local and migrant workers but given the scale, labour influx and its related risks are not anticipated. Direct workers will be engaged at the SPMU/PMU (State), ZMU (zonal) and FMU (District level) and will mostly be subject matter specialists and consultants hired from the market. Community Workers will also be engaged under the project for watershed/ springshed development, implementation of the community led landscape development plans. The project LMP currently under preparation includes: (i) review and assessment of the existing labor laws and practices with respect to workers service conditions, remuneration, Occupational Health and Safety, codes of conduct (including specifics on zero tolerance of SEA/SH), and grievance redressal mechanisms; (ii) highlights the labour risks and mitigation measures related to different categories of workers; (iii) recommends the terms and conditions related to workers, especially community workers; (iv) key contractual obligations related to labour management (like

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prevention of child and forced labor) and Workers Code of Conduct that need to be included in bid documents; (v) details of GRM available to project workers to raise workplace concerns, and; (vi) assigns responsibilities for supervision of sites, labor related reporting and undertaking capacity building on labor management. LMP will ensure that working conditions of community workers are aligned to the ESS2 requirements, are voluntary and directly benefit the workers. The project Community Operations Manual will also spell out the terms of engagement of community workers to implement village level activities supported through community grants.

**ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**

Relevant

ESS3 is relevant to the project. The project activities relevant for ESS3 are (i) Afforestation, agroforestry, and nursery modernization and strengthening which has a potential risk for enhanced use and improper disposal of pesticides, use of poly bags etc.; (ii) NTFP promotion such as Agarwood processing may lead to increase in fumes due to burning of wood, etc.; and (iii) minor civil works- small structures proposed for soil and water conservation. With respect to resource efficiency, the ESMFs prepared for the project have identified feasible measures for: (i) efficient water usage; (ii) raw materials use by exploring use of local/alternate materials and recycled aggregates; (iii) use of innovative technology so as to minimize project's footprints on finite natural resources in the construction of soil and water conservation and erosion control measures, and; (iv) enhancing energy efficiency and minimizing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The generic ESMPs included in the ESMF provide guidance for implementation of such measures. For pollution prevention and management, the focus is on: (a) exclusion of banned pesticides and fertilizers and; (b) management of hazardous wastes. Further, if during the project implementation, the requirement of pesticides and fertilizers is assessed to be significant, the project will prepare and implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Nutrition Management practices to mitigate the potential risks emanating from these activities. The need and timelines for the preparation of IPM are spelled out in the ESCP. With respect to carbon emissions, the project, during implementation, will estimate GHG reduction due to creation of additional carbon sink under the project, also identify climate resilient measures to suit local needs and challenges, and by possible use of alternative technologies. The project is adopting measures in line with the World Bank Group's Environmental, Health, and Safety Guidelines, for example: Environmental (Guidelines no. 1.1 to 1.8) and Forestry (Board and Particle-based Products; Forest Harvesting Operations).

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

ESS4 is relevant. The fragility of the locations require adequate safety measures such as identification of areas prone to landslides and other natural disasters, creating awareness and advisories and proper signages. The ESMFs include relevant national and state level policies and Acts on disasters like landslides, floods and fires to ensure prevention and preparedness to address the same. In addition, increased access to biodiversity rich areas for activities related to afforestation, NTFP collection increases the risk of the communities to human-wildlife conflict. The ESMFs include provisions for managing risks activities related to forestry/agroforestry/NTFP value chains, such as avoidance of work during night and periods of wildlife movement, involvement of JFMCs Village Chief and awareness raising of communities and improved monitoring/reporting. As the project would implement afforestation and agroforestry related activities, the potential risks will be mitigated through promoting appropriate and optimal use of agrochemicals to prevent adverse human health impacts from exposure during use, or accidental ingestion or misuse and if required, preparation of and following the Integrated Pest Management plans. Since the check dams are small in size and of low height, the risks associated with check dams is not significant. The afforestation, agroforestry, and even check dam related work is largely in forested areas/ degraded forests and, therefore, traffic related safety

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concerns are not envisaged under the project. Even though labor is expected largely to be sourced locally, the potential of health, safety and GBV/SEA/SH risks to local tribal communities from labour force as well as project workers/contractors do exist and will be addressed per the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the LMP and GR systems

**ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement**

Relevant

ESS5 is relevant Physical and economic displacement of tribal households or any adverse impacts on customary tribal lands, and cultural properties is not anticipated. The project, through the Negative List in the ESMFs, will exclude any sub-project activities that: (i) involve private land acquisition or lead to involuntary resettlement of tribal households or which create economic displacement or loss of livelihoods for communities, and; (ii) may have significant, adverse, irreversible impacts on customary tribal lands, natural or cultural resources. Land requirements are expected to be small scale, scattered and will be identified and made available by the communities (included in the selection criteria of the sub-projects). Related impacts of the project include partial loss of livelihood and income due to self-restrictions imposed by the community on access to common property resources for conservation and protection or for restoration of Jhum lands. The duration of these access restrictions will be collectively agreed to and spelt out by village-specific, community led landscape management plans. These plans will also include livelihood restoration measures to restore the livelihoods of those impacted, by targeting them for beneficiary-oriented livelihood support under the project, as set out under Action 5.1 of the ESCPs. The process for beneficiary selection, including prioritizing those impacted, will be detailed in the Community Operations Manual. The ESMFs include the selection criteria for community led activities where communities will provide any land needed for activities initiated by them. They also capture the existing customary land ownerships and tenures, their customary land donation procedures, the gaps with respect to ESS5 on voluntary land donation (VLD) and recommendation for bridging those gaps. For this, detailed guidelines, and protocols to govern the VLD have been included in the ESMFs.

**ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**

Relevant

ESS6 is relevant. Biodiversity conservation and management is one of the key aspects of ELEMENT, and the project is anticipated to have positive impact on improving the living natural resources in the project areas through plantation, agroforestry and afforestation. Due to community access to forests for plantation, afforestation, harvesting of NTFP/HVFP, implementation of soil and water conservation and erosion control structures in forest and non-forest areas may have an impact on biodiversity and increase human-animal conflict. Promotion, including plantation, of agarwood, bamboo, and other NTFP-based value chains are among the species selection risks envisaged under the project. Private sector participation in NTFP based livelihoods may further accentuate the impacts by promotion of monoculture/exotic species to achieve economy of scale. However, the project will promote mixed indigenous plantation in forest areas to increase forest density. On NTFPs, the project will not support large scale monoculture plantation, or plantation of alien/invasive species within designated forests, eco-sensitive zones and protected areas. Construction of some building units at ecotourism sites, including eco-friendly bamboo hut, nature trail, interpretation center, check dams, etc. may require some site clearance and tree felling activities. The project envisages to sensitize and enhance capacity of the JFMCs and work with them for forest and biodiversity protection work in the identified landscapes, which can be transformational in empowering them for protection of wildlife and critical habitats. The project will involve JFMCs in eco-restoration activities in the forest area as well as in plantation on degraded forest land by selecting indigenous mixed species of prevailing environment. Improved and state-of-the-art production and

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harvesting techniques will allow continued long-term production of the resource from the same natural resource base. The project will not support any sub project activities that are likely to require forest land diversion, including that from wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, critical habitats, eco-sensitive zones. The ESMFs include an exclusion/negative list of activities in the screening criteria that will eliminate the possibility of activities being taken up in critical habitats and ESMPs will be customized and prepare to manage site-specific impacts. The screening process included in the ESMFs will assist in determining the need for Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP), and if required, the BMP will be prepared prior to implementation of sub-projects in areas with rich biodiversity/ biodiversity hotspots in consultation with Forest Department and Biodiversity Boards.

**ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities**

Relevant

ESS7 is relevant. Tribal households and communities will be the key stakeholders and the main beneficiaries of the project since the project primarily targets forest landscapes. The forest-dependent communities in tribal areas have been historically marginalized and underserved in terms of access and connectivity to social, economic and human capital infrastructure and services. These areas have comparatively higher levels of poverty, livelihoods and food security with lower human development outcome indicators. The project does not anticipate (i) significant adverse impacts on land and natural resources subject that are subject to traditional ownership or under customary use; (ii) relocation of Indigenous Peoples; and (iii) negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples cultural heritage. The Exclusion list includes all sub-projects that may (i) have significant, adverse, irreversible impacts on customary tribal lands, natural or cultural resources, (ii) involve land acquisition or lead to involuntary resettlement or economic displacement of tribal households, and (iii) be opposed by local governance institutions (Village Committees/ Councils, Gram Sabhas) or by customary tribal leadership, and which could lead to social conflicts. In both Nagaland and Tripura, STs represent the overwhelming majority in the targeted Project areas and landscapes. In Nagaland, the entire state is predominantly tribal (nearly 90 percent of population), while in Tripura more than 90 percent of the selected landscapes fall in Sixth Schedule areas. Consistent with ESS 7, because Indigenous and Tribal peoples constitute the overwhelming majority of beneficiaries of the Project, an IPPF is not prepared for the Project. All landscape restoration and livelihood improvement activities will be subject to prior consultation and agreement with the local institutions (village councils/committees) and would be aligned with their customary practices. All work and management plans will have to be duly vetted, endorsed and owned by the representative village institutions before any physical interventions are initiated in the project village. As an additional mitigation measure, a participatory process will be rolled out in all intervention villages and landscapes during the planning phase and will ensure representation of all stakeholders, including the vulnerable and disadvantaged as set out in the ESMFs and SEPs. These measures will be over and above the E&S risk screening that will be undertaken to filter out any activities that could adversely impact the ST households. In order to ensure the above, the PMUs shall engage one social development specialist with domain knowledge on tribal issues to manage all requirements in sixth scheduled areas related to site selection, consultations, autonomous council approvals, disclosures, etc. All stakeholder engagement activities, including skilling and capacity building trainings, workshops, community consultations, information disclosure and awareness activities will ensure that the communication is culturally appropriate and uses the language and dialects with which the target audience is most familiar. Apart from the customary grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms available in the villages, the project will also provide tribal communities access to a project GRM.

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**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage**

Relevant

ESS8 is relevant. The possibility of project-related impacts on cultural heritage (in selected landscape for restoration activities) will be screened. Consultations with communities will also be undertaken to screen any sensitive issues related to tangible, intangible and undocumented cultural heritage and resources. The ESMFs include guidance on screening of the potential for any direct or indirect impact of project activities on cultural assets and determine the presence of any other such resources that may not be listed with national or state governments (e.g., Archeological Survey of India) but could be of local significance. Any such identified cultural heritage impacts and/or chance findings will be handled in line with national legal requirements and requirements set forth under ESS8. Measures required to protect cultural heritage will be captured in the ESMF and ESMPs.

**ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries**

Not Currently Relevant

Not relevant

**B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways**

No

**OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas**

No

**B.3 Other Salient Features**

**Use of Borrower Framework**

No

The project will apply the Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and all applicable requirements for clearances, licenses, permits and approvals by national, state and local governments.

**Use of Common Approach**

No

No financing partners are envisaged at this time.

**C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities**

**C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by implementation?**

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

- (i) Environmental and Social Management Frameworks (ESMFs) includes the procedures to carry out E&S baseline condition of landscapes, description of the treats / pressures, expected evolution on a Business-as-Usual scenario vis-à-vis the proposed interventions and based on the “protection” scenario which will be identified through technical inputs as well as Stakeholder Engagement process, E&S risks and impacts of the subproject typologies and activities will be covered within the ESMFs, with clear Screening Criteria and related assessment and mitigation measure requirements as well as KPI there from; exclusion/negative list; generic ESMPs included as a part of the ESMF will be customized for

Public Disclosure



site-specific activities; Guidelines for Community Participation and Engagement, Consultation and Disclosure during sub-project design and Implementation; capacity assessment of IAs.

- (ii) Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEPs)
- (iii) Environmental and Social Commitment Plans (ESCPs)

Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

- i. Implementation of E&S staffing and capacity building program
- ii. Preparation and implementation of LMP
- iii. Preparation and implementation of IPM and INM
- iv. Preparation and implementation of BMP
- v. Responsibilities for reporting on progress in implementation of the ESF requirements
- vi. E&S Screening, ESMP, including any ESS related plans required, if needed
- vii. Establishment and operationalization of agreed GRM mechanisms
- viii. Processes and timelines for obtaining of requisite statutory clearances, if not obtained by Appraisal
- ix. The implementation and updating of ESMPs and SEPs as needed; and
- x. Provisions for managing unanticipated risks and impacts

### III. CONTACT POINT

#### World Bank

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### IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT



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## V. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Gayane Minasyan, Raj Ganguly, Pyush Dogra
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Kevin A Tomlinson Cleared on 20-Sep-2023 at 07:26:41 EDT
ADM Environmental Specialist:	Avanish Kant
ADM Social Specialist:	Swati Dogra