



Standard on Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

This Standard on Stakeholder Engagement was developed in 2018 and ensures that WWF is committed to meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of all GEF and GCF projects. WWF's commitment to stakeholder engagement arises from internal standards such as WWF's **Project and Program Standards (PPMS)**,¹² as well as WWF's commitment to international instruments such as United Nations Declaration on Indigenous People (UNDRIP). Stakeholder engagement is an overarching term that encompasses a range of activities and interactions with stakeholders throughout the project cycle and is an essential aspect of good project management. See definition of stakeholders on page 88 in Annex 10.

Effective stakeholder engagement can make a significant contribution to successful project design and implementation while improving the environmental and social sustainability of projects and enhance project acceptance. Stakeholder consultations provide input for inter alia environmental and social assessment of the project.

The intensity and scale of stakeholder engagement will vary with the type of project, its complexity, and its potential risks and impacts. It starts early in project planning and spans the entire life of the project.

Requirements

Specifically, WWF GEF and GCF Project Teams will:

- Engage with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle as early as possible in the project development stage, and in a time frame that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design.
- Engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders. For projects that affect rights and interests, lands, resources and territories of indigenous peoples, ensure Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). (For details on FPIC, please refer to the WWF Policy on Indigenous Peoples).
- Provide stakeholders with timely, understandable and accessible information and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.
- Involve the following as part of stakeholder planning and engagement:
 - Stakeholder identification and analysis;
 - Planning how the engagement with stakeholders will take place;
 - Disclosure of information;
 - Consultation with stakeholders, addressing and/or responding to grievances, and;
 - Reporting to stakeholders.

During **Project Preparation**, WWF GEF and GCF Project Teams will:

- Identify the range of stakeholders. The list of stakeholders will vary depending on project activities and then develop a strategy to engagement them.
- Identify those Projects Affected Peoples who, because of their circumstances,



may be disadvantaged or vulnerable. Based on this, the Project Team will further identify individuals or groups who may have different concerns and priorities about project impacts, mitigation mechanisms, and benefits, and who may require different or separate forms of engagement.

- Conduct the stakeholder analysis in a culturally sensitive, nondiscriminatory and inclusive manner.
- Develop an appropriately scaled Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts.
- Disclose a draft SEP as early as possible and before project concept finalization. The Project Team will seek the views of the stakeholders on the SEP. A final SEP will need to be revised based on views and feedback, and then disclosed.
- In cases where the exact location of the project is not known, the SEP will take the format of a framework approach and will outline the general principles and a collaborative strategy to identify stakeholders and an engagement process to be implemented once the project location(s) are known.

During **Project Execution**, the Executing Agency will:

- Continue to engage with and provide information to all stakeholders, including Project Affected Peoples and others, throughout the life of the project in a manner appropriate to the nature of their interests, on the potential environmental and social risks and impacts of the project.
- Continue conduct stakeholder engagement in accordance with the SEP and build upon the channels of communication and engagement already established with stakeholders
- Communicate significant changes to the project that will result in additional risks and impacts, particularly when it will impact project affected people. The Executing Agency will provide information on such risks and impacts and consult with project affected people as to how these risks and impacts will be mitigated.
- Respond to concerns and grievances from project affected people related to environmental and social performance of the project in a timely manner.

WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Coordinator will oversee the Project Team's involvement with all stakeholders including Project Affected Peoples, Indigenous Peoples, and local CSOs as early as possible in the design/preparation process and ensure that stakeholder views and concerns are known and considered.

The WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Coordinator will review and approve all SEPs and oversee their implementation. The Executing Agency is responsible for the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and will designate specific personnel to be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of stakeholder engagement activities.

The WWF Environment and Social Safeguards Coordinator will also ensure that the Executing Agency will continue to hold consultations throughout project implementation as deemed necessary to address environment and social safeguards issues that affect stakeholders.

Annex 10 provides more details on the implementation of this policy.