

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
FOREST ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT PROJECT

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I. Project Development Objectives

The Project Development Objective is to strengthen capacity of government institutions and communities to improve sustainable forest ecosystem management and provide capacity building and investments in infrastructure, ecosystem restoration and management planning. The Global Environmental Objective is the same as the PDO.

II. Main Components of the Project

The four main components of the project are:

Component 1: *Institutional reform of the forestry sector:*

Priority areas for action include the following: capacity building for policy reform, creating a legal and regulatory framework for the reform of the forestry sector based on lessons learned through implementation of pilot activities at the national, local and community levels; preparing a base in order to create favorable conditions for a more decentralized management and planning of natural resources at the national and district levels, as well as at the level of forestry (leskhoz) and aiyl okmotu; training and capacity building for public / private partnerships; creating a platform for coordination and mobilization of communities; enhancing capacity of SAEPF; as well as conducting public awareness raising and information campaigns.

Component 2. *Strategic investment and piloting approaches for sustainable management:*

Priority activities include assistance in the preparation and implementation of the integrated forestry management plans that focus, but are not limited to the following activities: capital investment, such as creating of short cycle plantations; improving silvopastoral systems and agriculture taking account of the climate; investment to encourage natural regeneration of forests and reforestation with introduction of fertilizers into the soil; irrigation systems for fruit cultivation; forest management, including thinning and selective logging; production of high quality seedlings, creating nursery of tree species and forest plantations; as well as technical assistance and capacity building of local user groups and forestry professionals.

Component 3. *Information, monitoring and evaluation:*

Priority areas for action include: technical assistance and capacity building for the creation, operation and maintenance of the Forest management information system (FMIS), which will be used in the process of planning forest resources management within the Departments of Forestry. Technical assistance will be provided to the FMIS users, including the Department of Forestry, leskhoz, local and regional authorities, as well as local users and user associations. This activity aims to facilitate the collection and preparation of basic information on forest ecosystems, maps, researches; assistance in updating the state forest inventory (SFI); acquisition of new satellite images for identifying the extent of forest and pasture resources administered by the leskhoz; as well as enhancing capacity of the Department of Forest and Hunting Inventory and Planning for further regular updating SFI after project completion.

Component 4. *Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation.*

This component will finance project management activities which will be undertaken by the PIU established in the SAEPF. This will include budgeting, preparing annual work plans, contract management, financial management, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation. Under this component all reporting on implementation progress will be prepared, including monitoring of the PDO and the project Results Framework indicators.

III. Potential Restrictions for Users

Potential restrictions for users may arise from component 3, and they may consist of the following:

- a) Mapping, clarification of boundaries between forests and pastures in Yssyk Kul and Chui regions will change access regime of some territories that previously had unclear status and may have been used by local communities;
- b) Share of the fuel wood drawn by the communities in project areas from the nearby forests will have to be substituted for other fuel sources.
- c) reforestation - lands planted with trees will be public; however access to them for people, who used them before, will be restricted;
- d) firewood received by the local community on the pilot sites in surrounding forests will be replaced by other types of fuel.

IV. Key Policy Objectives as per OP 4.12

Key policy objectives include the following:

- Avoid, minimize or mitigate land related disputes and the related adverse conflicts;
- Help all involved in improving or at least restoring income and standards of living;
- Resettlement as an opportunity for the development of family and social infrastructure;
- Mitigate risks for the involved persons and assist in minimizing the risks for the Bank borrowers.

V. Key Guiding Principles

- All affected people will receive compensation or assistance in various ways, regardless of their status;
- Recovery of income may require close measurements of additional compensations;
- Involved population will take mitigation measures related to planning and implementation;
- Meaningful consultations;
- Information transparency;
- Grievance redress procedures.

VI. Key planning objectives

- Identifying adverse effects for their avoidance, minimization or mitigation;
- Assisting affected people with improving their subsistence and living standards;
- Providing institutional framework and resources for the implementation of the project activities;
- Mitigating risks for affected people helps minimize risks to borrower and Bank, too

VII. The Process Framework

Applicability: Restricting access to the use of resources in the legally defined reserves, natural parks or specially protected areas. For projects involving restriction of access, borrowers of the Bank shall ensure the development of the process framework in line with OP 4.12.

Applicability: Restrictions on access by users to resources in legally designated parks or conservation areas.

For projects involving restriction of access the borrower provides the Bank with a draft process framework that conforms to the relevant provisions of the OP 4.12 as a condition of appraisal

Objective: Livelihood restoration “in a manner that maintains the sustainability of natural resources” and does not adversely affect user livelihoods.

The framework establishes a participatory process by which appropriate restrictions and mitigation measures, as well as implementation and monitoring arrangements, are to be considered.

VIII. Plan of Action (PoA)

During the project implementation prior to the introduction of restrictions, the Implementing Partner, jointly with local intermediaries, shall prepare a PoA.

The PoA describes specific restrictions introduced, measures to be undertaken to assist affected persons, and arrangements for implementation and monitoring, particularly with respect to evaluating the success of livelihood restoration mitigation measures, so that additional actions can be taken if the measures are not being successful.

The PoA sets out the specific institutional responsibilities for various aspects of implementation, as well as an assessment of the capacity of the responsible parties to fulfill these roles along with any capacity building measures that they might need in order to achieve the needed capacity.

The PoA could take the form of a natural resources management plan prepared for the project.

The Bank’s Task Team will assess the PoA in order to determine the feasibility of the measures to assist the affected persons to improve (or at least restore in real terms to pre-project or pre-displacement levels, whichever is higher) their livelihoods with due regard to the sustainability of the natural resource.

The Team Leader will make the PoA available to the public through the WB InfoShop and relevant local sources of information. The Implementing Partner will report to the Government, Project Affected Persons(PAPs)/stakeholders and WB on the PoA implementation on the annual basis.

IX. Project Affected People (PAP): Section 1

1) **Social Assessment will be conducted** with the aim to:

- quantify economic dependence on the resources in question (i.e., providing a baseline for livelihood restoration);

- describe the formal and/or informal institutional structures that local communities have to enable them to engage in a transparent and representative consultation process (this includes identifying any vulnerable or marginalized groups who may need special provisions to ensure they are not excluded).

- **Issues**

- Household may have multiple providers of income – require intra-household analysis;
- Women may have different opportunities for employment – require gender analysis;
- Vulnerable groups (poor, elderly, ethnic minorities) have different opportunities for livelihood restoration – establish criteria for vulnerability;

2) **Local communities will participate** in identifying who are or are not PAPs (and thus eligible for direct participation in planning and in benefits/ compensations)

X. Project Affected People: Section 2

The following criteria are used to identify PAPs:

- people, who informally use pastures on lands that will be planted with trees;
- people, whose livelihood is fully or partly connected to forest resources collected in the territories, to which access will be restricted;
- people, whose livelihood fully or partly depends on entrepreneurial activities related to eco-tourism, wood fuel, and so on derived in the territories, to which access will be restricted.

XI. Livelihood Restoration

Potential Impacts

- Loss of income-earning capacity
- Compensation alone does not guarantee the restoration or improvement of living standards

Mitigation Measures Envisioned

- Support to development and implementation of forest-based tourism;
- Support to income generating activities based on non-timber forest products;
- Preparation of recommendations for pilot activities for sustainable use of sawdust in the Kyrgyz Republic to reduce pressure on timber forest resources (firewood as well as construction materials);
- and other projects in selected communities.

XII. Consultation and Participation

Key steps to meaningful consultation with communities include the following:

- Identify key stakeholders
- Ensure that project information is relevant, timely and in language accessible to stakeholders
- Disseminate information in advance and through the appropriate channels before consultation starts
- Consult early and on an on-going basis
- Incorporate the results of consultation in the design of the project or explain clearly why this is not possible

- Provide feedback to stakeholders on how their comments were taken into account
- Document the consultation process

Key steps to Meaningful Consultations with Communities

PAPs will be consulted at all stages of the project implementation:

1. Consultations to discuss the Process Framework with stakeholders will be held prior to project implementation.
2. Once the pilot sites are identified, consultations with PAPs will be conducted in order to inform them about the project, its scale, impact, and etc. It is assumed that residents will already be aware of most information due to the project nature aimed to address community needs; nevertheless, steps will be taken to ensure awareness of PAPs and get their feedback, which may entail changes in the project scope in order to minimize the need for resettlement.
3. After completion of the inventory and assets valuation, a security expert will discuss details with PAPs to verify the inventory and suitability of the valuation results for them;
4. After completion of the RAP, PAPs will receive a copy of it in a language and form that are understandable for them.
5. Prior to implementation of subproject, the proposed amount of compensation in cash or in kind will be discussed with each PAP for their review and approval prior to transfer of assets.
6. PAPs have the right to the presence of a third party, as a rule, representatives of local self-governments until final transfer of assets. PAP may file a complaint at any time.

In the course of consultation, socio-cultural factors, such as the level of literacy, cultural barriers to participation of population, as well as appropriate reduction factors, e.g. extension of terms to ensure maximum participation given responsibilities of households, geographic dispersal, and etc; and form corresponding to culture will be taken into account. Appropriate materials will be provided prior to consultation, which in form and language will be understandable to residents being consulted. Prior to resettlement the communities will have enough time to review and discuss the provided information. Community's feedback will be included in the design and implementation of the RAP, and as necessary - in project implementation in wider scale.

XIII. Documentation of the Consultation Process

- Good record of main issues and concerns raised and responses to them will be kept.
- Audio and video to maintain record might be used but form of recording will be disclosed in advance.
- The issue of attribution of comments will be discussed.
- Participants will be informed how they can access the record of consultations.
- The next steps after the consultations will be explained to participants.
- Stakeholder suggestions that cannot be accommodated will anyway be recorded and addressed.
- Minutes of consultation meeting will be attached to final PoA.

XIV. Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRM)

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after

concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/GRS>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org

Further grievances handling measures include the following:

- Point person with the responsibility of coordinating grievances (receive and sort) will be appointed (representative of the local authorities or the local personnel of the implementing partner);
- Grievances will be tracked and monitored;
- Receipt will be acknowledged and resolution will be provided within established time period (but not longer than that established by the national legislation);
- Multiple channels (at least two) for receiving feedback/grievances need to be established (mail, fax, e-mail, website, telephone, in person) taking into account local practices and availability of the channels to local communities.

XV. Gender Considerations

Gender equality is recognized as one of the key development goals in the Kyrgyz Republic. All government projects shall aim to exercise of human rights, including the rights of females. Public authorities shall perform their obligations under international treaties and agreements in the field of human rights.

The project will have different impact on gender relations in the affected communities located in the project area. Therefore, opportunities for involvement and identifying potential impacts of women's participation in decision-making at the local level will be explored.