



# Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

### **(ESRS Concept Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 03/03/2025 | Report No: ESRSC04800

**I. BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Operation Data**

|                                |                                                                 |                          |                      |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Operation ID                   | Product                                                         | Operation Acronym        | Approval Fiscal Year |
| P510429                        | Investment Project Financing (IPF)                              | PoCRA-II                 | 2026                 |
| Operation Name                 | Maharashtra Project on Climate Resilient Agriculture Phase - II |                          |                      |
| Country/Region Code            | Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)             | Region                   | Practice Area (Lead) |
| India                          | India                                                           | SOUTH ASIA               | Agriculture and Food |
| Borrower(s)                    | Implementing Agency(ies)                                        | Estimated Appraisal Date | Estimated Board Date |
| Department of Economic Affairs | Department of Agriculture                                       | 09-Apr-2025              | 09-Jul-2025          |
| Estimated Concept Review Date  | Total Project Cost                                              |                          |                      |
| 10-Mar-2025                    | 700,000,000.00                                                  |                          |                      |

**Proposed Development Objective**

To strengthen agriculture production ecosystem while focusing on technology driven adaptation of climate change impacts, improving soil carbon stock, water use efficiency and reducing relative GHG emissions to sustain a level of profitable productivity.

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

No

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

Improve Resilience and promote sustainable agriculture with the following four pillars viz: Pillar 1 - Resource Efficient Productivity Enhancement; Pillar 2 - Promoting Precision Agriculture for Emissions Management; Pillar 3- Improving and Building Income Resilience; Pillar 4 - Lighthouse Approach for Strengthening Institutions. The details of these pillars will be discussed with the client and the task team, will be finalised during project preparation.



## **D. Environmental and Social Overview**

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

PoCRA-II project will be implemented in the Maharashtra, which has 36 districts. Although agriculture accounts for 12 percent of the state's GDP, it employs nearly half the population of the state.

The project seeks to benefit smallholder farmers in 21 districts of Maharashtra through knowledge and technology to enhance their resilience to climate-induced vulnerabilities. The proposed project is a second phase of the recently completed Maharashtra Project on Climate Resilient Agriculture (PoCRA) (P160408). The second phase includes new districts in eastern Maharashtra, where a majority of the tribal population of the state is concentrated. These districts are Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Gondia, Nagpur, Amravati, and Yavatmal. Additionally, the western hilly districts of Jalgaon and Nashik also have a significant tribal population. The eastern districts of Gadchiroli and Gondia are affected by left wing extremism (LWE). Maharashtra also has a sizeable Scheduled Caste (SC) population, having 5.4% of the national SC population.

The state experiences a tropical monsoon climate with hot, rainy, cold seasons and dry summers. The coastal region falls into the Hot Humid-Per humid Eco-Region, with hot and humid summers, warm winters and a mean annual rainfall above 2000 mm. The western and central parts of Maharashtra fall in the Hot Semi-Arid Eco-Region and have hot and humid summers, mild and dry winters and mean annual rainfall of 600-1000 mm. The eastern part of Maharashtra lies in the Hot Sub-Humid (Dry) Eco-Region and has hot summers, mild winters and mean annual rainfall of 1000-1500 mm. About 16.9% of the total geographical area of the state is under forests. The forests in Maharashtra belong to six Forest Type Groups which are further divided into 17 Forest Types. The state has 6 National Parks, 48 Wildlife Sanctuaries and 6 Conservation Reserves. Number of natural wetlands are 686 and the total area is 29,947.

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

The Department of Agriculture (DoA) has implemented PoCRA-I (P160408), and PoCRA-II will be the first ESF operation for them. DoA has strong institutional capacity and operational experience in participatory planning and implementation, social mobilization, community engagement, direct benefits, community works and training and capacity building of village committees, including tribal areas. During PoCRA-I, the client has also successfully implemented the IPNM, mitigations actions/measures for environmental and social (E&S) risks identified under the project. This experience will be leveraged under POCRA-II.

PoCRA-II will be implemented by Project Management Units (PMU) at the state and district level. The state PMU currently has an environment and a social specialist, who have experience of application and implementation of Bank safeguard policies. Under POCRA-I, the safeguard risks were low to moderate, and the safeguard performance has been Satisfactory. However, the safeguard specialists lack prior experience and capacity to assess and mitigate risks specifically related to labor, SEA/SH, and community health and safety as envisaged by the ESSs. These specific areas will be supported under the capacity building measures.

The PMU will be strengthened with E&S experts to prepare the required project level documents (including Environment and Social Management Framework) with guidance from Bank's E&S team. DoA will hire Environmental and Social consultant(s) to conduct an ES assessment and prepare the required environment and social instruments in accordance with the Bank's ESF. The assessments, among other aspects, will evaluate the current institutional capacity



of all implementing department/ agencies/ entities and inform requirements for additional resources to manage, monitor, and report on environment and social risks/impacts. The final institutional arrangements for implementation will be agreed upon at appraisal.

## II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

### A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

#### A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Moderate

The environment risk is considered to be 'Moderate'. The proposed project interventions are environmentally benign which aim at improving climate resilience, soil health, carbon sequestration, promoting resource use efficiency (fertilizers, energy and water) and emission reduction (Methane and CO<sub>2</sub>) which contribute to environmental sustainability. However, the risk is considered to be 'Moderate' as the project activities are likely to result in low to moderate negative impacts that may arise from – i) support to post-harvest interventions including on-site processing machines/processing centers that might involve minor impacts from small scale civil/upgradation works, use of water and energy, generation of wastes at operation stage, and food safety concerns ii) support to activities like land levelling, farm machinery that might contribute to emissions, iii) support to the Farmer Producer Groups (FPGs) that are likely to engage in input supply where there is a risk of supplying inputs that are spurious, likely to contaminate the environment (e.g. hazardous pesticides), v) promoting precision agriculture that is likely involve use of plastics (mulch) and hazardous chemicals, especially pesticides and weedicides that can have negative impact on health, soil and water. However, these impacts are expected to be site specific, reversible and manageable

#### A.2 Social Risk Rating

Moderate

Social risk is assessed to be Moderate as the overall ES impacts will be positive and any adverse impacts will be localized, reversible and amenable to conventional mitigation measures. Small scale, construction works will largely be on community/government lands, and land acquisition, physical relocation and economic displacement is not anticipated. Some community works may involve voluntary land donation (VLD), subject to compliance with ESS5 and prior approval of the Bank. The ESMF negative/exclusion list will prohibit project interventions involving land acquisition and displacement or causing significant impacts on private or community land. The ESMF will include procedures for VLD. Given the small scale of construction works, majority of the civil works will be carried out by local workers with low requirement of external workers and labor campsites. Under POCRA-I, the project has worked in several tribal districts on microplanning, strengthening village committees, direct benefits, community works, farmers field schools, communication and community trainings. This experience will inform the project's expansion into newer tribal areas. Some of the project areas are officially notified as affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE). Some of the key social issues relate to: a) engaging with formal/informal tribal leaders and complying with provisions of Schedule V areas; b) inclusion of particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs), landless and marginal farmers/labor, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups; c) security in LWE areas; and d) weak access to grievance redressal mechanisms. The sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SH) risk is assessed as 'moderate'. Impacts of project activities are anticipated to be temporary, site-specific, reversible and manageable through appropriate risk management mechanisms. If significant risks for tribal involvement are identified during preparation, the rating will be adjusted to substantial.



## **B. Relevance of Standards and Policies at Concept Stage**

### **B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards**

#### **ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

Relevant

POCRA-II will lead to improved crop productivity/diversification and climate resilience. ESS 1 is relevant for this project to assess, manage, and monitor E&S risks and impacts and to ensure E&S sustainability. As sub-project locations are unknown and interventions would be across 21 districts in the state, an Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared. Detailed assessment will include an understanding of exclusion of alternative use/tenure arrangements, farm labor and landless and marginal farmers. The ESMF will include: screening mechanism and sample ESMPs; negative list of activities that will not be financed; VLD procedures. The ESMF will also include: i) Labor Management Procedures (LMP), ii) Indigenous People Planning Framework (IPPF), iii) GBV/SEA/SH Mitigation Framework; and VLD. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) will be prepared. Key requirements for SEP and ESMF will be reflected in the ESCP.

#### **ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

Relevant

Based on stakeholder analysis, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be prepared, consulted upon, and publicly disclosed by project appraisal. Project will engage with broad-based/targeted consultations with targeted stakeholders including, landed/landless farmers, community leaders, disadvantaged/vulnerable groups, and elected representatives. The SEP will summarize the consultations and stakeholder feedback and include a plan for consultations, engagement, information sharing and disclosure during project cycle. SEP will also recommend criteria for inclusion of vulnerable and/or landless households in planning, village committees, trainings and as direct beneficiaries. The existing Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) will be strengthened to enhance the accessibility and responsiveness of grievances, including SEA/SH related grievances.

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

Relevant

EHS and labor risks are expected to be moderate, including for GBV; labor influx; and agrochemicals. The project is likely to involve: a) direct workers; b) contracted workers; c) community workers; and d) primary supply workers, including for solar panels. The potential for labor influx is small. LMP will be included in the ESMF. LMP will include terms and conditions of employment, non-discrimination and equal opportunity, workers' organization, and workers' GRM. When applicable, Terms and Conditions related to community workers will be included in LMP, GRM and will require agreement with village committee. ESA will include risks to PS workers, especially children, bonded and vulnerable labor and working conditions. Bidding documents for supply of solar panels will include Bank's requirements for PS workers. Child and Forced labor risks will be mitigated through a) LMP, bidding documents, contracts and a CoC; b) negative list in the ESMF; c) workers' GRM; d) training and monitoring.

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

Relevant

There could be some minor impacts– (i) use of agrochemicals which may impact the health through exposure, residues in water, food, and soil for which integrated nutrient and pest management plan (IPNM) needs to be followed, (ii) post harvest processing activities that will involve use of energy and water for processing and generate wastes, (iii) farm mechanization may contribute to emissions. Climate resilient crop varieties will be promoted instead



of hybrids that demand high inputs. Civil works, land levelling and mechanization activities can cause pollution of air, water and soil and noise pollution. Water efficient and renewable energy technologies can be promoted for processing and wastes can be recycled/reused/safely disposed. The ESMF will focus on assessment of any residual issues related to resource consumption and pollution from the project activities and will identify the risks and include measures to be taken at planning, execution and operation and management stages.

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

POCRA-II does not involve large-scale, complex construction, hazardous sites/materials, non-permissible agrochemicals, large-scale labor camps/influx, and/or construction-related traffic. CHS risks related to hazardous materials, SEA/SH, labor influx are moderate. Two project districts are notified as Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected. The project will rely on proactive community engagement, participatory microplanning, direct benefit transfer to beneficiaries, and invest in improving yields and incomes. LWE risks are moderate. No security personnel will be hired. Targeted consultations in LWE areas will be undertaken and ESMF will include suitable LWE risk mitigation measures. It will also include mitigation measures related to construction, labor management, handling of agrochemicals, GBV, and SEA/SH. ESMF will include a Code of Conduct for community orientation on CHS. This will become a core training module for community groups, field functionaries, local contractors and workers

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

Not Currently Relevant

Land acquisition, Land use restrictions and physical and/or economic displacement is not anticipated. Small scale, community/farm-level construction will be undertaken largely on community or government-owned lands. Some activities may involve donation of private land, including land leasing between lessors and community groups. The ESMF will include: a) safeguard screening mechanism to identify adverse impacts on land, land use, assets and livelihoods; b) negative list to exclude any activities that cause significant loss of land, land use, livelihoods and assets or are not endorsed by communities; and c) procedures to ensure voluntary land donation as well as land leasing is compliant with ESS5 requirements of voluntariness, transparency, informed choice, right to refusal and adequate documentation.

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

Not Currently Relevant

Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources is considered not relevant to the project. The project activities will take place in existing cultivated land. The project's ESMF will carry out an assessment and include a screening checklist to ensure project activities do not pose any risk/ impact / alter any critical habitat and natural habitat. ESMF will include guidance to exclude activities in or near protected areas and/or sensitive habitats.

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

Relevant

Many project districts have tribal population who will be among key project beneficiaries. The Environment and Social Assessment (ESA) will include meaningful consultations with tribal communities to ensure positive/negative risks and impacts are identified and adequately mitigated. Based on this assessment, an IPPF will be prepared and integrated in the ESMF. The IPPF will include measures on: a) meaningful consultations and participation of tribal



communities in project interventions and benefits; b) risk avoidance/mitigation measures; c) enhancement of socioeconomic opportunities; d) GRM; and e) risk mitigation measures in LWE districts. FPIC is not envisaged as POCRA-II will not cause relocation or adverse on customary land and natural resources and cultural heritage of tribal communities. Any such interventions will be included in the negative list. If significant risks for tribal involvement are identified during preparation, then the rating will be revised.

**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage**

Not Currently Relevant

Given the nature of proposed interventions/activities under the project, concerns related to cultural heritage or chance finds are not anticipated at this stage. Therefore, ESS 8 is not relevant to the proposed project.

**ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries**

Not Currently Relevant

This standard is not relevant. No involvement of Financial Intermediaries (FI) is proposed or envisaged in the project.

**B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways**

No

**OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas**

No

**B.3 Other Salient Features**

**Use of Borrower Framework**

In Part

Given the experience of POCRA-I, Borrower's framework on village-level planning, gram sabha resolutions, grievance redressal and community monitoring will be assessed for adoption. The ESMF will include an assessment of aspects of the borrower framework that can be adapted for the project.

**Use of Common Approach**

No

**C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities**

**C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by Appraisal?**

The following actions would be required before appraisal begins to allow for an informed decision-making, commensurate with the E&S issues/risks identified during project preparation:

- 1) Preparation of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), including the LMP, IPPF, IPNM, and GBV/SEA/SH Mitigation measures, along with E&S procedures such as screening and negative checklists that will guide the preparation and implementation.
- 2) Preparation of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), including stakeholder mapping and consultations.
- 3) Preparation of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).
- 4) Disclosure of the SEP and the ESCP.



The following key aspects are likely to be a part of Borrower's Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

- 1) Organizational structure and staffing to manage environment and social risks/impacts;
- 2) Procedures and timelines to adopt and disclose ESF documents/instruments, as relevant;
- 3) Implementation and monitoring of the ESF instruments, including ESMF, SEP, and ESCP (and updating, as required);
- 4) Preparation and implementation of specific assessments/plans to meet the requirements set forth in ESSs (for sub-projects/activities, which are likely to go beyond the Appraisal Stage);
- 5) Training and activities for strengthening capacity of officials with the PMU, line departments, consultants, and other key staff on E&S management;
- 6) Provisions for managing unanticipated Environmental and Social Risks/Impacts;
- 7) Prevention/mitigation and response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) risks;
- 8) Evidence-based reporting requirements, including geo-referenced site data/information to facilitate real-time tracking of implementation of E&S actions, as necessary; and
- 9) Measures for strengthening the existing Grievance Redressal Mechanism.

### III. CONTACT POINT

#### World Bank

Task Team Leader: Ranjan Samantaray Title: Senior Agriculture Specialist

Email: rsamantaray@worldbank.org

TTL Contact: Ademola Braimoh Job Title: Senior Agriculture Economist

Email: abraimoh@worldbank.org

### IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20433

Telephone: (202) 473-1000

Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

### V. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s): Ranjan Samantaray, Ademola Braimoh

ADM Environmental Specialist: Sharlene Jehanbux Chichgar



**V. APPROVAL**

ADM Social Specialist:

Varun Singh