



Additional Financing Appraisal Environmental and  
Social Review Summary  
Appraisal Stage  
**(AF ESRS Appraisal Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 09/24/2023 | Report No: ESRSAFA605



**I. BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

Country	Region	Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)
Congo, Republic of	WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA		
Project ID	Project Name		
P181184	Additional Financing To The Climate-resilient And Inclusive Livelihoods Project		
Parent Project ID (if any)	Parent Project Name		
P177786	Climate-Resilient and Inclusive Livelihoods Project (ProClimat Congo)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy	Investment Project Financing	10/2/2023	11/10/2023

**Proposed Development Objective**

To strengthen landscape management and increase the use of improved livelihood activities in targeted communities

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
<b>Current Financing</b>	<b>82.00</b>
<b>Proposed Additional Financing</b>	<b>50.00</b>
<b>Total Proposed Financing</b>	<b>132.00</b>

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

Yes

**C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities**

The project will provide livelihood support, especially on sustainable and resilient agriculture and natural resources management, in communities in targeted landscapes.

Public Disclosure



## D. Environmental and Social Overview

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

The Climate Resilient and Inclusive Livelihoods Project (ProClimat Congo, P177786) will be implemented in three distinct landscape areas in the northern, central, and southern regions of the Republic of Congo. The landscape in the north extends over parts of the Likouala, Sangha, Cuvette-Ouest, and Cuvette Departments, while the landscape in the center extends over parts of the Plateaux, Pool, and Lekoumou Departments, and in the south, the landscape extends over Kouilou and part of the Niari Departments. The three landscapes are in fact integrated into the three forest massifs of the Congo, characterized in the north by dense forests and flooded forests, in the center by savannahs and gallery forests of the Batéké plateaux; and in the south by dense evergreen forest, mesophilic forest and different types of shrubby savannah.

The three implementation landscapes contain 10 protected areas, namely Conkouati-Douli National Park and Marine Area (504,950 ha), Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park (423,870 ha), Lac Télé Community Reserve (438,960 ha), Gorilla Reserve of Lésio-Louna (44,000 ha), Ntokou-Pikounda National Park (427,200 ha), Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Sanctuary (7,000 ha), Ogooué-Leketi National Park (350,000 ha), Odzala-Kokoua National Park and Lossi Gorilla Sanctuary (1,354,600 ha), Léfini Wildlife Reserve (630,000 ha), and Dimonika Biosphere Reserve (136,000 ha). These protected areas contain a rich and varied biological diversity with dominant species such as: *Teichechus senegalensis* (manatee), *Loxodonta africana cyclotis*, *Gorilla gorilla gorilla*, *Pan troglodytes troglodytes*, *Papio sphinx* (mandrill), *Hippopotamus amphibius*, *Kobus defassa*, *Tragelaphus Bocérus*, *ophagraphe*, *Hylochoerus meinertzhageni*, *Cephalophus*, Migratory birds, Elephants, Gorillas, Chimpanzees, Bushpigs, Hylochaurs, Buffaloes, Red bushpigs, Mandrills, Grimm's duiker, Striped jackal, Whip-poor-will, Brazza swallow, etc.

The three landscape areas were selected using the following criteria: (i) the presence of legally identified protected areas with conservation value, (ii) relevant parts of districts close to protected areas that may exert pressure on the area's natural resources, and (iii) districts close to protected areas that suffer from high levels of fragility and exclusion, notably in the Pool and Lékoumou Departments. As project preparation evolves, certain districts or villages along the borders of these three landscapes may be added or removed based on proximity to other beneficiaries of the project; increased exposure to climate risks and fragility; and/or the potential for successfully promoting climate-smart agriculture and natural capital management, including through ecotourism.

The Republic of the Congo is 109th on the Global Climate Risk Index 2021. The country has been facing an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme events caused by climate change, which are having a heavy impact on agriculture and ecosystems. With more than 40% of the population working in this sector, climate shocks are threatening communities, affecting their food security, livelihoods and resilience, particularly in rural areas where poor and vulnerable communities are concentrated.

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

The project will be implemented at the national level by a central Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the Ministry of Planning, Statistics, and Regional Integration (MPSIR). The PIU will be responsible for the E&S safeguards aspects. Given the multisectoral nature of the project, the PIU will liaise with a technical committee which would include focal points from the core ministries participating in project implementation in addition to MPSIR: the



Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries; the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and the Congo Basin; and the Ministry of Forest Economy. At the regional level, Regional Satellite Offices (RSOs) will be established to ensure coordination and close follow-up of the implementation of project activities including the E&S safeguards aspects in the landscape areas.

A preliminary E&S assessment has shown that the implementing ministry has limited E&S capacity and is not very familiar with the ESF. In addition, there is no borrower's framework available within the country. The current approach of the implementing ministry consists of using the framework of the Technical and Financial partners. To support the parent project, MPSIR, designated the E&S specialists of the PIU of the Support to Enterprise Development and Competitiveness Project (P161590), who were familiar with the World Bank E&S requirements, to develop the safeguards instruments. Since then, the Support to Enterprise Development and Competitiveness Project (P161590) has been closed and the PIU has been dissolved. Hence, for this additional financing, MPSIR has opted for a different approach to update the safeguards instruments. MPSIR has identified a consulting firm with knowledgeable E&S specialists to carry out the update of safeguard instruments to reflect the changes brought by the additional financing. Several factors have influenced the choice of MPSIR to hire a consulting firm, in particular that the parent project is not yet effective and the PIU's key personal and associated E&S specialists are yet to be recruited. However, the project will ensure that following recruitment of the E&S specialists within the PIU, they will receive appropriate training on the ESF. A comprehensive training plan will also be implemented during the implementation stage. Relevant stakeholders, including the central PIU, regional satellite offices, the technical committee and relevant ministries, will be trained on specific aspects of environmental and social assessment in accordance with the ESF, in addition to capacity building in stakeholder engagement, grievance mechanisms, managing GBV/SEA/SH risks and health, safety and security risks, environmental management, pollution prevention, biodiversity conservation, etc. The World Bank will provide guidance on preparing and implementing the capacity building and training plan, where needed, to help the client manage E&S risks throughout the lifecycle of the project. Given that the project will also intervene in fragile and economically lagging areas, the training of the PIU staff would also focus on remote monitoring tools such as the Geo-Enabling initiative Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS). The required capacity building and training requirements are identified in the ESMF and reflected in the ESCP.

Further capacity building and training requirements for the PIU and specific mitigation measures to build the Borrower's E&S capacity were identified and reflected in the ESCP. Training shall be required in the following areas: Stakeholder mapping and engagement, Specific aspects of environmental and social assessment in accordance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework particularly ESS1, ESS2, ESS5, ESS7 and ESS10, Emergency preparedness and response, Community health and safety, Implementation and monitoring of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), Project Grievance Mechanism to enable project-affected people to file complaints, Mitigation, prevention and response on the GBV/SEA/SH front, assessment, development and implementation of the GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan, Capacity building in other specific aspects of assessment and implementation of environmental and social risk management practices, as identified through needs assessments of key project actors during project implementation.

The project's institutional arrangements for E&S due diligence and monitoring under the CERC component will be included in the CERC section of the ESMF.



## 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 Crisis Response Window (CRW) additional financing will scale up the parent project (ProClimat) by tackling deteriorating food security situation in the Republic of the Congo throughout the support to the National Food Security Resilience Plan (NFSRP). The implementation of the CRW will support direct food assistance to the most vulnerable and food insecure people in the short run, such as severely affected households, refugees, host communities and asylum seekers, school-aged children, and indigenous people. It will also support smallholder farmers to increase local food production and diversification of agricultural outputs to reduce food import dependency through the provision of seeds and fertilizers as well as advisory services related to climate smart techniques and other agricultural services. It will also strengthen food security and community-based early warning information systems, including monitoring and evaluation, and management. The proposed activities within the additional financing are aligned with components of the parent project (ProClimat) as well as the landscape approach. Under component 3, Promoting Inclusive, Climate-resilient Livelihoods and Agriculture Value Chains, the AF will provide support through provision of agricultural inputs and accompanying technical assistance. And under component 6, Responding to immediate Food and Nutrition Security Needs, the AF will finance the procurement and distribution of inputs at production and post-harvest stage and will also finance technical assistance to improve the capacity of farmers to aggregate, store, process, and add value to food products, and promote sustainable and resilient agriculture techniques to reduce producers' vulnerability to climate change. Such activities may result in negative risks and impacts. Among those risks and impacts are risk of soil and water pollution due to oil spills and pesticide use, disruption of sensitive habitats and ecosystems with risk of migration of certain mammals, disruption of community activities, risk of occupational health incidents/accidents, decrease in biological diversity, intensification of land use or change in land use for livestock feed production, infrastructure wastes (farms, slaughterhouses, laboratory effluents), loss of cultural heritage, risks to community health and safety such as infectious diseases with zoonotic potential. These risks coupled with the known mitigation measures and poor client capacity on implementing WBG ESF, and the risk related to a UN agency implemented the whole component lead to maintaining the classification of the environmental risk of the project as Substantial at appraisal stage for the AF.

#### A.2 Social Risk Rating

Substantial

AF's activities within the AF align with the components of the parent project and will extend into and outside The AF is also aligned with the landscape approach and will support communities' resilience and livelihoods. The Social risk is maintained as Substantial for Additional Financing, based on the nature of its activities. The AF is expected to bring significant social benefits to the targeted communities. It will contribute to the alleviation of food insecurity and the improvement of household income through the improvement of agricultural production infrastructure, increased domestic food production and market development, improved nutritional status and income of vulnerable households, and capacity building for food security management. While the overall social benefits are expected to be positive, the social risks and impacts include possible temporary or permanent physical and/or economic displacement impacts from project activities, particularly under agriculture, forestry, non-timber products, and ecotourism as economic/livelihood activities. The project activities might also create the risk of disturbance of habits and customs and desecration of worship/cultural sites. There may also be risks of exclusion of communities if the



selection criteria for beneficiaries is not inclusive, transparent, and/or fair, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized groups including women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, ex-combatants, refugees, and Internally Displaced People (IDP). Other social risks are weak capacity of the client to assess and manage social risks, labor influx which may arise from non-local workers brought into Project areas by contractors, labor conditions (Working conditions and management of worker relationships, protecting the work force, grievance management); occupational Health and Safety, and adverse impacts on community health.

## B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) 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

The main substantial adverse environmental risks and impacts would be expected to stem from the Rehabilitation and maintenance of the feeder road network (including small bridges and other river crossings); Rehabilitation of post-harvest infrastructure (cold storage, cleaning and drying unit, etc.); Small-scale irrigation; Improvement of access to other public infrastructure (access to electricity and water for agro-processing), Improvement of irrigation and drainage systems; Construction and upgrading of conservation infrastructure. Potential environmental risks and impacts of these activities include; Risk of soil and water pollution due to oil spills and pesticide use; Risk of lung diseases; Disruption of community activities; Risk of construction accidents; Reduction of vegetation area; Waste generation; Loss of cultural heritage; Degradation and risk of loss of vegetation cover; Loss of ecosystem services; Disruption of sensitive habitats and ecosystems with risk of migration of certain mammals; Decrease in biological diversity. Additionally, use of NBS such as wetlands for flood control etc. will be screened carefully for potential biodiversity impact as the country is rich in biodiversity. Conservation activities under component 2 might take place in several protected areas. Planning activities including screening for biodiversity impacts should be done very carefully.

Social risks and impacts that have been identified during the preparation of the project are: i) weak capacity of the client to assess and manage social risks; ii) risk of exclusion of communities if the selection criteria of beneficiaries is not inclusive, transparent and/or fair; labor influx which may arise from non-local workers brought into Project areas by contractors; iii) Labor conditions (Working conditions and management of worker relationships, protecting the work force, grievance management, occupational Health and Safety, adverse impacts on community health, increased risks of gender-based violence (GBV), including intimate partners violence (IPV), iv) sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SH), v) risk of work accident; workers health and safety risks including risks to increase HIV/AIDS transmission and its spread among workers and in the community; vi) possible temporary or permanent physical and economic displacement impacts from project activities, and restrictions in access to natural resources in legally designated parks and protected areas, impacts on livelihoods through the infrastructures construction and rehabilitation activities; vii) lack of inclusion of vulnerable groups including Indigenous Peoples; viii) risk of disturbance of habits and customs and desecration of worship/cultural sites, potential risk on cultural heritage and mainly chance finds; ix) inadequate stakeholders' consultations/engagements, nonfunctional grievances and complaints mechanism and committees, x) lack of accessible and comprehensive dissemination of information to stakeholders, and inadequate stakeholder engagement particularly in conflict prone areas.



To mitigate potential risks and impacts, the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) prepared as part of the parent project will be updated, consulted upon, adopted, and disclosed in accordance with the ESSs and the requirements of the World Bank Group ESF and Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSs). The ESMF sets out the principles, rules, guidelines and procedures to assess the environmental and social risks and impacts. It contains measures and plans to reduce, mitigate and/or offset adverse risks and impacts, provisions for estimating and budgeting the costs of such measures, and information on the agency or agencies responsible for addressing project risks and impacts, including on its capacity to manage environmental and social risks and impacts. It includes adequate information on the area in which subprojects are expected to be sited, including any potential environmental and social vulnerabilities of the area, and on the potential impacts that may occur and the mitigation measures that might be expected to be used. The ESMF covers all items under component 1, 3, and 6 in the areas of project influence, and any associated facilities that may be determined during project implementation. The updated ESMF will include updated GBV risk assessment and detailed screening of project activities for biodiversity impacts and ToR for Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP). The updated Labor Management Procedure (LMP) will also be annexed to the ESMF. An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan has been prepared.

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared as part of the parent project will be updated, consulted upon, adopted and disclosed prior to appraisal. The SEP was developed to consult and include stakeholders, particularly vulnerable and marginalized communities, in project design and implementation. The update will also include stakeholder mapping, stakeholder information disclosure, and consultation guidelines and principles for ensuring meaningful participation of all stakeholders, with differentiated strategies to reach the most vulnerable. Details of the Project’s grievance mechanism (including SEA/SH grievances) ensure the concerns and complaints of project affected persons (including GBV/SEA/SH related complaints) and stakeholders are addressed in a timely manner.

Likewise, the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), the Process Framework (PF); and the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) prepared as part of the parent project will also be updated, consulted upon, adopted and disclosed prior to appraisal. ESIA/Site-specific, ESMP, IPP, and RAPs/LRP (Livelihood Restoration Plan) for sub-projects will be prepared as and when required during project implementation.

**Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:**

**ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

This standard is assessed as currently relevant. Stakeholder engagement and Information disclosure is a critical tool for project success, and for considering and managing cultural practices and complexities that are typically non-participatory during the identification of the sub-projects.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared as part of the parent project will be updated, consulted upon, adopted, and disclosed prior to appraisal. The Project Implementation Unit will implement an inclusive and accessible SEP proportional to the nature and scale of the project and associated risks and impacts, to ensure that stakeholders are properly identified and to solicit their input and feedback throughout the project cycle. The Project will require the involvement of various major or national and local stakeholders. Accordingly, the SEP identified the following key stakeholders: the main line ministries such as MPSIR, MAEP, MEF, Ministry of Environment, and other national and regional agencies, as well as Project beneficiaries including women, indigenous peoples, youth, ex-combatants, refugees, IDPs, and persons with disabilities. Other stakeholders will include relevant NGOs and donor agencies, and other ministries and local authorities (such as the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and the Promotion of Indigenous





Peoples, Ministry of Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and Solidarity, High Commission for the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants, Ministry of territorial development, mayors, traditional leaders, etc.).

The SEP will also describe a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) (including a channel to receive SH/SEA complaints following a survivor-centric approach), to receive Project-related concerns and grievances, with socio-culturally appropriate and accessible mechanisms for rural communities.

The SEP outlines a process for meaningful consultation, frequency of engagement including time and venue, how feedback will be solicited, recorded, and monitored, and the grievance process, among other requirements set out in this Standard. During project implementation, the Borrower will engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders throughout the project life cycle considering different access and communication needs of stakeholders. Special attention will be given to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, particularly IPs. They will be consulted through an inclusion mechanism that will ensure their access to information and share their views on the project. If necessary, the FPIC will be implemented.

### **ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions**

The Project workforce will include direct workers (directly employed by the Project unit), contracted workers (recruited by third parties such as contractors or consultants), Community workers and primary supply workers (workers engaged for essential construction materials to be purchased). All civil servants working under this project will remain subject to the terms and conditions of the national labor code, public sector employment terms and LMP. Under Subcomponent 2.3, Labor-Intensive Public Works to enhance food security and resilient agriculture activities will be implemented through a UN agency (such as WFP, UNHCR and FAO). Hence, a significant labor influx is expected.

Labor in Congo is regulated and protected under the Law n°1975-45 of 15 March 1975 the Labor Code Amended by law n°1996-06 of 6 March 1996.

The policies and regulations stated in this law reflect the principles of ESS2 on issues such as the responsibility of the employer to ensure that a safe system of work is available for all work activities, fair treatment, non-discrimination and equal opportunities to workers, supporting the rights and benefits of the workers, recognizing workers' rights to establish or join associations of workers, prohibitions on sexual harassment/forced labor/child labor (under 16), etc.

As the Project Unit is a government entity governed by the law on public service employment, trade union and official grievance redress mechanisms already exist.

With contracted workers, the majority (an estimated 50-100 workers during the peak period) would be mobilized by the contractors, a number of whom may come from other localities (especially from the two major cities, Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire). Potential risks related to labor and working conditions, such as labor influx, child labor, forced labor, work-related discrimination, OHS risks, risks of contamination in case of epidemic of COVID-19, and access to safe drinking water, power supply, and limited availability of sanitation facilities, were assessed by the safeguards specialists of the Project Implementation Unit prior the beginning of works, and will be addressed through the implementation of labor management procedures (LMP). The potential key OHS risks relate to moving equipment,





noise, vibration, welding, chemical hazards, working environment temperatures, working at height, and safety and hygiene (where and if established).

Therefore, the LMP prepared for the parent project as part of the ESMF will be updated, consulted upon and disclosed prior to appraisal. The LMP, which provides mitigation measures to address labour and OHS risks, will be incorporated into procurement documents.

The LMP includes a well-functioning and easily accessible grievance mechanism for project contracted workers. The Project will include in the bidding documents requirements for (i) a worker’s Grievance Mechanism (GM); and (ii) sensitization related to the availability of a worker’s Grievance Mechanism (GM) and the code of conduct to prevent and address potential harassment, child labor, gender or GBV/SEA issues, intimidation and/or exploitation during the implementation of the activities financed under this project.

As part of each contractor’s C-ESMP, an OHSMP will also be prepared by the companies hired and will include: (i) an occupational health and safety, communication, and training program; (ii) provision of organization charts; (iii) safety regulations and responsibilities, accident and incident response and reporting, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), fire prevention measures, fall protection, emergency preparedness; and (iv) first aid and emergency response and transfer during construction. Furthermore, the construction supervisors will be responsible for support services to ensure that all subcontractors adhere to the project OHSMP and report incidents and accidents, as well as non-compliances, in a timely manner. The Borrower will require contractors to develop, implement and maintain the OHSMP to ensure that all applicable health and safety legislation and requirements set out in the ESS2 and relevant sub-sections of the World Bank Group General EHS Guidelines are met during project implementation. The labor-management procedures include the assessment of OHS risks and impacts related to project activities as they are defined through preparation and the proposed measures to manage those risks.

Due to the global spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19), project personnel and workers may be exposed to and infected by Covid-19, which in some cases can have symptoms ranging from a mild disease like a common cold to more severe (even fatal) symptoms and potentially lethal outcomes. There is also an ongoing epidemic of shigellosis in the Republic of the Congo, project personnel and workers may be exposed and in some cases symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal pain, stomach cramps and fever. To prevent Covid-19 exposure and infection as well as shigellosis to the project personnel and workers, and transmission to the local community, the following measures will be included in the ESMF: (1) include Covid-19 and shigellosis prevention and control measures into the civil works and consulting packages; (2) provide adequate hygiene and personal protection equipment to personnel and workers; physical distancing to minimize the chance of exposure to staff, workers and visitors; adhere to standard precautions procedures issued by the government; provide training on Covid-19 and shigellosis prevention to personnel and workers; close monitoring of implementation measures by the PIU, construction supervision consultant, and the contractor; (3) develop rapid response procedures to identify nearest medical services for referral; and (4) arrange for regular testing of employees and encourage them to take Covid-19 vaccine .

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

The project is expected to use resources and materials for all proposed construction works. Risks and impacts have been identified regarding the release of pollutants, waste generation, management of disposal materials and



hazardous waste, impacts on adjacent communities and resource use efficiency. The project will have to ensure the management of these different resources to avoid increasing the pressure on them. Provisions in this sense were already set out in the ESMF and will also be updated in any subsequent environmental instrument to be prepared during project implementation.

Regarding water, as the project will finance activities to reduce flood risks and to a lesser extent irrigation schemes for arable land, emphasis will need to be placed on equitable access to beneficiaries and also on the maintenance of normal river services. The project will thus ensure that beneficiaries are made aware of the importance of the water resource and the need for its rational management.

The project might involve the use of pesticides for agricultural activities. A pest management plan that will set foundation of an Integrated Pest Management best practices, risks, impacts, and mitigation measures related to pesticide use including but not limited to impact on soil, water resources, community health, and safety, and management of hazardous materials and waste (such as empty pest containers).

The project is expected to support the development of livestock and aquaculture sub-sectors. Risks and impacts have been identified regarding land use and land contamination. The project will have to ensure sustainable land use to avoid increasing the pressure on them. Provisions in this sense will be set out in the ESMF and will also be updated in any subsequent environmental instrument to be prepared during project implementation.

Given the project investment types and scale, it is not expected that the project will produce significant amounts of exhaust gases and GHG emissions. Nevertheless, impacts and mitigation measures related to GHG emissions will be addressed in the different ESIA/ESMP to be prepared for sub-projects. To the extent technically and financially feasible the project will adopt measures, specified in the WBG ESHG and other Good International Industry Practice (GIIP), for efficient use of raw materials and for optimizing energy use and integrate them into the project technical design.

#### **ESS4 Community Health and Safety**

Potential impacts on community health and safety through civil works, labor influx, pollution, and resource efficiency are described, and mitigation measures are provided in the updated ESMF. The security risk for the project workers and the communities has been assessed within the framework of the ESMF. The three project implementation landscapes, as well as the entire country, present a calm level of security, with the only exception the Pool area, which experienced an internal conflict between the Republic of Congo and the Ninja militia from 1998 to 2005, and which resurfaced from 4 April 2016 to 23 December 2017. Calm has reigned there since then, but there have been occasional minor incidents due to the need for former combatants to reintegrate into society.

Various activities (civil works), including face-to-face training and mass awareness communication, which will be undertaken by the PIU, may expose communities (hosts, Indigenous people, workers and others) to COVID or shigellosis, air pollution and OHS safety risks during construction and operation in the vicinity of physical sites in the project intervention areas. While the civil works to be financed are limited in scale and scope, the project will develop and insert in the tender documents a requirement to follow the implementation of a Health, Safety and



Environmental (HSE) Plan in line with World Bank Group Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines for construction activities.

SEA/SH risks are estimated to be substantial and are mostly related to potential sexual harassment in the workplace or in association with the works to be implemented under Components 2 and 3 of the Project. Accordingly, a SEA/SH risk assessment was conducted as part of the ESMF. The findings of this assessment identified mitigation measures which include hiring a SEA/SH specialist three months after project effectiveness, and the development of an SEA/SH action plan, which will be completed six months after effectiveness and which will detail the actions needed to address SEA/H risks.

The GRM will include a channel for SH/SEA complaints (following a survivor-centric approach). This information will be further assessed during project implementation.

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

This standard is relevant given possible temporary or permanent physical and economic displacement impacts from project activities, particularly under components 2, and 3 . Therefore, the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) prepared as part of the parent project will be updated, consulted upon and disclosed prior to appraisal. The RPF provides procedures and guidance to appropriately identify, address and mitigate adverse socioeconomic impacts that may occur due to the implementation of activities requiring displacement. When technical designs and feasibility studies provide sufficient details and site-specific information on the investments for Components 2, and 3, during implementation, Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) and Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRP) will be prepared by the Client based on the RPF . The Project-level GRM, developed as part of the SEP, will be accessible to communities and individuals to address complaints related to resettlement activities. Furthermore, under sub-component 2.2, the project intends to improve natural capital management in areas that are yet to be determined. The activities that will be carried out in the protected areas could lead to restrictions on access to natural resources in legally designated parks and protected areas. The project has accordingly developed a Process Framework to ensure that people’s forest and fishery-dependent access to livelihoods in protected areas are not adversely impacted by the project. The Process Framework outlines processes by which members of potentially affected communities participate in determining the necessary measures to address the risks and impacts of restricted access to and use of natural resources or other common goods in conservation areas and in other areas governed by resource management plans.

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

Activities under Components 2 and 3 in general will have a physical footprint on ecosystems, but in particular, activities under sub-component 2.2 Improving Natural Capital Management are likely to have a significant impact on biodiversity. However, there will be a screening for biodiversity impacts an appropriate mitigation hierarchy will be applied and appropriate consultations conducted using the existing regional and local framework. Furthermore, given that the three landscapes selected for project implementation contain 10 protected areas, it is expected that each intervention in a protected area will be accompanied by the participatory development or updating of the investment plan for that protected area. The updated ESMF will establish a list of exclusion criteria to ensure those project



activities are not carried out in an area meeting these exclusion criteria. It will also define guidelines for the development of Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs), where appropriate.

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

The AF will operate in the same areas as the parent project including departments where Indigenous Peoples (IP) are present (Sangha, Likouala, Plateaux, Lekoumou). The IPPF prepared for the parent project will be updated, consulted upon, and disclosed prior to appraisal. Once project-specific sites and activities are determined, and where indigenous people and underserved traditional local communities are affected, the Borrower will prepare an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) acceptable to the Bank that sets out measures through which the project will ensure that: (i) IPs affected by the project receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits; and (ii) if potential adverse effects on Indigenous People (Ips) are identified, those adverse effects are avoided, minimized, mitigated or compensated.

Where needed, free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of IPs will be applied in accordance with the requirements of ESS7 as well as national legislation (forestry code, law on the promotion and protection of indigenous populations). The Indigenous Peoples Plan will outline the process for obtaining FPIC during project preparation. The project will require the FPIC in case of the loss, alienation, or exploitation of their lands and access to natural and cultural resources.

The updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will strengthen outreach programs to ensure that indigenous communities, especially those living in remote areas, are aware of the availability of food voucher and food distribution and malnutrition managing activities of the project in their locations. Community mobilization and awareness-raising activities on key positive practices, as well as job opportunities offered to women and youth and livelihood opportunities, will be included. The Grievance redress mechanism that will be developed under this project will also be tailored to be culturally appropriate and accessible to Indigenous peoples by taking into account cultural factors and communications means and access barriers. The potential social impacts will be adequately managed and mitigated through the development, implementation, and monitoring of appropriate measures.

### **ESS8 Cultural Heritage**

This Standard is relevant since the construction of infrastructure may involve soil excavation or damage buildings with cultural or historic value. In addition, the creation of new agricultural plots could possibly affect cultural sites. The updated ESMF will strengthen provisions for site-specific screening and assessment of any known sites of cultural or historic importance which may be impacted locally, as well as identification of any sites of cultural/social importance for local communities. The updated ESMF will also strengthen actions towards : (i) a generic chance to find Procedures for all construction or works contracts, requiring civil contractors to take proper protective measures in case cultural heritage sites are discovered, including stopping construction activities if cultural property sites are encountered during construction.

### **ESS9 Financial Intermediaries**



Not applicable.

**C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways** Yes

**OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas** No

**B.3 Reliance on Borrower’s policy, legal and institutional framework, relevant to the Project risks and impacts**

**Is this project being prepared for use of Borrower Framework?** No

**Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:**

Although the Republic of Congo has an E&S Framework, there are gaps between the environmental and social assessment regulations and practice, especially in description of the environment, level of impact analysis and mitigation measures, and public consultation and disclosure of information. There is no experience among the different Project implementing agencies in implementing and applying the ESF and its associated environmental and social standards. The project therefore will apply the World Bank Group ESF and will not use the Borrower’s E&S Framework within this project.

Public Disclosure

**IV. CONTACT POINTS**

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**Implementing Agency(ies)**

**V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**



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**VI. APPROVAL**

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