

PLAN  VIVO

Plan Vivo Safeguarding Procedures

# **Environmental and Social Assessment Guidance**

*Version 1.0*

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# 1 Environmental and Social Safeguards in Plan Vivo Projects

## 1.1 The Process

Plan Vivo projects must comply with the following Environmental and Social (E&S) Safeguarding procedures throughout the project's lifespan:

At PIN stage:

- Exclusion List (Annex 3, PIN template)
- E&S screening (Annex 4, PIN template)

**At PDD stage (the focus of this guidance document):**

- **E&S assessment scoping and planning and subsequent report**
- **E&S assessment (ESA) in the field**
- **Development of an E&S management plan (ESMP)**

Throughout project period:

- Validation of ESA and ESMP as part of PDD validation
- Annual E&S monitoring and reporting as part of Annual Reporting
- Verification of E&S monitoring and reporting
- Final evaluation of ESMP implementation at the end of the project

Guidance and information for each of these stages can be found in Plan Vivo's Environmental and Social Risk Management document, found on the [Environmental and Social Safeguards page](#) of the Plan Vivo website.

## 1.2 This Guidance Document

This document provides guidance on conducting the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) and developing it into an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The ESA is submitted for review alongside the ESMP at PDD stage.

As per PV Climate (V5) and PV Nature (V1) requirements 3.9.5 and 3.9.6, an ESA should include the in-field assessment of all potential negative environmental and social risks and impacts identified during the E&S screening. The ESA aims to validate the results from the E&S screening, further assess the risks and impacts identified, identify if there are any other risks or impacts, and to plan for how the project will manage the identified risks or impacts.

A summary of the processes required to produce an ESA can be found in section 5 of this document. An example template of an ESA can be found in Annex 1 of this document. The ESA should be included in section 3.9.2 of the PDD, with an E&S Assessment Report included as Annex 10 of the PDD.

The ESA informs the ESMP. The ESMP should be included in section 3.9.3 of the PDD. Guidance on producing an ESMP can be found in the PDD template, and the E&S Risk Management document, available on the [Environmental and Social Safeguards](#) page of the Plan Vivo website.

## 2 Introduction to the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA)

The E&S assessment (ESA):

- Is a field-based activity involving consultations and interviews with project stakeholders;
- Focuses on E&S risks and impacts identified during E&S screening;
- Concentrates specifically on the E&S risks and impacts that were rated as 'moderate', 'substantial' or 'high' risk during the E&S screening;
- Performs checks and validates results for 'low' risk issues, and those that were considered not to be risks at screening;
- Includes risks and impacts that are either caused by the project, contributed to by the project, or linked to the project.

- Includes direct and indirect impacts and considers cumulative risks.

The E&S assessment does not:

- Include consideration of operational, financial, or political risks of the project;
- Assess contextual risks that are not triggered by the project or project proponent, which have no link to the project concept or activities;
- Constitute an ESIA, HRIA, HRDD, or Social Impact Assessment (SIA);
- Constitute a socioeconomic assessment: a socioeconomic assessment will characterise the existing context, whereas the ESA looks at how project activities (and the desired outcomes of those activities) interact with the local context.

## 3 Conducting an ESA

### 3.1 Capacity and Expertise

Conducting an ESA requires an inter-disciplinary team, including some of the following expertise:

- Expertise in the environmental and social topics being assessed
- Familiarity with environmental and social safeguarding
- Very familiar with community engagement strategies
- Familiarity with the local stakeholder context
- Facilitation skills (for facilitators)
- Note-taking skills (for note-takers)
- Relevant language skills
- Analysis and presentation of qualitative data
- Development of action plans

Topic specific expertise might be needed if particular risks and impacts have been identified.

**For example:**

If the project is working with Indigenous Peoples, and there are potential adverse impacts, specific expertise in working with Indigenous Peoples might be needed.

If the project is going to limit expansion of agriculture, and there are potential risks and impacts on agriculture, a team member with expertise in agriculture would be recommended.

The team composition will vary depending on whether the assessment is being conducted as a one-off engagement, or whether the assessment is being integrated into other field-based activities that are planned as part of the project design process, for example, stakeholder engagement activities or participatory design activities.

Integrating the ESA into other project design and engagement activities is encouraged. For example, while holding meetings or workshops with participants to discuss aspects of the project design, identified risks can be discussed and opinions can be gathered. This is a good opportunity for a project to discuss management options with the community, alongside conducting stakeholder engagement.

A more diverse team may be required if further participatory or engagement work is taking place in the field alongside developing the ESA, such as the extra expertise of, for example, identified local leaders, or technical experts.

**For example:**

- A project aims to improve grazing practices in a large rangeland used by several local communities and by itinerant pastoralists who use the area traditionally during the dry season.
- A risk that has been identified by the project, during E&S screening, is that improved grazing practices could require people to change the location and timing of their grazing during the year, affecting both local communities and seasonal pastoralists (identified as an *access restrictions* risk, as per the E&S screening at PIN stage).
- The project first plans to conduct participatory land use mapping, with local communities, and with pastoralists, as a basis for considering potential improvements.
- In order to integrate E&S risk assessment, for the identified access restriction risk, a two-step method is designed.
  - First, in a morning session, participants (herders) conduct a participatory map of the rangeland, indicating land use in time and space.
  - This session discusses possible improvements in grazing management, and what changes in grazing that might require (e.g. moving herds together,

allowing them shorter periods on more contained areas). This forms a potential management plan that can be discussed in the afternoon.

- Second, in the afternoon session, participants are encouraged to discuss the changes in behaviour required to action the management plan, and discuss who might be affected, and how (impacts). Participants discuss solutions (mitigation measures), such as ways to phase in management measures, any livelihood or other support required by affected herders to enable them to comply with the suggested plan.
- The results of the exercise provide both an understanding of current grazing practices, potential impacts to changing these practices, and a long-list of ideas to mitigate these risks.

Typically, there will be one lead for the assessment, who is technically responsible for the approach and output of the assessment. This person might provide in-field supervision of the field teams, composed of, for example, a facilitator and a note taker.

## 3.2 Assessment Procedures

The extent of an E&S assessment will depend on the risk rating the project is given following the E&S screening at PIN stage. Risks identified in the E&S screening review as 'moderate', 'high', or 'substantial' should be given more consideration than risks identified as 'low'. All risks should be considered to some extent.

You should follow these steps:

1. Scoping and planning of the assessment.
2. Implementation of the assessment.
3. Developing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

As such, no one ESA is the same as the other.

## 3.3 ESA Scoping and Planning

### **Purpose:**

To decide on the scope of the assessment, to design a fieldwork plan including a sampling strategy and fieldwork schedule, and to develop the methodology for the fieldwork.

### **When:**

- Early in PDD development
- Early enough to allow for changes to the project design once the assessment has been completed
- Late enough that if there is a clear project design against which potential impacts can be assessed

**How:**

### 3.3.1 A: Clarifying Assessment Objectives

#### **Task 1**

Review the E&S screening to understand the types of E&S risks and impacts that will be included in the assessment. Clarify any uncertainties within the project team.

- For example, the screening has identified the potential for access restrictions that will affect community members access to mangrove areas that they depend upon for fuelwood, income from fuelwood sale, and fishing activities.
- It might be necessary to conduct some further desk-based review, or to contact subject and local experts, as part of the assessment design, where potential issues are unclear. In this example, reviewing research on levels of mangrove use and dependence would be useful.

#### **Task 2**

Based on the E&S risks and impacts that will be assessed, agree on the purpose and objectives of the fieldwork, including key outputs, and include these in your fieldwork plan.

- For example, the purpose of the fieldwork will be to assess the E&S risks and impacts identified, and to validate the screening results.
- For example, one of the objectives of the fieldwork would be to understand how the restrictions of access to mangrove areas might affect different user groups, and what measures the project might introduce to avoid, or mitigate these impacts.

#### **Task 3**

Decide on the information requirements to meet your desired objectives.

- For example, for the mangrove access restrictions example, the information requirements listed in Table 1 may be useful to consult on.

## 3.3.2 B: Review Recent Assessment and Safeguard Plans

### Task 1

Understand if there are recent (the last 2-3 years) E&S assessments, or equivalent assessments, that can be used to fill the information requirements identified. If this is the case for some E&S risks and impacts, then this information can be used, meaning data does not need to be collected in the field.

- For example, a recent study looked at the local uses of mangrove areas, identifying key user groups, types of products used, the livelihood function, and levels of use. This information would not need to be collected again.

### Task 2

Understand if there are already safeguard plans in place in the project area, which would eliminate the need to design these as part of the E&S assessment.

- For example, your organisation and project already have a livelihood restoration plan, or access restriction framework, which includes steps the project will take to assess levels of mangrove use, and feasible livelihood interventions to enable community members to change mangrove use patterns. If this is the case, a safeguard plan would not need to be re-developed.
- For example, your organisation already has a Grievance Redress Mechanisms that is in use in the project area and is thought to be effective. Only minor checks of effectiveness of the GRM need to be included in the field assessment.

## 3.3.3 C: Select Stakeholders to Include in the Assessment

### Task 1

Review your project stakeholder analysis, or complete one if it has not been developed.

### Task 2

Consider the stakeholders who should be involved in the assessment, remembering that the assessment should work with both those people who are potentially directly affected and those people who are in a position to support with mitigation measures.

### **Task 3**

List the selected stakeholders in a matrix format. See Box 1 for examples on the types of stakeholders to include in the assessment.

### **Task 4**

In large project areas, consider how you will conduct sampling, particularly how many sites and villages will be visited, and build this into the field schedule. This sampling should consider adequate coverage of sites (different villages or areas within the project area, with different social or ecological characteristics), and stakeholders.

The following criteria can be considered for selecting sites or villages:

- Representative of the types of E&S risks and impacts that are to be assessed. Sometimes this will require selection of different sites.
- Representative of worst case and best-case scenario (e.g. a village where there have been real challenges with engagement, and several past grievances, versus a village where there are strong relationships of trust and no engagement issues).
- Logistical issues, although noting that some of the most challenging areas to reach (due to seasonal rainfall, road and transport conditions, etc) can also have the most E&S risks/impacts and therefore the seasonal timing of the assessment, and adequate resourcing for the assessment, should be considered.

## **3.3.4 D: Develop Methods**

The methods used in the ESA and the data collection sheets produced as a result of discussions around mitigating and managing E&S risks should be included in Annex 10 of the PDD 'Environmental and Social Assessment Report'. The scope, planning and outcomes of this work should be included in section 3.9.2 of the PDD template 'Environmental and Social Assessment'.

### **Task 1**

Based on the information requirements identified, decide on the most appropriate methods for each of the stakeholders.

- For example, in Table 1, focus group discussions will be held with women who use mangrove resources, and group interviews will be held with traditional leaders.

## **Task 2**

Develop methods sheets which include the key topics and questions to discuss (based on the information requirements) with the selected stakeholders. See Table 1 for some examples of methods that are commonly used.

- For example, to assess the types of impacts that could occur (social, economic, cultural), focus group discussions with user groups are selected, and key informant interviews with traditional leaders).
- For example, a focus group discussion with mangrove users could include some of the following topics:
  - How have you been engaged by the project to date (stakeholder engagement)?
  - Are you aware of how to place a grievance about the project (grievance mechanism)?
  - Mangrove use: what types of products are used, how frequently, for what?
  - Mangrove use change: what changes in mangrove use have been discussed within the community and with the project?
  - Impacts: how would these changes in use affect you?
  - Mitigation measures: what ideas are being discussed with the project to avoid these impacts, or to mitigate them (e.g., substitute resources, income sources etc).
  - Are there any other comments or concerns about the project?

## **Task 3**

Develop the data collection sheets to include in the ESA report (Annex 10 of the PDD).

- See Table 2 for a template Data Collection Sheet.

### 3.3.5 E: Develop Final Field Plan and Budget

#### **Task 1**

Based on the proposed stakeholders and methods (Table 1), finalise the fieldwork plan and schedule (example in Table 3).

- This should account for how many teams are working on the assessment, and the number of stakeholder meetings that are planned.
- The plan should be developed sufficiently to allow for local stakeholders to then be contacted to arrange meetings.
- It is essential that the timings, format and location of the planned meetings take into account community preferences and are accessible, particularly for directly affected groups.
- The plan should have an associated budget for all logistical arrangements associated with the field activities.

#### **Example List of Stakeholders who could be included in an ESA:**

##### Communities

- Resident local communities with customary rights
- Resident local communities without customary rights
- Non-resident natural resource users with customary rights
- Non-resident natural resource users without customary rights

##### Community groups (and intra-community groups, i.e. nested within 1-4 above)

- Indigenous Peoples
- Marginalised people
- Vulnerable/disadvantaged people
- Other community groups, e.g. youth

##### Community leadership (formal and customary, often nested within 1-3 above)

- Village leadership (formal)
- Customary leadership
- Natural resource management committee (formal)

##### Local stakeholders

- Educational and religious institutions
- Local enterprises and entrepreneurs

- Diaspora
- Secondary stakeholders
- Project proponent/develop
  - Private landowners
  - Governance ministries and deconcentrated line agencies (e.g. ministry of forestry, wildlife, etc.)
  - Local government administration
  - Protected Area management authorities
  - Law enforcement personnel
  - Civil Society Organisations
  - Advocacy groups
  - Research institutions
  - Private sector actors (e.g. agriculture, tourism, hunting, etc.)

*Table 1: Stakeholders and methods*

Stakeholders	Methods		
	Key informant interview (individual)	Group interview	Focus group discussion
Village leadership (formal)		X	
Customary leadership		X	
Village natural resource management committee (formal)		X	
Men who use mangroves for construction wood and timber for sale			X
Women who use mangrove for own use fuelwood and firewood for sale			X
Local NGO working on improved cookstove promotion	X		

*Table 2: Example of a data collection sheet used for a Focus Group Discussion or Community Meeting, to include as part of the ESA report (Annex 10 of the PDD).*

<b>Stakeholder:</b> e.g. Users of mangrove for fuelwood		
<b>Method:</b> e.g. Focus Group Discussion – 6-8 participants		
<b>Topic or activity</b>	<b>Example prompting questions to be used by the facilitator</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Stakeholder engagement</b>	How have you been engaged by the project to date? Discuss.	
<b>Grievance Mechanism</b>	Are you aware of how to place a grievance about the project (grievance mechanism)? Discuss.	
	Are you aware of any grievances (submitted, or not), and how they have been handled by the project? Discuss.	
<b>Mangrove use and access restrictions</b>	Mangrove use: what types of products are used, how frequently, for what?  Mangrove use change: what changes in mangrove use have been discussed within the community and with the project?	
<b>Impacts</b>	How would these changes in use affect you? (impacts). Discuss.	
<b>Solutions/ mitigation measures</b>	What ideas are being discussed with the project to avoid these impacts, or to mitigate them (e.g. substitute resources, income sources etc).	
<b>Other</b>	Are there any other comments or concerns about the project?	

*Table 3: Example of a fieldwork schedule, to include as part of the ESA report (Annex 10 of the PDD).*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
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19 February	Monday	Am - Team training Pm - Team training	Local office	Initials of team members
20 February	Tuesday	Fieldwork day 1 (all day) - NR committee workshop	Village 1	Initials of team members
21 February	Wednesday	Am - Field team 1 - Community Rangers Am - Field team 2 - Traditional leaders Pm - Field team 1 - FGD mangrove users (men) Pm - Field team 2 - FGD mangrove users (women)	Village 1	Initials of team members
22 February	Thursday	Fieldwork day 1 (all day) - NR committee workshop	Village 2	Initials of team members
23 February	Friday	Am - Field team 1 - Community Rangers Am - Field team 2 - Traditional leaders Pm - Field team 1 - FGD mangrove users (men) Pm - Field team 2 - FGD mangrove users (women)	Village 2	Initials of team members
24 February	Saturday	Am - Lessons learnt discussion with field team Pm - Data entry	Local office	Initials of team members

## 4 ESA Fieldwork

### 4.1 How to

**A: Make sure the field team is prepared**

**Task 1:** Plan the training materials, agenda, and logistics.

**Task 2:** Conduct a full training of the field team, including all the team members to be involved in the assessment.

- Training should cover:
  - Assessment approach and objectives
  - Final planning for stakeholder consultations and field plan
  - Methods
  - Facilitator and team code of conduct
  - Data capture protocols

**B: Conduct consultations as per the field plan, using the developed fieldwork methodology.**

**C: Hold project meeting or workshop**

Task 1: Organise meeting with all the field staff who participated in the consultations

Task 2: Hold meeting to:

- Ensure data has been captured accurately
- Review findings
- Draft the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) (see ESRM document for details, available on the [E&S Safeguards section of the Plan Vivo website](#)).

Task 3: Decide on reporting responsibilities

Task 4: Formulate a roadmap (workplan) for completing the ESMP and integrating any changes into the project design.

**D: Analyse information and write up E&S Assessment Report**

- This report is included as Annex 10 of the PDD.
- It should include evidence of meetings, data collection sheets, etc. Templates are provided above.

A typical ESA report template is shown in Annex 1.

## 4.2 Outcomes

The outcomes of the ESA should be:

**1. An E&S Assessment produced in section 3.9.2 of the PDD:**

*Describe the scope of the assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts, including the geographical scope of the project, the project activities and potential risks and impacts assessed (and criteria for this), national legislation and international Environmental and Social Standards used as point of reference, and the safeguard plans developed.*

*Describe the methods used to and assesses the significance of potential environmental and social risks and impacts, and develop measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate these impacts – including descriptions of consultations with affected communities, local stakeholders, and vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people; clear assessment criteria; and sampling strategy and methods.*

*Identify the project staff or other experts that conducted the environmental and social assessment and provide a summary of their relevant skills and experience, including details of understanding of the local context and socioeconomic conditions and familiarity with international Environmental and Social Standards, impact assessment, and the development associated safeguard plans.*

*Include a full environmental and social assessment report in Annex 10 of the PDD.*

**2. An E&S Assessment Report in Annex 10 of the PDD. A typical ESA report template is shown in Annex 1.**

**3. The production of an E&S Management Plan as a result of the work conducted throughout the ESA, to be written into section 3.9.3 of the PDD (Table 3.9.3):**

*Complete Table 3.9.3 to describe the mitigation measures in place to address environmental and social risks and impacts. Add a row for each environmental and social risk and impact identified in Sections 3.9.1 and 3.9.2. Mitigation measures will either be plans, protocols, or specific project activities. Where a mitigation measure is a plan (e.g. a community engagement plan), the activities for this plan need to be included in the project design and budgeted for. If a standalone plan, such as a stakeholder engagement plan, or livelihoods restoration plan, or protocol (e.g. H&S protocol) is the mitigation measure, simply list this plan or protocol and ensure that it is annexed to the PDD.*

*Mitigation measures should include compensation measures (including for example livelihood restoration) if Local Stakeholders are negatively affected by Project Interventions and negative impacts cannot be fully mitigated.*

Table 3.9.4 Environmental and Social Risk and Impact Mitigation Measures

Risk/Impact	Mitigation Measures	Project Activity	Livelihood Indicator
Add type and brief description of risk/impact.	Add numbered list of measures to avoid, minimise or mitigate the identified risk or impact.	For each mitigation measure, cross reference the relevant project activity number from Section 3.6. (e.g. Activity 1.1.1)	For each mitigation measure, cross reference the relevant livelihood indicator from Section 4.3.  Cost, frequency and responsibility for monitoring should all be included in Table 4.3.

## 5 Annexes

### 5.1 ESA report template

A typical ESA report would cover many of the items in the Table of Contents below. Note that where this information is presented elsewhere (e.g. in the PDD), then text can be duplicated, or sections of the PDD can be referred to, to reduce time and effort on duplicating report writing.

- Introduction
  - Purpose and objectives of the assessment
  - Scope of the assessment
- Aims and objectives of the assessment
- E&S risks and impacts assessed
- Geography of the assessment
- Reference framework
- National legislation

- International Standards
- PV E&S requirements
- Project background
  - Location
  - Objectives and activities
  - Timeframe and budget
  - Partners
- Social and environmental context
  - Characterisation of the socioeconomic context
  - Biophysical and environmental context
- Assessment approach and methodology
  - Approach
  - Risk framework and/or other assessment criteria
    - Methodology
  - Sampling strategy
  - Methods
    - Assessment team
  - Team members, skills and experience
    - Challenges and limitations
- Assessment findings
  - Summary of key findings
  - Description of results by E&S risk and impact topic
  - Risk significance
  - Key gaps
  - Recommendations
- Roadmap to developing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)

- Workplan with the activities to finalise the ESMP
- To include in Annex 10 ‘E&S Assessment Report’ (for example)
  - Plan Vivo ESMS screening questionnaire results
  - Summary of national legislation and international standards (reference framework)
  - Results of the stakeholder analysis
  - List of stakeholder consultations conducted; photos of fieldwork activities.
  - Draft ESMP (and any other relevant safeguard plans).

## 5.2 ESMP example

*Note that columns 3 and 4 ‘Project Activity’ and ‘Livelihood Indicator’ are not included in this example ESMP. These columns should correspond to the appropriate activities and indicators within the project’s design.*

Risk/Impact	Mitigation Measures
Stakeholder engagement: limited awareness of the project concept and plans; no clear engagement mechanisms to ensure involvement of directly affected peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Revise project community engagement strategy (CES)</li> <li>● Develop project information sheets and feedback sessions</li> <li>● Conduct annual meetings as per CES with project affected people</li> </ul>
Grievance redress mechanism: limited awareness of the GRM, issues with accessibility for remote communities, lack of responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct community consultations on how to improve accessibility</li> <li>● Review and revise current GRM to integrate feedback</li> <li>● Periodic review of GRM (every 3 years)</li> </ul>
Access Restrictions: fuelwood for household consumption to be limited, but improved cookstoves unavailable and with design flaws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assessment of the improved cookstoves design flaws and alternative models</li> <li>● Update the cookstove provision plan (in the livelihood plan)</li> </ul>
Access Restrictions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify those communities where agricultural expansion into mangroves is an issue</li> </ul>

<p>mangrove clearance for agriculture in some communities with limited land availability, for use of marginal land for paddy rice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct land use mapping and planning in these villages to identify affected communities and households</li> <li>• Conduct feasibility assessment for conservation agriculture initiative as part of the livelihood programme.</li> </ul>
<p>Access Restrictions: Alternative fuelwood for fish smoking being promoted by the project leads to poor quality fish smoking and lower prices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess alternative fish drying and preservation techniques</li> <li>• Conduct feasibility assessment for these technologies</li> <li>• Adapt the livelihood plan accordingly.</li> </ul>