

**COMBINED PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENTS / INTEGRATED
SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET (PID/ISDS)
CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: PIDISDSC18378

Date Prepared/Updated: 09-Jun-2016

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	India	Project ID:	P157836
		Parent Project ID (if any):	
Project Name:	Meghalaya Community-led Landscapes Management Project (P157836)		
Region:	SOUTH ASIA		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	28-Nov-2016	Estimated Board Date:	23-Feb-2017
Practice Area (Lead):	Environment & Natural Resources	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	Forestry (50%), General water, sanitation and flood protection sector (20%), General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (15%), Public administration-Agriculture, fishing and forestry (15%)		
Theme(s):	Water resource management (20%), Environmental policies and institutions (20%), Other environment and natural resources management (40%), Pollution management and environmental health (20%)		
Borrower(s):	Department of Economic Affairs		
Implementing Agency:	Government of Meghalaya		
Financing (in USD Million)			
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			140.00
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			60.00
Total Project Cost			200.00
Environmental Category:	B - Partial Assessment		
Concept Review Decision:	Track II - The review did authorize the preparation to continue		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

Other Decision (as needed):	
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B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. India is one of the few fast growing economies in the world with a positive trend in recorded forest cover. The country's economy has expanded at an average annual rate of 7.6 percent and is likely to sustain a growth rate exceeding 7 percent over the next 2-4 years. Notwithstanding the pace of economic development, India's forest cover continues to show an upward trend since 2011. Although some of this increase is associated with increase in area of plantations, it is nevertheless a significant achievement for a country with a population of over 1.2 billion.

2. However, the Northeastern region of the country, ecologically significant for its biodiversity, mineral and water resources is experiencing a decline in forest cover. The states in this region still account for almost a quarter of the country's forests, but with rich mineral deposits and hydropower potential, they are poised for rapid growth which if unmanaged, could be perilous to this fragile ecosystem. Though rich in biodiversity nearly 33 percent of this region is degraded, mainly due to jhum (shifting cultivation) .

3. Meghalaya is one of the fast growing states in the Northeast, yet economic opportunities continue to be limited for its rural inhabitants. This rapid growth (9.7 percent in 2013-14) is led by the industrial and service sectors growing to nearly 54 percent of the GSDP. However, the state's HDI has seen a decline since 1980 and 11.8 percent of the population is below the poverty line, including 12 percent scheduled tribes. Eighty percent of the state's population is rural and nearly two thirds of its population continues to depend on agriculture and the primary sector for their livelihoods.

4. The state's economy and communities, challenged with seasonal scarcity of water and high soil erosion, are also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. While forest cover is high (76% of area), unmanaged coal mining, limestone quarrying and unplanned logging are contributing to degradation of the catchments and consequently the water bodies. Though there is abundant rainfall, insufficient storage capacity and excessive soil runoff in the upper catchments lead to seasonal water shortage and flash floods in some parts of the State. Current analysis for the period ending in 2050 indicates that forest vulnerability shows little change for Meghalaya, while water and agricultural vulnerability increase in parts of the state

5. Given strong linkages between economic wellbeing of communities and the quality and climate resilience of natural assets and services, reversing degradation of the natural resource base is important for Meghalaya's aspirations to eradicate poverty and grow in an inclusive and sustainable manner that builds on and respects local culture and traditions.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

6. Rural communities in the state depend heavily on forests and community lands for livelihoods, food and medicine. A significant proportion of the rural population carries out jhum (shifting cultivation) which is a direct cause of forest loss and degradation in the short term. However, the Khasi, Garo and Jaintia tribes who call this region home have had a long history of sophisticated management of these lands and a spiritual connection with the land and its diversity, displayed in

their traditions and customs. This legacy of community management is recognized in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution which vests the rights over forests, jhum and water resources with Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in the state.

7. The ADCs in Meghalaya are the Constitutionally mandated middle layer of governance created to give greater autonomy to tribal societies and serve as a link between the formal state government structures and traditional tribal institutions. As per the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, the ADCs have legislative, executive and judiciary functions which include, among others, the power to make laws with respect to forests, other than reserved forests; to set aside and allocate land for jhum (shifting cultivation) and, to collect taxes and user fees for water resources within their district. The ADCs are empowered to oversee nearly 90% of the state's forest land – both community and private, while the state Forest Department manages the remaining 10%.

8. However, there has been little investment in forest landscapes under ADC management over the years. The overlay of state government policies with the roles of ADCs and traditional village headmen points to some degree of overlap in roles at the district level and below, and the gradual weakening of ADCs as agents of development. With limited funding and lack of technical resources the ADCs are constrained to invest in planning and management of forest landscapes to realize their potential. On the other hand, ADCs have been allocating lands for mining, agriculture and others purposes to private owners raising concerns of transparency and good governance. Absent appropriate incentives and capacity for long term management, mining and other non-forest uses, which are commonly seen as the options for short term returns, threaten the vital ecosystem services and natural assets that are essential for inclusive growth and better livelihoods over the long term.

9. Restoration and management of the resource base can be a driver for sustainable rural development. Meghalaya still has high (76 percent) forest cover, 90 percent of which is under community or private management. Communities can manage these landscapes for multiple short, medium and long term benefits as avenues for alternative livelihood and income streams, without depleting the resource base. With respect to water and soil conservation, the state government is in the process of implementing a water policy which would address issues relating to protection, preservation and conservation of the water bodies. For these programs to succeed, however, it is critical to invest in the sustainable management of landscapes, which requires that communities and ADCs as representatives of communities are strengthened and empowered to work in collaboration with state government institutions.

10. The Government of Meghalaya's multi-pronged flagship – Integrated Basin Development & Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) is making efforts in this direction. The program focuses on poverty alleviation, employment generation and livelihood promotion. It has nine focal areas in agriculture, water and natural resource management to bring new knowledge and skills which empower communities to make the best use of the natural resources through the value chain. Key thrust areas of the IBDLP related to water and land management are creation of Small Multipurpose Reservoirs (SMRs) and Integrated Natural Resource Management.

11. The proposed project supports the overarching objectives of the IBDLP. It aims to strengthen community leadership in natural resource management by investing in institutional capacity and implementation of landscape level management plans. Community institutions at the village and

district levels will be offered technical assistance, skill-development and financial resources to enable them to take informed decisions. Landscape level management plans will be implemented and will provide links to value chains where possible through the Integrated Basin Development and Livelihoods Program (IBDLP) and the Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project (LAMP) activities. The proposed project will be based on the principles of community leadership in decision-making, transparent information flows, respect for local culture and traditions, enhancing gender equity and sustainable management of resources.

Relationship to CAS/CPS/CPF

12. The proposed operation is consistent with the World Bank India Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for 2013-17 to support poverty reduction and shared prosperity in India. The overarching objective of the CPS aims to support India's development agenda of faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth as outlined in the government's 12th Five Year Plan.

13. The proposed project is aligned with two key pillars of CPS - transformation and inclusion. In line with the pillar for Transformation, the project will support community-led interventions to restore and sustainably manage forests, water resources and biodiversity on which 80 percent of the population depends (Outcome 2.5). Further the proposed project will have positive impact in terms improving availability and reliability of water sources for drinking and economic purposes through various interventions in soil and water conservation. (Outcome 2.2).

14. The project's approach also corresponds to the Inclusion pillar of CPS. It is in line with the strategy adopted under the CPS to enhance the involvement of the World Bank in low income states of India which are committed to reforms. Meghalaya is in the North-East, a financially excluded region in the country with lower per capita income than the national average, low HDI and a large population of scheduled tribes.

Achievement of SDGs

15. The proposed project will directly contribute to the achievement of four out of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- (i) Goal 6 - To improve water regime, its availability and sustainable management of water related ecosystem;
- (ii) Goal 10 - Towards reducing inequality.
- (iii) Goal 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems
- (iv) Goal 17 - Global collaboration and partnership development for common goal.

16. The proposed project is also aligned with the WBG Forests Action Plan and its focus area of Sustainable Forestry. In particular, it will contribute to the goals of the Action Plan by optimizing the potential of natural forests to provide monetary and non-monetary benefits, participatory management and rehabilitation of degraded lands.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s) (From PCN)

The project development objective is to strengthen community-led natural resources management in selected landscapes in the state of Meghalaya.

Key Results (From PCN)

Direct project beneficiaries (#) of which female (%) CSI

Area in selected landscapes managed by communities according to defined criteria (ha)
 Land area brought under a catchment system as a result of the project (ha) (CSI)
 People in targeted forest and adjacent communities with increased monetary or non-monetary benefits from forests, disaggregated by gender (#) (CSI)
 Beneficiaries that feel project investments reflected their needs (%) disaggregated by gender (CSI)

D. Concept Description

17. The project will finance landscape management planning and implementation by community institutions covering the entire state of Meghalaya. Capacity building and landscape level planning will be carried out state-wide, while implementation of these plans will be in prioritized landscapes and rolled out in a phased manner. During implementation, activities under the plans will be linked to ongoing state supported livelihood programs under the IBDLP and LAMP, which provide support to entrepreneurs for value addition and marketing of agricultural and forest products. The Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA), constituted as the foundational institution for the overall implementation of IBDLP and LAMP is the proposed implementing agency for the proposed project and will facilitate the planning with technical inputs and funding.

18. The community will be engaged at the very early stage of project planning, including during resource mapping, social data collection, project design and monitoring. The project will support inclusion and capacity building of women for their effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership in collective decision-making at village level. The project will foster collaboration between ADCs, traditional village leaders, women and youth in program planning and implementation and, build on MBDA's experience on community led design of investments. Component 1: Strengthening Knowledge and Capacity for Improved Natural Resource Management (\$6 million.)

19. Sub-Component 1A: Knowledge and Learning (\$4 million): This component includes knowledge and learning activities at different levels- from community to the state PIU, and will support thematic studies that strengthens the information base for better natural resource management. Key activities under this component would be: (i) community-led resource mapping; (ii) review existing institutions and policies in the state to identify opportunities for better management of forest lands (iii) supporting the IBDLP as a Center of Excellence. (iv) Strengthen a coordinated approach across line departments and MBDA.

20. Sub-Component 1B: Strengthening community institutions for natural resource management (\$2 million). This component will finance (i) strengthening the role of traditional and local institutions in management of natural resource systems; (ii) capacity building of ADCs; (iii) leadership development (through training and mentoring) of youth and women. Component 2: Preparation and implementation of Community Landscape Plans (\$50million)

21. Sub-Component 2A: Community landscape planning (\$6 million). This sub-component finances preparation of community-led landscape plans with support from State and District level institutions (MBDA and ADCs). Community led plans will be based on natural units where management efforts by a single community or multiple communities and jurisdictions. During development of these plans communities will identify the leading causes of degradation of natural resources in their area and agree on actions to address those, and an agreed menu of options

including options for the provision of ecosystem services, protection of biodiversity and cultural values within the landscape. The community would seek to solve shared problems and capitalize on new opportunities and agree on trade-offs needed. These plans will be developed by community with the support of MBDA's group of skilled professionals. Certification of these plans would be at the district level through the District Basin Development Units (DBDU) whereas final technical and financial approval would be provided by MBDA at the state level.

22. Sub-Component 2B: Community-led Implementation and Management of prioritized Landscapes (\$30 million). This sub-component will finance investments within each landscape plan in a phased manner. Communities will first implement agreed first phase activities in their plan and graduate to the next phase of financing if implementation meets agreed criteria. This approach is meant to incentivize access to funds by the communities. Criteria for assessing successful implementation will be agreed with communities during preparation and communities will carry out assessment of plan implementation for their peers. Communities will receive technical assistance during implementation from MBDA and line department staff in addition to non-governmental organizations. Landscape plans will include (i) integration of traditional knowledge and approaches to land management and, (ii) activities selection with a view to linking them to value chains created under the LAMP project.

23. Sub-component 2C Innovative Investment Grants to enhance value of sustainable Water and Forest Resource Management (14 million). This component will finance innovative ideas submitted by universities, and non-profit organizations or associations in the state. Some of the proposals may be in partnership with line departments in water resources and forests. The ideas or interventions would be aligned with and support the overall objective of the project and serve to pilot or demonstrate innovations in natural resource management with potential for scaling up. The MBDA will institute a competitive grant award process with clarity on screening, approval and funding procedure.

Component 3. Project Implementation and management (\$4million)

24. This component will strengthen the key institution responsible for project implementation (MBDA) units at the state, district and village level and enhance their technical capacity to facilitate at the community level and manage the project. Through this component, the project would finance (i) establishment of project implementation unit (PIU) within MBDA and associated technical staff and support consultants (ii) the incremental cost associated with use of existing government agencies (iii) communication and consultation program to ensure wide awareness about the project objectives and foster stakeholder engagement. (iv) Establishment of expert groups (consulting services) to provide technical support to PIU (v) Provision of training to PIU staff, government staff and technical experts (vi) technical fiduciary and safeguards oversight and supervision of project activities in the field; and (vii) monitoring and evaluation of the project at community and state level, including participatory monitoring and learning.

II. SAFEGUARDS

A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project is located in the State of Meghalaya, covering all the districts in the State. The state is divided into three divisions, namely, Jaintia Hills (with two districts), Khasi Hills (with four districts) and Garo Hills (with five districts). The state has a total forest area (under various classes) of 9,496

sq km, which is about 42.34% of the total geographical area of the state. There are two national parks and three wildlife sanctuaries, 22 community reserves, one biosphere reserve and two elephant reserves to protect and conserve biodiversity of the state. The five protected areas cumulatively covered about 42.3 thousand hectare area. In Meghalaya, sacred groves represent a long tradition of environmental conservation based on indigenous knowledge by the tribal communities. They are among the few least disturbed forest patches which are serving as the natural treasure house of biodiversity and a refuge for a large number of endemic, endangered and rare taxa.). The forests in the southern slope of the state receives heavy rainfall (6,000-10,000 mm). The Cherrapunjee/ Mawsynram Plateau which receives highest rainfall in the world is located in the same slope. The state of Meghalaya consists of two basins, left bank of Brahmaputra (11185 sq. km.) and Brahmaputra tributaries (11208 sq. km.). Important river systems like Simsang, Ganol, Bugi, Dareng and the Rongdik are originating within the the state. Rich floral and faunal diversity exist in the catchments of these rivers. The proposed project will work with communities broadly in the area of forest and water and will help in identify activities like; assisted natural regeneration of degraded lands, plantations, soil and water conservation on farm lands restoration of springs and water bodies, nature based tourism, agro forestry and homestead forestry etc. The project in a way will enhance skill and technical capacity of communities along with strengthening support to social system. Communities in Meghalaya depend heavily on forests and community lands for livelihoods, food and medicine. A significant proportion of the population depends on jhum or shifting cultivation which is a direct cause of forest loss and degradation in the short term. The Khasi, Garo and Jaintia tribes who call this region home have a long history of sophisticated management of natural ecosystems and a spiritual connection with the land and its diversity manifest in tribal traditions and customs. This legacy of community management of natural resources is recognized in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution which vests the rights over forests, Jhum and water resources with the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) as representatives of tribal communities.

B. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The preparation and implementation of the proposed project would be led by the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority in close coordination with other state departments such as Soil and Water Conservation, Tourism Department, etc. for implementing investments at the district level, and various technical agencies for research and allied support. This is the first World Bank financed project at this scale to be implemented by the MBDA. MBDA is already implementing statewide Integrated Basin and Livelihood Development Programme (IBDLP) and the IFAD supported Meghalaya Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project (LAMP) for value chain creation and access to markets with support from technical partners and is familiar with processed for management, monitoring, mobilization and reporting mechanisms.

The Bank will provide for substantial safeguards-related capacity-building, including training workshops and the production of guidance reports and toolkits. A high priority will be safeguards-related training for MDBA PIU, district level MBDA officials and associate representatives from state departments as they would be responsible for technical review and approval of community-led landscape plans, and would require to screen the proposed activities against environment and social risks. Close monitoring of triggered safeguard policies, laws during implementation and adequate staffing at the PIU level with both social and environmental staff will be emphasized.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Gaurav D. Joshi (GEN06)

Mridula Singh (GSU06)

D. POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>The project activities are expected enhance natural resource management in targeted landscapes, and are expected to be beneficial and sustainable from an environmental and social perspective.</p> <p>Although the project would be implemented within environmentally and socially sensitive areas, none of the planned project investments or activities are expected to generate significant adverse environmental impacts.</p> <p>OP 4.01 is triggered; though the type and scale of the proposed interventions seems to be manageable, the expected impacts and the measures to mitigate them are known; some environmentally sensitive hot spots although raise the level of risk of the project. The state is endowed with 70 percent forest cover and abundant rainfall, however these forest landscapes face numerous threats and challenges, including complex governance, land use conflicts; mining, jhum cultivation and other non-forest land uses; and illegal logging and fuel-wood harvesting. The project activities being largely focused on forests and water resources management, enhancing sustainability of land based livelihoods; availability of water; and improving the state of forests, will thereby reduce ongoing pressures of forest degradation.</p> <p>In compliance with OP 4.01, MBDA would need to prepare an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for managing and mitigating the environmental and social risk related to the project activities, and the preparation of Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) for specific interventions. The ESMF will include standard mitigation methods and procedures, along with appropriate institutional arrangements for screening and reviewing sub-projects and monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures to prevent adverse impacts.</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	<p>The project will affect natural habitats, forests and associated ecosystems in a positive manner. The project is designed to reduce ongoing patterns of degradation of natural habitats, and biodiversity by</p>

		implementing measures to avoid promoting any further degradation. The ESMF will include the necessary provisions to screen activities and their impacts on natural habitats, activities that involve the significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats will not be supported.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	Yes	The project is intended to bring about positive changes in the management, and sustainable utilization of forests. The positive impacts associated with the program are the conservation and restoration of forest resources, the establishment of new plantations, and improved management and in some cases rejuvenation of forest areas and their function, and increased benefit sharing from these resources.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	This policy is not applicable as the project will not finance activities which will involve the procurement and use of pesticides.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	This policy is triggered as the project landscapes may have various physical cultural resources located within them; including sacred forest groves which have a significant religious and cultural association for the protecting community. The groves are considered as one of the most species-rich areas for plants, birds and mammals. The ESMF will provide criteria and procedures to ensure the appropriate treatment of physical cultural resources; this includes chance finds procedures for small-scale infrastructure.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	The policy is triggered, accordingly a Tribal Development Framework will be prepared to address impact. It will also include an action plan to ensure that equal opportunities are provided to access benefits.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	TBD	Land may be required for small infrastructure, which will be government or community land. Efforts will be made to avoid private land acquisition and necessary processes to mitigate adverse impacts. During project preparation, applicability of this policy would be further ascertained.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	.

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

1. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS

26-Oct-2016

2. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS.

The following safeguard assessment Studies will be launched in July 2016.

These include , (i) environmental and social assessment , (ii) institutional assessment from social perspective

III. Contact point

World Bank

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

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IV. For more information contact:

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V. Approval

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Approved By		
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Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Kseniya Lvovsky (PMGR)	Date: 09-Jun-2016
Country Director:	Name: Onno Ruhl (CD)	Date: 10-Jun-2016

1 Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.