

Protecting tigers, people and their vital habitats in the Sundarban Delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II

Environmental and Social Management Plan

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)



May 2022

Version Control

Project title	Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II
Document title	Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)
Version	0.1
Status	Final
Date	24 May 2022
Lead author	Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
ICP	Informed Consultation and Participation
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IPs	Indigenous People's
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JFM/JFMC	Joint Forest Management/ Joint Forest Management Committee
LRRM	Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SBR	Sundarban Biosphere Reserve
STR	Sundarban Tiger Reserve
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
TR	Tiger Reserve
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
WTI	Wildlife Trust of India
WTB	Wild Team Bangladesh

1 Introduction

This safeguard tool describes the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for the project titled “Protecting Tigers, People and their Vital Habitats in the Sundarban Delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase 2 Project”, outlining the environmental and social management commitments that Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and its partners, viz. Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh, and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh will implement to manage potential negative impacts and enhance positive impacts of the project.

The ESMP is the umbrella safeguard plan, and introduces the other safeguard tools to be applied in this project, as per Figure 1. These other tools include a Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF), including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guidelines, which is place to ensure that communities, including vulnerable groups, meaningfully participate in the development and implementation of project activities (**Annex 1**). In addition, the project has a Grievance Redress Mechanism and register (**Annex 2** and **Annex 3**), and a stakeholder engagement plan for broader stakeholder engagement (**Annex 4**).

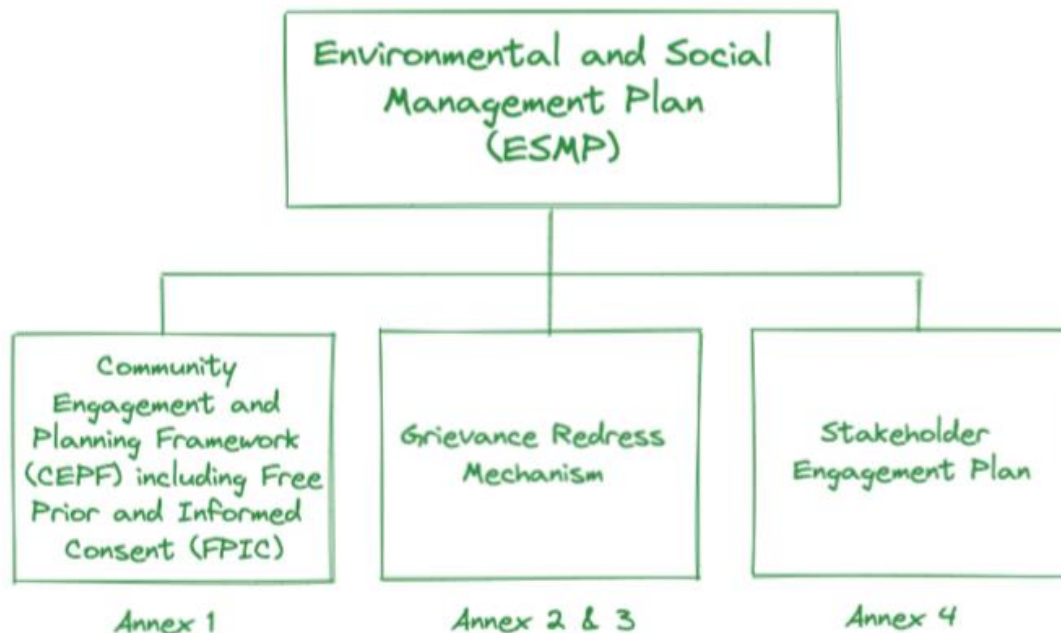


Figure1: Project safeguard plans

The purpose of the ESMP and these other safeguard plans are explained in Section 1.1 and 1.2 below.

1.1 Purpose of the ESMP

This ESMP has been developed to outline the ‘Protecting Tigers, People and their Vital Habitats in the Sundarban Delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase 2 Project’ (‘the project’ hereafter) overall environmental and social risk management strategy. It is intended as a ‘living document’ that will be regularly reviewed and updated by WTI and partners in response to changes to the project description, changes in the WTI and partners organisational structure as well as changes in legislation and any other guidelines and practices subscribed to. The ESMP will be a publicly disclosed document and

demonstrates WTI and partner's commitment to being transparent, accountable and accepting responsibility for the potential project impacts (both positive and negative).

The objectives of the ESMP are to:

- Ensure that the project aligns with international good practice, including the KfW Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and IUCN ESMS standards, policies and procedures, as well as complies with the legal requirements of India and Bangladesh, and internal WTI and partners' policies and procedures;
- Ensure that the potential negative environmental and social impacts of the project are managed appropriately, for example:
 - Favouring avoidance and prevention over minimisation, mitigation or compensation when dealing with negative impacts; and
 - Where avoidance is not possible, reducing, restoring, compensating/offsetting the negative impact.
- Ensure that the potential positive environmental and social impacts of the project are enhanced;
- Ensure that the principle of environmental and social sustainability is taken into account; and
- Provide a reference against which future monitoring and evaluation can be undertaken.

The ESMP serves as an umbrella safeguard tool covering all of the identified environmental and social risks/ impacts and allowing for the management and monitoring of these and any new risks adaptively. The ESMP therefore integrates the findings of:

- All environmental and social impact assessment studies carried out during the design phase of the project; and
- The safeguard tools and other provisions identified for complying with the requirements of the Standards mentioned above, as well as country- and site-specific information relevant for the project's risk management strategy.

1.2 Purpose of the associated safeguard plans

In addition to this umbrella safeguard plan, which covers all the potential environmental and social risks and impacts, annexed to this ESMP, there are a number of safeguard instruments, including the:

- Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF) including FPIC guidelines: this plan been developed to manage the potential risks of the proposed fencing (access issues), and risks related to procedural and distributive justice in relation to other project activities, including consideration of vulnerable/most affected people in project activities. The plan also illustrates how the project will respect Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC); **Annex 1** of this ESMP;
- Grievance Redress Mechanism, the mechanism through which the project proponent (WTI) can receive and respond to grievances related to the project; this also includes procedures for serious incident reporting should this be required, and a Grievance Register; **Annex 2** and **Annex 3** of this document.
- Stakeholder engagement plan: while the CEPF details the participatory process and FPIC process the project will follow, the stakeholder engagement plan refers to the engagement of other stakeholders essential to effective project delivery (**Annex 4** of this document).

For more information on the project risks and impacts, and the mitigation measures and plans, see Tables 1 and 2.

1.3 Brief project description

1.3.1 Project location

The project is located in the Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve, India and Sundarbans Reserve Forest, Bangladesh, with project sites located in the Sundarban Delta (Figure 2 and Figure 3). The landscape covers a core area of 1699, 22 km² and a buffer zone of 2500, 78 km² in India, and a ~ 6000 sq. km of reserve forests in Bangladesh (core and buffer unclassified). On the Indian side, this includes three forest fringe villages of Kultali Block, viz. Deulbari-Debipur (Deulbari-Debipur Gram Panchayat), Binodpur, and Maipith (Maipith-Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat); and on the Bangladesh side, the three adjacent villages of Sundarbans called Kadamtala, Mirgang, and Golakhali.

The Sundarban Delta is situated in the state of West Bengal in eastern India, and Southwest Bangladesh, and comprises a vast landscape of numerous islands amidst a network of rivulets and streams and estuaries, branching out from the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers. It constitutes a unique mangrove ecosystem with a diverse variety of both floral and faunal types. It is considered as one of the most biodiverse regions of both India and Bangladesh and has been ascribed as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Sundarban delta is considered a high priority Class I Tiger Conservation Unit (TCU) and constitutes one of the largest available tiger habitats on the subcontinent. It covers an area of approximately 10,000 km², with about 60% of the landmass in Bangladesh and 40% in India. Tiger densities in both these portions of the landscape are estimated to be relatively low, with 62-96 tigers in the Indian side and about 84-130 tigers in Bangladesh Sundarbans. Besides the tiger, it also harbours several other threatened species. In addition, the mangroves being a highly diverse ecosystem, provide important provisioning services such as edible aquatic lifeforms, medicinal plants, and fuel for local communities, while having other regulatory roles important to humans, such as absorption of airborne and waterborne pollutants.

The Indian part of the Sundarban Delta lies within two districts (north 24 paraganas and south 24 paraganas) with the larger chunk of the delta lying within the latter. It is one of the largest Tiger Reserves of India covering about 2584, 89 km², and is like other Tiger Reserves sub-divided into Sundarbans National Park along with Reserve Forest patches (Figure 2). On the Indian section of the project, no human settlements exist within the boundaries of the National Park or Reserve Forests, but the Reserve Forest Patches are utilised by local communities for livelihood purposes more extensively than the National Park area, where access is heavily restricted. On the Bangladesh side, the delta covers about 6000 km², and is classified as Sundarban Reserve Forest, within which specific regions are classified as Wildlife Sanctuaries. The Sundarban Reserve Forests in Bangladesh are divided into four ranges that together fall under two large administrative divisions – Sundarban East and Sundarban West, and altogether cover an areas of 1396.98 Km², about 23.3 percent of the total area of Sundarban in Bangladesh (Figure 2).

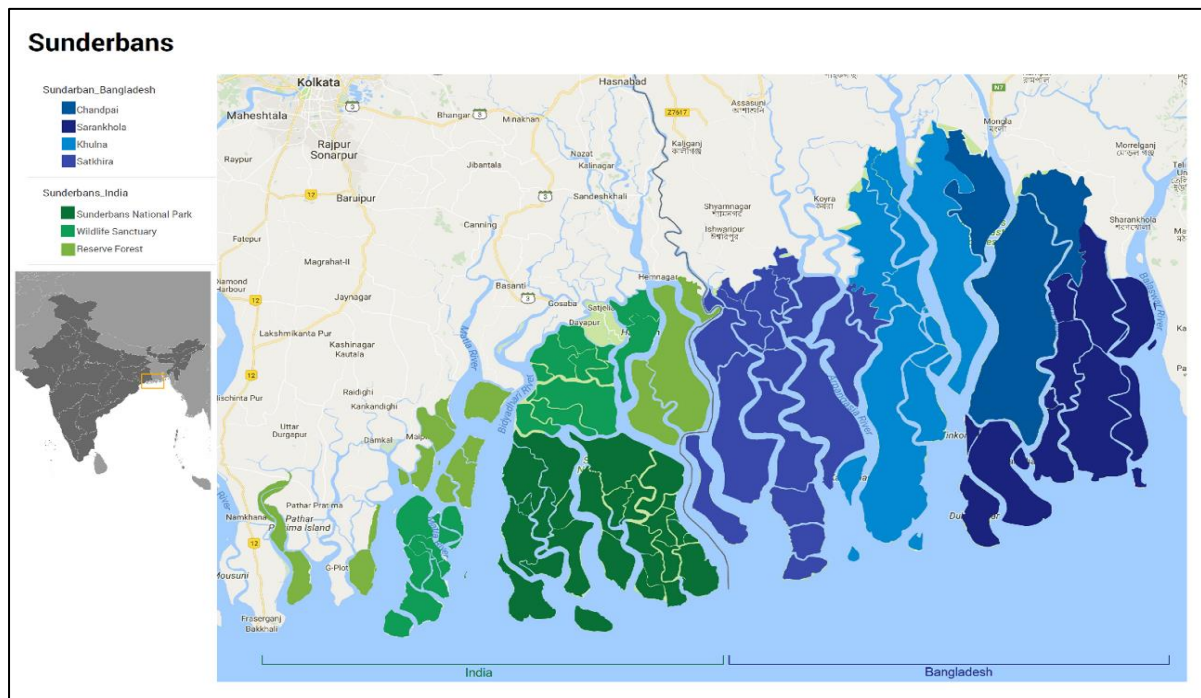


Figure 2: Locational map showing administrative divisions of the Sundarban Delta in Bangladesh and India.

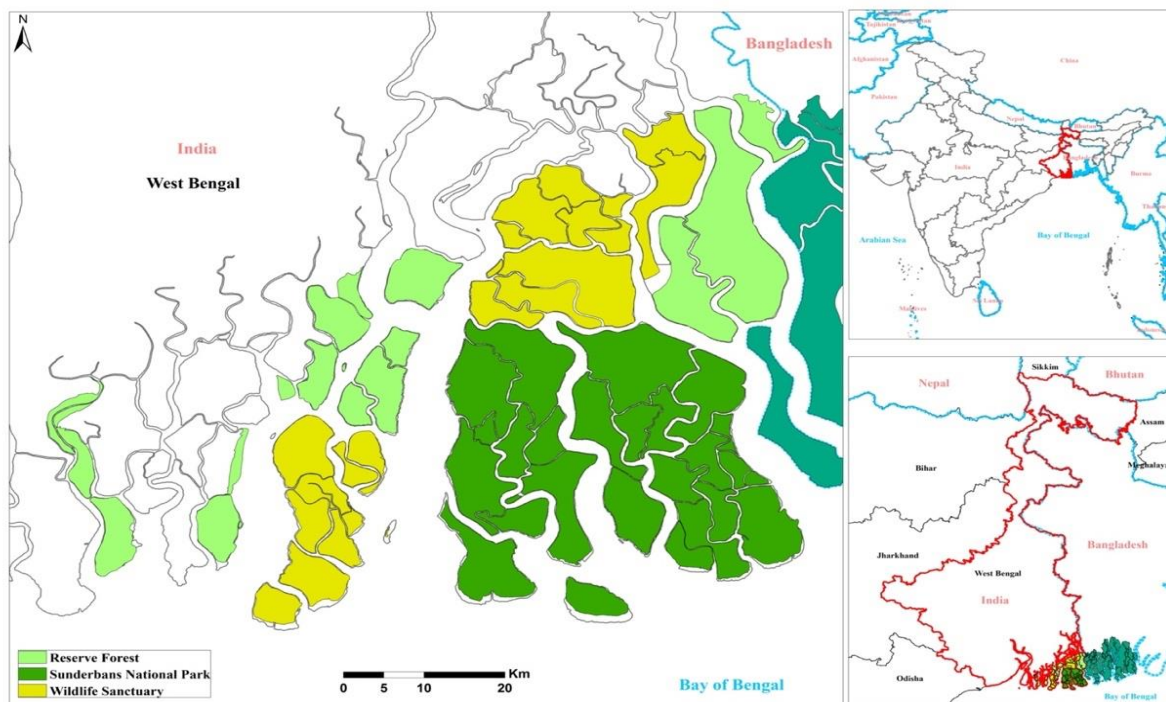


Figure 3: Locational map showing the project study area in the Sundarban Delta in Bangladesh and India.

The majority of the human population living within the delta region of the landscape, depend heavily on the natural resources of this landscape, primarily aquatic lifeforms, for subsistence and trade. Fishing for a wide variety of freshwater and saltwater fishes, crabs and shrimps are a major subsistence and commercial occupation, while annual collection of honey from the forests of the area is also a widespread practice. In addition, people also collect timber, firewood and grasses from these forests, although this has been greatly reduced in the recent years owing to access restrictions imposed by the Forest Department of Bangladesh and India, to curb degradation of the mangrove ecosystem.

While much of the problems in the Sundarbans delta are similar for both the countries, the Bangladesh Sundarban faces a much higher level of poaching pressure than the Indian side, both from local communities as well as from organised groups. Poaching of tigers and their principal prey species remains a major threat to tigers in this landscape, considering the porous waterway network that perforates the delta landmass of the Sundarbans. Enhancing cross-border cooperation and information sharing as well as engaging and integrating local communities in patrolling to prevent wildlife crimes, is critical to reduce illegal poaching of tigers and their principal prey species in this landscape.

Apart from poaching, the major issues in the Sundarban are owing to the over extraction of forest and other natural resources such as fish and crustaceans, and the resultant conflict that occurs with tigers - tigers habitually attack humans venturing into its domain to extract natural resources. In fact, it is suggested that human-wildlife conflict specifically with tigers and crocodiles are one biggest threats to this landscape, followed by climate change, salinity changes, shrimp seed collection by local people, other livelihood pressures on natural resources, and pollution. High human fatalities and livestock losses lead to higher risks of negative attitudes and antagonism towards the tiger, consequently leading to retaliatory killing of tigers, especially when they enter villages (either accidentally or for preying on livestock). This has been identified as a medium priority threat to tigers in Sundarbans requiring immediate attention.

For long-term conservation of tigers in this landscape it is also important that the pressures imposed by the local populace on the natural resources is gradually reduced through alternative methods of rearing and harvesting the same or alternative resources, or adoption of lucrative non-forest dependent livelihoods. While it is difficult to veer people away from extraction of natural resources such as honey, fodder, fishes, shrimps, etc., it is important that efforts be made to provide them with alternative modes of sustenance, so that their dependence on natural resources is reduced, thereby also reducing the frequency of interaction with wild animals such as the tiger. It is also crucial that people are integrated into conflict management practices, and are gradually made aware of the problems of the tiger and its fragile habitat.

In both, India and Bangladesh, the project aims at reducing human tiger conflicts in areas that do not receive much attention by the Forest Department. In India, this part constitutes the western fringe of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve, which is just outside the bounds of the Sundarban Tiger Reserve. In Bangladesh, the project aims at reducing the human tiger conflict (HTC) in the area outside the Sundarbans by applying physical barriers, capacity development of community people on safe forest work, sustainable resource collection and awareness build-up of local communities it will ultimately reduce HTC and pressure of Sundarbans in context of resource harvesting and retaliatory killing of tiger thus provide support for suitable management of viable tiger population and Sundarbans.

On the Indian side, the project will focus on three forest fringe villages of Kultali Block, viz. Deulbari-Debipur (Deulbari-Debipur Gram Panchayat), Binodpur, and Maipith (Maipith-Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat) (Figure 4). The total population of the three villages is 18,260 people. These are one of the most remote villages in the landscape with access from the mainland through one battered single lane road, and through the water ways from various docking islands like Gosaba. On the Bangladesh side,

the project will focus on three adjacent villages of Sundarbans called Kadamtala, Mirgang, and Golakhali (Figure 5). The total population of the villages is 2,969. These three are the most HTC prone villages of the Sundarbans.

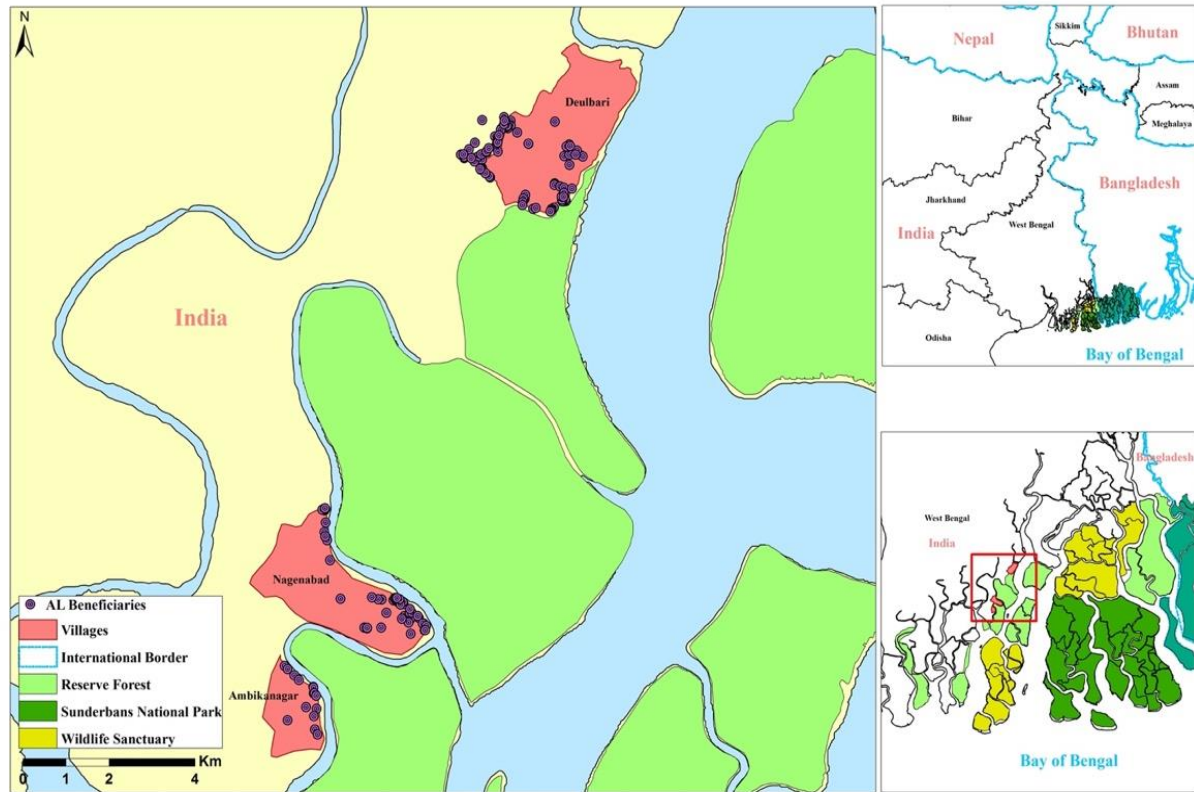


Figure 4: Map of the project area in the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve India and the three project villages

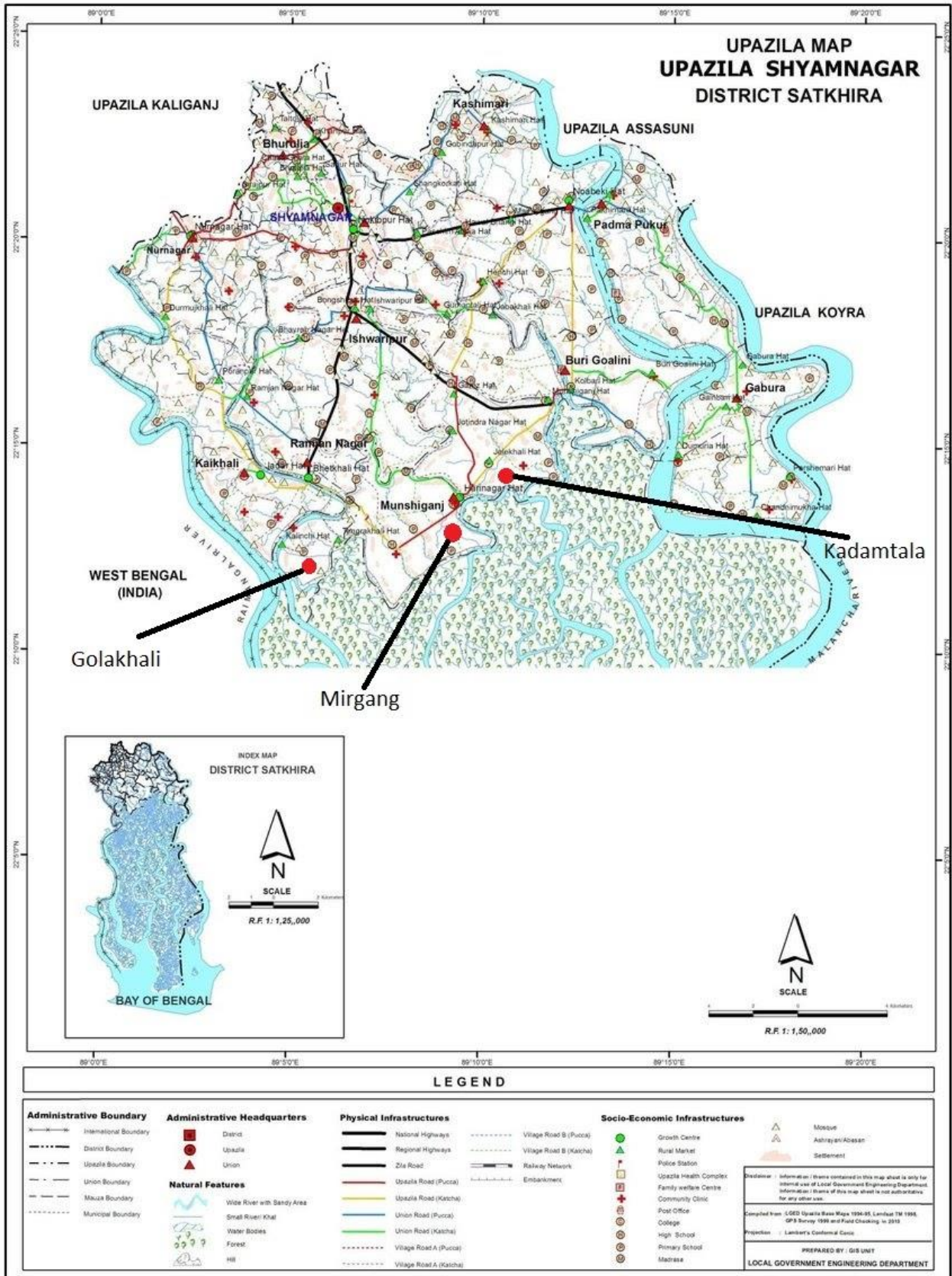


Figure 5: Map of the project area in the Bangladesh Sundarban showing the three project villages

1.3.2 Phase I Project objectives and proposed outcomes

The overall objective of the Project is to “effectively reduce human-tiger conflicts, and retaliatory killings of tigers, and develop positive attitudes towards tigers and tiger conservation initiatives, in select areas adjoining the Sundarban Tiger Reserve in India, and Sundarban Reserve Forest in Bangladesh”. To meet this objective, the project was divided into two Phases, with Phase I being piloted for three years from 2018 – 2020. Phase I had four outcomes, each with specified outputs. The results/ deliverables of Phase I are described under each output:

- **OUTCOME 1:** Identified villages with high dependence on the forest produces and high incidences of human-tiger conflict modelled into ‘tiger tolerant’ villages:
 - **Output 1.1:** Reduce fuelwood use in at least 1000 households in Bangladesh (500) and India (500) Sundarbans by 30%, by end of project year.
 - 601 households in India and 500 in Bangladesh now regularly use Improved Cook Stoves (ICS). This has resulted in a 36.81% reduction in fuelwood use (average household per day), which equates to a reduction of extraction of approximately 3.56 kms of fuelwood per household per day; approximately 1261 tons in 292 days.
 - **Output 1.2:** At least 70% of voluntarily trained villagers in select villages of India and Bangladesh Sundarbans engaged in non-forest resource dependent livelihoods by end of project year.
 - 176 households in three villages in India, and 30 households in three villages in Bangladesh are engaged in non-forest-based livelihoods. Income on average has increased by 27 – 39% for 75% of the beneficiaries and almost all showed a marked reduction in time spent on forest resource collection. Alternative livelihood (AL) beneficiaries in the three villages in India are shown in Figure 4 above.
 - **Output 1.3:** Build and manage one community based training centre in adjacent to Chandpai range of Bangladesh Sundarbans.
 - The functional part of the Community Based Training Centre in the Bangladesh Sundarban has been constructed. Four training programmes were conducted for community members and the Bangladesh Forest Department. The centre has also acted as a cyclone shelter on two occasions.
- **OUTCOME 2:** Awareness levels on the importance of tigers and their unique habitat, increased by 45-50% among children and youth in select villages dependent on forest produces around Sundarban Tiger Reserve, India and Sundarbans Reserve Forest, Bangladesh, through focussed awareness events:
 - **Output 2.1:** Identify, produce, and test various tools and messaging for mass awareness in Indian Sundarbans.
 - A short animated film, illustrated story book, banners and pamphlets were developed as well as 16 awareness events carried out.
 - **Output 2.2:** Strengthen tiger conservation education and awareness through community based platforms in the Bangladesh Sundarbans.
 - A Knowledge Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey was conducted indicating on average, a 62% increase in knowledge.
 - In addition, five Sundarban Education Centres (SEC) were supported and engagement and training sessions were carried out with all existing Tiger Scouts.
 - 55 Bagh Bondhus were also engaged and conducted 248 village awareness forums.

- **OUTCOME 3: Infrastructure for management and reduction of human-tiger conflicts and adversities associated with HTC established and operationalised in India and Bangladesh Sundarbans:**
 - **Output 3.1: Infrastructure across the Sundarbans fully upgraded to address all wildlife emergencies and human-tiger conflict situations, including rescues, treatment and rehabilitation of wild tigers and other wildlife species.**
 - **Indian Sundarban:** A landscape wide HTC survey was completed and equipped 24 Paraganas Forest Division with two boat based Rapid Response Teams (RRT; speed boat and large vessel with tranquilizer guns, drones, camera traps, flashlights. Public announcement systems, wireless sets etc.). Nine human wildlife conflict (HWC) cases were addressed, four pertaining to tigers.
 - **Bangladesh Sundarban:** Existing Village Tiger Response teams were trained and equipped. 31 cases of HWC were addressed, five involving tigers.
 - **Output 3.2: Identified Indian and Bangladesh villages/wards in and around Sundarban delta made 'tiger tolerant' to actively reduce negative interactions with wild tigers and humans.**
 - **Indian Sundarban:** 1km of one village (closest to the forest edge) was illuminated with solar lights (50 units) and 34 voluntary Primary Response Teams (PRT) members were constituted, equipped and trained.
 - **Bangladesh Sundarban:** ten street lights were installed at strategic locations, 300 Forest Resource Collectors were trained on safe and sustainable practices, Forest Tiger Response Team (FTRT) operated and regular meetings were held with them as well as with the Village Tiger Response Team (VTRT). Both the FTRT and VTRT were equipped.
- **Outcome 4. Framework of cross-border learning and sharing, and coordination for synchronised conservation efforts of tiger habitats in the Sundarban Delta developed and initiated:**
 - **Output 4.1: Conduct sharing and learning exercises across the Bangladesh and India Sundarbans to enhance synchrony in tiger conservation efforts in the Sundarban Delta.**
 - Four transboundary exposure trips were conducted involving local community representatives, youth and Forest Department staff.
 - One transboundary inter-governmental meeting was organised involving Forest Officials from both India and Bangladesh.
 - The Tiger Scouts, SEC and Bagh Bondhu initiatives were found suitable to be replicated on the Indian side.

1.3.3 Phase II Project objectives, proposed outcomes and key components

Phase II aims to build on Phase I Project results. This will be done by focusing on the same area and villages, upscaling the successful Phase I activities, replicating successful initiatives across borders and complementing the successful done by the Forest Department.

Overall objective for India:

Firstly, the project villages are largely located in the transition zone of the biosphere reserve and thus receives little focus as compared to the areas near buffer zones, and the core of the reserve. In particular the projects' green livelihoods and ICS related activities are in line with the Department's initiatives in the areas flanking the Tiger Reserve and is thus being focused in the project area where the Tiger Reserve's initiatives cannot reach. These initiatives also contribute to the Eco-development and Joint Forest Management Committee support activities goal of the management plan of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve. These activities also contribute directly to reduction in depletable resources in the

adjoining forests, and thus would help with their improvement, contributing specifically then to the “Habitat Improvement” goal of the management plan.

Lastly, several activities on the Indian side, including, training, equipping and mobilizing of PRTs alongside operating the Rapid Response Teams to assist in mitigating conflict situations will also directly contribute to the “Reduction of man-animal conflict” goal of the management plan of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve.

Overall objective in Bangladesh:

Firstly, project will directly work to reduce HTC in selected villages through VTRT, FTTRT, barrier erection and ICS distribution to reduce fuelwood collection. These activities will directly reduce number of tigers foraging outside the forests and thus also killing of livestock and humans outside the Sundarban forests. Hence this caters directly to the management objectives of reduction of direct tiger loss as set by the Sundarban Reserve Forests management plan.

The project will implement ICS activities thus will reduce pressure on forests by reduction in extraction of fuelwood, thus will help to maintaining habitats virginity and quality, which is also a management mandate of SRF. Awareness activities through Bagh Bondhus, tiger scouts, local campaigns and capacity building of different stakeholders will help to maintain positive attitudes of local communities for wildlife of the Sundarban. They will thus support in maintaining strong wildlife populations, especially that of key prey species, along with the tiger.

It is envisaged that the Phase II Project outcomes will include:

- OUTCOME 1: Annual human deaths due to human-tiger conflicts across prioritised six villages each in Indian and Bangladesh Sundarbans reduced by at least 20% by end of project period (Will be implemented by WTI and WildTeam Bangladesh);
- OUTCOME 2: People's engagement in tiger conservation activities in three project villages in India and Bangladesh enhanced; and
- OUTCOME 3: Status of tiger's prey species to support tiger management of the Bangladesh Sundarbans assessed and monitored.

In order to achieve this objective the proposed outcomes will focus on:

- Outcome 1 will focus on 5 outputs (components):
 - O.1.1 Create physical/illuminated deterrent barrier across a 5-8 km stretch and in two administrative blocks to reduce tiger forays into village lands in Indian Sundarbans by at least 40% (Figure 6);
 - O.1.2: 600 households from three villages each in Indian Sundarbans and 150 households from three villages in SRF Bangladesh adopt Improved Cook Stoves/Biogases to reduce fuelwood consumption;
 - O.1.3: Resource collection by at least 450 beneficiaries in India and 300 beneficiaries in Bangladesh in three villages reduced by at least 35% on average;
 - O.1.4: Assist the forest department in handling all wildlife emergencies and HTC situations through VTRT, ERT, RRT and PRT and other infrastructure established under project; and
 - O.1.5: Create and operate "Tiger Hotline" to enable swift relay of information on HTC/Wildlife Crime incidents and other wildlife emergencies across project landscape in India and Bangladesh Sundarbans.
- Outcome 2 will focus on 2 outputs (components):

- O.2.1: Three distinct platforms for community engagement and participation developed, functionalised and maintained in project area; and
- O.2.2: Avenues for enhanced learning, education, skill build up and awareness increased in the Sundarbans landscape through formation of at least 2 SECs, and at least 3 transboundary learning and sharing exercises in India part and 6 (5 ongoing and one new) SECs 1 new interpretation Centre and operational Community Based Training Centre (WCBC) in Bangladesh part.
- Outcome 3 will focus on the single output (component) below:
 - O.3.1: Tiger's prey species assessed and monitored across the Bangladesh Sundarbans, and assessed the carrying capacity of the Sundarbans for tigers.

The project includes the following activities:

- Outcome 1 key activities will include:
 - O.1.1 Building deterrent barrier with consent of all stakeholders;
 - O.1.2: Build local capacity to construct, use and maintain improved cook stoves/biogas;
 - O.1.3: Introduce, monitor, and evaluate viable alternative sustainable livelihood strategies;
 - O.1.4: Train and empower all stakeholders in human tiger conflict mitigation and wildlife rescue; and
 - O.1.5: Set up functional and effective "Tiger Hotline".
- Outcome 2 key activities will include:
 - O.2.1: Local stakeholder engagement through three unique dynamic platforms; and
 - O.2.2: Conservation sensitisation programme with focus on human-tiger conflict.
- Outcome 3 key activity includes:
 - O.3.1: Comprehensive tiger survey and monitoring programme.

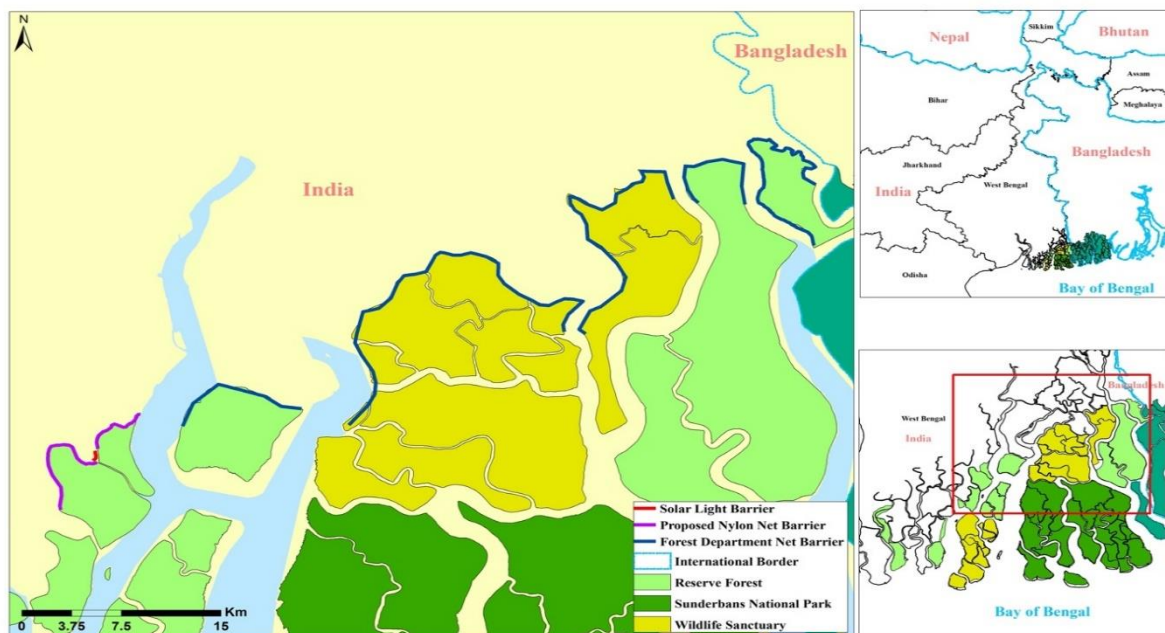


Figure 6: Map of the project area in the Indian Sundarban showing the proposed location of the nylon net barrier and the solar light barrier.

1.3.4 Project timeframe and budget

The Project will be implemented for three years, starting in November 2020 and ending by December 2023. The proposed budget total for the project is 801,707.59 Euros as of January 2021.

1.3.5 Project partners and responsibilities

WTI is the lead implementing partner for this project, and will report directly to the IUCN, the executing agency.

Other implementing partners¹ for this project include:

1. Lokamata Rani Rashmoni Mission (LRRM) India
2. WildTeam Bangladesh
3. Jahangirnagar University Bangladesh

Collaborating partners² include:

1. State Forest Department of West Bengal, India
2. Bangladesh Forest Department, Government of Bangladesh

No service providers³ are to be engaged in the project.

1.3.6 Project responsibilities

IUCN has the following responsibilities:

- Set the standards that the grantee and its partners must implement in the funded projects;
- Ensure the grantees can apply the requirements of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS);
- Monitor to what extent Environmental and Social (E&S) risks are correctly assessed by the grantees at the planning/ proposal stage and that subsequent E&S management activities are implemented;
- Monitor the Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) implementation during all stages of the projects, including through site visits;
- Consolidate reporting on ESMS implementation; and
- Collect project lessons learnt to adapt the requirements of this ESMS and its performance in the light of the field experiences.

WTI has the following responsibilities:

- Conduct E&S risk identification and assessment as per the IUCN ESMS and associated tools, templates and guidelines;
- Work with Affected Communities and stakeholders to design appropriate management plans and safeguard tools to manage identified risks;

¹ Implementing partners include organizations such as government agencies, non-government agencies or community based organizations who have a distinct role in the implementation of the project and who receive funds for delivering outputs as identified in the project document.

² Collaborating partners include organizations or individuals with whom the project is collaborating with and who might contribute to a project's outputs but without receiving funds.

³ Service providers include organizations or individuals who are selected through a procurement process to provide a concrete deliverable for the project.

- Implement these management plans; and
- Monitor and report on ESMS implementation to IUCN, including identifying new or emerging risk and adapting plans accordingly.

IUCN and the WTI are responsible for the project impacts – direct and indirect – caused by activities that are either financed or technically supported by the project. This includes impacts (positive and negative) caused by activities or actors that are financially or technically supported by the project, even when these activities or actors fall outside of the direction/authority/mandate of the IUCN and WTI.

1.4 Social context

The local communities inhabiting the Sundarban delta, both in India and Bangladesh, are entirely a migrant population, largely from mainland Bengal, the Chotanagpur Region and later from other parts of India, prior to partition. This migration was promulgated by the British Raj to facilitate the land reclamation and resource harvesting proposals, since 1779. However a major draft of this migration occurred post 1910, when several proposals for reclaiming large tracts of land was moved, through which large populations of tribal folk were brought in as labourers to clear the mangrove forests, who later settled on several of these cleared islands of the delta.

As per the 2001 census of Indian side, around 3,596,729 people reside in the various islands and the mainland adjoining the delta, which today is estimated around 6,074,188. Much of the Sundarbans population resides in the 18 islands that have permanent settlements today. The human population of the Sundarbans belongs to either Hindus, Muslims, or Christians, among which the Hindu community also has a large aggregation of various schedule tribes, the majority of whom are Santals, Bhumij, Oraon and Munda. Apart from these, there are also other tribes like the Mahali, Kora, Korwa, Lohara, but in relatively smaller numbers. The total population of Scheduled Tribes in the Sundarbans in India is estimated at around 96,976 people (Census of India 2011). On the Bangladesh part of Sundarban, the human population (4,304,371, as per Population and Housing Census, Bangladesh, 2011) primarily comprises of Muslims, with a total population of 3,402,532, while the total population of Hindus stands around 877,278, distributed across the two Zilla (Sub-districts) of Khulna and Sathkhira (Population and Housing census, Bangladesh, 2011). Additionally, around 21,417 Christian people also reside in these two Zilla. The indigenous population (referred to as Ethnic population in Bangladesh Census report, 2011) in these two Zilla's as per the Population and Housing census of Bangladesh (2011) is very small with around 3134 Munda, 51 Chakma people, 300 Bormon People and 1079 people classified as other ethnic population.

On the Indian part of Sundarban social groups are divided as per their religious affiliation, as well as class. Within individual religious groups they are divided based on various religious sects and castes (for Hindu's). With respect to religion, sects and castes, discrimination between these social groups are not prominent, but status discrimination based on class is more apparently discernible. There are also some observed issues of marginalization among socially backward classes of this region.

- Socially marginalised groups do not get equal accessibility to the government schemes and other facilities that facilitate better livelihoods, as they have reduced bargaining power with authorities. Also, being financially underprivileged, they usually don't get access to any opportunity for financial up-liftment.
- Marginalisation of property and land is observed in Sundarban after property division among the next generation of the farmers due to high rate of reproduction. Several farmers irrespective of their land holding size have several children, amongst whom the land and other property are divided for inheritance. Consequently, many of them with nominal amounts of land, have been

becoming marginalized farmers due to such property and land division. This has been creating several cascading problems regarding agricultural investments.

In Bangladesh people from different religion lives in the targeted villages but there is no social conflict among religions. But in the Hindu community there are some issues between castes, but largely these do not lead to pervasive conflicts. Consequently, on the Indian and Bangladesh parts of the Sundarban, there are no conflicts observed between different social groups.

1.4.1 Livelihoods

In both countries, a major proportion of the human population living around the forests of Sundarban, are engaged in forest dependent activities like fish, crab, honey, forest firewood collection for their livelihoods. Other livelihood pursuits include:

- Government Service holders (schoolteacher, employees of panchayat),
- Different Businesses and commercial enterprises
- Agriculture work (own agriculture and agricultural labour),
- Small scale retailing (vegetable sellers, ferrymen, etc.)
- Fishery and fish cultivation,
- Animal husbandry like poultry, goat rearing, etc.

The population in the project villages of the Indian side dependent on subsistence income sources, ranges from 60 to 80% (Deulbari: 75%; Maipith/Nagenabad: 80%; Binodpur/Ambikanagar: 60%). Apart from permanent job holders, businesspeople, and those who have substantial farming land for commercial farming, all others earn their livelihoods primarily through subsistence livelihoods.

Subsistence income source in around the targeted areas in Bangladesh are mainly natural resource collection from the forest like shrimp collection, honey collection, fishing in the rivers, and running makeshift ferry systems. Some people do seasonal tourism with small boats while, others work as daily wage labourers, either in tourism boats or with the forest department, other government departments as well as commercial establishments. The population in project area of Bangladesh depending primarily upon subsistence income ranges from 60-70% in general.

On the Indian side, commercial income sources refer to some businesses, but none of them pay income tax to the government. All such businesses instead pay relevant taxes to the local panchayats in the form of trade license fees. The proportion of population in project villages having such businesses are listed in table above. On the Bangladesh side, commercial income sources are mainly businesses, commercial shrimp farming, crab culture, and small scale grocery marketing. In most of the cases they provide income tax to government basically for commercial farm-based business, although in some cases they provide taxes to the government in the form of license fees.

The main developmental aspirations in India and Bangladesh are:

- Strengthening of river side embankments to protected villages from inundation,
- Development of roads, especially metal roads as most roads that connect to villages are either mud roads or narrow brick laid roads.
- Betterment in drinking water facilities, fresh water is scarce in areas in and around the delta.
- Improvement in health care facilities,
- Improvement of educational facilities,
- Improvement of different non-forest-based livelihood opportunities to help improve lifestyle status,

- Electrification and illumination in villages, roads etc.

The main developmental opportunities in both the India and Bangladesh sides of the Sundarbans are:

- Direct marketing opportunities of resources and other animal husbandry products,
- Local agro / bio product-based food processing for different agricultural and horticulture produces
- Agro-Business, Horticulture, Medicinal Plant, Eco Tourism including home stays,
- As a result of ample availability of ponds in the villages large scale fish cultivation opportunities.

Irrespective of the country, the differences in capabilities to achieve aspirations are quite similar. There is extensive poverty across villages, with not enough availability of capital amongst masses, to enable them to achieve their collective aspirations. However, there is also a widespread dearth of skills and ideas that inhibit villagers to achieve their aspirations.

Local people have excellent knowledge on the techniques of natural resource extraction and harvest, irrespective of the country, however, the concept of sustainability is largely elusive, and they are unable to use rationally and sustainably most of the resources. Added to this is the problem of unchecked commercial demand on certain natural resources including shrimp, cabs, honey etc. Consequently, over-extraction is rampant, and it is common to hear local people state that the size of catches has reduced or that certain resources have become increasingly rare.

Within the Protected Area of the Reserve, villagers have limited access to the forest resources which is protected stringently by the legal framework (various Acts, Laws and Regulations) of the two countries. Still, understanding the intricate dependence of local people on the natural resources, extraction of certain limited amounts of natural resources, especially honey, are allowed by the Forest Department in the buffer areas under issuance of specific licenses to do so. However, due to the nature of the landscape and resulting poor enforcement, a very large number of unlicensed harvesters exploit resources even up to the core areas of the park, resulting in depletion of natural resources, forest degradation, and disturbance to wildlife and also high incidences of tiger attacks on humans.

1.4.2 Stakeholders

A detailed analysis of key stakeholders in the project area is presented in the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan. In summary, the following stakeholder groups have been identified:

- Forest Resource Collectors/ Local residents: men, women and youth of project villages who are not strictly dependent on forest resources for their livelihoods/as a sole livelihood option/poverty stricken (Villages: Deulbari, Maipith/Nagenabad, Binodpur/Ambikanagar in India and villages, Kadamtala, Mirgang and Golakhali in Bangladesh.)
- Local wards under union council (Villages: Kadamtala, Mirgang and Golakhali in Bangladesh)
- Local village council members including Panchayat members, Joint Forest Management Committee members, etc (Villages: Deulbari, Maipith/Nagenabad, Binodpur/Ambikanagar in India)
- Local villagers, including women, youth and children (Villages: Deulbari, Maipith/Nagenabad, Binodpur/Ambikanagar in India)
- State Forest Department of West Bengal, India
- Local Forest Officials of North 24 Paraganas Forest Division
- Bangladesh Forest Department
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), India
- IUCN-KFW – ITHCP

- IUCN-India and Bangladesh Offices
- Local media persons of the project regions
- Wildlife Trust of India
- Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission
- WildTeam
- Jahangirnagar University

1.4.3 Affected Communities

Affected communities in this project are all of those communities that have been included in the project as direct beneficiaries (see Figures 4 and 5) and any additional communities affected by the construction of the construction of the nylon fence. As illustrated in the E&S screening, no substantial negative impacts of this project have been identified, as the project aims to reduce human tiger conflict and support alternative livelihoods and fuel sources for communities adjacent to the Sundarbans Protected Areas.

1.4.4 Indigenous People

Indigenous peoples are the descendants of those who inhabited a geographic region, when people of different ethnic origins arrived. In Asian context, the term 'indigenous peoples' refers to groups such as the 'Adivasis', 'tribal people', 'hill tribes' or 'scheduled tribes'.

In India, indigenous people are recognised under the Schedule Castes and Tribes Act of 1989, as well as other acts that delineate the connect of the people to the lands, such as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. While the Indian government acknowledges the marginalized situation of various Scheduled Caste and Tribal groups, it also therefore through its various acts and laws, confers reservations, and other supportive benefits, in order to alleviate discrimination. These reservations, benefits and schemes are applicable all across India and in the state of West Bengal it is no different. Specifically in Sundarban, there is no specific advantage or disadvantage conferred to indigenous people in particular besides the generic benefits. There is also little local level discrimination against indigenous people from settled people.

In Bangladesh, they are treated as 'tribal' in official documents, though in the Act 12 of 1995 and Rules 6, 34, 45, 50 of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Regulation (1900), they are documented as 'indigenous peoples' or 'aboriginal' as per section 97 of the SAT Act (1950). In Bangladesh there are about 50 different indigenous communities living in the plain lands and hill areas. Though they claim that their population is over 3 million, according to the survey of 2011, the country's indigenous population is around 1,586,141, which signifies 1.8% of total population of the country.

The Constitution of Bangladesh ensures affirmative action for indigenous peoples and prohibits discrimination inter alia on grounds of race, religion or place of birth, Article 23A of which provides, "the State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities". It also spells out in Article 28 (4), "nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens". The Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) urged the government to enact the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (2015) which is being drafted by the Parliamentary Caucus on Indigenous Peoples and formulated by the NHRC aiming to ensure economic, social, and cultural rights of indigenous people.

On the Indian side, the project will focus on three forest fringe villages of Kultali Block, viz. Deulbari-Debipur (Deulbari-Debipur Gram Panchayat), Binodpur, and Maipith (Maipith-Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat). These villages are one of the most remote villages in the landscape with access from the

mainland through one battered single lane road, and through the water ways from various docking islands like Gosaba.

On the Bangladesh side, the project will focus on three adjacent villages of Sundarbans called Kadamtala, Mirgang, Golakhali. These three are the most HTC prone villages of the Sundarbans where we have been working since ITHCP Phase-I.

1.4.5 Vulnerable groups

Vulnerable groups are population groups that suffer from discrimination, unequal access to rights, unequal access to and control over resources or unequal access to development opportunities. Such groups may include ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic minorities, indigenous groups, female-headed households, children and youngsters, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the poor. In the context of IUCN projects, vulnerable groups are:

- Likely to be affected by the project (i.e. they are exposed to project activities, e.g. because they live in communities where activities will be implemented);
- Sensitive to these effects (e.g., because they are highly dependent on natural resources with no other livelihood options); and
- Have got low adaptive capacity (e.g. because they don't have family or relatives who can support them, or no other skills or assets to rely on).

In this context, the principle identified vulnerable group are Forest Resource Collectors (FRCs), who are individuals dependent upon natural resources sourced largely from within the Protected Areas. These individuals are vulnerable to HTC, and any restrictions imposed through fencing or other activities with potential to prevent access to natural resources. FRCs include men, women, indigenous and non-indigenous, young and old. These individuals are the focus of the alternative livelihood projects and improved cook stove programme.

2 Environment and Social Risks and Management

WTI and its Partners are committed to full compliance with both Indian and Bangladesh legal requirements, IUCN's ESMS (2016) and associated Standards, and the requirements of the KfW Sustainability Guidelines (2021). A screening of the project identified no major potential adverse impacts, although a number of moderate risk issues were identified. These issues, and how the project will manage them, are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 below. Table 3 will be completed during the project inception, illustrating how the project will monitor and evaluate these environmental and social risks.

Table 1: Environmental and Social Standards and Provisions

Environmental and Social Standards	Scope of application	Main issues, how they will be addressed and whether a stand-alone plan is required (e.g. Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Grievance Mechanism, etc.)
Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> TBD	<p>The IUCN Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions has not been triggered. The project also does not support law enforcement activities within the landscape. Nor do the project partners have a mandate on levying or supporting of enforcement of any activity by the State Forest Department that could prevent access to natural resources over which local communities are dependent for their livelihoods. The project does not have a mandate to directly or indirectly resettle local communities. The project will support the construction of a nylon net fence and illuminated barrier, designed to keep tigers from venturing into villages thereby putting at risk human lives and property. These fences do not impose any restrictions on people from entering the forests as people use boats to enter forests along water channels, which are typically hoisted above the waterline for boats to pass through. The Community Engagement and Planning Framework, including FPIC guidelines, will ensure a participatory and consensual process is followed for the establishment of the planned fencing (Annex 1 of this ESMP).</p>
Indigenous Peoples	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> TBD	<p>The IUCN Standard on Indigenous Peoples has been triggered, with potentially low-moderate risks. The standard is triggered due to the presence of Indigenous Peoples in the project area. In India, Indigenous Peoples in the project area include Scheduled Tribes (ST) including tribal ethnic groups belong to the <i>Mundas</i>, <i>Santhals</i>, <i>Bhumijis</i> and <i>Oraons</i>, although they are dispersed across the mixed ethnic villages in the region and enjoy equal status in the society, since villages are primarily constituted of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes. On the Bangladesh Sundarban, no such assessment has yet been conducted, but in Satkhira District there are 70 <i>Munda</i> families in the project villages. The main project activity that could lead to impacts is the construction of the 5-8 kilometre nylon fence. While this fence has been requested after consultation with local village people, council members and Forest Department officials, to ensure that indigenous peoples within these communities consent to the activity, the project will establish a protocol for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) that will be applied prior to the fence planning and construction (the CEPF, Annex 1). This FPIC process will aim to ensure that the location of the nylon netting/and or illuminated barrier will take into account the local context combined with data on areas most frequently used by tigers to cross into village lands. This barrier is specifically being developed to protect local communities and their property/ livestock from</p>

		tigers and other animals that enter village lands from time to time. The nets are typically erected together by the Forest Department and local people, and all water channels are kept open for boats to move in and out, thereby imposing no restriction of access into the Protected Area for local people. Also, there are no specific indigenous groups in the project villages as the villages are mixed in terms of ethnicity and religion, people with indigenous lineages (Scheduled castes and tribes) are not discriminated against and enjoy equal rights and socioeconomic statuses in the project villages. Many of the phase I project beneficiaries are also people with indigenous lineages, without any discrimination.
Cultural Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> TBD	The IUCN Standard on Cultural Heritage has not been triggered. There are sites of cultural and spiritual importance within the Protected Areas within the project area, but the proposed nylon fence will not restrict local communities' access to natural resources or to these sites, and there is no support to law enforcement foreseen in this project.
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Natural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> TBD	<p>The IUCN Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Natural Resources has not been triggered and has been categorised to be of low-moderate risk. This is due specific consideration of the nylon and/or illuminated barrier that is planned in this project. It is thus clarified here, that:</p> <p>1) the planned barriers, whether comprising of nylon fences or illuminated streetlights are built specifically to keep tigers at bay and not other wild animals such as crocodiles, wild pig, spotted deer, etc.. This especially holds true as much of the forest edge and village lands are already separated by broad water channels including rivers, with widths ranging from 100 meters to up to 5 kilometres, which itself forms a natural barrier to all other wild animals except birds, crocodiles and tigers. Tigers in this landscape have been known to be able to swim across very broad rivers crossing over into human occupied areas. The net barrier forms an additional deterrence preventing tigers from moving out of the forest directly into a village, in areas where the separation of the two is relatively less (~ 100 – 500 meters). Where local people opt for streetlights on certain stretches, they will be put on the village side of the forest-village interface, thereby not causing any harm due to the illumination to any wildlife species or their populations.</p> <p>2) Nylon barriers have already been used extensively by the Forest Department in the Tiger Reserve jurisdiction, and with great success. The current effort is only to complement that in an area where the Tiger Reserve funds cannot cater to it.</p> <p>3) The nylon netting, whether done by the Forest Department or under this project, is done, with good scientific understanding that the Sundarban delta is geographically islanded, and does not have any biological connectivity with any other forests or natural ecosystems on the mainland. In other words, by virtue of the delta being surrounded by a massive human</p>

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		population living in villages, towns and cities on one aspect, and the Bay of Bengal on the other aspect, it naturally does not allow for the migration, or dispersal of any land dwelling animal beyond its confines. Thus, restricting movement of tigers from the forest edge selectively only on the human dominated sides, does not impact the tiger population or its genetic integrity. Tigers and other mammals are however free to cross across international borders and across island clusters within the 10,000 Km ² delta itself, and no sort of barrier prevents them from doing so.
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Activities to comply with ESMS policy and provisions		Costs	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule
Disclosure Requirements	Signboards and information pamphlets are already in place and have been distributed. Additional procedures (meetings, printing, and distribution of forms as per the templates provided, etc.) as set out in the Grievance mechanism. Specifically, one large sized signboard in each project village, specifying avenues that can be utilised to file grievances with the project team and also directly with IUCN, were erected. Similar information as also provided in pamphlets as well as verbally in various meetings. In this Phase, there will be new signboards, pamphlets and others sources of information dissemination.	Costs are budgeted in budget line H6.3 for signboards and collaterals and under budget line H6.2 for meetings	WTI, LRRM & WildTeam	31 st March 2021
	Disclosure of the project documents (including ESMS screening and assessment, safeguard tools) on the IUCN website.	Not Required	ITHCP Secretariat	31 st March 2021
	Verbal disclosure of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Grievance Mechanism during meetings and workshops with project stakeholders, including local community representatives and forest officials.	Not Required	ITHCP Secretariat, WTI & WTB (for WTI & WTB website)	31 st March 2021
Grievance Mechanism	Grievance mechanism document will be implemented by the project proponent and partners in the first three months of project inception. Specifically, village sarpanch (headman) will be designated as the local point of contact and arbitrator for grievances filed, and the entire Grievance mechanism will be explained. Community representatives such as PRTs/VTRTs/Bagh Bondhu's etc will be apprised of the Grievance mechanism and the associated processes. They will also be supplied with Grievance forms. New signboards will be erected with detailed information on the process of Grievance filing and the relevant	Not required, will be carried out under project budget	WTI, LRRM, WildTeam and JU	31 st March 2021

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	contacts. WTI and partners' project coordinators will be apprised of the mechanism and processes and trained to address and mediate grievance redressal. The project's Grievance Redress Mechanism and register are located in Annex 2 and Annex 3 of this ESMP.			
Gender Mainstreaming	The project already makes earnest efforts for gender mainstreaming. In phase 1, nearly 90% of the alternative livelihood options beneficiaries were women. Similarly, 100% beneficiaries for the Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) initiatives are also women. In the current phase the project will also endeavour to include women/girls on a purely voluntary basis into the established platforms of Bagh Bondhu's, PRTs and Tiger Scouts. The stakeholder engagement plan will be drafted in detail to elaborate on the extent to which the project will foster gender mainstreaming.	Not required, will be carried out under the regular implementation of the project	WTI, LRRM, WildTeam and JU	Throughout the course of the project
Stakeholder Engagement	The Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been drafted and finalised, in Annex 4 of this ESMP. This will be implemented throughout the course of the project implementation. Initial three months will be utilised to conduct formal meetings with local stakeholders, including local field-based forest officials, to discuss on beneficiary selection criteria, processes, etc, as well as apprise them of the grievance mechanism and allied procedures. Selection of liaisons for grievance addressal will also be constituted during this period. Additional meeting with shortlisted beneficiary groups will also be conducted as per the finalised SEP. Periodic meetings between implementing organisations, community members and forest officials will also be periodically conducted. Media personnel will be invited in planned events of the project to ensure unbiased coverage of events and issues. Lastly, formal meetings with higher officials of the Forest Department will also be conducted for project progress and feedback	Not required, will be carried out under project budget	WTI, LRRM, WildTeam and JU	31 st March 2021 and throughout course of project

Table 2: Key social and environmental impacts and related management measures

Social and environmental impact ⁴	Management measures ⁵	Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability ⁶	Location	Costs	Implementation Responsibility	Schedule and monitoring frequency
<p>I] Legacy issues and Reputational Risk There is a moderate level risk to legacy and reputation of ITHCP-KFW and implementing Organisations WTI, LRRM and WTB, due to possible infractions of human rights by enforcement agencies. Although such cases are outside the purview off the project, by virtue of a common conservation landscape, certain events may have a bearing on the reputation and legacy the project and its implementers.</p>	<p>Although this risk is present, primarily due to the existing tensions between local community and local forest departments, the project endeavours to positively influence this relationship by creating a positive relationship through reduction in HTC, and reduction of dependence on natural resources within the Protected Areas. In addition, the project has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Stakeholder Engagement Plan that ensures all parties are updated on the progress of the project, the processes involved, and the frameworks developed (beneficiary selection, grievance filing, etc.)(Annex 4) • Information Disclosure (see Table 1), including explicit communication of the projects' objectives, outcomes and procedures to the various stakeholder groups. • Joint stakeholder meetings and consultations including Forest Department, local community members, media personnel, etc. • Clear media (print, visual and social media) communication to clarify the projects' role and actions from time to 	<p>Feasibility = High Effectiveness = High (in project area) Effectiveness = Low (Outside project area) Sustainability = Moderate (in and outside project area, as management changes are very frequent)</p> <p>Although feasibility of management measures is high, the effectiveness of the management measures would be moderate to high within the immediate project areas, as has been witnessed in phase I. The effectiveness would however be low if events occur outside this area since management measures will be relevant largely for the project area.</p>	Site Wide & Project Villages in specific	Already built in as consultation and meeting costs under budget heads of Outputs 1.1; 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.1 and 2.2	WTI, LRRM, WTB & JU	31 st March 2021 and then annually.

⁴ If IUCN Standards are triggered and it has been decided that the management measures are not presented in the form of a stand-alone plan (e.g. Indigenous People's Plan, Process Framework etc.), the management measures need to be described in this table.

⁵ Where management measures have already been conceptualised as project activities, this needs to be specified and cross referenced to the proposal/ concept note (e.g. "see Activity 1.2.3"); other columns are not applicable to avoid repetition.

⁶ The ESMP must confirm that proposed mitigation measures are feasible, that they are effective in providing management / mitigation for all affected groups and that they are sustainable.

	time, and opportunistically, especially during adverse events that may potentially levy a bearing on the project and its implementers.					
<p>II] Risks of Gender Inequality, human rights violations (participation rights), and risks of discriminating against vulnerable groups</p> <p>There is a moderate risk that the alternative livelihood activities (e.g. the ICS initiative) and community groups established to help the forest departments (e.g. VTRTs, PRTs, Bagh Bandhus, Tiger Scouts etc.) can inadvertently discriminate against women and vulnerable groups such as FRCs, when it comes to beneficiary selection and selection of participants respectively. However, the likelihood of such discrimination occurring and its impact if it does occur inadvertently, is low.</p>	<p>The entire project focusses on Forest Resource Collectors who are poor and therefore dependent on forest-based livelihoods. Specifically, the project has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific outputs like ICS and Alternative Livelihoods will target women and vulnerable Forest Resource Collectors (including women), detailed in the Community Engagement and Planning Framework (Annex 1), including a Beneficiary Selection Protocol and process, including criteria such as 1) High dependence on forest Resources; 2) Lack of other avenues of earning; 3) Willingness to adopt • Inclusion of women in sensitisation meetings that would help encourage them to be inducted as PRTS, VTRTs, Bagh Bandhus and Tiger Scouts. 	<p>Feasibility = High Effectiveness = High Sustainability = High</p>	All Project villages	Already inbuilt. See budget lines for Outputs 1.2, 1.3, 2.1.	<i>WTI, LRRM, WTB & JU</i>	31 st March 2021 for protocols, and then assessed annually with project output initiation
<p>III] Risk discrimination against Indigenous Peoples</p> <p>As Indigenous People are present in the study area, obtaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent from all affected individuals in order to erect the nylon fence and light barriers will be required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEPF including FPIC Protocol: CEPF in Annex 1 includes the FPIC process and how it relates to the different project activities. 	<p>Feasibility = High Effectiveness = High Sustainability = High</p>	All Project villages	Not required, will be undertaken as precursory activity for community-based work	<i>WTI, LRRM, WTB & JU</i>	31 st March 2021 for protocols, and then assessed annually with project output initiation

<p>IV] Risks pertaining to Labor and working conditions affecting project workers Risk of project workers including volunteers, PRT/VTRT members, surveyors, or people engaged in the project facing risks of being attacked by wild animals (particularly tigers), facing risks of encountering armed poachers, or contracting diseases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All workers, volunteers, surveyors are informed of possible risks <i>a priori</i>, and join after due consideration of the risks. Informed consent letters are signed by all of them. • To reduce risks, all direct project staff are provided medical insurance packages as a mandate. • Adequate training and equipping is also carried out for all directly associated workers, and has also been included in the proposal, which includes, safety gear, first aid kits, etc. • Field boats with adequate stocks of first-aid and emergency medical equipment (Stretchers, saline drips, suturing materials, etc.) to provide quick intervention if there is any medical emergency. • Survey teams are always accompanied by armed Forest rangers/guards for protection from wild animals, and are also trained in specific protocols on dealing with wild animal encounters. Survey teams will also carry potable water and food with them, and also first-aid kits. • Risks from armed poachers is extremely low, as majority of poaching occurs covertly through trapping. Despite the low risk, as mentioned, above, surveyors are accompanied by armed forest rangers/guards 	<p>Feasibility = High Effectiveness = High Sustainability = High</p>	<p>Site wide</p>	<p>Trainings and equipment are budgeted in proposal, under Outputs 1.4, 2.1 and 3.1</p>	<p>WTI, LRRM, WTB and JU</p>	<p>Annually, and opportunistically.</p>
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3 ESMP Monitoring and Supervision

This ESMP will be updated on an annual basis, in parallel with project annual reporting. The ESMP will be monitored to track the progress and effectiveness of the agreed mitigation measures illustrated in Table 2, and the implementation of the other safeguard tools.

Table 3 below will be completed on an annual basis by the project team. Completing this table annually will allow for the assessment of progress and changes, and adapt accordingly.

The information in Table 3 will be collected in collaboration with the IUCN annual supervision mission, which will use the ESMS supervision checklist, designed to collect information on progress and effectiveness of risk management measures.

Some of the information in Table 3 will also be included in the IUCN-KfW ESMS section of the annual report. Reporting to IUCN will occur on an annual basis. This annual project monitoring will identify any additional environmental or social risks that may have emerged since the project started, and establish appropriate mitigation measures for any significant new risk.

Table 3: ESMP Monitoring and evaluation table

1.1 Reporting information 1.1.1 Period covered by this report: 1.1.2: Contact details of the responsible person(s) completing this questionnaire for further communication: 1.1.3 Sources of information used to compile this report: <i><Please list all different sources of information used to compile this report, including participatory/ community monitoring results etc>.</i>				
1.2 Project risk rating ⁷ (high; substantial; moderate; low):				
1.3 Project safeguard tools: <i><Complete Table 2.3 below></i>				
Safeguard tool ⁸	Status	Latest version (date)	Date that the final plan will be complete	Date plan will start to be implemented
1.4 Progress of ESMS monitoring and reporting for the reporting period <i><Complete Table 2.4 below></i>				
ESMS monitoring & reporting task	Frequency	Status	Challenges/ issues	IUCN/KfW review required?
Daily ESMS Coordinator tasks	On-going	<i><In progress></i> In progress	<i><No>.</i>	No
Annual or bi-annual report ESMS section	Annual	<i><Complete/In progress/ Incomplete></i> Complete	<i><Yes (describe)>.</i>	Yes
Annual or bi-annual ESMP M&E update section <i><this table></i>	Annual	<i><Complete/In progress/ Incomplete></i> Complete	<i><Yes (describe)>.</i>	Yes
Annual or bi-annual review & update of safeguard tools	Annual	<i><Complete/In progress/ Incomplete></i> In progress	<i><No>.</i>	No
Annual IUCN Supervision Mission	Annual	<i><Complete/In progress/ Incomplete></i> Completed virtually	<i><No>.</i>	Yes
Submission of updated safeguard tools when major changes or updates ⁹	Case by case basis	<i><Complete/In progress/ Incomplete></i> In progress	<i><No>.</i>	Yes

⁷ See ESMS Screening Report for original project risk rating

⁸ Safeguard instruments can include for example: Process Framework (PF), Community Planning and Engagement Framework (CEPF), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), and corresponding sub-plans, such as Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP), Environmental and Social Codes of Practice (ESCP), Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRP), Resettlement Action Plans (RAP), Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPP) or any other safeguard instrument applied or to be applied as a result of the impacts identified during the respective reporting period.

⁹ This includes when safeguard instrument pass from framework-level to plan level, or from provisional to interim or final. For example, an FPIC Protocol outline might then develop into a final FPIC Protocol. These major changes require IUCN and KfW review.

1.5 Project activities and status summary: *please describe the main ESMS-related activities and measures that have taken place during the reporting period, any changes to the scope of the project, any significant changes applied to safeguard instruments as well as any potential changes which may become relevant in the upcoming reporting period, all compared to the initial project proposal (new activities, changes to the target areas etc.). Use a bulleted list:*

1.6 Progress and effectiveness of mitigation measures

A: Social & environmental Impacts ¹⁰	B: Mitigation measures	C: Schedule ¹¹	D: Describe status of completion, suggest solutions where problems are encountered	E: Early judgement: Does this measure seem effective?
<Insert E&S risks & impacts from Table 6>.	<Insert mitigation measures from Table 1>.	<See footnote> green = on schedule/ahead of schedule/ complete; orange = slightly delayed; red = major delays/issues	<Only describe for any measures that are slightly delayed/ majorly delayed>.	<Summary of project view of effectiveness to date>.
I] Legacy issues and reputational risk	Stakeholder Engagement Plan			
	Information Disclosure			
	Joint stakeholder meetings			
	Clear media (print, visual and social media)			
II] Risks of Gender Inequality, human rights violations (participation rights), and risks of discriminating against vulnerable groups	CS and Alternative Livelihoods			
	Beneficiary selection protocol			
	Inclusion of women in sensitisation meetings			
III] Risk discrimination against Indigenous Peoples	CEPF including FPIC Protocol:			
IV] Risks pertaining to Labor and working conditions affecting project workers	CEPF including FPIC Protocol:			
	All workers, volunteers, surveyors are informed of possible risks a priori, and join after due consideration of the risks			

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	Provision of medical insurance package direct project staff are provided medical insurance packages as a mandate.			
	Adequate training and equipping			
	Field boats with adequate stocks of first-aid and emergency medical equipment			
	Survey teams are always accompanied by armed Forest rangers/guards for protection			
<i>New ESMS risks that have emerged</i>				
<i>Other ESMS provisions</i>	Describe status of completion of actions/ measures			Outstanding action and timing
Disclosure	<Describe any key disclosure actions/ measures completed during reporting period>. -			
Grievance mechanism	<Summary of principle grievances or complaints received and how these were managed ¹² >.			

¹⁰ Column A and B are copied directly from the ESMP Table 1.

¹¹ Use colour coding: **green** = on schedule/ahead of schedule/ complete; **orange** = slightly delayed; **red** = major delays/issues.

¹² This section would simply summarize the principle grievances or complaints received during the reporting period, as well as the status on resolution. This can include any legal action/litigation against the project as well as their resolution. Note that the specific grievances would be registered and kept by the project proponent as per the grievance mechanism, and would not be shared with any other parties.

Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II

ESMP Annex 1

Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF), including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Wildlife Trust of India



Last updated: May 2022

Version Control

Project title	Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II
Document title	Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF), including the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guideline
Version	Version 1.0
Status	Working Draft
Date last updated	May2022
Lead author	Wildlife Trust of India
Requirement for tracking changes	Once a final version of the CEPF has been approved by IUCN please make all further modifications to the CEPF visible by either tracking changes or putting the modifications in a different colour in order to aid any subsequent review.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CEPF	Community Engagement and Planning Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
ITHCP	Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRE	Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAPs	Project Affected People
WB ESF	World Bank Environmental and Social Framework
WB ESS	World Bank Environmental and Social Standard

1 Introduction

Projects funded under the ITHCP are required to have established a provisional Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF) upon submission of a full proposal. The scope and scale of the CEPF is proportionate to the nature and scale of the potential risks and impacts of the project. Therefore, this document describes the CEPF, including the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guideline for the project titled “Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II” (hereafter referred to as “the Project”).

The CEPF is an annex to the project’s Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) which outlines the environmental and social management commitments that Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and its partners, viz. Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh, and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh will implement to manage potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts of the project, as per Figure 1.

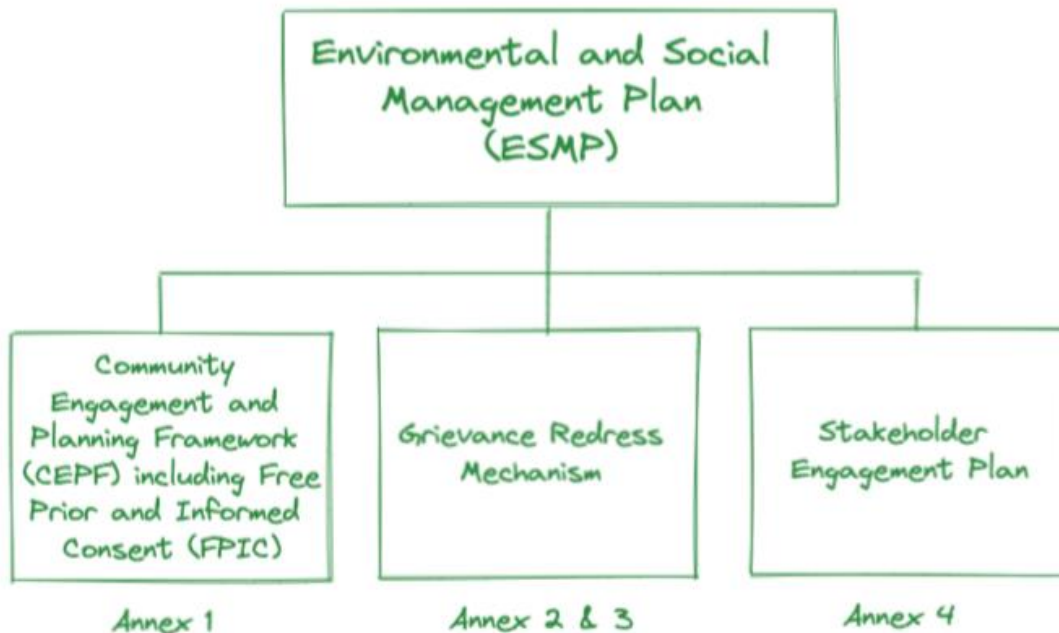


Figure 1: The CEPF in relation to project safeguard plans

Further, this document merges essential elements of a Process Framework (WB ESS 5) on eligibility and entitlements as well as an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) (WB ESS 7) on FPIC requirements. It has been developed in alignment with the IUCN Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW’s Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and international good practice, notably the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (WB ESF 2017), including the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) 1-10. The CEPF also complies with India’s and Bangladesh’s requirements as well as internal policies and procedures of Wildlife Trust of India, Wild Team Bangladesh, Jahangirnagar University and Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission.

1.1 Purpose of the CEPF

As stated in the project’s ESMP, the project does not contribute to any access restrictions which might prevent local communities from accessing land or natural resources. There are no involuntary, or

voluntary access restrictions required because of this project. Instead, the purpose of this CEPF is to ensure that the project is designed and developed in such a way as to ensure procedural and distributive justice, to take into account and actively include the vulnerable/most affected people, and to uphold Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). This CEPF aims to ensure that the community decision-making process is maintained at all levels of the project and appropriate measures have been agreed and put in place to mitigate adverse impacts, if any, on the vulnerable members of the community.

Specifically, the CEPF and FPIC guidelines aim to:

- Reduce the risk of top-down project development and external coercion to legitimacy. This refers to the importance of community-based design of the alternative livelihood projects and improved cook-stoves, and the location and design of the proposed fencing.
- Reduce the risk of elite control and capture to procedural and distributional justice. This refers to the risk of local elites or others dominating the project decision-making, and capturing the benefits of the projects at the expense of vulnerable groups. This refers to carrying out participatory and consultative meetings with stakeholders.
- Reduce the risk of social exclusion to vulnerable community members. This refers to the risk of not following appropriate participatory approaches, excluding the needs of women and other marginalized community members, and/or including the risk of social discrimination. This project takes care to be inclusive; considers interests of women and includes beneficiaries across social groups especially the marginalized community members and women.
- Ensure that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent is upheld.

While the introductory sections of this CEPF provide some context, the key section to refer to is Section 10 which presents the participatory process, including FPIC followed for the project. Details on this process is provided in Annex 2 in the project's protocols, and the resulting Village Action Plans as presented in Annex 3.

1.2 Guiding principles of the CEPF

To ensure the cultural appropriateness of the applied engagement and planning processes, the CEPF should build as much as possible on the existing local institutional settings and procedures in place, while at the same time adhering to the following guiding principles:

- The project will not be implemented in areas under territorial land disputes or conflict or where community consent to participate in the project cannot be established as part of the "first contact" and project introduction;
- All communities/ villages will be approached in the spirit of honest and constructive collaboration, have the rationale for the project, its purpose, activities, potential benefits and potential losses clearly explained and are given the right to consent or withdraw at any time and in every stage of the project;
- The engagement, planning and decision-making process, as well as institutional arrangements for grievance redress, will aim to work through established local institutions and procedures at the village, district and state levels, as applicable, and augment these only to ensure the full inclusion of all relevant community members;
- Communication will begin early in the project preparation stage, occur regularly throughout the project cycle in a consistent and transparent manner and allow for the timely disclosure of relevant information and comprehensive discussion of social and environmental risks and impacts;

- Consultation shall be well-documented, adequately resourced, capture stakeholder views to inform decision about the project (i.e. two-way communication) and allow adequate time for community decision-making;
- Engagement preparation shall take into consideration issues of gender equity, illiteracy, disability, ethnicity and socially excluded groups to ensure that dialogue is inclusive, tailored to meet the needs of disadvantaged or vulnerable persons¹ and carried out in the appropriate language(s) and methods to ensure an adequate understanding of the activity is achieved;
- All community members, disregarding whether they are belonging to an indigenous or ethnic minority group or not, will be fully included in the engagement process, including land tenure mapping, baseline survey, design of livelihood measures, to seek their consent and are eligible for the same risk management (mitigation, compensation and/or restoration), as applicable;
- Potential risks and impacts on all groups in the project area are perceived completely (e.g., the loss of access to natural resources, and associated loss of income, that could arise from improved protected area law enforcement, human wildlife conflicts, perception of unfair treatment, unclear eligibility criteria or potential discrimination of certain groups all of which might fuel social conflicts etc.);
- Compulsory acquisition of land or the physical resettlement of people through eminent domain will not be undertaken and allocation of small private land plots for livelihood activities or other infrastructure developments will be done either through offering alternate replacement land, compensation at full replacement cost or through voluntary land donations by the community or individual members as in line with the respective requirements for land donations by ESS 5;
- All restrictions caused by project activities regarding access to natural resources and conversion of environmentally adverse land use practices will only be taken up if a collective agreement and/or voluntary land contributions has been established by a community in a participatory manner and based on the consent of communities;
- Eligibility criteria to be considered for the risk management and for receiving project benefits are approved by all affected groups, including marginalised groups and all villages as well as the individuals that are to be significantly impacted by restrictions of access to natural resources within the project's domain;
- All adverse impacts on livelihoods – especially when they are significant and/or if they fall on vulnerable community members, will need to be avoided and if avoidance cannot be achieved they will be mitigated, compensated (as required for lost assets or structures) and restored through appropriate measures to be negotiated and agreed with the communities;
- User groups who are not members of participating communities, but are using the affected lands or will be affected by potential down-stream effects, will need to be identified through stakeholder analysis and impact mapping. These groups and individuals should also be considered as project affected persons and targeted with appropriate measures so that their livelihoods are not adversely impacted;
- Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation (MRE) will be conducted with the communities to ascertain that agreements are hold up and the collectively decided approach to risk management is adhered to, incl. fulfilment of any mitigation, compensation or restoration of adverse impacts, with particular focus on the most vulnerable and most affected community members.

¹ Those individuals those who may be more likely to be adversely affected by the project impacts and/or more limited than others in their ability to take advantage of a project's benefits. Such an individual/group is also more likely to be excluded from/unable to participate fully in the mainstream consultation process and as such may require specific measures and/or assistance to do so. This will take into account considerations relating to age, including the elderly and minors, and including in circumstances where they may be separated from their family, the community or other individuals upon which they depend.

2 Methodology Applied for Developing the CEPF

This section describes the steps that Wildlife Trust of India and its partners followed to develop the CEPF, including all stakeholder engagement activities that the Wildlife Trust of India and its partners carried out to inform the document.

2.1 Steps followed to develop the CEPF

1. The CEPF commenced with an initial meeting with the inhabitants of Kultali block of Indian Sundarban and forest department, along with a contingent of IUCN in November 2017, wherein preliminary discussions were initiated.
2. Following which a pilot project was initiated in the Sundarban to assess stakeholders and explore what activities could be acceptable to the and also have a lasting impact.
3. The pilot phase was carried out during June 2018 to December 2019, when various risk mitigation activities were planned and carried out. Thereby a stronger nexus was established with the local communities.
4. Through the course of the Phase – 1 of the project, the project teams carried out numerous formal and informal consultations with local people, village panchayat members, Joint Forest Management Committee members and local Forest Department officials to be able to develop a long-term plan for addressing the issues of human-tiger conflicts, forest resource dependence and plan the Phase 2 proposal framework.
6. The framework was evaluated by IUCN and KFW for Environmental and Social Impacts and an ESMS evaluation report was drafted, outlining the potential threats that some of the planned interventions could have on community rights and access to the forests. Based on inputs from the stakeholders and ESMS evaluation the project proponent and partners with support from the TLLG members developed an Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP), constituting a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) framework, a Grievance Mechanism (GM) and a Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF – this document).
7. Grievance Mechanism (GM) was introduced, especially for local communities. which involved installation of sign boards outlining the grievance filing, and redressal opportunities and the contacts for people to contact were put up at strategic locations after due discussion with the village panchayat.
8. The SEP was introduced especially for local communities, which constitutes a list of stakeholders, an analysis of their power and influence and a plan for engaging them through the course of the project.

2.2 Description of stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder engagement was initiated before the onset of phase 1, wherein, the project team carried out consultations with local villagers, forest department officials and other NGO partners to plan the long-term interventions that can be undertaken in the project area. Further, through the course of the phase-1 project, local community members, especially potential beneficiaries, village council members (Panchayat and Parishad), and local forest department members have all been continuously consulted with regarding continuation of existing initiatives and beginning new ones.

The stakeholder engagement activities largely involved consultative meetings and focus group discussions for local stakeholders, and consultative and review meetings with government stakeholders. In addition for certain section of the local communities, the SEP outlines the development of a Free, Prior and Informed Consent framework to be employed as a safeguard (Refer to the Annex 1).

3 Project Background

The project is located in the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve, India and Sundarban Reserve Forest, Bangladesh, with project sites located in the Sundarban Delta (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The landscape covers a core area of 1699.22 km² and a buffer zone of 2500.78 km² in India, and a ~ 6000 sq. km of reserve forests in Bangladesh (core and buffer unclassified). On the Indian side, this includes three forest fringe villages of Kultali Block, viz. Deulbari-Debipur (Deulbari-Debipur Gram Panchayat), Binodpur, and Maipith (Maipith-Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat); and on the Bangladesh side, the three adjacent villages of Sundarban called Kadamtala, Mirgang, and Golakhali.

The Sundarban Delta is situated in the state of West Bengal in eastern India, and Southwest Bangladesh, and comprises a vast landscape of numerous islands amidst a network of rivulets and streams and estuaries, branching out from the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers. It constitutes a unique mangrove ecosystem with a diverse variety of both floral and faunal types. It is considered as one of the most biodiverse regions of both India and Bangladesh and has been ascribed as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Sundarban delta is considered a high priority Class I Tiger Conservation Unit (TCU) and constitutes one of the largest available tiger habitats on the subcontinent. It covers an area of approximately 10,000 km², with about 60% of the landmass in Bangladesh and 40% in India. Tiger densities in both these portions of the landscape are estimated to be relatively low, with 62-96 tigers in the Indian side and about 84-130 tigers in Bangladesh Sundarban. Besides the tiger, it also harbours several other threatened species. In addition, the mangroves being a highly diverse ecosystem, provide important provisioning services such as edible aquatic lifeforms, medicinal plants, and fuel for local communities, while having other regulatory roles important to humans, such as absorption of airborne and waterborne pollutants.

The Indian part of the Sundarban Delta lies within two districts (north 24 paraganas and south 24 paraganas) with the larger chunk of the delta lying within the latter. It is one of the largest Tiger Reserves of India covering about 2584.89 km², and is like other Tiger Reserves sub-divided into Sundarban National Park along with Reserve Forest patches (Figure 2). On the Indian section of the project, no human settlements exist within the boundaries of the National Park or Reserve Forests, but the Reserve Forest Patches are utilised by local communities for livelihood purposes more extensively than the National Park area, where access is heavily restricted. On the Bangladesh side, the delta covers about 6000 km², and is classified as Sundarban Reserve Forest, within which specific regions are classified as Wildlife Sanctuaries. The Sundarban Reserve Forests in Bangladesh are divided into four ranges that together fall under two large administrative divisions – Sundarban East and Sundarban West, and altogether cover an area of 1396.98 Km², about 23.3 percent of the total area of Sundarban in Bangladesh (Figure 2).

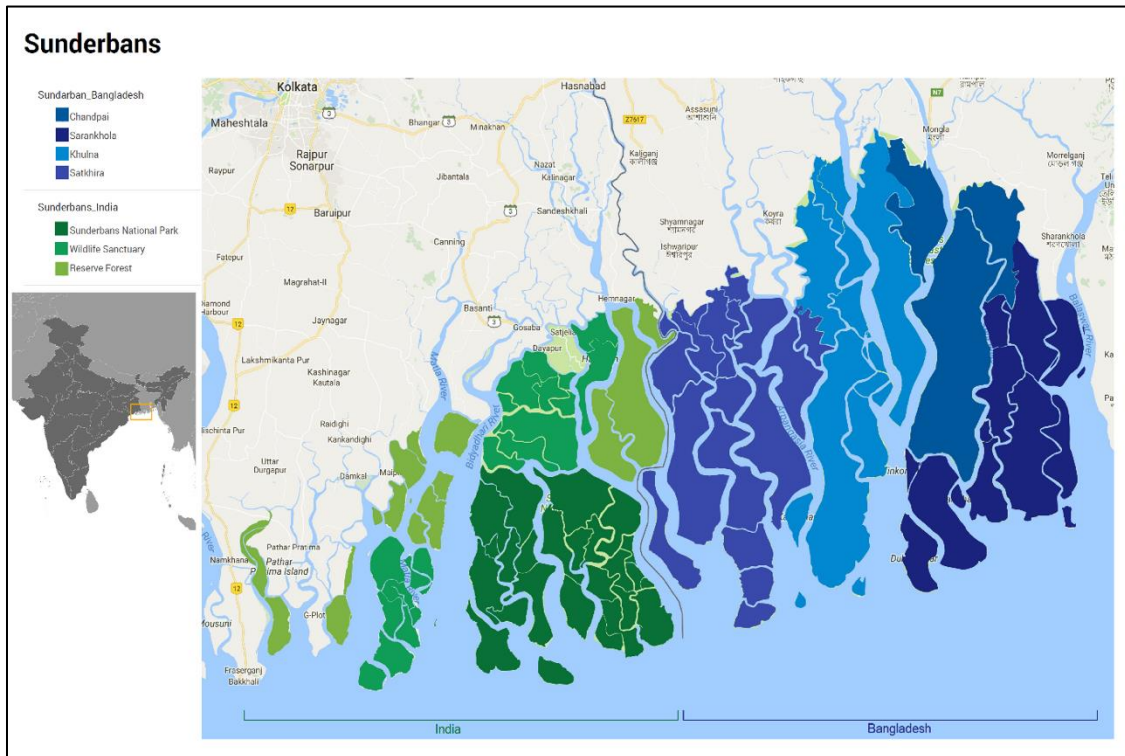


Figure 2: Locational map showing administrative divisions of the Sundarban Delta in Bangladesh and India.

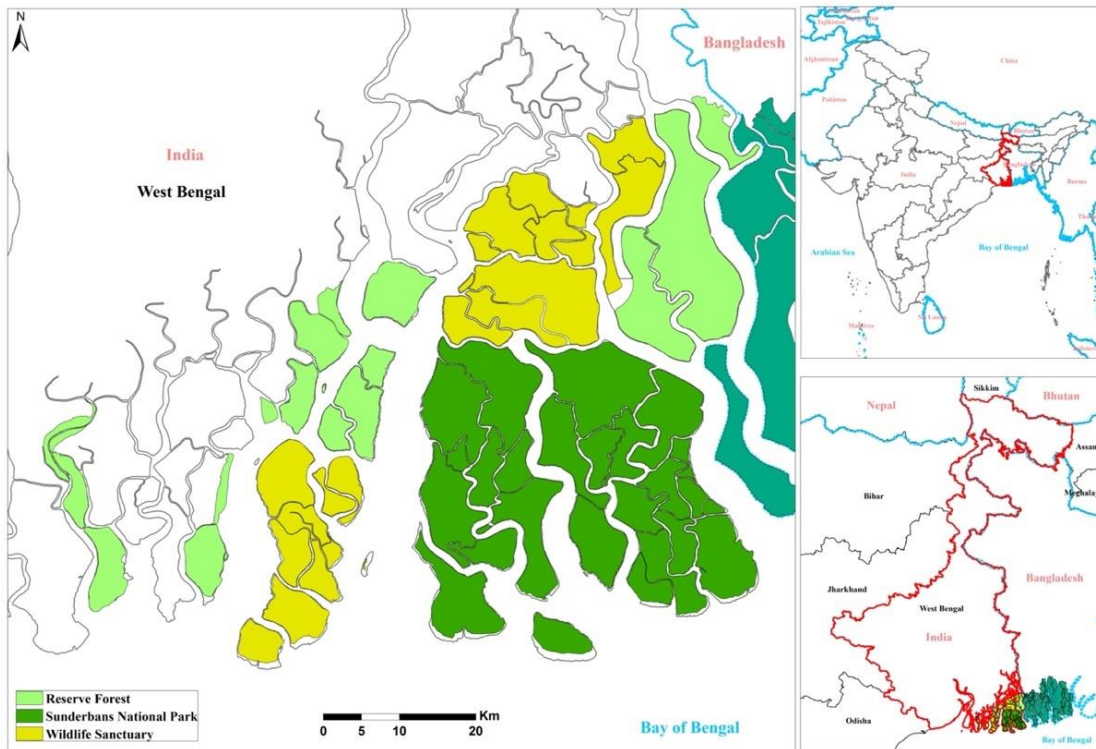


Figure 3: Locational map showing the project study area in the Sundarban Delta in Bangladesh and India.

The majority of the human population living within the delta region of the landscape, depend heavily on the natural resources of this landscape, primarily aquatic lifeforms, for subsistence and trade. Fishing for a wide variety of freshwater and saltwater fishes, crabs and shrimps are a major subsistence and commercial occupation, while annual collection of honey from the forests of the area is also a widespread practice. In addition, people also collect timber, firewood and grasses from these forests, although this has been greatly reduced in the recent years owing to access restrictions imposed by the Forest Department of Bangladesh and India, to curb degradation of the mangrove ecosystem.

While much of the problems in the Sundarban delta are similar for both the countries, the Bangladesh Sundarban faces a much higher level of poaching pressure than the Indian side, both from local communities as well as from organised groups. Poaching of tigers and their principal prey species remains a major threat to tigers in this landscape, considering the porous waterway network that perforates the delta landmass of the Sundarban. Enhancing cross-border cooperation and information sharing as well as engaging and integrating local communities in patrolling to prevent wildlife crimes, is critical to reduce illegal poaching of tigers and their principal prey species in this landscape.

Apart from poaching, the major issues in the Sundarban are owing to the over extraction of forest and other natural resources such as fish and crustaceans, and the resultant conflict that occurs with tigers - tigers habitually attack humans venturing into its domain to extract natural resources. In fact, it is suggested that human-wildlife conflict specifically with tigers and crocodiles are one biggest threat to this landscape, followed by climate change, salinity changes, shrimp seed collection by local people, other livelihood pressures on natural resources, and pollution. High human fatalities and livestock losses lead to higher risks of negative attitudes and antagonism towards the tiger, consequently leading to retaliatory killing of tigers, especially when they enter villages (either accidentally or for preying on livestock). This has been identified as a medium priority threat to tigers in Sundarban requiring immediate attention.

For long-term conservation of tigers in this landscape it is also important that the pressures imposed by the local populace on the natural resources is gradually reduced through alternative methods of rearing and harvesting the same or alternative resources, or adoption of lucrative non-forest dependent livelihoods. While it is difficult to veer people away from extraction of natural resources such as honey, fodder, fishes, shrimps, etc., it is important that efforts be made to provide them with alternative modes of sustenance, so that their dependence on natural resources is reduced, thereby also reducing the frequency of interaction with wild animals such as the tiger. It is also crucial that people are integrated into conflict management practices, and are gradually made aware of the problems of the tiger and its fragile habitat.

In both, India and Bangladesh, the project aims at reducing human tiger conflicts in areas that do not receive much attention by the Forest Department. In India, this part constitutes the western fringe of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve, which is just outside the bounds of the Sundarban Tiger Reserve. In Bangladesh, the project aims at reducing the human tiger conflict (HTC) in the area outside the Sundarban by applying physical barriers, capacity development of community people on safe forest work, sustainable resource collection and awareness build-up of local communities it will ultimately reduce HTC and pressure of Sundarban in context of resource harvesting and retaliatory killing of tiger thus provide support for suitable management of viable tiger population and Sundarban.

On the Indian side, the project will focus on three forest fringe villages of Kultali Block, viz. Deulbari-Debipur (Deulbari-Debipur Gram Panchayat), Binodpur, and Maipith (Maipith-Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat) (Figure 4). The total population of the three villages is 18,260 people. These are one of the most remote villages in the landscape with access from the mainland through one battered single lane

road, and through the water ways from various docking islands like Gosaba. On the Bangladesh side, the project will focus on three adjacent villages of Sundarban called Kadamtala, Mirgang, Golakhali (Figure 5). The total population of the villages is 2,969. These three are the most HTC prone villages of the Sundarban.

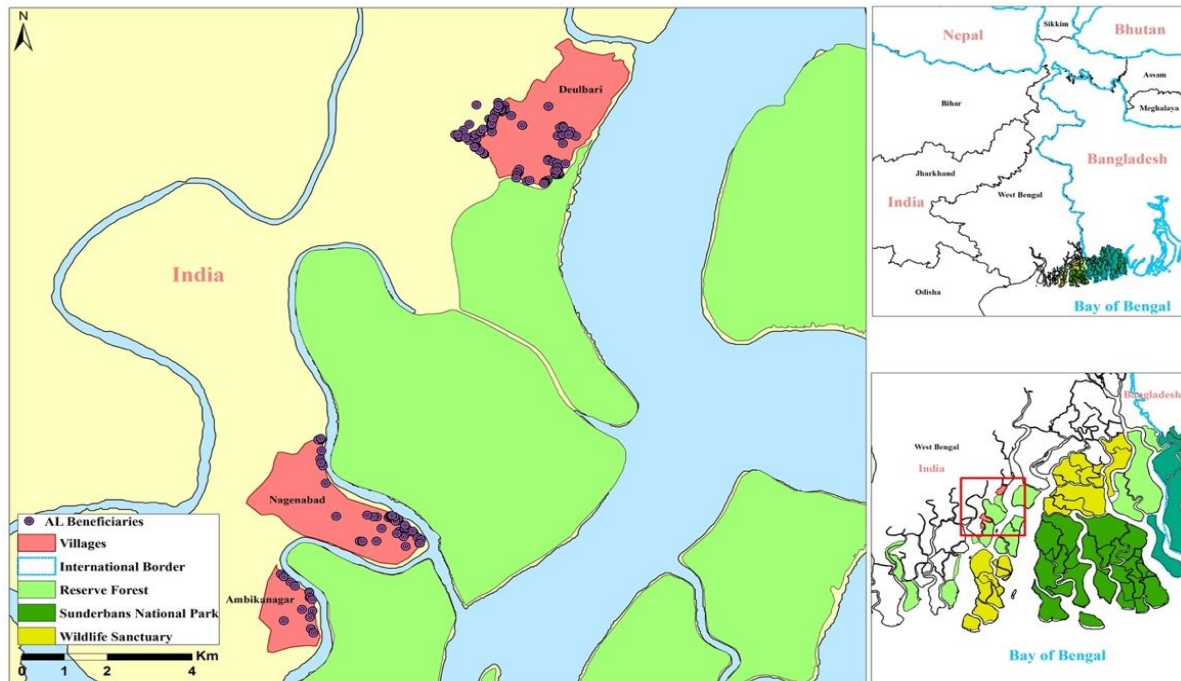


Figure 4: Map of the project area in the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve India and the three project villages

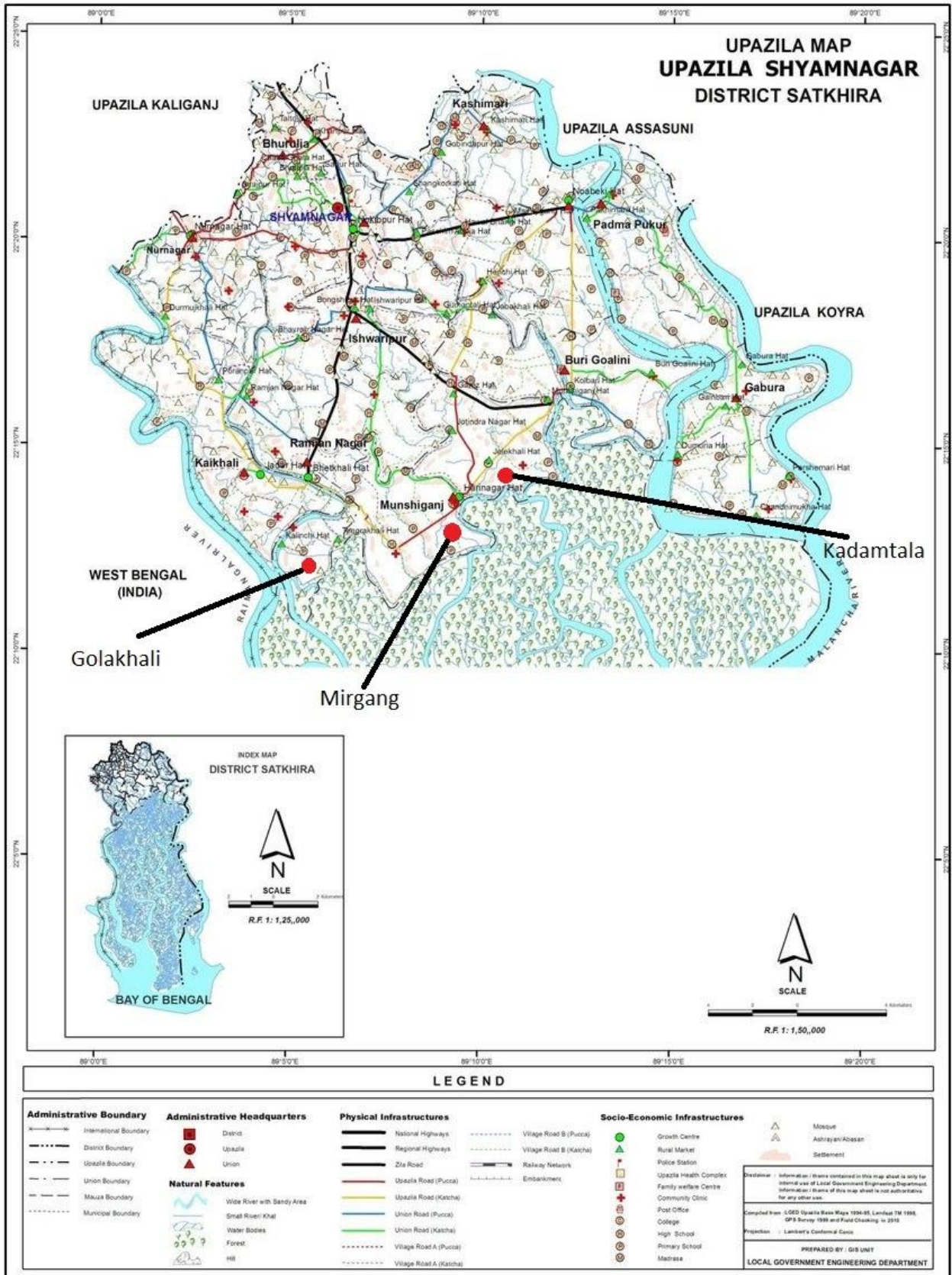


Figure 5: Map of the project area in the Bangladesh Sundarban showing the three project villages

4 Preliminary Assessment of Baseline Conditions (Community Profiles)

For details on the social context, descriptions of the key stakeholders and Project Affected People (PAPs) in the project area (including Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable/ disadvantaged groups) and a preliminary assessment of baseline conditions among PAPs (e.g., livelihoods, governance arrangements, socioeconomics) refer to the Project's ESMP.

The project envisions reducing forest dependency of forest fringe villages of Sundarban by providing and promoting alternative livelihood opportunities which would consequently reduce interaction of locals with the tigers in Sundarban landscape. The Phase 1 project began in 2018 when baseline data about magnitude of tiger issue was recorded and socio-economic data of the local inhabitants was collected. The details of which are as follows:

Status of natural resources collection & forest dependency in Sundarban

In Indian part of Sundarban, out 751 respondents from three target villages the forest dependency was found to be very high, i.e. between 95-100%. Baseline did not count the exact number of the days they entered into the forest for resource collection. But found more than 90% of the respondents went inside for all the months in a year. The respondents were land less or owned land estimated less than 1 ha and 70% to 90% belonged to below poverty level. For more detailed information, please refer to Table below.

From the study it has been found that resource collectors collect diversified resources from the Sundarban, namely, fire-wood, shrimp, crab, fish, honey, timber, honey and wax to mention a few. Regarding the resource collector status, the highest proportion is multiple resource collectors-fuel wood, fish, crab and shrimp 27.96 percent. On the other hand, the combine resource collectors- Honey, wax, fish and crab is low in number because of these resources are seasonal and not available throughout the year. The resource collection from forest involves lot of risk especially from tigers and crocodiles. The most risk job is honey collection. The majority of the resource collectors involve on fuel wood and additionally they depend on other resources.

Income from Forest Resources

However, the study tried to measure the average annual income of different resource collectors from the Sundarban. Concerning the resource collector status, the multiple forest resource collectors-fish, crab and shrimp harvesters average annual income is higher than other resource collectors because of their high market demand. Fuel wood and fish collectors hold the second position on average annual income from the forest resource collection. Though the most of the resource collectors collect fuel wood, but their annual income is lower than the other resource collectors. The reason is identified that the fuel wood collectors harvest fuel wood mainly for household consumption.

Table 1: Baseline information on socioeconomic status of the project villages in the Sundarban of India and Bangladesh

	Villages	Total Population	Total Households	No. of households surveyed	% of households sampled	Proportion of illiterate individuals (of sampled respondents)	Proportion of indigenous households
Indian Sundarban	Deulbari-Debipuri	7315	1453	340	23.4	45.0	0.88%
	Binodpur	5330	1082	385	35.6	6.8	7.27%
	Maipith	701	126	26	20.6	5.0	0.00%
Bangladesh Sundarban	Kadamtala	5056	987	108	11.0	56.6	NA
	Mirgang	6025	1092	181	13.0	39.4	NA
	Golakhali	4621	890	107	12.0	33.4	4.00%

Proportion of households below poverty level	Average land size owned by households (Ha)	Average monthly income of households (Rs/Taka)	% Households dependent on forest resources	Average hours spent by average households in forest resource collection (Days/Month)
78.52%	0.21 ha (25.88% have land)	2700	95.83%	NA
90.90%	0.19 ha (68.05% have land)	2700	99.22%	NA
69.23%	0.31 ha (96.15% have land)	2700	100.00%	NA
80.00%	35.49	7301	83.00%	15 Days per month
80.00%	35.49	NA	83.00%	15 Days per month
80.00%	35.49	NA	83.00%	15 Days per month

5 Legacy Issues

The Sundarban unlike other Tiger Reserves of India has never been subjected to mediated relocation initiatives since the human population was always bifurcated out from the Protected Area due to its natural water-based contours. However, there has remained a constant struggle between local people and park authorities due to access restrictions levied on them as per the laws of the country. This struggle was heightened with the declaration of part of the forests as a notified Tiger Reserve in 1973, and then as a subsequent declaration of the Sundarban Wildlife Sanctuary in 1977. Subsequently, over the years, there have been several agitations staged by local people of different villages against the forest department. In the more recent past, the forest department has made immense efforts to develop better relationships with people through mediated action. One of these has been to provide regulated access to natural resources and permissions to extract them, to local people, through issuance of boat licenses. The forest department has also setup micro-enterprises for honey and other natural produces of the area to allow people to develop better livelihoods while reducing their extraction levels. While this

appears to have been successful in many parts of the landscape that constitutes the Tiger Reserve (TR), there are many other parts outside the bounds of the TR, but adjoining critical tiger habitats, where such initiatives have not permeated.

The Forest Department also initiated the establishment of Joint Forest Management frameworks in 2004 to ensure participation of local people in the management of the mangrove forests of the region. Joint Forest Management (JFM) is an approach and program initiated in the context of the National Forest Policy of 1988 wherein state forest departments support local forest dwelling and forest fringe communities to protect and manage forests and share the costs and benefits from the forests with them. Communities organize themselves into a JFM Committee to protect and manage nearby forests, guided by locally prepared byelaws and micro plans. West Bengal is the pioneer to initiate JFM, the first Government Resolution on JFM was issued in 1989 for southwest Bengal. However, in Sundarban the first order for the formulation of a JFM was constituted only in August 2004.

People of this region suffer from remarkably high levels of poverty, especially because there is very little scope for jobs or other forms of livelihoods that people can adopt instead of depending on forest-based livelihoods. Also, a very low proportion of skilled workforce exists in this region due to lack of opportunities, and due to a severe dearth of capacity development avenues. This has been a constant sensitivity in the region, when working towards alleviation of forest dependency. Therefore, all conservation projects in this landscape require to incorporate alternative livelihood development related activities for forest dependent families, to greater degree. Additionally, the landscape owing to its vastness and disparateness in terms of connectivity, has also lacked developmental initiatives by the government in many of its parts. Poor quality roads, lack of proper medical facilities, lack of electricity supply, sparse education facilities, poor supply of potable water, poor market infrastructure and connectivity, have been lingering issues in the landscape. In Bangladesh, people living in areas adjoining the Sundarban Reserve Forest (SRF) mostly lack safe drinking water. Due to climate change the water table has receded gradually, and water salinity has increased over the years. Moreover, uneven rainfall reduces rainwater harvesting opportunities. Hence, people have been aspiring and moving towards establishment of artificial water treatment plant/water desalination plants that can provide them fresh and safe drinking water. Besides, they also often re-excavate freshwater ponds and build PSFs (Pond Sand Filter) for extracting fresh water.

The mainstream economy of major population is directly or indirectly related to agriculture and forest resources. But due to adverse impact of climate change and anthropogenic activities, there has been an observed decline in the productive capacity of soil, primarily due to the increase in the soil salinity in a large number of places. Regionally there is a lack of job opportunities for locals and often families migrate away from the region towards nearby towns and cities in search of better opportunities. But there are enormous natural resources and opportunities in the region which can enhance the local economy if these resources are used in a sustainable way. As this area is highly rich in natural resources, and presently the people of the project villages are willing to try new income opportunities, there is a high chance to successfully engage them in different livelihood options which will provide a regular income. Along with this, the currently poor road network is being improved, which in time will ease transportation facilities for both people and goods. This will ultimately boost up market access and thus extend the marketing network. In both India and Bangladesh, most of the people living adjacent to Sundarban forests collect resources from the forest by acquiring a Boat License Certificate (BLC) issued by the forest departments of the respective country. However, a large section of them also refrain from acquiring the license due to absence of proper identification papers, etc., and go to forests for resource collection without any legal permission. Forest Resource Collectors (FRCs) sell their product at local markets, from where small traders purchase and sell those products to urban or semi-urban dealers. Generally, FRCs collect honey, nypa palm, fishes, shrimp, and crabs and so on from the forests. Albeit people also practice agricultural crop production, fish and shrimp cultivation due to

availability of saline water in nearby canals and rivers. But, adverse impact of climate change caused by global warming, resulting in increasing coastal salinity has been detrimental for cereal crop production. Additionally, frequent natural catastrophic events like cyclones, storm surges, etc. causes damage to *ghers*/fish ponds and amplify various fish diseases, and also dry up water resources, ultimately leading to huge losses. Such catastrophes also lead to inundation of embankments and flooding of agricultural lands with saline water, rendering such lands unfit for cultivation for several years. Thus, people indirectly depend on forest resource collection either legally or illegally. On the other hand, these people do not have proper resource collection techniques and knowledge and so they fall prey to tiger attacks, causing situations of conflict, inside and outside of the forests.

6 Institutional and Legal Framework

The Wildlife Trust of India and its project partners, are committed to full compliance with India and Bangladesh's legal requirements, IUCN's ESMS policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW's Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and international good practice, notably the WB ESF (2017) and ESS1-10.

Adherence to Standards places an emphasis on ensuring adequate public consultation and disclosure is carried out so that affected communities are fully informed about the project and their views and concerns are taken into account. The IUCN and all of its ITHCP projects are committed to this. Stakeholder engagement shall be conducted on the basis of timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, provided in a culturally appropriate format.

For details on the institutional and legal framework, refer to the Project's ESMP.

In India, the following forest protection laws govern the institutional framework of the project:

- The Wildlife (Protection) Act (WPA), 1972, was enacted to provide for the protection of wild animals, birds and plants. This Act provides for the protection of the country's wild animals, birds, and plant species, in order to ensure environmental and ecological security. Among other things, the Act lays down restrictions on hunting many animal species. The Act was last amended in the year 2006. The Act provides for the formation of wildlife advisory boards, wildlife wardens, specifies their powers and duties, etc. It helped India become a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**). CITES is a multilateral treaty with the objective of protecting endangered animals and plants.
- The National Policy 1952 was formulated out of the need for a reorientation of forest policy in light of the changes that had taken place since the enunciation of the 1894 policy on forests. Forestry in India, whether state or privately owned, was classified into four categories of Protection Forests, National Forests, Village Forests and Tree Lands. The Policy laid down "that India, as whole, should aim at maintaining one third of its total land area under forests." village communities should under no circumstances be permitted to use forests at the expense of the "national interest", which was identified with defence, communications and vital industries. The policy emphasised scientific conservation, emphasis was laid on the conversion of low value mixed forests to high value plantation of commercial species.
- Forest Policy of 1988 (NFP) represented a major paradigm shift from the earlier policies and this shift began to take some shape through the introduction of Joint Forest Management in India in 1990.
- The Forest Conservation Act of 1980 (FCA) can be seen as a single biggest legislative initiative in Indian history to slow deforestation caused by the conversion of forestlands to non-forest purposes. Under this Act, no State Government can authorise such conversion without securing Central

Government's approval. The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, came into force to address deforestation. Though the Indian Forest Act has been in force since 1927, it was geared to allow the colonial British administration to control the extraction of timber and not aimed at preserving forests or addressing deforestation.

- The Biodiversity Act 2002 has been enacted in pursuance of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992. The preamble to the Act borrows the objectives as laid down in the Convention and says that the Act is to "provide for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of the benefits" arising therefrom.
- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 is a result of the protracted struggle by the marginal and tribal communities of our country to assert their rights over the forestland over which they were traditionally dependent. This Act is crucial to the rights of millions of tribal and other forest dwellers in different parts of the country as it provides for the restitution of deprived forest rights across India, including both individual rights to cultivated land in forestland and community rights over common property resources. However, as far as Sundarban biosphere reserve is concerned people here never lived inside the current forested area and hence cannot claim rights to forest land, although they do claim rights to access to forest resources.
- The Sundarban mangrove forest, one of the largest such forests in the world (140,000 ha), lies on the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers on the Bay of Bengal. It is adjacent to the border of India's Sundarban World Heritage site inscribed in 1987. The site is intersected by a complex network of tidal waterways, mudflats and small islands of salt-tolerant mangrove forests, and presents an excellent example of ongoing ecological processes. The area is known for its wide range of fauna, including 260 bird species, the Bengal tiger and other threatened species such as the estuarine crocodile and the Indian python.

The District Land & Land Reforms Officer has exclusive control over the Land & Land Reforms administration within his/her district, and he/she functions under the general supervision and control of the Principal Secretary and Land Reforms Commissioner of the state, as well as the Director of Land Records and Surveys and Joint Land Reforms Commissioner, West Bengal.

In Bangladesh, at National level, Ministry of Land is the final authority in land management. The Ministry concentrates on policymaking, supervision, and monitoring of land administration. At divisional, district, Upazila and union levels, the key role in this regard is played by the Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner of land and Local revenue collector, respectively.

The Office of the Additional District Magistrate and District Land & Land Reforms Officer has been set up by integrating the former District Settlement Office and the Land Management Wing of the Collectorate and is placed under the overall charge of a District Land & Land Reforms Officer, having the powers of a Collector. One or more Deputy District Land & Land Reforms Officer and other technical and non-technical Officers and staff assist the District Land & Land Reforms Officer.

The office of the District Land Reforms Officer is largely involved in undertaking the following tasks,

- Detection & vesting of ceiling surplus of Land
- Distribution of vested lands among the landless peasants
- Acquisition of homestead land and its assignment among homeless rural poor
- Providing protection to sharecroppers by recording their names

- Continuous Maintenance & Updating of Record of Rights & Maps
- Providing Record of Rights & Maps to the General Public
- Inter departmental land transfer
- Granting short term and long-term land use leases
- Land management
- Land survey and
- Land transfer registration

Villagers who reside in the villages in Sundarban fringes have the right to use the resources of village site but do not have the right to exploit resources from forest. In India the forested part of the land comes under the jurisdiction of Forest Department and is not considered as revenue land. The Forest Department has its own legal structure that allows or disallows people from entering or exploiting the forested area for any purpose whatsoever. Locally the Forest Department, provides licenses to enter and exploit forest resources, and people without the license are inhibited from indulging in resource collection. In this manner the right to available forest resource is restricted for the villagers by existing laws and regulations pertaining to forested lands. Further, since no villages exist within the bounds of the forests, the Forest Rights Act of 2006 is also not applicable here. All villages lie outside the protected forests along its fringes.

Land administration in Bangladesh has a long history that dates back to systems developed by the Hindu rulers of ancient India, and also carries the heavy imprint of the elaborate system of land surveys and registration for revenue collection purposes introduced by the British. The present-day administration of land is divided into four different functions across two Ministries.

- The Directorate of Land Records and Surveys (DLRS) in the Ministry of Land (MOL) conducts cadastral surveys, from which it produces mouza (revenue village) maps showing individual plots of land and khatian (individual land record certificates).
- The Land Reform Board (LRB), also in the MOL, has a number of functions that it discharges through Upazilla Land Offices and Union Tehsil offices. It administers khas (public) land and manages abandoned and vested property. It updates maps and land records between surveys and sets and collects the Land Development Tax (LDT). It is also formally responsible for the implementation of land reform legislation and the implementation of tenant's rights.
- The Land Appeals Board (again in the MOL), is the highest revenue court in the land, serving as the final arbiter in matters of khas land, changes in records, plot demarcation and taxation which cannot be resolved at lower levels. As such, it represents the final link in a chain running upwards from the Assistant Commissioner (Land) and the Nirbahi Officer at the Upazilla, through the Additional Deputy Collector (Revenue) and the Deputy Revenue Collector at the District.
- Finally, the Department of Land Registration in the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs records land mutations arising through sale, inheritance or other forms of transfer, reports changes to the Ministry of Land, and collects the Immovable Property Transfer Tax.

The Forest Act of 1927 as amended in 1989 has its roots in Indian Forest Act, 1878. The Forest Act grants the government several basic powers, largely for conservation and protection of government forests, and limited powers for private forests. The 1927 version of the act was amended in 1989 for extending authority over "any land suitable for afforestation".

Forest department is the main agency to implement the provisions of the Forest Act. The Act, however, does not specify any sort of institutional structure for the forest or other land holding agencies. It also does not set out any specific policy direction for managing the forests. Bangladesh has formulated a series of eleven rules for delegating legal powers to Forest Officers, from the Chief Conservator down to Forest Guards for implementing certain parts of the act. Most of the forest lands under the management of forest department are areas declared to be reserved and protected forests under this act. The available figures for the current total area of reserved or protected forest are not consistent. The areas in Bangladesh that are referred to as "village forests" are actually privately owned land covering about 270,000 hectares. Under the Forest Act the government may establish village forests by assigning parts of reserved forest to particular villages for their use. However, this provision has never been used in Bangladesh.

The act empowers the government to regulate the felling, extraction, and transport of forest produce in the country. The process to get permit for felling trees and transporting the material is quite bureaucratic and time consuming. The level of competent authority increases with the number of trees in question. Forest department limits the routes for transportation of forest produce, inspects and marks the material for transportation.

a) The contribution of Phase-1 project to the National Tiger Action plan:

The Phase I project contributed to the following tiger conservation strategies as outlined in the NTAP 2011-2022 of India:

1. Strengthening of infrastructure within tiger reserves (Strategy b, Activities 8 & 11, NTAP 2011-2022, page 142)
2. Addressing man-animal conflict; Procurement/deployment of camera traps, cages to catch problematic animals; Procurement of tranquilizing equipment, rescue vehicles and drugs. (Strategy d, activities 2 & 3, NTAP 2011-2022, page 142)
3. Co-existence agenda in buffer / fringe areas: Providing ecologically viable livelihood options to local stakeholders for reducing their dependency on forests. (Strategy e, sub activity 1, NTAP 2011-2022, page 143)

The Phase I project activities contributed to the following Strategic Actions as outlined under the Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (BTAP) 2018 – 2027.

1. Develop THC mitigation activities and supporting protocol to reduce tiger human and livestock killings and injury (*BTAP Threat Goal 1: Increase Tiger Density in SRF; Threat Objective3 - Minimise Tiger-Human conflict – High Priority*).
2. Monitor numbers of human, livestock and tiger killings and injury and spatial distribution of THC. (*BTAP Threat Goal 1: Increase Tiger Density in SRF; Threat Objective 3 - Minimise Tiger-Human conflict – High Priority*)
3. Raise awareness in target groups about legal protection and importance of tigers and their prey; conduct school-based awareness programmes and incorporate tiger conservation in school curricula. (*BTAP Threat Goal 3: Maintain sufficient prey base; Threat Objective 2 - Minimise Prey poaching – High Priority*)
4. Understand socio-economic dependencies of forest users on the Sundarban and develop alternative income opportunities. (*BTAP Threat Goal 4: Maintain sufficient to support the Sundarban tiger and prey populations; Threat Objective 2 – Reduce unsustainable forest resource use – High Priority*)

5. Develop THC alleviation strategies including VTRTs (to reduce tiger and livestock killing), FTRTs (to reduce human killing incidents) and specialist teams (to deal with situations requiring tiger capture) (*BTAP Challenge Goal 1: improve conservation capacity in the BFD and its conservation partners; Challenge Objective 2 – Build field level capacity to deal with immediate tiger conservation needs – High Priority*)

b) How will your Phase II project feed into the NTAP?

Since the phase II of the project aims at amplifying the initiatives of Phase I, in the Indian Sundarban, the Phase II project will continue contributing to the following strategies,

1. Firstly, the project will aim at developing the tried and tested barrier systems in the project areas, where they do not exist and are out of the purview of the government to undertake. Secondly, it will also continue to provide assistance to the forest department through the procured boats and other equipment such as drones, all of which go onto comprising strengthened infrastructure in the region. These activities therefore confer directly to the NTAP activity, “*Strengthening of infrastructure within tiger reserves*” (Strategy b, Activities 8 & 11, NTAP 2011-2022, page 142).
2. The project aims greatly at reducing human-tiger conflicts in the project region, by directly aiding department officials in a conflict situation. This will be done by providing skilled assistance in monitoring the conflict animal, driving it back into the forest, or capturing the animal involved when required. All of this is to be achieved with the help of all the equipment purchased. Thus, it addresses two activities under the NTAP strategy, ‘*Addressing man-animal conflict; Procurement/deployment of camera traps, cages to catch problematic animals; Procurement of tranquilizing equipment, rescue vehicles and drugs*’. (Strategy d, activities 2 & 3, NTAP 2011-2022, page 142).
3. The projects’ planned initiatives towards developing more enhanced awareness and increasing the sensitivity towards tigers and their habitat conservation is, as well as the activities pertaining to the promotion of alternative livelihoods and improved cook stoves, directly cater towards the NTAP strategy “*Co-existence agenda in buffer / fringe areas: Providing ecologically viable livelihood options to local stakeholders for reducing their dependency on forests*”. (Strategy e, sub activity 1, NTAP 2011-2022, page 143)

For Bangladesh part of the project, the planned activities cater to the following objectives of the NTAP (BTAP) and other government mandates.

1. Firstly, the project will support the raising of awareness through Banga bandhus, Tiger Scouts, and ongoing Sundarban campaign which will support “GoB’s development agenda 3.3.4 Mainstream tiger conservation” and “3.3.9 Build national capacity to implement education and awareness programmes, and community involvement” objectives of BTAP 2018-2027 of Bangladesh.
2. The project aims to reduce human tiger conflict in the project period. For this the project aims at installing barriers in select regions, continuing its work with VTRT, FTRT and the ERT approaches which will support to achieve tiger conservation threat goal “3.3.1: Increase tiger density in the SRF” and, “3.3.5: Improve conservation capacity in the BFD and its conservation partners” of BTAP 2018-2027.
3. The project also aims to increase skills and capacities of local communities like Journalist, students, resource collectors, conservationist, researchers and stakeholders through Community Based Training Centre (WildTeam Conservation Biology Centre) which will directly support to achieve threat goal 3.3.9: “Encourage collaboration to support the BFD in implementation of the BTAP 2018-2027”.

4. The proposed activities under JU component of Bangladesh aims to improve the understanding about tigers, prey population and the Sundarban. The activities as stated will directly address the objectives set out in the Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan, with particular focus to the BTAP threat objectives 3.3.7: *Ensure awareness and education is targeted at priority audiences*; p. 91), and BTAP threat objectives 3.3.2: *Evaluate current and desired state of tiger's prey population and population size of the Bangladesh Sundarban*; p. 84).

7 Preliminary Assessment of Key Risks² and Impacts³ by Stakeholder Group

One of the biggest risks impacting local people, irrespective of their ethnic, religious or class affiliation, is from human-tiger conflicts. Almost all people habitually venture into forests to collect natural resources such as crabs, prawn, fish, honey, etc., which being bountiful fuels an ever-increasing demand, and poses as a lucrative livelihood source for the most impoverished, despite the risks of getting killed by tiger attacks. While, the project does not aim at carrying out or supporting any form of relocation or people, and also does not support law enforcement activities within the landscape, it aims at reducing vulnerability of local people to tiger attacks. The project partners also have a strong mandate against levying or supporting of enforcement of any activity by the State Forest Department that could prevent access to natural resources over which local communities are dependent for their livelihoods. The project does not have a mandate to directly or indirectly resettle local communities.

Vulnerability to attacks by tigers and other wildlife species such as crocodiles are largely faced by men, as men predominantly take on arduous tasks such as venturing deep into the forests for honey or crab collection, although women also fall prey to such attacks in significant numbers, albeit less than men.

Another major risk in the landscape comes from natural disasters such as cyclonic storms, which cause significant damage to people's homes and livelihoods. This damage is mainly in the form of damage to houses and crops. Men and women, and people of all ethnicities are affected equally by such catastrophes. Over 80% of families, have 'Kuccha' houses (made of mud and bricks with thatched roofs), and thus, such people's homes are most impacted. Also, people's whose farmlands lie beside the edge of river channels are most impacted during storms as saline water floods the fields rendering those patched infertile for crop production for 1-2 years.

The project may pose:

- risk of top down project development and external coercion to legitimacy. Reduce the risk of elite control and capture to procedural and distributional justice. This refers to the risk of local elites or others dominating the project decision-making, and capturing the benefits of the projects at the expense of vulnerable groups.
- risk of social exclusion to vulnerable community members. This refers to the risk of rigid participatory approaches excluding the needs of women and other marginalized community members, including the risk of social discrimination.

² *Environmental and social risk is a combination of the probability of certain hazard occurrences and the severity of impacts resulting from such an occurrence. Therefore, risks are composed of two components: likelihood of occurrence, and the consequence of the resulting impact. This goes beyond some definitions of risk which focus solely on the probability of an event occurring, or to refer to an uncertain event of unknown probability that, if it occurs, could affect the achievement of one or more objectives. The significance of a risk can therefore be determined by understanding more about the two key components of risk – likelihood and consequence.*

³ *Impacts are defined as economic, social, environmental, and other consequences that can be reasonably foreseen and measured in advance if a proposed action is implemented. Potential impacts are those impacts that are predicted, while actual impacts have already occurred.*

- risk that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent is not upheld.

Another identified risk involves Indigenous people. In the project different ethnic communities classified as Scheduled Tribes (ST) exist, including the *Mundas*, *Santhals*, *Bhumijis* and *Oraons*. They are dispersed across the mixed ethnic villages in the region and enjoy equal status in the society as villages are primarily constituted of a mix of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes. On the Bangladesh Sundarban, no such assessment has yet been conducted, but in Satkhira District there are 70 *Munda* families in the project villages. The data collected on past conflict incidents however, reveals that the more vulnerable groups are class related, with poor households, with no land and fixed occupation being more vulnerable to such attacks, irrespective of their ethnic affiliation. In fact, villages with larger indigenous populations experienced lesser human deaths due to tiger attacks over the last two decades. Education appears to have a major role to play, with most recorded victims of tiger attacks being illiterate, besides being largely marginal workers or agricultural labourers.

The main project activity that could lead to impacts on ethnic and local communities is the construction of the 5-8 kilometre nylon fence. This barrier is specifically being developed to protect local communities and their property/ livestock from tigers and other animals that enter village lands from time to time. The nets are typically erected together by the Forest Department and local people, and all water channels are kept open for boats to move in and out, thereby imposing no restriction of access into the Protected Area for local people. Also, there are no specific indigenous groups in the project villages as the villages are mixed in terms of ethnicity and religion, people with indigenous lineages (Scheduled castes and tribes) are not discriminated against and enjoy equal rights and socioeconomic status in the project villages. Many of the phase I project beneficiaries are also people with indigenous lineages, without any discrimination. Further, to guard against this risk, the fence has been requested after consultation with local village people, council members and Forest Department officials, to ensure that indigenous peoples within these communities' consent to the activity, the project will establish a protocol for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) that will be applied prior to the fence planning and construction. This FPIC process will aim to ensure that the location of the nylon netting/and or illuminated barrier will take into account the local context combined with data on areas most frequently used by tigers to cross into village lands.

8 Avoidance and Mitigation of Risks and Impacts

The project could pose several risks as listed in the previous section however appropriate mitigation measures are in place to manage adverse impacts especially on the vulnerable members of the community. Since the inception of the project adequate and fair community decision making process was adopted to be continued through the days of implementation. This was intended to reduce risk of top down project development and external coercion to legitimacy. Regular consultative meetings and sharing is organised to reduce risk of elite control especially from local elites or influential people. Further to reduce risk of capture to procedural and distributional justice regular monitoring of distribution of benefits is done whether it is for facilitating alternative livelihoods or improved cook-stoves in individual households. The project takes into consideration that no vulnerable group is troubled and participation from under-represented and marginalised groups is ensured to reduce the risk of social exclusion of vulnerable community members. In fact, the women and representatives of the vulnerable groups form the major part of beneficiaries of the project. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples and local communities right to free, prior and informed consent is upheld by having a proper grievance mechanism in place and making all the concerned forms available to the stakeholders.

9 Compensation and Restoration

The project does not have any inbuilt initiative to compensate local communities in light of any of the elucidated risks. This is primarily because the government of India, through the State Forest Department already operates a compensation mechanism for compensating for losses incurred due to human-tiger conflicts. Such claims are made by local people themselves in the respective range or beat offices of the forest department, and after careful evaluation of the claim, the requisite amount is disbursed to the victim or to the next of kin of the victim.

Similarly, during instances of devastation due to natural disasters the state government routinely disbursed relief to the affected people in the region, and often also mediate compensation or restoration of village homes and agricultural fields.

10 Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guideline

In the communities where the project will be working in India and Bangladesh, there are various Scheduled Tribes, who are recognised as Indigenous People in India. Ethnic groups include the *Santals, Bhumij, Oraon, Munda, Lodha*, among others. Neither India nor Bangladesh are signatories of ILO 169. In India, Indigenous People are recognized under the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Act of 1989, as well as other acts that delineate the connect of the people to the lands, such as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. While the Indian government acknowledges the marginalized situation of various Scheduled Caste and Tribal groups, it also therefore through its various acts and laws, confers reservations, and other supportive benefits, in order to alleviate discrimination. These reservations, benefits and schemes are applicable all across India and in the state of West Bengal it is no different. Specifically, in Sundarban, there is no specific advantage or disadvantage conferred to Indigenous People.

In Bangladesh, Indigenous Peoples are treated as 'tribal' in official documents, though in the Act 12 of 1995 and Rules 6, 34, 45, 50 of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Regulation (1900), they are documented as 'indigenous peoples' or 'aboriginal' as per section 97 of the SAT Act (1950). In Bangladesh there are about 50 different indigenous communities living in the plain lands and hill areas. Some estimates suggest that the population of indigenous communities is over 3 million. According to the survey of 2011, the country's indigenous population is around 1,586,141, which signifies 1.8% of total population of the country.

The Constitution of Bangladesh ensures affirmative action for indigenous peoples and prohibits discrimination inter alia on grounds of race, religion or place of birth, Article 23A of which provides, "the State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities". It also spells out in Article 28 (4), "nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favor of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens". The Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) urged the government to enact the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (2015) which is being drafted by the Parliamentary Caucus on Indigenous Peoples and formulated by the NHRC aiming to ensure economic, social, and cultural rights of indigenous people.

What is Free, Prior and Informed Consent?

WTI and partners recognise FPIC as a specific right that pertains to Indigenous Peoples, recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007). FPIC is also part of a broader set of rights including the right to self-determination shared by all peoples, embodied within

the Charter of the United Nations and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (FAO 2016).

WTI and partners understand FPIC as the right to give or withhold consent to a project or activity that may affect Indigenous Peoples or their territories, and that implementing an FPIC process does not guarantee that rights holders will grant consent.

WTI and partners also recognise that once consent is provided, in whatever format, rights holders have the ability to withdraw this consent at any stage. Importantly, potentially affected Indigenous People are engaged through FPIC in a negotiation in which the conditions of the project design, implementation, M&E, can be negotiated (FAO 2016).

WTI and partners will implement the following FPIC principles for the negotiation of conditions under which the project is designed, implemented, monitored, and evaluated:

- **Free** = consent is given voluntarily and without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation.
- **Prior** = consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities to allow time to understand, access, and analyze information on the proposed activity.
- **Informed** = information provided prior to seeking consent is accessible, objective, and complete.
- **Consent** = a collective decision (“Yes”, “No”, or “Yes with conditions”) made by the rights-holders following their own timelines and decision-making processes with the option to reconsider if the proposed activities change or if new information relevant to the proposed activities emerges.

The implementation of these four principles can be evaluated on four dimensions: 1) whether they are free (non-coercion factor); 2) prior to the planned intervention (time factor); 3) do they inform (the transparent fully disclosed culturally mediated information factor); and 4) is consensus genuine (the effective participatory deliberations factor). Dimensions 1 – 3 above go a long way to determine if consensus is genuine, that is if dimension 4 is achieved. If any of 1 – 3 are not respected, the FPIC will be oppressive; it will lack trust if it is not conducted prior to the planned intervention; and where there is no transparency and full disclosure, decisions reached might not be in the interests of indigenous peoples and local communities, who might not consider it to be legitimate, and might not comply.

Rights holders

The people who have the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) are Indigenous and local Peoples, represented by their agreed representatives, in the villages where the project will be working or which could be affected by the project activities (see the ESMP, January 2021 for project description). However, as Indigenous Peoples do not live in clearly defined villages or communities, but form part of the population residing in the local communities, which have clearly defined decision-making bodies and processes, FPIC will be broadened to all participating communities (villages where the project is working, or which could be affected by the project). This includes Forest Resource Collectors (individuals particularly dependent upon natural resources for their living), direct beneficiaries (e.g. of alternative livelihoods and cook stoves) and other residents potentially affected by the proposed fence.

These rights holders are identified in the project’s Stakeholder Engagement Plan in the stakeholder analysis, and the planned engagement.

In India, the Wildlife Trust of India and LRRM, and in Bangladesh, WiildTeam, are the key agencies who endeavour to seek consent from local communities and other stakeholders for various initiatives

to reduce human-tiger conflicts in the region and alleviate the dependence of local people on forest-based livelihoods.

Implementation of FPIC

WTI and partners will follow four practical steps to implement FPIC, listed below. These steps will be further elaborated and detailed in the FPIC Protocol.

Step 1: Establish an FPIC Protocol

WTI and partners shall, starting with this outline document, establish an FPIC Protocol that outlines the proposed process, the rights holders, the conditions for FPIC, and provides guidance for project personnel responsible for the implementation of FPIC. Figure 6 illustrates where effective FPIC is situated compared to other forms of participation.

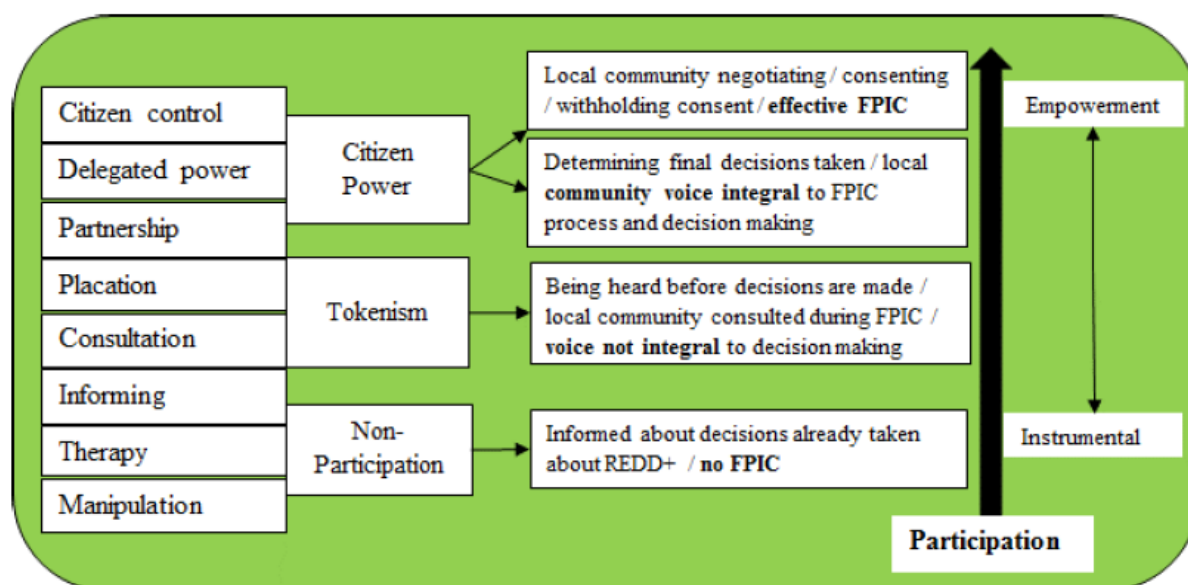


Figure 6: Ladder of participation for effective FPIC⁴

Step 2: Internal assessment of capacity to execute FPIC

WTI shall, assess its capacity to execute an effective FPIC process throughout the duration of the current project; this is to ensure that WTI is able to establish an FPIC Protocol that identifies all stakeholders and rights holders, respects all the conditions for FPIC, and provides the requisite guidance for project personnel responsible for the implementation of FPIC. The assessment will be carried out at project inception and at annual intervals through the duration of the project. Table 2 below provides the minimum internal capacity requirement to execute an effective FPIC process, which has been drafted by WTI and partners.

Table 2: Internal assessment of capacity to execute FPIC⁵

Consideration	Practical Question	Yes/No	WTI and partner evidence or actions
Support for human rights	Can you show a track record of recognition of diverse and locally	Yes	1. Have constituted and co-protected Village Conservation Reserves under Forest Rights Act (2005)

⁴ Figure 6 is adapted from Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216-224.

⁵ Table 1 is adapted from Owen, J. R., & Kemp, D. (2014). 'Free prior and informed consent', social complexity and the mining industry: Establishing a knowledge base. *Resources Policy*, 41, 91-100.

	defined sets of rights and entitlement		<p>2. Supported village people seriously affected by human-elephant conflicts settle in elephant free areas with all facilities or better livelihood and lifestyles.</p> <p>3. Rehabilitated ~ 40 bear dancers (deemed a criminal offence) recognising their rights to a better livelihood.</p>
Negotiation framework	Can you show track record of engaging in 'good faith' negotiation with local communities	Yes	<p>1. Negotiated with people in aggravated landscapes of human-wildlife conflict and managed to get people to participate positively in conflict mitigation activities.</p> <p>2. Negotiated with local village reserve owners to give up unsustainable hunting and preserve their forests for improving biodiversity and biomass production</p> <p>3. Stopped mass killing off whale sharks across the coast of Gujarat through negotiation with local fishers</p>
Parties	Have you carried out a stakeholder mapping to identify all parties	Yes	This is a standard practice followed by WTI in all its conservation projects. In the current project area also, this has been carried out and a detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been drafted.
Relationship	Do you understand the relationships between stakeholders and the levels of trust between parties	Yes	<p>WTI acquired this understanding mainly through its on-ground partner LRRM who have been working with the communities in this region for last 5 years or so. Additionally, phase 1 scoping phase provided ample opportunity to garner a deeper understanding of relationships between different stakeholder groups.</p> <p>In Bangladesh Sundarban, WildTeam has been working for the last five years and additionally the ITHCP phase 1 period provided the scope to gather this understanding.</p>
Power dynamics	Do you understand the power asymmetries between stakeholders and the impact on local relationships	Yes	<p>WTI acquired this understanding mainly through its on-ground partner LRRM who have been working with the communities in this region for last 5 years or so. Additionally, ITHCP phase 1 scoping phase provided ample opportunity to garner a deeper understanding of relationships between different stakeholder groups. In Bangladesh Sundarban, WildTeam has been working for the last five years and additionally the phase 1 period provided the scope to gather this understanding.</p>
Knowledge	Do the local communities have a comprehensive understanding of FPIC prior to executing FPIC process	No	<p>They are not aware of FPIC, but through the project they have been made to understand the projects' objective and its outcomes and have also acquired written consents from all beneficiaries in Phase 1 ITHCP.</p> <p>Action: Raise awareness through the development of the FPIC protocol during project inception.</p>
Capacity	Do you have team with capacity to convey, receive and analyse human rights and development gaps in local area	Yes	Action: further capacity needs to be built on internationally accepted norms and processes.

Participation	Do you have a system for empowered participation of local people in FPIC process in place (see Figure 7)	Yes	Ensured through village level institutions
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Step 3: Precursory ‘consultations about FPIC consultations’ executed (Table 3)

WTI and partners carried out a precursory ‘consultations about FPIC consultation’ at project inception. The precursory consultations shall be inclusive of participants from all stakeholders and rights holders groups; the precursory consultations explained the FPIC protocol and process and ends with the identification of legitimate FPIC representatives of all affected and concerned groups, who will stand, speak, and act on behalf of their groups in the FPIC process. Table 2 below should be used to document the outcome of the precursory consultations.

These consultations therefore were aimed to establish the legitimate actors involved in the FPIC decision-making process, including:

- How women, youth and any marginalised or vulnerable groups (e.g. Forest Resource Collectors) represented in decision-making?
- Who were the freely chosen representatives involved in decision-making?
- What was the decision-making process? (clear steps)
- What were the conditions required by the community? (e.g. capacity, information, timing, other)
- What information was required that helped making these decisions? (informed)
- When information was needed to be made available? (schedule, prior)
- What was the decision for consent (e.g. meeting) and how it was documented?

These consultations also raised awareness about the project’s grievance mechanism, which included grievances about the quality of the FPIC process.

Table 3: Precursory ‘consultations about consultations’ executed

Who is executing the precursory consultations	What is the experience of executing agent	Who participated (stakeholder / rights holder group)	Who will represent group in FPIC process	Contact details of representative	Signature of representative
WTI in India	WTI has 6 different projects and a two-decade long history of working with local people to further conservation causes.				
LRRM	LRRM has experienced sociologists who undertake community level work. In the field they will conduct consultations with local				

	communities following the guidance of, and protocols set under the FPIC by WTI.				
Wild Team in Bangladesh	Wild Team has been working for nearly one decade in Sundarban with local communities				

Step 4: System for third party monitoring put in place (Table 3)

WTI and partners shall, appoint an appropriately qualified and experienced third party to periodically monitor their FPIC process, starting from the precursory consultations. This will ensure that WTI FPIC process is validated (or not) as meeting best practice; acceptable third-party monitors shall include organizations such as IUCN with established track record of designing and implementing FPIC. The third-party monitoring exercise shall be carried out annually; Table 3 should be filled to document feedback from monitors after each monitoring exercise.

Table 4: Feedback from third party monitoring of FPIC process

Who are your third-party monitors	Qualifications and Experience	What is your relationship to third-party monitors	What is the relationship between monitors and local people	Dates of monitoring exercise	Key feedback
IUCN – Country Offices (India and Bangladesh)	To be defined during project inception.	No direct relationship WTI and IUCN have been associated in joint policy meetings and in a small grants initiative under their Mangroves for the Future Programme.	No direct relationship. It is indirect only through the current project. IUCN has not worked in this part of the landscape (Kultali block) before. Local people are unaware of IUCN.	Tbd	

Documenting the FPIC process

WTI and partners shall, document all FPIC related activities during project implementation including capacity building activities, precursory consultations, regular periodic consultations, and third-party monitoring exercises. These reports shall be produced regularly on a quarterly basis. Documentation include reports, audio recordings, and video documentation; and must show the contact details and signatures of all project staff, representatives from partner organizations, and local communities that were involved in the activity being documented. The FPIC reports are to be publicly available on WTI, and other project partners, and third-party monitors websites. WTI shall freely distribute copies of reports to project partners and to representatives of affected local groups and communities; and make reports available to any member of local groups and communities that request for them.

FPIC Process Work plan

The FPIC process is not a one-off event at the start of a project; it is a never-ending consultative process through the life cycle of a project. Therefore, WTI shall adopt a FPIC process work plan that commences at the start of the project and terminates at the end of the project. Table 4 provides elements of FPIC work plan to be adopted by WTI; the work plan also provides the basic elements for third-party monitoring.

Table 5: The FPIC process work plan through the project life cycle

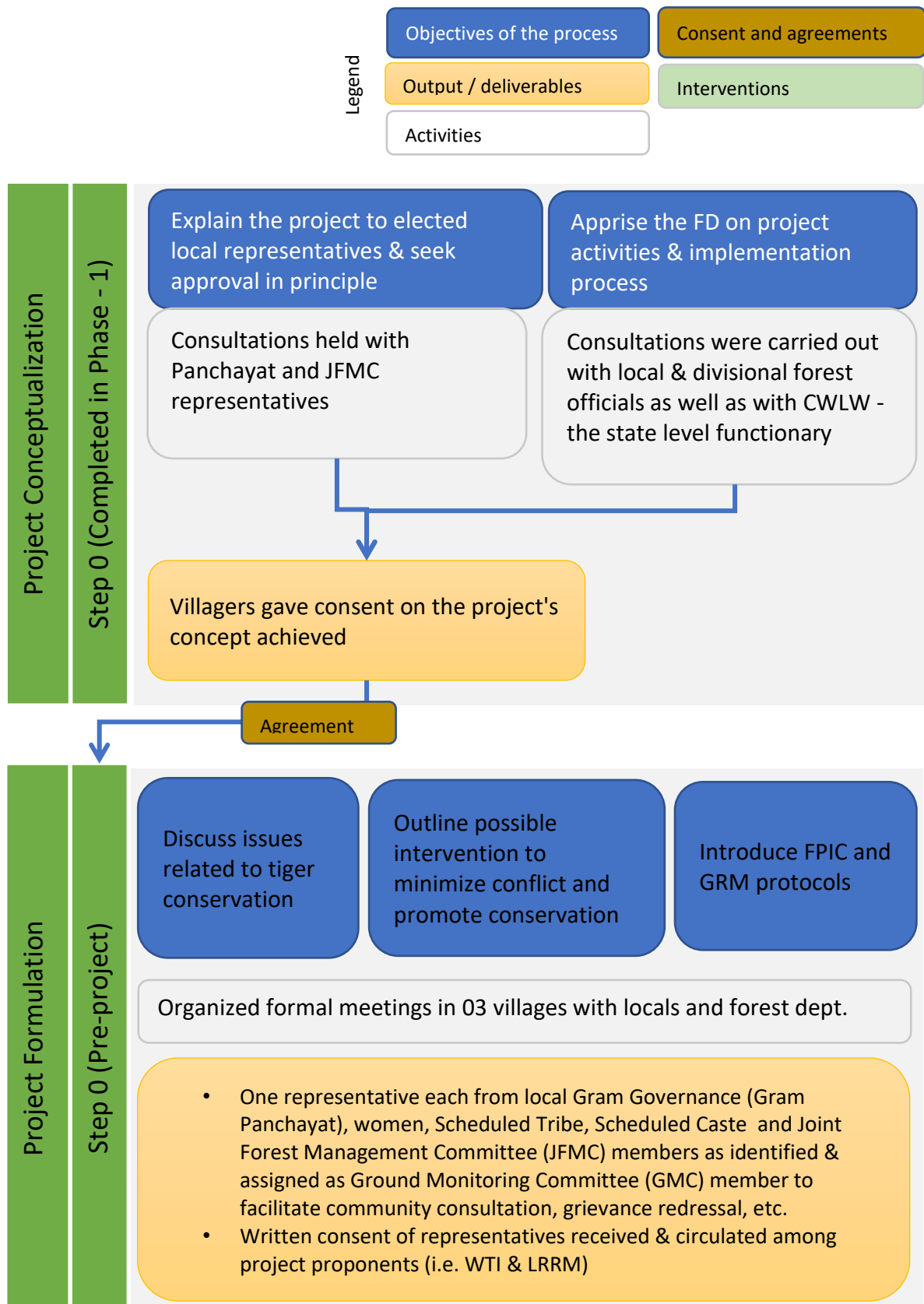
Activity	Affected Actors	Periodicity
Pre-consultation consultations	WTI, partners, members of affected local communities	Commencement of project
Draft FPIC Protocol	WTI, partners, representatives of affected communities	Commencement of project (reviewed annually)
Team FPIC capacity training	WTI and partners	Commencement of project (reviewed annually)
Regular FPIC consultations	WTI, partners, representatives of affected communities	Prior to commencement of planned and unforeseen project activities that affect local communities
FPIC third party monitoring	WTI, partners, third party monitor, representatives of affected communities, members of affected local communities	Annually
Documentation of FPIC process	WTI and partners	Quarterly reports
Dissemination of FPIC reports to affected parties	WTI, partners, third party monitor, representatives of affected communities, members of affected local communities	Quarterly
FPIC feedback	WTI, partners, third party monitor, representatives of affected communities, members of affected local communities	Rolling basis

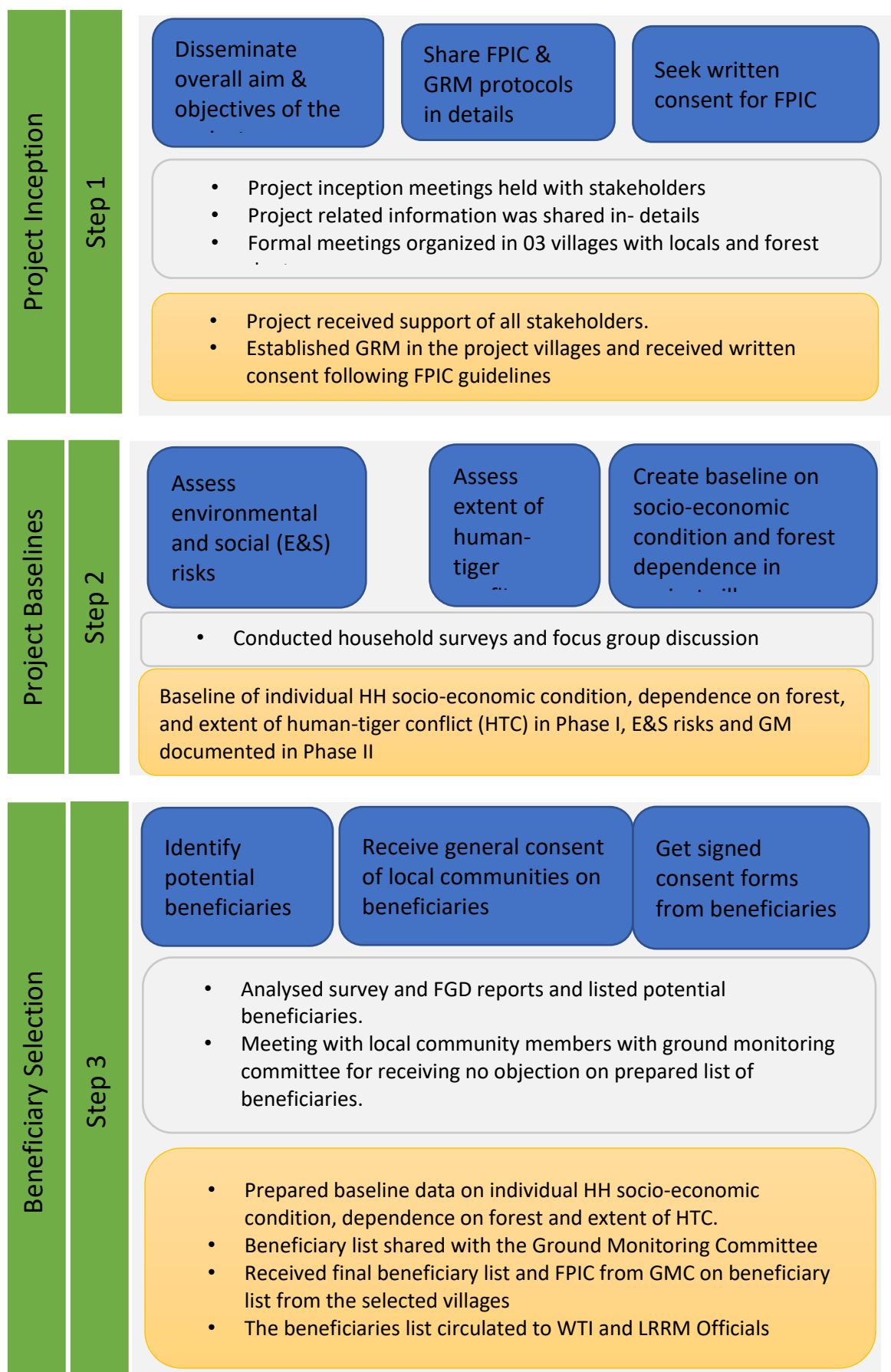
Declaration of Commitment

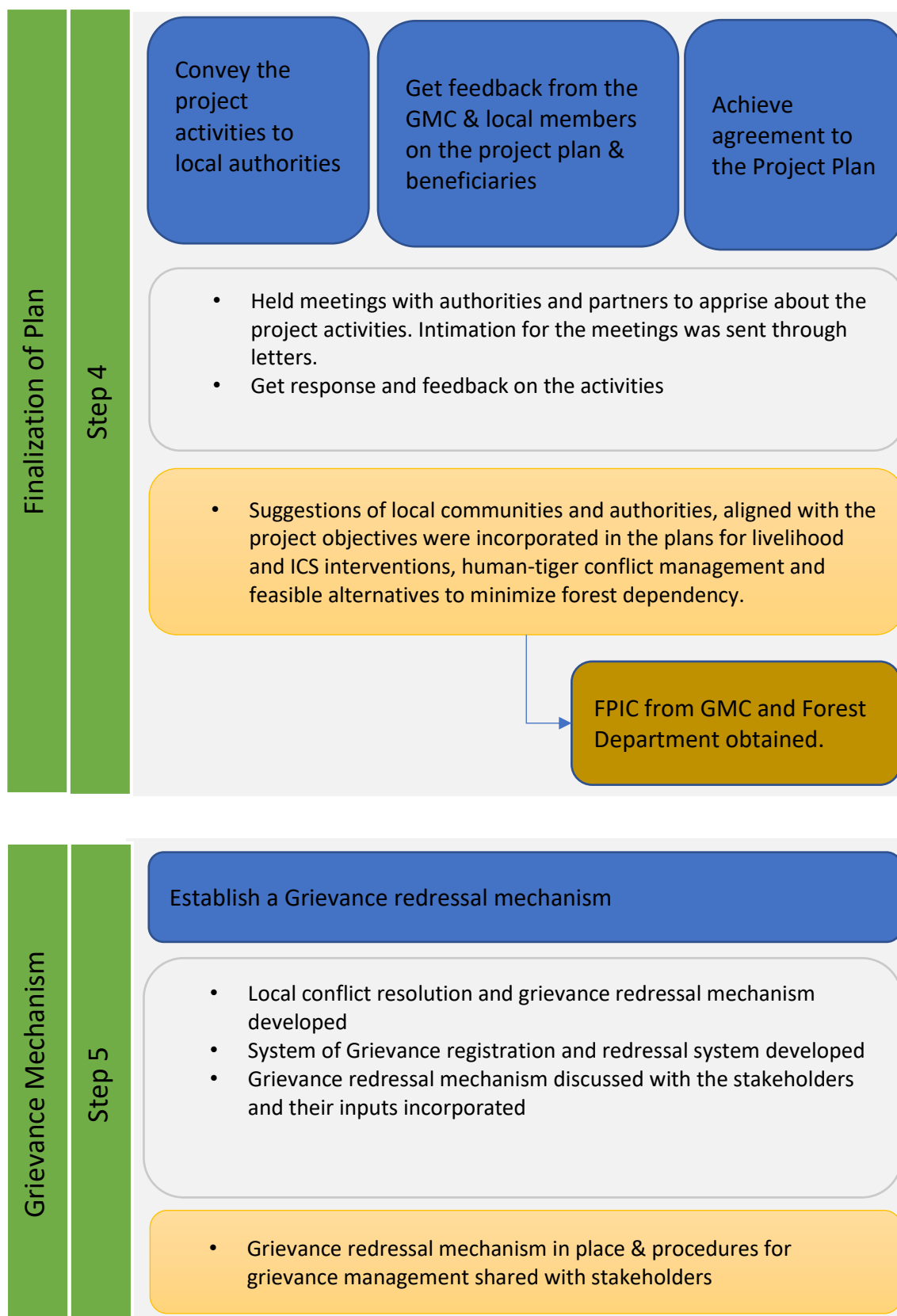
WTI and its partners will commit to implementing the FPIC protocol outlined herein including the FPIC process work plan involving regular third-party monitoring of its FPIC process and documentation of all FPIC related activities. WTI and its partners accept that breaches of this FPIC protocol could lead to suspension of project support from IUCN and KfW.

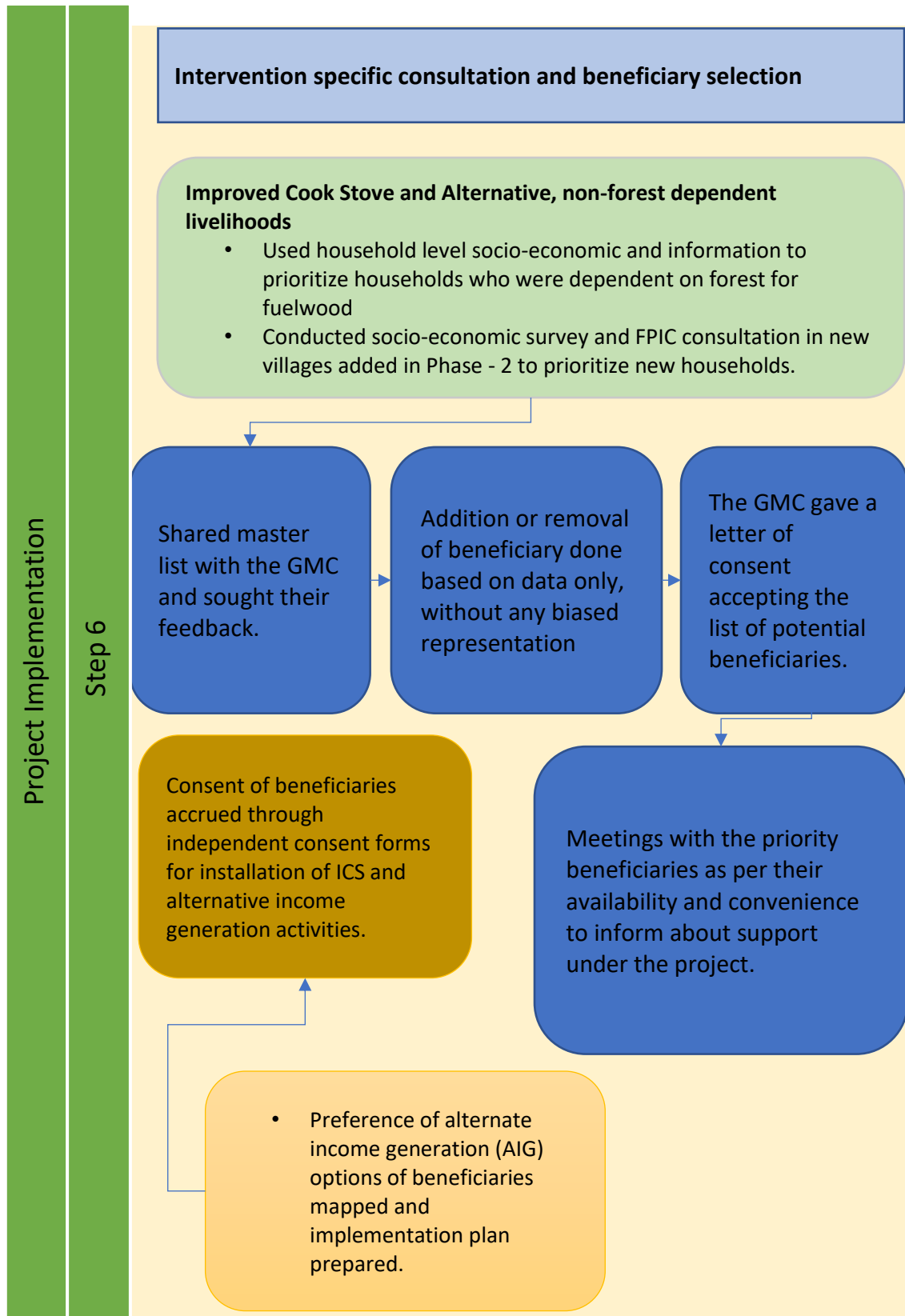
Signatories

Name	Organization and Position	Signature	Date
Rahul Kaul	Wildlife Trust of India, Vice President and Chief of Conservation	To be signed at project inception	To be signed at project inception
Amitava Roy	General Secretary, Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission	To be signed at project inception	To be signed at project inception
Md. Anwarul Islam	General Secretary and Chief Executive, WildTeam Bangladesh	To be signed at project inception	To be signed at project inception









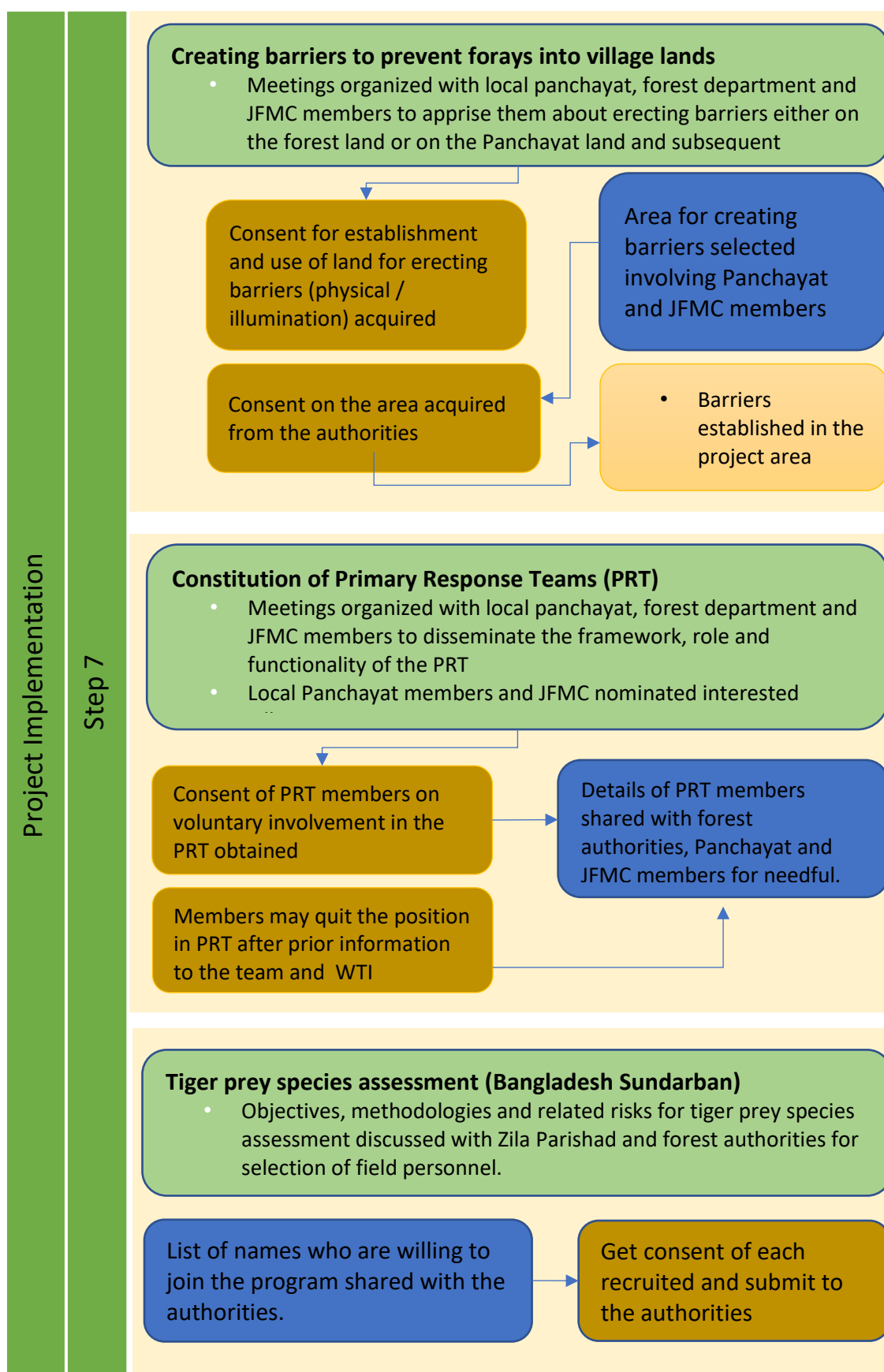


Figure. 7. Flow chart representing the overall structure of the activities of different stakeholders under the CEPF document framework

11 Grievance Mechanism

A Grievance Mechanism is a safeguard tool that is part of the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). A grievance is any complaint, comment, question, concern, suggestion about the way a project is being implemented, or any part of it therein. It may take the form of specific complaints about impacts, damages or harm caused by the project, non-conformity or compliance with the IUCN and WTIs' and partners' safeguards, concerns about access to the project stakeholder engagement process or about how comments and concerns about project activities, or perceived incidents or impacts, have been addressed. Complainants reporting grievances relating to other, non-project actors, will be encouraged to report these to the grievance mechanisms of these actors.

The Grievance Mechanism is a free, open and accessible mechanism, principally designed for Affected Communities, and accessible to all project stakeholders, project staff (including contractors) and volunteers working in key positions. All eligible grievances received will be addressed by WTI and its partners in a fair and transparent manner. In the case of construction activities, WTI and its partners will ensure that its contractor(s) establish their own Grievance Mechanism for all workers established under the existing national labour laws of Bangladesh and India. This requirement will be included in all contracts and agreements that WTI enters into with contractor(s). Information on contact points will be posted on staff information boards and on site information boards. A flowchart depicting the process of grievance registering and redressal is shown below:

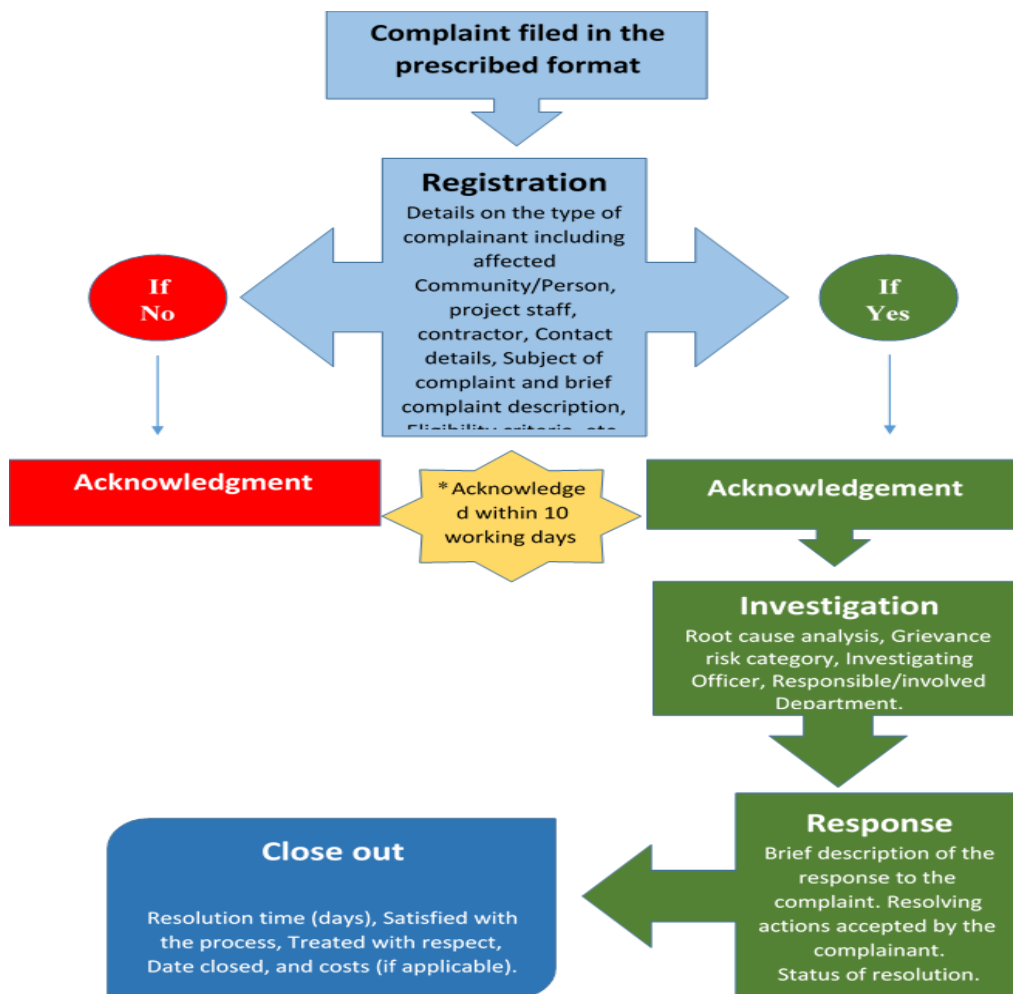


Figure 8: Flow chart representing the process of grievance registering and redressal

The Wildlife Trust of India and its partners, Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh and Jahangirnagar University Bangladesh have established the eligibility criteria for the Grievance Mechanism. The Grievance Mechanism does not substitute, but complements and builds on existing Grievance Procedures (e.g. those established by the Protected Area authorities), while ensuring that the WTI and partners can identify, register and respond to grievances appropriately. This Grievance Mechanism reflects and operates under the good practice principles.

Grievance resolution for the “Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarbans delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II” follows the IUCN’s three-stage process for resolving a grievance. To be practical and cost-effective, resolution of complaints is sought at the lowest possible level. The IUCN grievance mechanism is a three-stage process: stage 1 - local-level resolution sought; stage 2 - submission to relevant national-level body where reporting of any grievance through Stage 1 is considered unsatisfactory to the aggrieved party; stage 3 - submission to IUCN Project Complaints Management System in cases where Stages 1 and 2 do not resolve the grievance, then the IUCN Country Office would become involved in the grievance case as a necessary step prior to elevating the issue to IUCN’s Project Complaints Management System.

Under the Director Policy and Programme, IUCN will ensure that all grievances, whether eligible or not, need to be recorded in a grievance register (Annex 3 of the ESMP). This register documents all complaints, suggestions, comments, questions submitted by stakeholders in a categorical way as well as the agreed corrective actions (with due regard for confidentiality of information).

Lastly, agreed action plans have been established with timeframes for regular process monitoring towards resolution of grievances. WTI and its implementation partners will coordinate the monitoring by organising periodic checks, bringing together the concerned parties and relevant technical advisors for meetings or other communication on the status of action plans, until they are completed. The WTI and its implementation partners will assess the effectiveness of this complaints resolution process on an annual basis, and identify any needs for improvement.

In addition, under the Director Policy and Programme, the IUCN will ensure that reports from WTI and its partners on the progress made to implement recommendations are processed and all necessary monitoring tasks are coordinated, in cooperation with the Head of Oversight Unit. Furthermore, reports demonstrating compliance with IUCN’s ESMS procedures will be posted on the website for consideration by partners and the general public, with due regard to confidentiality.

12 Implementation Arrangements

For details on Wildlife Trust of India and its partners’ organisational structure for the Project during implementation as well as a description of the environmental and social roles, responsibilities and functions of their staff members during the implementation, refer to the ESMP.

Table 6: CEPF process implementation actors [example table to be adapted as needed]

Actor	Role	Responsibility	Representative	Contact
Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)	Host	Compliance	Mr Samrat Paul	+91 8293074102 fo.sundarbans@wti.org.in

1. Lokamata Rani Rashmoni Mission 2. Wild Team Bangladesh (WTB) 2. Jahangirnagar University	Host	Compliance	Mr. Amitava Roy/ Md. Abu Zafar/Md Abdul Aziz	+917797141546/+88017111910 20 secretary@rashmoni.or.in / abu.zafar82@gmail.com / maaziz78@gmail.com
PAPs	Affected Parties	Grievance	Mr. Ashok Halder	+919064805770
Government Agencies	Administrators	Accountability	Mr. Ashok Halder	+919064805770
Civil Society	Observers	Accountability		
Business Interest	Resource Users	Profits		
Third Party Monitor	M and E	Accountability		

For the project titled “Protecting Tigers, People and their Vital Habitats in the Sundarbans Delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase 2 Project”, in reference to the ESMP document outlining the environmental and social management measures that lead organisation Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and its partners, viz. Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh, and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh will implement to manage potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts of the project.

They will be responsible to implement the other safeguarding tools and preparing relevant documents as mentioned below;

- Stakeholder engagement plan
- Grievance mechanism and register
- Outline of the Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) protocol).

IUCN has the following responsibilities:

- Set the standards that the grantee and its partners must implement in the funded projects;
- Ensure the grantees can apply the requirements of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS);
- Monitor to what extent Environmental and Social (E&S) risks are correctly assessed by the grantees at the planning/ proposal stage and that subsequent E&S management activities are implemented;
- Monitor the Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) implementation during all stages of the projects, including through site visits;
- Consolidate reporting on ESMS implementation; and
- Collect project lessons learnt to adapt the requirements of this ESMS and its performance in the light of the field experiences.

WTI has the following responsibilities:

- Conduct E&S risk identification and assessment as per the IUCN ESMS and associated tools, templates and guidelines;

- Work with Affected Communities and stakeholders to design appropriate management plans and safeguard tools to manage identified risks;
- Implement these management plans; and
- Monitor and report on ESMS implementation to IUCN, including identifying new or emerging risk and adapting plans accordingly.
- Lastly, several activities on the Indian side, including, training, equipping and mobilizing of PRTs alongside operating the Rapid Response Teams to assist in mitigating conflict situations will also directly contribute to the “Reduction of man-animal conflict” goal of the management plan of Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve.
- Responsibilities of Lokamata Rani Rashmoni Mission (LRRM)
 1. The organization will be responsible to implement the project activities in the areas near buffer zones, and the core of the reserve.
 2. In particular, the projects’ green livelihoods and ICS related activities are in line with the Department’s initiatives in the areas flanking the Tiger Reserve and is thus being focused in the project area where the Tiger Reserve’s initiatives cannot reach.
 3. These initiatives also contribute to the Eco-development and Joint Forest Management Committee support activities goal of the management plan of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve. These activities also contribute directly to reduction in depletable resources in the adjoining forests, and thus would help with their improvement, contributing specifically then to the “Habitat Improvement” goal of the management plan. Thus will be responsible to prepare the beneficiary list and other activities related to alternative livelihood and improved cook stove with prior consent from the villagers and ground committees comprising of members from village Panchayat, frontline forest staff and selected villagers.
 4. LRRM will also be engaged to form Sundarban Education Centre, Tiger Scout and Bagh Bondhus along with WTI and these are planned to involve under vast awareness programs, campaigns. This will eventually help to maintain positive attitudes of local communities for wildlife of the Sundarban.
 5. They will be in direct contact with the ground committees along with WTI and as a field implementer of the proposed activities and will be responsible in the ground to mobilise the first hand grievance records along with the proposed ground committees. And further forward the issues/issue to WTI and IUCN.
- Responsibilities of WildTeam Bangladesh and Jahangirnagar University
 1. Firstly, project will directly work to reduce HTC in selected villages through VTRT, FTRT, barrier erection and ICS distribution to reduce fuelwood collection. These activities will directly reduce number of tigers foraging outside the forests and thus also killing of livestock and humans outside the Sundarban forests. Hence this caters directly to the management objectives of reduction of direct tiger loss as set by the Sundarban Reserve Forests management plan.
 2. The project will implement ICS activities thus will reduce pressure on forests by reduction in extraction of fuelwood, thus will help to maintaining habitats virginity and quality, which is also a management mandate of SRF.
 3. Awareness activities through Bagh Bondhus, tiger scouts, local campaigns and capacity building of different stakeholders will help to maintain positive attitudes of local communities for wildlife of the Sundarban. They will thus support in maintaining strong wildlife populations, especially that of key prey species, along with the tiger.
 4. Jahangirnagar University will be leading the assessment of prey species population in Bangladesh Sundarban and conduct research on prey-predator relationship in the forest of Sundarban this has less direct role in vast engagement of communities in the program.

5. Thus WTB be responsible to prepare the beneficiary list for improved cook stove with prior consent from the villagers and ground committees comprising of members from the Zilla Parishad, frontline forest staff and selected villagers.
6. WTB will be in direct contact with the ground committees as a field implementer of the proposed activities and they will be in the ground to mobilise the first-hand grievance records along with the proposed ground committees. And further forward the issues/issue to IUCN country office Bangladesh.

IUCN and the WTI are responsible for the project impacts – direct and indirect – caused by activities that are either financed or technically supported by the project. This includes impacts (positive and negative) caused by activities or actors that are financially or technically supported by the project, even when these activities or actors fall outside of the direction/authority/mandate of the IUCN and WTI.

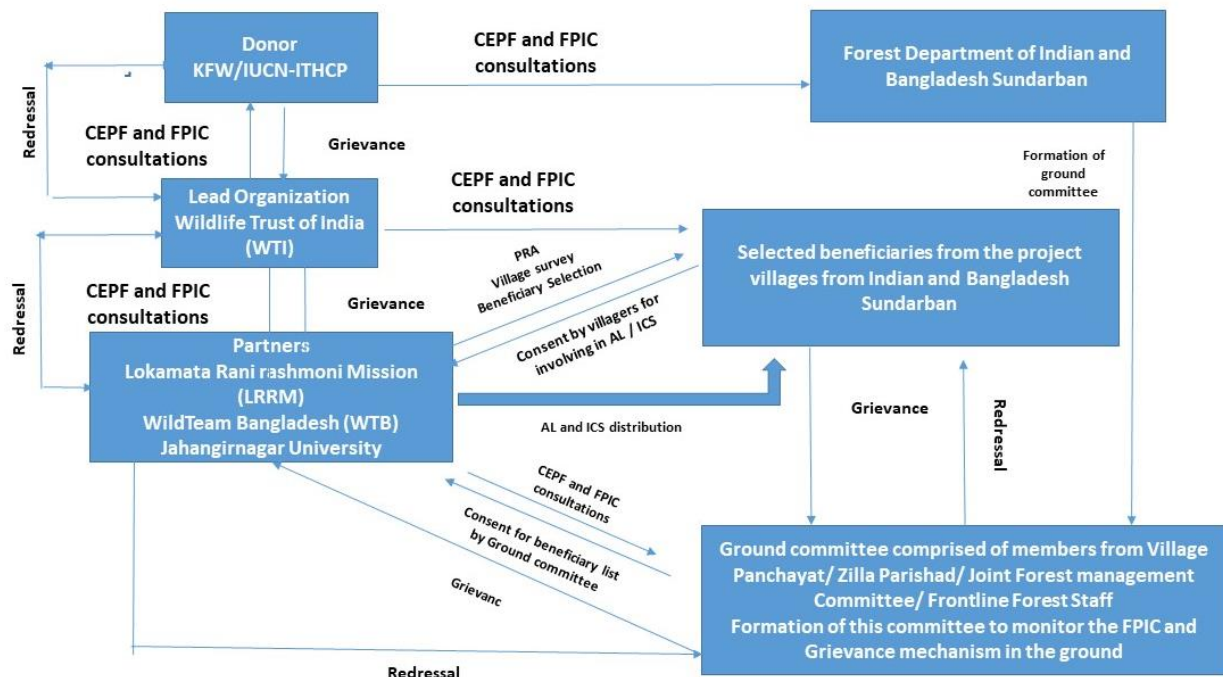


Figure. 9. Roles and responsibilities concerning project implementation of different stakeholders, including the grantee, affected communities, and relevant government agencies.

13 Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation (MRE)

The progress of the CEPF will be monitored via the project's ESMP

14 Capacity development

The project aims at undertaking all the necessary safeguarding instruments such as it describes the Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF), including the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guideline for "Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II. It merges essential elements of a Process Framework from World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (WB ESS 5) on eligibility and entitlements as well as an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) (WB ESS 7) on FPIC requirements. It has been developed in alignment with the IUCN Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW's Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and

international good practice, notably the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (WB ESF 2017), including the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) 1-10. The CEPF also complies with India's and Bangladesh's requirements as well as internal policies and procedures of Wildlife Trust of India (Lead Organization), Wild Team Bangladesh (Partner Organization), and Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission (Partner Organization).

All the partner organization in sync with the lead organization (Wildlife Trust of India) work on ground level monitoring in the project villages. Capacity building trainings were initiated from the donor's stake i.e. TLLG, to WTI and the partners; Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission and WildTeam Bangladesh. Staff from this organisation have been trained to work with CEPF framework under repeated online trainings sessions from TLLG. However, it may be required to carry out specific capacity enhancement workshops for representatives in each of the partner organisations along with the lead, in carrying out the CEPF and FPIC on the ground. Post such training a similar capacity training will be provided to the ground monitoring team comprised of members from Village administration, Frontline Forest Staff and Community members by the trained representatives of the lead and partner organisations. The execution of the project will take place through various levels and information will be disseminated likewise to the community and other relevant stakeholders.

15 Costs and Budget for Implementation

The cost and budget estimates for the implementation of the CEPF, including FPIC guidance and the costs for implementing the measures described in the entitlement matrix are presented in Table 7 below. For the concerned training and capacity building of stakeholders of this project on FPIC and GM we have not mentioned any separate cost under the budget section. The expenses will be done along the activities we mentioned under consultation with communities. If additional training is required to be provided from IUCN or TLLG staff to ground staff from India and Bangladesh, then a separate budget would be needed to be included for the probable expenses regarding their field visit and training arrangements.

Table 7: Cost and budget estimates for the implementation of the CEPF (including the FPIC protocol) throughout the project life cycle

Activity	Schedule	Budget		Cost (€)
		Project Proponent (Phase II budget)	Donor (Additional)	
Pre-consultation	Commencement of project (carried out in Phase 1 of the project)	00	00	00
FPIC capacity training	Commencement of project (updated annually)	26569.5	00	26569.5
FPIC consultations	Commencement of project and every 12 months after; extra sessions during unforeseen project activities that affect PAPs	5220	00	5220
FPIC third party monitoring	Annually	00	2000	2000
Documentation of FPIC process	Rolling basis; annual updates as required.	300	00	300

<i>Dissemination of FPIC reports to affected parties</i>	<i>Annually</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>300</i>
<i>FPIC feedback</i>	<i>Rolling basis</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>00</i>
<i>Legacy issues and reputational risk management measure</i>	<i>Information disclosure to stakeholders at the beginning of the project</i>	<i>361.45</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>361.45</i>
	<i>FPIC consultation with communities; FGD with communities in the project villages of India and Bangladesh</i>	<i>1452</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>1452</i>
	<i>Household consultations with beneficiaries; On monthly basis until all the potential beneficiaries are consulted</i>	<i>2318</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>2318</i>
	<i>Consultative meetings with forest department-every three months with local forest officials and annually with higher officials</i>	<i>1286</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>1286</i>
<i>Risks of Gender inequality, human rights violation and Risks of discriminating vulnerable groups</i>	<i>Alternative livelihood for poor forest resource collectors</i>	<i>41182</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>00</i>
	<i>Improved cook stoves for women</i>	<i>15573</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>15573</i>
	<i>Cost of creation of beneficiary selection protocol</i>	<i>350</i>	<i>00</i>	<i>350</i>
TOTAL		94911.95	2000	96911.95

16 Adaptive Management

The CEPF will be routinely updated as the project progresses.

For details on the Project's change management strategy, including adaptive management capacity building for all project staff, and how the CEPF is respected, even as the project responds to exigent and other unforeseen circumstances (e.g., staff turnover, donor changing demands, political change, natural disasters, etc.), refer to the ESMP.

The project has already agreed to move forward with the framed ESMP which is supposed to act as the backbone of the project to guide its implementation in the field by engaging as all relevant stakeholders. This document will be treated as a crucial entity and will change according to the needs, through the course of the project. Needs may come from social, environmental or official atmosphere as mentioned before.

In the initiation phase of the project CEPF framework will be discussed thoroughly among the staff of donor, proponent and partner agencies to clear the agenda and activity guidelines for clearly understanding their roles in the project and how to use this document in every step while running the proposed activities in the field. After that a clear line of understanding of the CEPF document will be disseminated through detailed discussion with the Forest Authorities, Village administration and community members of the villagers of both India and Bangladesh to clarify to them, its functionality during the project period and their role in implementing the framework as well.

Any unforeseen changes which may come from social or environmental changes will be addressed by following the framework discussed in the detailed ESMP document.

17 Next Steps

1. Finalized documents of CEPF including FPIC and GM will reach all of the parties, including Donor to proponent and partner organizations in India and Bangladesh.
2. The dissemination of FPIC and GM documents will be carried out by the proponent and the partner organization to the other stakeholders in the ground in the part of Sundarban of India and Bangladesh.
3. Capacity building trainings will be conducted by the proponent with partner organizations in India and Bangladesh to make them completely understand about the plans. Further consultations with communities will be carried out by the partner organizations in the field to make them aware of the FPIC and GM related framework and communities' role in this process of implementations in the ground.
4. The FPIC and GM documents will be updated on regular intervals of 6 months and sent to the IUCN and TLLG staff through project proponent for their regular comments on the framework that proponent and partners followed in the field during project implementation.
5. The FPIC and GM reports will be addressed based on the issues if raised from ground and the redressal mechanism will be communicated to proponent and needed steps will be taken in the ground through proponents and partner organizations to resolve the matters in the ground to assist the communities and to maintain the integrity with communities in the Sundarban of India and Bangladesh.

Annex 1: Stepwise process for implementation of safeguards

The table below provides an example of a flowchart with the stepwise process that a project might design for the community engagement and planning, which includes FPIC, grievance management, socioeconomic baseline and assessment, and livelihood/ access considerations. Below the table, is the suggested structure for a fieldwork protocol that breaks down these steps into outputs and activities, to ensure that each engagement activity contributes to clearly defined outputs. This flowchart and procedure allows for the implementation of the safeguard instruments in practice, and the overall project-level safeguard instruments can be updated accordingly from information arising. The steps included here are provided as an example: each project will have a slightly different process, depending on the local context, organisational approach, and national legislation.

Example Step	Engagement topic			
Pre-project consultations				
Step 0 (pre-project)	Introductory village consultations	Understanding villagers' needs, willingness etc.	FPIC: Identification of potential representatives of focal villages	GRM: Understanding of local conflict resolution and grievance management mechanisms
Introductions, baselines and planning				
Step 1 Orientation	Consultative meetings with village and council (panchayat/zilla parishad) representatives	Disclosure of overall aim and objectives of the programmes/project.		

Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF)

Step 2: Baseline	Collection of baseline information on socioeconomic parameters and forest dependence in focal village	Community profile in focal villages – socioeconomics and forest dependence	Forest Dependence quantification	Local stakeholder analysis
Step 3: Participatory Planning of activities and initiatives to be undertaken in project	Consultative meetings with identified villagers and council representatives	Drafting of project logical framework and proposal	Agreement for participation by village councils in joint planning and implementation of project plan. Identification of FPIC representatives in project villages	Formulation and establishment of GM mechanism
Implementation planning and Management				
Step 4: Beneficiary Identification and Selection	Consultative meetings with different beneficiary groups identified for different initiatives under the project plan	Preparation of lists of potential beneficiaries for each initiative. Accruing of general consent from representatives of different beneficiary groups		

Community Engagement and Planning Framework (CEPF)

Step 5: Agreement	Household consultations with potential beneficiaries identified	Accruing of agreement from individual beneficiaries in project villages for adoption of, and support towards the implementation of relevant activities	FPIC: Agreement/consent forms signed by beneficiaries	
Step 6: Management of planned activities	Community level training workshops/meetings/ events for initiation of activities targeted at community livelihoods and forest dependence	Adoption /partaking by beneficiaries of various livelihood alternatives etc provided by project		GRM: On-going grievance management
Step 7: Implementation of activities	Participatory events/consultations for discussing the problems being faced, successes, etc with beneficiaries.	Monitoring of all initiatives pertaining to livelihoods and other community based initiatives	FPIC: On-going monitoring and 3rd party verification	
Step 8: Management plan MRE and adaptive management	Final evaluation with participation of villagers	Adaptive Management of MP according to MRE		

Annex 2: Project safeguard procedures

Once the participatory process has been designed, usually prior to the project inception, it is recommended that projects develop a set of procedures that covers each step. Procedures clearly define the desired output of each step (e.g. identification of representatives for FPIC, or agreement on a particular topic), and the activities required to achieve these steps. While in practice the implementation might be more iterative, and procedures should not be overly restrictive, clearly identifying the key outputs means that safeguard principles and requirements can be tracked and implemented.

The procedure document would include the Table above from Annex 1, which illustrates all of the key steps and topics, and then for each step, the following format is suggested:

Pre-Consultations, Orientation and Agreement

1. Contact local elected representatives of the project villages. These may be Panchayat and JFMC or Zilla Parishad members as the case maybe.
2. Organize formal meetings with Panchayat/JFMC/Zilla Parishad members to discuss the pertinent issues related to tiger conservation and seek their view on possible interventions required to minimize adversities brought about by tigers and tiger conservation.
3. Explain the purpose and scope of FPIC and seek inputs for formulation of FPIC protocols.
4. Request Panchayat/JFMC/Zilla Parishad to assign one representative to facilitate the community consultations, grievance addressal, etc.
5. Through appointed representative of Panchayat /JFMC/ Zilla Parishad, organize meetings with community members in project villages, along with relevant forest department officials to discuss the project proposal and its various aspects. Also to explain the process of FPIC and Grievance Mechanism.
6. Through meetings facilitate the assigning of one representative for the following groups, to be part of the FPIC process.
 - a. Local Gram Panchayat
 - b. Women
 - c. Schedule Tribes
 - d. Scheduled Castes
 - e. JFMC members

7. Seek authorization of representatives and their own consent in written post meeting.
 - a. The signed copies of the representatives need to be circulated to the local authorities to keep transparency among them.
 - b. The same to be circulated to WTI and LRRM project officials.
8. Before commencing the project activities another series of meetings with assigned authorities and partners will be conducted to convey the project activities to the local authorities and collect response or feedback for the same.
 - a. All the members of the concerned authorities will be requested through letters to participate the meetings to discuss the project activities with local villagers.
 - b. All the members will be free to take notes and give feedback from the villagers that they represent, and can suggest implementers to include the activities, and or modify the processes of implementation, etc.
9. Suggestions and feedback from the monitoring authorities and local members will be considered, as long as they are aligned with our project objectives and there is scope to incorporate them. These suggestions, presented in the form of a joint feedback letter from the representatives will have to be mandatorily signed by the representatives.
10. After incorporation of suggestions or on acceptance of the project plan and its activities and processes, a letter of free, prior informed consent will be sought from all representatives.

ACTIVITY SPECIFIC CONSULTATIONS AND BENEICIARY SELECTION

I] Improved Cook Stoves

1. Socioeconomic surveys were conducted in 2018 in three villages, to gather household information on various aspects such as household income, dependence on forest produces, etc. This data will be used to prioritize households who are severely dependent on forest resources, especially upon forest-based fuelwood for cooking.

Criteria for Selection: Below Poverty line → Heavy livelihood dependence on forests → regularly use forest fuelwood

For new villages added in Phase -2, the socioeconomic surveys will be conducted post or alongside FPIC consultations. Any gaps in data will also be filled a priori, before commencing with beneficiary selection.

2. Once a priority list has been prepared through the surveys, this master list will be shared with the representatives selected (See section 6 above), and their feedback sought. It will however be made clear that any additions or removals will have to be done based on data, and no biased representations will be accepted.

3. After the master list has been reviewed and revised based on justified and data-based inputs, the village representatives will require to give a letter of consent accepting the list of potential beneficiaries. The vetted master list shall also be maintained in files for later consultation, review and verification.
4. A meeting will then be held with shortlisted beneficiaries as per budget availability, i.e. selecting the top most needy beneficiaries the project can help support within the stipulated budget. These shortlisted beneficiaries will be met with in one or several meetings as per their location and availability and informed about the support being planned to be extended by the project. Their inputs to the same will also be sought, and their consent to this will also be accrued through independent consent forms.

III] Alternative, Non-Forest Dependent Livelihoods

1. Socioeconomic surveys were conducted in 2018 in three villages, to gather household information on various aspects such as household income, dependence on forest produces, etc. This data will be used to prioritize households who are severely dependent on forest resources, especially on honey, fish, prawns, and crabs.

Criteria for Selection: Below Poverty line → Forest Resources only source of livelihood for family

For new villages added in Phase – 2, the socioeconomic surveys will be conducted post, or alongside FPIC consultations. Any gaps in data will also be filled a priori, before commencing with beneficiary selection.

2. Based on the data, and the selection criteria, a master list of beneficiaries will be created, and this will be shared with village representatives and shall also be maintained in files for later consultation, review, and verification. Once reviewed by the village representatives.
3. Based on the approved and accepted list of potential beneficiaries, the project team along with the village and forest department representatives will organize meetings with shortlisted batches of potential beneficiaries.
4. During meeting with potential beneficiaries, discussions will be initiated on the type of preferred alternative income generation (AIG) options, so that they can reduce their dependence on forests and thus reduce their vulnerability to tiger attacks.
5. Based on the meetings, a mapping on preferred AIG options with respect to their expressed preferences of AIG. Based on this, mapping, the plan for implementation of AIG development will be prepared. The same will again then be shared with the village representatives for their inputs, after which it will be finalized.
6. While development of AIG's, a written consent form will be acquired from each beneficiary.
7. Each beneficiary will then be monitored after they have adopted their AIG, in order to see how well each beneficiary is able to carry ahead with the new AIG, and the level of support required.

III] Barriers to Prevent Tiger Forays into Village Lands – Physical or Illuminated Barriers

1. Meeting will be organized in prior with local Panchayat, forest department and JFMC members to disseminate the information regarding the establishment of barriers either on the forest land or on the Panchayat land.
2. The prior consent for the establishment and utilization of forest/panchayat land will be acquired from all the mentioned authorities.
3. Selection of area will be done by involving Panchayat and JFMC members and the consent on the section will be collected from the said authorities.
4. Based on the consent the establishment activities will be commenced in the project area.
5. In presence of JFMC and deputed frontline forest staff timely monitoring and assessment of the barrier will be carried out. And a brief report will be submitted to the authorities for their knowledge.

IV] Development of Primary Response Teams (PRT)/Village Tiger Response Teams (VTRT)/Forest Tiger Response Team (FTRT)

1. Village level meetings with Panchayat and JFMC members will be carried out to disseminate the framework, roles and functionality of the PRT/VTRT/FTRT.
2. Members will be selected based on precursory meetings with villagers and expressed interested to work as PRT/VTRT/FTRT members. Since these are non-incentivized, purely motivation-based roles, volunteers recommended by earlier PRT/VTRT/FTRT members will be prioritized. New enlisted members will be intimated to the local JFMC/Panchayat/Zilla Parishad, and their consent will be sought.
3. Consent letters from individual volunteers/members for their voluntary involvement in the PRT structure will be obtained. Copies of consent letters will be submitted to concerned authorities for their reference and filing. The same shall also be maintained with each partner for later, review, verification, etc.
4. Since these roles are voluntary, any member who wants to quit the role, is free to do so, with prior intimation. The same shall be intimated by project members to relevant bodies such as forest department/panchayat/zilla parishad/JFMC, etc.
5. The monthly meetings with the members will be organized to assess the PRT activities and the suggestions will be shared with the authorities for further improvement of PRT functionality in the project area.

V] Tiger Prey Species Assessment – Risk to Field Assistants from Tigers, and other hazards.

1. The objectives, methodologies and the related risks for tiger prey species assessment will be thoroughly discussed with the Zilla Parishad and Forest authorities for selection of teams who will carry out the field work inside the Sundarban.
2. The list of names who are willing to join the program will be shared with the concerned authorities. Consent from each recruit will be obtained and submitted to the authorities for their references.
3. The assessment of their work will be carried out with help of the concerned authorities and suggestions, and supports will be provided timely basis to support the activity.

Annex 3: Village/ Site Activity Plan Template

See separate document.

Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II

Annex 2 Grievance Mechanism

Wildlife Trust of India



23rd of February 2022

Version Control

Project title	Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II
Document title	Grievance Mechanism
Version	0.1
Status	Final
Date	23 rd of February 2022
Lead author	Wildlife Trust India

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1. Introduction

This Safeguard Tool describes the Grievance Mechanism for the project titled “Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II”, outlining the process that Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), and its partners - Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh, and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh - will follow to address any comments, suggestions, questions and complaints that stakeholders may have about the project and its activities. The Grievance Mechanism has been developed in alignment with international good practice, including the IUCN Standards and KfW Sustainability Guidelines, and also complies with India’s and Bangladesh’s requirements as well as internal WTI and partners’ policies and procedures.

Details on the project description, social context and legislative framework can be found in the project’s Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

This Grievance Mechanism has been finalised. The details contained in this document was updated. The mechanism was in place at the inception of the project manifested through installation of appropriate Grievance Mechanism signboards, boxes and the register is regularly updated.

The Grievance Mechanism is a free, open and accessible mechanism, principally designed for Affected Communities, and accessible to all project stakeholders, and project staff (including contractors). All eligible grievances received will be addressed by WTI and its partners in a fair and transparent manner. Section 2 of this document describes what constitutes an eligible grievance. Information about the grievance process (described in Section 3) has been provided in English and Bangla (Bengali), including who to contact and how, and will be made available on the project website, in other materials (e.g. posters, flyers etc.) and during stakeholder consultation meetings (described in Section 4). Procedures for WTI and partners to follow when reporting serious incidents are also provided in Section 5, whilst Section 6 describes recording and monitoring actions.

This Grievance Mechanism is available for project staff, contractual staff, and volunteers working in key positions. In the case of construction activities, WTI and its partners must ensure that its contractor(s) establish their own Grievance Mechanism for all workers established under the existing national labour laws of Bangladesh and India. This requirement will be included in all contracts and agreements that WTI enters into with contractor(s). Information on contact points will be posted on staff information boards and on site information boards.

A grievance is considered to be any complaint, comment, and question, and concern, suggestion about the way a project is being implemented, or any part of it therein. It may take the form of specific complaints about impacts, damages or harm caused by the project, non-conformity or compliance with the IUCN and WTIs’ and partners’ safeguards, concerns about access to the project stakeholder engagement process or about how comments and concerns about project activities, or perceived incidents or impacts, have been addressed.

The project area and main project components are detailed in the ESMP, and include efforts to reduce human-wildlife conflict, support to alternative livelihoods and improved cook stoves, conservation education, engagement in mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, and tiger and prey-base monitoring.

As such, grievances that may arise could include:

- Complaints from/concerns of Forest Officials regarding infringement of existing laws by local people, especially community beneficiaries of the project.

- Complaints/concerns by local people against atrocities/illegalities carried out by state authorities against them.
- Concerns/complaints by local people regarding quality and quantum of alternative livelihood support, and other types of support/benefits provided through the project.
- Concerns raised by fellow community persons of project beneficiaries and directly engaged stakeholders, regarding partiality in selection of beneficiaries.
- Concerns/complaints by local people regarding additional benefits support they aspire for, and cannot receive from project.

There may also be other forms of grievances. Complainants reporting grievances relating to other, non-project actors, will be encouraged to report these to the grievance mechanisms of these actors (See ineligible grievances).

1.1 Purpose of the grievance mechanism

A Grievance Mechanism is part of a suite of a safeguard tools that accompany the Project's Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The ESMP outlines the environmental and social management commitments that the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), WildTeam Bangladesh and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh, will implement to manage potential negative impacts and enhance potential positive impacts of the project. This Grievance Mechanism helps WTI and partners, understand whether there is a potential breach of the IUCN and KfW Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) principles, standards and procedures.

If the grievance submitted is determined to be eligible, a process is then followed to identify the root cause of the grievance and ensure that issues of non-compliance with the ESMS are rectified. Some grievance cases may require remedial actions to redress potential harm resulting from failure to respect the ESMS provisions or preventative measures to avoid repetition of non-compliance.

Specifically, this Grievance Mechanism aims to:

- Guide WTI and partners in addressing complaints comments, questions, concerns and suggestions from Affected Communities and other rights holders and stakeholders, related to the project, and its activities in a fair and transparent, and practical manner;
- Identify and manage stakeholder concerns and thus support effective risk management for the Project;
- Provide stakeholders fearing or suffering adverse impacts from the Project with the assurance that they will be heard and assisted in a timely manner;
- Build and maintain trust with all stakeholders thereby creating an enabling environment in which to operate; and
- Prevent adverse consequences of failure to adequately address grievances.

As such, the Grievance Mechanism does not intend to substitute for any existing Grievance Procedures (e.g. those established by the Protected Area authorities), but instead complement and build on existing procedures, while ensuring that the WTI and partners can identify, register and respond to grievances appropriately. This Grievance Mechanism reflects and operates under the good practice principles illustrated in Figure 1 below.

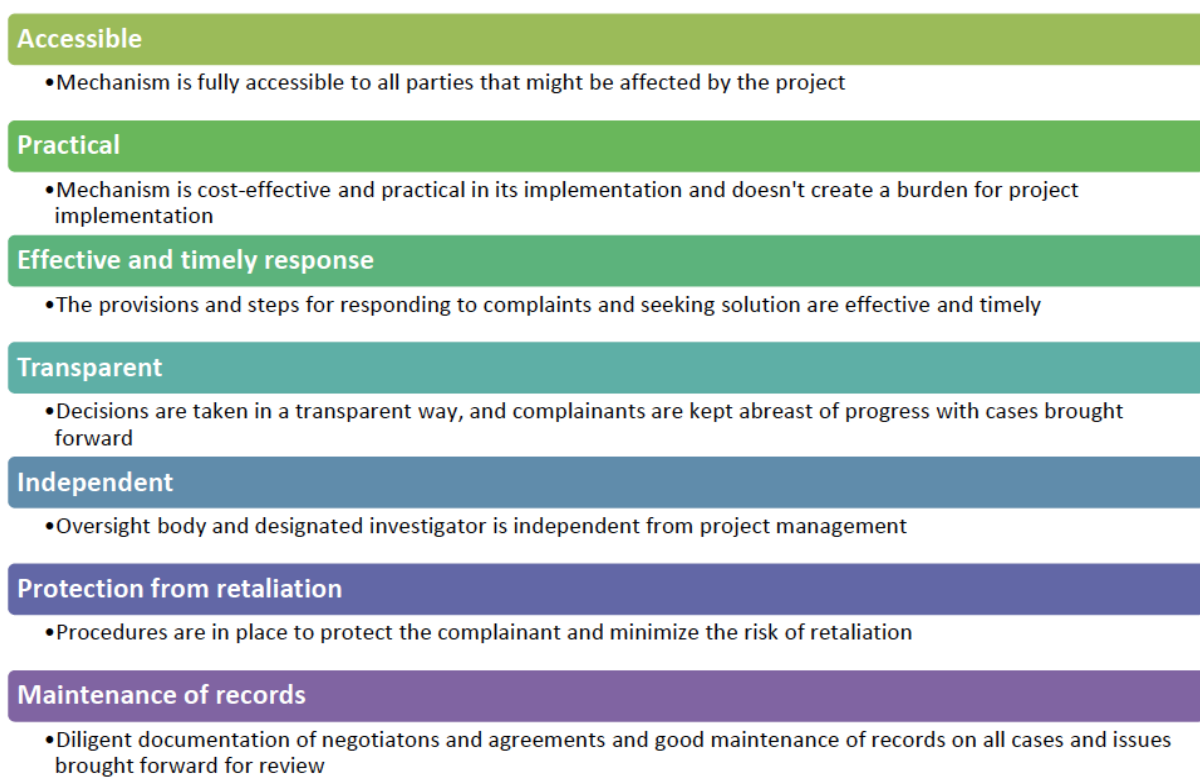


Figure 1: Good practice principles for grievance management (Source: IUCN 2020a).

2. Eligibility

The Wildlife Trust of India and its partners, Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, India, WildTeam Bangladesh and Jahangirnagar University Bangladesh have established the eligibility criteria for the Grievance Mechanism. The criteria of eligible grievances include:

- Any community, organisation, project stakeholder or affected group (including individuals) who believe it is or may be negatively affected by any project activities, such as installation of fences, providing alternative livelihoods and such others, implemented by the WTI or its partners, and/or owing to the Project's failure to follow the IUCN and WTIs' Environmental and Social Safeguards and other compliances as set out in the IUCN ESMS, during the design or implementation of the project activity is considered an "Affected Party" and is entitled to submit a complaint;
- Negative impacts can include all forms of project impact, including direct and indirect impacts of project activities. As with the scope of application of the IUCN ESMS, negative effects are not restricted to the activities of the WTI, but include the effects of activities of project partners (including collaborating project partners such as PA authorities) that are financially or technically supported by the project.
- Any Affected Party, who is directly or indirectly affected by the project activities may file a complaint;
- Representatives (a person or local organisation) can submit a complaint on behalf of an Affected Party, but they must provide concrete evidence of authority to represent them; and
- Anonymous complaints cannot be considered [but see point above]. Affected Parties identities will be kept confidential upon their written request as there is a risk that confidentiality may limit

efforts to resolve complaints. However, complainants will be informed if confidentiality is impeding the process.

On the other hand, the current criteria for ineligible grievances include:

- Complaints with respect to activities, actions or omissions that are not technically or financially supported by the project, or about parties that are not partners or direct collaborating partners in the project;
- Complaints about issues outside of the project scope, including outside of the project area of influence. In case of human rights violations, which is outside the purview of the project (and therefore ineligible), WTI and its partners' on-ground teams shall encourage and support the complainant to file relevant grievance/complaints with the local police and judiciary, under existing laws for prevention of human rights violations. However, WTI, its partners and any person directly connected with the project shall not be responsible for furthering the settlement of such a grievance.
- Complaints filed:
 - After the date of official closure of the Project; or
 - 18 Months after the date of the official closure of the Project in cases where the complaint addresses an impact resulting from project activities that was not, and reasonably could not have been, known prior to the date of official closure.
- Complaints that relate to the laws, policies, and regulations of India and Bangladesh, unless this directly relates to the WTIs' and partners' obligation to comply with the IUCN's ESMS principles, standards and procedures;
- Complaints that relate to the IUCN, WTIs and their partners' non-Project-related housekeeping matters, such as finance, human resources and administration;
- Complaints submitted by the same claimant on matters they submitted to the Grievance Mechanism earlier, unless new evidence is provided or the project has not responded to this complaint in the timeframe illustrated below (Section 3); and
- Complaints that relate to fraud or corruption or to the procurement of goods and services, because they fall under different mechanisms. Reports of fraud or corruption in a project should be directed to the confidential Anti-Fraud Hotline¹. Complaints about the procurement of goods and services, including consulting services, should be directed to the IUCN office responsible for the particular procurement².

3. Grievance Process

The grievance resolution process for the "Protecting Tigers, People and their vital habitats in the Sundarban delta in India and Bangladesh – Phase II" follows the IUCN's three-stage process for resolving a grievance. In order to be practical and cost-effective, resolution of complaints should be sought at the lowest possible level. The IUCN grievance mechanism is a three-stage process as shown in Figure 2.

¹ Anti- Fraud Hotline +41 22 999 0350 (voice mail); Anti-Fraud email account antifraudpolicy@iucn.org; fax +41 22 999 0029, mail letter to the Head Oversight Unit, IUCN World Headquarters, Rue Mauverney 28, 1196 Gland, Switzerland.

² If the response of the office is not deemed to be satisfactory, the complainant may escalate to IUCN Headquarters at procurement@iucn.org.



Figure 2: The stages of the IUCN Grievance Mechanism

Stage 1: Local-level resolution sought

The best approach to resolving grievances involves project management of Wildlife Trust of India, Lokmata Rani Rashmoni Mission, in India, and WildTeam and Jahangirnagar University in Bangladesh, and the Affected Party reviewing the conflict and deciding together on a way forward that advances their mutual interests. This reflects the fact that local and country authorities often have better information on and understanding of the causes of disputes arising from project implementation. ‘Deciding together’ approaches are usually the most accessible, natural, unthreatening, and cost-effective ways for communities and project management to resolve differences.

The first step, after WTI and their partners receive and record a local grievance, is for the grievance to be taken up by the local grievance redress procedure, which includes in India, either the Panchayat body, the Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), or both, depending on the nature of the grievance. In Bangladesh, the local body is the Union Parishad, which functions similarly to the Panchayat, explained here. In India, the local Panchayat is a local body of representatives that is democratically elected based on voting by villagers of the concerned villages. In Bangladesh, the Union is comprised of several numbers of wards of a region. Similarly, in India, the JFMC is also a constituted body that represents the local people and is specifically concerned with work being done for the betterment of the environment in and around the villages.

In India, both the Panchayat and JFMC are mandated to engage in arbitrating grievances raised by any villager. When the grievance concerns, human rights, facilities such as roads, hospitals, schools or any other disputes, it is regularly taken up by the Panchayat for resolution. When grievances concern any environmental impact or any work concerning the natural environment, it is taken up by the JFMC. Both of these bodies are recognised in national legislation. In Bangladesh, the Union Parishad, and the Chairman in particular, is charged with engage in arbitrating grievances raised by any villager, which can include issues related to both development and the environment.

These local bodies therefore forward grievances that qualify for local level resolution after being recorded in the register. WTI and its partners’ field representatives then follow up on the process of arbitration and resolution with these respective local bodies. In cases where grievances do not qualify

to be arbitrated and resolved by these local bodies, or in cases where no resolution is achieved, they are directly taken up by WTI and its partners' representatives, following the subsequent stages of Grievance redress as described in subsequent points below.

Grievance process

The grievance process is outlined below. Refer to the ESMP Annex 3 appended Excel Spreadsheet for an example of a Grievance Register which serves as a record of the grievance process.

1. Submission of a grievance:

- a) The WTI and partners, have identified one Contact Person in each project village to act as a conduit for any grievances from groups or individuals who may not feel confident to raise the complaint directly. This person may or may not be involved in the project implementation, and is known to the community. Ideal candidates are respected members of village councils, i.e. Panchayats, Union Parishads, or members of the local Joint Forest Management Committee. The Contact Person has been made familiar with the project and the partners, and named on signs in each project village detailing this grievance mechanism.
- b) Alternatively, stakeholders/Affected Parties shall be able to use the following methods to submit a grievance:
 - i. Verbally (in person or via telephone), through project partner representatives in the field, and/or through the selected grievance redressal representative of the project village.
 - ii. Written and sent via electronic mail or through SMS/networking messaging apps, etc.,
 - iii. Filling out the Grievance Form and mailing it (printed format will be made available in every project village) or handing it to the WTIs' field representatives or grievance redressal representative of village.
- c) Complaints may be submitted in writing, in person or by telephone or email to the designated contact person, the project field offices or the headquarter locations of any of the project partners' or proponents' headquarters (details also to be provided on signs in each village).
- d) The grievance is then recorded and classified in a Grievance Log or Register (written and electronic) by the Field Project Coordinators or other responsible staff of WTI or its project partners.
- e) When submitting a grievance, the complaint should include the following information [responsible project staff will support complainants submitting verbal complaints to include all of this information]:
 - I. Complainant's name and contact information;
 - II. If not filed directly by the complainant, proof that those representing the affected people have authority to do so;
 - III. The specific project or program of concern including location;
 - IV. The harm that is or may be resulting from it;
 - V. The relevant social policy or provision (if known);
 - VI. Any other relevant information or documents (e.g. date of event);
 - VII. Any actions taken so far (if any) to resolve the problem;
 - VIII. Proposed solution; and
 - IX. Whether confidentiality is requested (stating reason).

- f) The complaint can be filed either in English or in Bangla (Bengali). Regardless as to whether confidentiality is requested, the identity of the complainant(s) will be maintained only by the Project staff member working in the field site who has handled the case directly. When working to resolve the case, the identity of the complainants will be maintained within as smaller group as possible to assure protection against retaliation.

2. Acknowledgement and addressing the grievance:

- a) Grievance is formally acknowledged through a personal meeting, phone call, email or letter as appropriate, within 10 working days of submission. If the grievance is not well understood or if additional information is required, clarification should be sought from the complainant during this step.
- b) The Field Representative of the Project and/or the Field Project Coordinator, will investigate the validity of the grievance, including whether it is related to a third party, and whether it is in fact true. The root cause will be investigated and the risk category identified.
- c) A response is developed by the responsible staff with input from others, as necessary. The Project will consider the existing conflict resolution committee setup at every village level by villagers through its administrative framework, to take up field grievances, in efforts to resolve them in a consultative manner.

3. Required actions implemented to deal with the issue, and completion of these, is recorded in the grievance register.

- a) The response is signed-off by the responsible staff. The sign-off may be a signature on the grievance register or in correspondence that should be filed with the grievance to indicate agreement.
- b) The response is communicated to the affected party; the response should be carefully coordinated. The responsible staff ensures that a suitable approach to communicating the response to the affected party is agreed and implemented. The response to a grievance will be provided within 20 working days after receipt of the grievance.
- c) The response of the complainant is recorded to help assess whether the grievance is closed or whether further action is needed. The responsible staff should use appropriate communication channels to confirm whether the complainant has understood and is satisfied with the response. The complainants' response should be recorded in the grievance log. Ideally, both parties should sign off the grievance to confirm closure. Or, alternatively, a written confirmation that the grievance has been closed satisfactorily should be obtained.

The grievance is closed with sign-off from the responsible staff, who determines whether the grievance can be closed or whether further attention and action is required. If further attention is required the responsible staff should re-assess the grievance and then take appropriate action. Once the responsible staff has assessed whether the grievance can be closed, he/she will sign off to approve closure of the grievance on the grievance log or by written communication.

Stage 2: Submission to relevant national-level body

Where reporting of any grievance through Stage 1 is considered unsatisfactory to the aggrieved party, a complaint may be lodged with either the WTIs' or its implementation partners' Senior Managers or Principal Investigators, Programme Country Director, or the IUCN India and Bangladesh Programme offices.

1. The WTIs' and implementation partners' Senior Management Team will assess the eligibility of the complaint and provide a response as to whether or not it is eligible, in accordance with the above criteria (within 10 business days after receiving the complaint).
2. If the complaint is deemed eligible, WTIs' and implementation partners' senior management team, will devise a plan and timeframe to investigate, which will be communicated to the complainant, ideally within 10 business days of the complaint being logged.
3. The WTIs' and implementation partners' senior management team will then look into the matter, with additional technical support if required (e.g., from the IUCN Country Office, or an independent third party). Based on the results, the team will then work with concerned parties to develop and implement an action plan and timeframe to resolve any issues.
4. A summary of the concern raised, actions taken, conclusions reached, follow up plan and timeframe for completion will be documented and communicated as agreed between the parties. The WTI and/or its implementation partners will facilitate support to further clarify, assess, and resolve further issues, as needed.

Stage 3: Submission to IUCN Project Complaints Management System

In cases where Stages 1 and 2 do not resolve the grievance, then the IUCN Country Office would become involved in the grievance case as a necessary step prior to elevating the issue to IUCN's Project Complaints Management System:

- IUCN Head of Oversight, 28 Rue Mauverney, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland
- projectcomplaints@iucn.org
- Fax: +41 22 999 00 02 (addressed to "IUCN Head of Oversight")
- Telephone: +41 22 999 02 59.

Contact details

	Step 1: Local Project Team	Step 2: National WTI	Step 2: National IUCN offices
Name	Mr. Samrat Paul (India) / Mr. Ashok Halder (India) / Md. Abu Zafar (Bangladesh) / Md. Sahadat Hossain (Bangladesh)	Dr. Medha Nayak (India)/ Dr Samir Kumar Sinha (India) / Mr. Amitava Roy (India) / Dr. Md. Anwarul Islam (Bangladesh) / Dr. Md. Abdul Aziz (Bangladesh)	<Information on IUCN India and Bangladesh to be included>.
Position	Field Project In-charge (India) / Village head PRT Leader (India) / Field Project Coordinator (Bangladesh) / Project In-Charge (Bangladesh)	Assistant Manager and OiC of Division, Wildlife Trust of India (India) / Chief Ecologist, Wildlife Trust of India (India)/ General Secretary, LRRM (India) / Chief Executive Officer, WildTeam (Bangladesh) / Professor of Zoology, Jahangirnagar University (Bangladesh)	<To be included>
Email	Fo.sundarbans@wti.org.in/ NA / abu.zafar82@gmail.com / rumonsahadat5@gmail.com	head.conflictmitigation@wti.org.in / samir@wti.org.in / secretary@rashmoni.org.in / anwar1955@gmail.com / maaziz78@gmail.com	<To be included>

Phone	+918293074102 / +918826915388 / +919735242849 / +919939004228/ +919433219813 / +8801711191020 / +8801715256440 / 8801671113255 + 8801716256193	<To be included>
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A template for the Grievance Form is presented in Annex 1.

4. Management of non-compliance

If the WTI or its implementation partners, fail to implement corrective actions under the Project Complaints Management System or continues to be in non-compliance, the following steps will be taken:

- Report summarising the reviews and consultations [IUCN].
- Warning to the WTI or its implementation partners that major corrective actions will be necessary including:
 - Detailed analysis of the root causes for non-implementation of recommendations, including fact-finding missions (with technical support from IUCN or external consultants) and meetings with stakeholders;
 - Production of a new action plan with a timeframe strengthened monitoring procedures and specific reporting;
 - Action plan review and monitoring of implementation;
 - Conditions put on the approval of financial transactions;
 - Moratorium on the disbursement of funds; and
 - Disclosure of information on the dedicated page of the IUCN public website.

5. Proactive approach to grievances

The best approach is to proactively prevent grievances from building up. Stakeholder engagement during the design phase is critical as well as regular stakeholder contact and consultation during the implementation. Maintaining a constructive relationship with stakeholders helps the executing entity/project managers identify and anticipate potential issues early. If a grievance arises the executing entity should involve the affected parties in 'deciding together' how to resolve the issue.

If the issue cannot be solved between the two parties, an intermediate step before proceeding to stages 2 or 3 (Figure 2) might be to ask a local, respected individual to assume the role of an ombudsperson. Involving a person who is respected and trusted by the affected parties can be an effective and unthreatening way for communities and project management to resolve differences. It is possible that the Contact Person mentioned in Stage 1 could be nominated as an ombudsperson: this will be decided during the project inception phase.

6. Informing Stakeholders about the Grievance System and Ensuring its Accessibility

For the grievance mechanism to be effective and accessible, the WTI and its implementation partners have taken active steps to inform all relevant project stakeholders of the existence and scope of the Grievance Mechanism and about the relevant provisions of the ESMS. It is vital that stakeholders are aware of the eligibility criteria for a grievance and the mechanism for grievance submission and contact information.

The WTI and its implementation partners will align the Grievance Mechanism process with good international practice, meaning it will be:

- Accessible: All field offices and field staff will have information on the Grievance Mechanism and how to register complaints; all stakeholders will have information on the Grievance Mechanism and how to register complaints;
- Practical: The mechanism established ensures that it is simple and viable and does not create a burden for project implementers or project stakeholders;
- Transparent: Decisions will be taken in a fair and transparent manner and the complainants will be kept updated of the process;
- Independent: The oversight body and designated team will be independent from project management where the grievance/complaint originates; and
- Time Bound: The process for resolution will be comprehensive and completed in a timely manner.

This has been ensured by providing accessible leaflets to project beneficiaries, and village representatives of project area, with succinct and clear information regarding the mechanism in local, comprehensible language. Additionally, local language signage with elaboration of the mechanism, contact details of relevant people has been provided at strategic locations in project villages.

7. Serious Incident Reporting

The WTI's and its implementation partners should report all serious incidents caused by or related the Project that have or could have significant negative impacts on people or on the environment, to the IUCN ITHCP Secretariat Coordinator. The purpose of reporting serious incidents is to ensure that appropriate responses and corrective actions are taken in a timely manner in order to minimise, mitigate and/or remedy the impacts as well as to avoid repeat occurrences.

A serious incident in this context is defined as: "any unplanned or uncontrolled event with a materially adverse effect on workers, community members or the environment within the Project's Area of Influence or events that have the potential to have material or immaterial adverse effects on the Project execution, or give rise to potential liabilities or reputational risks" (IUCN 2020b, Reporting Serious Incidents). Serious incidents can include:

- Fatalities, serious injuries and accidents at work;
- Fatalities, serious injuries and accidents affecting local communities and others;
- Incidents of human-wildlife conflicts leading to deaths or disabilities may be cross-referenced with existing databases, and individual cases need not be filed as a grievance;
- Violations of human rights, including sexual and gender-based violence and harmful child labour;
- Forced evictions;
- Conflicts, disputes and disturbances leading to loss of life, violence or the risk of violence; and
- Environmental impacts.

In the case of a serious incident, the incident will be reported by the WTI and its implementation partners to the IUCN ITHCP Project Manager/Coordinator and the IUCN ESMS Coordinator within 48 hours of the WTI receiving information of the incident occurring. In cases where detailed information is not immediately available, a draft report will be prepared by the WTI and its implementation partners and submitted, with a more comprehensive update being prepared once the details have been established. The report will state whether the incident will be subject to a formal inquiry, criminal investigation or legal proceedings to determine the circumstances of the incident, responsibilities and root causes.

If the incident is not subject to a formal inquiry or legal proceedings, the report will follow the template provided in Annex 2 (Serious Incident Report), including:

- A detailed description of the incident and its effects on workers, local communities, the environment etc.
- An analysis of the root-causes, covering the management and control measures that were in place at the time and any failings identified in regard to management or procedures; and
- Details of any response provided, actions taken to remedy the situation, and to prevent its recurrence.

If the incident is subject to a formal inquiry or legal procedure, the findings of the inquiry will be summarised, using the template in Annex 2, along with a link to and/or an electronic copy of the inquiry's final report, if it is made available to the public. The WTI and its implementation partners will inform the IUCN about any ongoing or future issues related to the incident that may require attention, such as grievances, claims for compensation or other legal action taken by the victims' families.

8. Maintaining Records and Monitoring Actions

Under the Director Policy and Programme, IUCN will ensure that all grievances, whether eligible or not, need to be recorded in a grievance register (Annex 3 of the ESMP). This register documents all complaints, suggestions, comments, questions submitted by stakeholders in a categorical way as well as the agreed corrective actions (with due regard for confidentiality of information). This is done under 5 main headings:

1. Grievance registration: including subject of complaint, description of complaint and eligibility criteria;
2. Acknowledgement: the WTI and its implementation partners acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 5 working days;
3. Investigation (of eligible grievances only): the WTI and its implementation partners investigate the root cause, whether the claim is true or false and proposes corrective actions;
4. Response: the WTI and its implementation partners provide a response to the complainant; and
5. Close out: the WTI and its implementation partners close the grievance once it has been adequately addressed and remedied and a response provided to the complainant.

Agreed action plans have been in place with timeframes for regular process monitoring towards resolution of the grievance. WTI and its implementation partners have coordinated the monitoring by organising periodic checks, bringing together the concerned parties and relevant technical advisors for meetings or other communication on the status of action plans, until they are completed. The WTI and its implementation partners will assess the effectiveness of this complaints resolution process on an annual basis, and identify any needs for improvement. In addition, under the Director Policy and Programme, the IUCN will ensure that reports from the WTI and its implementation partners on progress made to implement recommendations are processed and all necessary monitoring tasks are coordinated, in cooperation with the Head of Oversight Unit. Furthermore, reports demonstrating compliance with IUCN's ESMS procedures will be posted on the website for consideration by partners and the general public, with due regard to confidentiality.

References

IUCN (2020a) Guidance Note: ESMS Grievance Mechanism, part of the IUCN Environmental & Social Management System (ESMS), Version 2.0: May 2016, IUCN: Gland, Switzerland.

IUCN (2020b) Template: Reporting Serious Incidents, part of the IUCN Environmental & Social Management System (ESMS), Version 2.0: May 2016, IUCN: Gland, Switzerland.

Form 1: Template for Public Grievance Form

Public Grievance Form	
Reference No. (assigned by Implementation Partner):	
Please enter your contact information and grievance. This information will be dealt with confidentially. Please note: If you wish to remain anonymous, please enter your comment/grievance in the box below without indicating any contact information – your comments will still be considered by	
Full Name	
Anonymous submission	<input type="checkbox"/> I want to remain anonymous; and why is anonymity requested?
Please mark how you wish to be contacted (mail, telephone, e-mail).	<input type="checkbox"/> By mail (please provide mailing address):
	<input type="checkbox"/> By telephone (please provide telephone number):
	<input type="checkbox"/> By e-mail (please provide e-mail address):
Preferred language for communication	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Bangla <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi
Description of incident or grievance:	What happened? Where did it happen? Who did it happen to? What is the result of the problem?
Date of incident/grievance:	<input type="checkbox"/> One time incident/grievance (date _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Happened more than once (how many times? _____) <input type="checkbox"/> On-going (currently experiencing problem)
What would you like to see happen to resolve the problem?	

Please return grievance form to Dr. Medha Nayak, Wildlife Trust of India, F-13, Sector – 8, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh, 201301

Dr Md. Anwarul Islam, Cosmos Centre, 69/1 New Circular Road, Malibagh, Dhaka 1217, Bangladesh (email: anwar1955@gmail.com)

Dr. Md. Abdul Aziz, Department of Zoology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka 1342, Bangladesh.

Form 2: Template for a serious incident report

Source: IUCN 2020b

Serious Incident Report	
General Information	
Project name, country, region	
Name of Proponent / Implementation Partner	
Person and agency submitting the information	
Organisations, agencies and/or companies involved in the incident	
Details of the people affected, status (e.g. if they are working as rangers, volunteers, staff, etc.), names, ages, gender. Details of the community or communities involved.	
Details of the Incident	
Date and time the Incident occurred	
Location	
Type of Incident	<i>Fatalities, serious injuries and accidents at work</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Fatalities, serious injuries and accidents affecting local communities and others</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Violations of human rights or accusation of human rights violations, incl. sexual and gender-based violence and harmful child labor</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Forced Eviction</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Conflicts, disputes and disturbances leading to loss of life, violence or the risk of violence</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Environmental incidents</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed chronological description of the Incident and its circumstances (if possible, with photos)	
Root Cause Analysis	
Detailed description of key causal factors (internal and external), potential management failings and identification of absent/ inadequate/ failed/ unused management and control measures (e.g., non-compliances with ESMS standards or measures)	
Specification of relevant roles and responsibilities of the agencies, authorities and others involved	
Reaction to the incidents by the victims, involved families or communities as well as local/national/international media	
Agency or agencies responsible for investigation of the case. What is the scope of the investigation? Does this include a root cause analysis?	

Serious Incident Report			
Response and Corrective Actions			
Description of the response (if available) and agencies involved.			
Description of any corrective actions, plans or next steps to prevent the incident from recurring or follow up to close the case or proceed with further investigations (include action plan with responsibilities and schedule)			
Incident Report Approval			
	Position	Name	Date
Prepared by			
Approved by (IUCN ESMS Coordinator)			