

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC14874

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I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Kazakhstan	Project ID:	P153673
Project Name:	Forestry Development Project (P153673)		
Task Team Leader(s):	Angela G. Armstrong		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	12-Apr-2016	Estimated Board Date:	21-Sep-2016
Managing Unit:	GEN03	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	Forestry (90%), General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (10%)		
Theme(s):	Other environment and natural resources management (80%), Climate change (20%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	50.00	Total Bank Financing:	30.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			20.00
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			30.00
Total			50.00
Environmental Category:	B - Partial Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	Yes		

B. Project Objectives

The project development objective is to enhance sustainable environmental rehabilitation and management of forest lands and associated rangelands in ways that improve livelihoods and secure global public goods.

C. Project Description

The project has four main components:

Component 1: Improving sustainable forest management (SFM). This component has four sub-components:

- i) **Improved Fire Management:** This sub-component will further develop and scale up support for the Forest Fire Control Information System (FFCIS), developed under the FPRP. This state-of-the-art fire control system, has enhanced the fire-fighting capacity in Semey Ormany improving detection and reducing response times. Under the Forestry Development Project, this system would be scaled up in East Kazakhstan and Pavlodar regions, as well as the Akmola Region, supporting forest fire prevention and suppression on 800,000 hectares of forest. The component would provide (i) improved facilities for fire prevention and detection, including lookout towers and communications equipment, and (ii) improved facilities for fire suppression including road rehabilitation (allowing better access enabling both preventative actions, i.e. cleaning of fire breaks, and suppression once the fires have started), fire stations equipment, and firefighting vehicles.
- ii) **Support for afforestation:** This sub-component will mainly scale-up seedling plantings and expand vegetative cover in the Kyzlorda region, including the amelioration of 40,000 ha in the Dry Aral Seabed. The component will support the establishment of new forest plantations and will provide benefits for prevention of erosion and the creation of new habitats for biodiversity.
- iii) **Additional SFM interventions:** This sub-component will also provide other sustainable forest management support including a program of thinning and cleaning, as well as the rehabilitation of gallery forests along the Irtysh River.
- iv) **Institutional development:** The project will support the evolving institutional needs of the sector through the provision of specific technical studies and proposals to help create the enabling environment to support the establishment of a new protected area (State Forest Nature Reserve, “Aral”) covering 472,000 ha in the Dry Aral Seabed, the new PFM approach and also the creation of the public private partnerships for the fast growing plantations.

Component 2: Developing Participatory Forest Management. This component will scale up support for Participatory Forest Management (PFM). In particular, it will engage communities in forestry management (e.g., through tenders and forestry social contracts, mainly for planting and maintenance works); and begin the process of creating the enabling political and legal environment for further PFM development. Through PFM, local people can may be able obtain rights to a share of forest products in exchange for undertaking specific protection and/or management responsibilities. Forest resources are especially important for vulnerable households (women-led, poor households), because these households tend to engage more in subsistence agriculture, including gathering of forest products for domestic consumption. To improve the quality of the forest, the project may help create the enabling environment to allow for small scale silvicultural thinning through PFM. Any production arising would be for local consumption and would be undertaken as part of sustainable forest management and in accordance with an approved management plan. PFM activities will ensure adequate participation of women and vulnerable groups, and if inequitable arrangements are found, opportunities will be sought to address the inequities, e.g., targeting a proportion of PFM contracts to vulnerable groups and ensuring women’s participation in PFM councils.

Component 3: Supporting the establishment of fast growing plantations and shelterbelts. This component will support:

- i) the establishment of fast growing plantations that would be the basis for developing public-private partnerships, with an emphasis on increasing job and the potential for further economic growth. These plantations of poplar and other hardwoods would be established on State Forest Fund lands, administered by the Forest and Wildlife Committee. It is expected that these established plantations could be an eventual source of raw material to support SMEs in timber processing and/or wood energy (e.g., fuelwood and chips and pellets for heating in municipal buildings); and
- ii) the creation of shelterbelts along selected roads in Kyzylorda region, to help protect the roads from the harsh climate, while reducing road maintenance costs, reducing the effects of erosion from wind, rain and snow. The shelterbelts will additionally create green corridors and havens for wildlife, and at the same time sequestering carbon and providing shelter, wood and non-wood products for local communities.

Component 4: Project Management and Coordination

This component will finance the operating costs of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within the FWC to carry out project management functions for Component 1, 2, and 3. Support will be provided for procurement, financial management, coordination, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation.

Throughout the project planning and implementation, there is commitment to social inclusion, citizen engagement and gender equity. Mechanisms will be used to ensure women's participation in the PFM sub-component.

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

The Project areas will be located:

- (a) Along the Irtysh river banks in two northern oblasts, i.e., Pavlodar and East Kazakhstan as well as in Akmola region. The areas are dominated by pine forests, interspaced with grassland, and occasional salt pan and salt lake. They are inhabited by (state paid) forest workers, some other forest workers and farmers.
- (b) In the southern oblast of Kyzyl Orda with saxaul and tamarix woodlands on the north and south side of the Syr Dara river irrigation system and adjacent dry Aral Sea coast. The project areas are rural and are seasonally populated with mainly Kazakh or Uzbek livestock herders; some parts were abandoned during the transition due to the lack of employment. There are also villages with former fishermen, railway workers, and rice farmers.
- (c) While the project areas for supporting the establishment of fast growing plantations and for developing participatory forest management are to be decided during the project design, it is likely these activities would be implemented countrywide in semiarid and mountainous areas.

The project includes the eastern Irtysh pine forest which is under state protection and included in two national forest reserves (Semey and Irtysh Ormanies) where timber harvesting can still take place as sanitary felling or for thinning immature stands

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The project implementing agency will be the Forestry and Wildlife Committee within the Ministry of Agriculture. The day to day project implementation will be the main responsibility of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) which has experience in applying national and WB safeguards policies, gained during the implementation of the previous WB Forest Protection and Reforestation Project.

The WB supervision missions conducted in 2012 and 2014 concluded that project environmental management was satisfactory: all project activities followed environmental requirements specified in the framework Environmental Management Plan (EMP); for all major investments (creating new nurseries, construction of forest road and of forest fire stations and installation of look towers) the specialized companies which have relevant licenses, have conducted EIA studies and/or prepared simple EMPs which were approved by the State Ecological Expertise (SEE). The EIA documents were disclosed and consulted with interested parties, including local population; planting activities have been carried out based on approved Forestry and Hunting Committee Forest Management Plans, which also were preliminarily cleared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection; the conducted site visits to the forest fire stations, look-out towers, road construction, as well as to the planting sites in Semey Ormany Forest Nature Reserve show the environmental requirements specified in the framework project EMP and in the subprojects EMPs overall have been well implemented and there were no outstanding project environmental issues.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Arcadii Capcelea (GENDR)

Ekaterina Romanova (GSURR)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>This OP is triggered as the project is expected to generate some environmental impacts which will not be of large scale and irreversible. These impacts will be associated with the construction of lookout towers, civil works for rehabilitation of fire station facilities, rehabilitation of forest roads, forestry activities including thinning, cleaning and planting and are, in particular, the following: minor soil loss and biodiversity degradation; damage of trees and vegetation; dust; noise; construction wastes; water pollution; labor safety issues. All of these would be temporary and site specific. At the same time, the project would generate a series of environmental benefits that would include reduced desertification, salt and dust control, and reforestation of degraded lands, improved conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in selected ecosystems.</p> <p>Since at this stage of project design not all subprojects and activities and their location are known, it is proposed to prepare a framework EMP (which is similar to an Environmental and Social Management Framework) which would guide conducting site specific EIAs and preparing concrete EMPs. This will be done in accordance with Bank procedures and Kazakh EA regulations. The framework EMP will identify possible environmental</p>

		impacts of the types of activities and subproject that would be financed under the project and propose necessary mitigation, monitoring measures as well as implementing arrangements. In terms of reforestation activities the EMP will emphasize the need to use native species of pine, saxaul, tamarix, poplar, willow, aspen and other, and thus providing significant biodiversity benefits. Also the EA document will require that all forest planning and management activities (including fire management strategies, thinning, cleaning and planting activities) will address natural habitat considerations in both the site-specific and landscape context.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	Natural habitats is triggered. While the project is not expected to convert or degrade critical natural habitats, the project does include the establishment of a protected area (State Forest Nature Reserve) in the Dry Aral Seabed. The process of site selection will include a field visit by a qualified biologist to further confirm that the project will not adversely affect endangered species or habitats, as well as special approval from the environmental protection authorities.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	Yes	The Forests OP is triggered because the project is intended to be implemented mainly in forested areas. In particular, the project will support investment in rehabilitation degraded forests and woodlands, to restore protective cover and to make these and other forests more productive. The project will not finance plantations that involve the conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, and this will be ensured during the decision on land allocation for afforestation activities which will involve approvals from the environmental protection authorities. The project will not finance industrial-scale commercial harvesting operations. Any silvicultural thinning and or cleaning activities will be done in a sustainable manner and on a small scale for local needs -- the main requirements in this regard will be clearly specified in the EMP.
Pest Management OP 4.09	Yes	Pest management is triggered because indirectly the project will stimulate more use of pesticides in existing forest nurseries. To address potential project impacts, the Pest Management Plan that was designed for the previous WB Forest Protection and Reforestation Project will be updated and applied, specifically for these purposes. This will help the

		nurseries to develop and implement more environmentally acceptable pest control strategies.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	While it is not expected that there will be any encroachment of human settlements in the project area forests and the project itself will not cause involuntary physical displacement of people, this OP may be triggered, since the project may limit access to forest resources which could potentially curtail existing legal or illegal incomes of vulnerable people, at least on a temporary basis. A Social Assessment will be carried out to estimate the number of affected people and the number of beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender, level of wealth, age, and other social indicators. Also, taking these considerations into account, a Resettlement Process Framework will be prepared, disclosed and consulted in the country for project areas designated as protected areas, and a Resettlement Policy Framework will be prepared for these areas not designated as protected areas. These frameworks will provide guidelines for designing site specific mitigation measures on the potential adverse impacts of access restrictions on vulnerable people and for developing an institutional arrangement for the implementation of mitigation measures.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 04-Apr-2016

B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:

It is expected the draft framework EMP will be drafted during September 2015 - February 2016. In early March, the draft document will be disclosed at the Forestry and Wildlife Committee and then consulted with all key stakeholders: representatives from environmental and forestry authorities; academia; environmental NGOs; specialized research and design institutes; local communities; private sector involved in forestry operations. Based on the public consultation, the

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

document will be finalized and disclosed on the Committee's website before Appraisal which is scheduled for April 2016.

In addition, before Appraisal the Resettlement Process Framework will be consulted with all key parties. For these consultations, the client will disclose the draft document on its website,

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader(s):	Name: Angela G. Armstrong	
<i>Approved By:</i>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name: Agnes I. Kiss (SA)	Date: 11-Sep-2015
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Kulsum Ahmed (PMGR)	Date: 11-Sep-2015