



TERMS OF REFERENCE

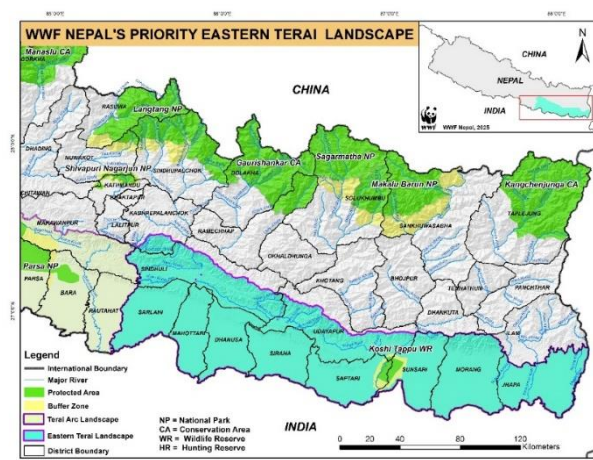
For

PREPARING AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MITIGATION FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS IN EASTERN TERAI LANDSCAPE

1. Background

WWF is the world's leading independent conservation organization originated in Switzerland in 1961 and currently running in more than 100 countries across 6 continents. WWF initiated work in Nepal with a rhino conservation program in Chitwan in 1967 while the WWF Nepal set up its office formally on 19 May 1993. Currently, WWF Nepal works in five thematic areas - Wildlife, Freshwater, Forests, Climate and Energy, and Policy. WWF Nepal's focus has progressed from its localized efforts in conservation of a single species in the 1960s, to integrated conservation and development approach in 1990s, to a new horizon of landscape-level conservation encompassing national, regional, and global scales of complexity since the early 2000s. WWF Nepal works in Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) and Mountain Landscape including Sacred Himalayan Landscape, and other National Conservation Priority Areas.

Building on the success of TAL in forest restoration and ecological connectivity, WWF Nepal is now exploring onto new conservation landscape – Eastern Terai Landscape (Map 1) where successful strategies will be replicated to maintain ecological connectivity and increased ecosystem services flow for the wellbeing of people and nature. The landscape encompasses critical watersheds with river cascading from Mahabharat and Churia Range, making its conservation essential to managing water flow, mitigating climate-induced hazards, and preserving biodiversity. It also includes diverse ecosystems - riverine forests, tropical Sal forests, and Chir pine-broadleaf forests, which are home to threatened flora and fauna, such as leopard, elephant, wild water buffalo, and striped hyena. Forest cover and large forest blocks provides connectivity for large dispersing Pachyderm such as elephant. The landscape also provides refuge for spill over tiger population in TAL.



Map 1: Eastern Terai landscape

2. Environmental and Social Safeguards in WWF's Work

In 2019, WWF's governing bodies adopted the **WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework** (ESSF) to ensure consistent and comprehensive application of safeguards across the entire WWF Network. Updated in 2023, the ESSF¹ provides an institutional mechanism to manage the environmental and social risks, together with the impacts of WWF's work, helping deliver better conservation outcomes, and contributing to the well-being of local communities in the places where WWF operates. Safeguards are driven by "do no harm" principles and the framework is designed to address a broad range of environmental and social risks, mindful of the different challenges and needs in different parts of the world.

As a WWF network organization, WWF Nepal has conducted the ESSF risk screening process for the TAL program and Mountain Landscape (Sacred Himalayan Landscape and National Conservation Priority Areas).² Three issue areas corresponding to the substantive ESSF standards were identified through this process and are addressed in the mitigation plan with the aim of mitigating potential risks: 1) community health and safety 2) Indigenous Peoples, and 3) restrictions of access.

For the new conservation landscape – Eastern Terai Landscape (ETL), in line with the WWF ESSF, an Environmental and Social Mitigation Framework (ESMF) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) shall be developed addressing the risks and impacts identified in safeguard process³.

ESMF is a framework instrument that examines safeguards issues and impacts of the project and/or a series of sub-projects. It will ensure that adverse environmental and social impacts are avoided or appropriately mitigated and/or compensated for. The specific purposes are to: 1) establish clear procedures and methodologies for the environmental and social risks assessment, review and implementation of interventions to be financed under the project; 2) summarize the key areas of risks and describe the mitigation measures; 3) specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to project interventions; and 4) determine the training, capacity building, technical assistance, and costs needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF.

3. Objectives of the Assignment

The main objective of the assignment is to prepare an ESMF for identified safeguard risks.

The specific objectives include:

- Review ETL's safeguards screening results, consult, and document existing practices of mitigation measures included in landscape program/projects to address the environmental and social risks.
- Identify the additional mitigation measures that program implementers and partners should proactively adopt.
- Carry out the appropriate consultations to consult and gather the needed input to design the ESMF and SEP.

4. Methodology

Multiple methodologies (both quantitative and qualitative) should be used. However, the detailed methodology will be proposed by the individual/organization conducting the assignment and shared

¹ [2023 ESSF & SoPS \(panda.org\)](https://panda.org/2023-ESSF-SoPS)

² [WWF Statements of Principles and Environmental and Social Safeguards | WWF](https://www.wwf.org/WWF-Statements-of-Principles-and-Environmental-and-Social-Safeguards)

³ [Safeguard Process 2023 \(All languages\)](https://www.wwf.org/Safeguard-Process-2023)

with WWF Nepal for review. A well formulated approach and methodology combined with a realistic time schedule and mitigation plan outline should form a solid basis for field visits. Consultation meetings and briefing sessions with relevant stakeholders shall be arranged with WWF Nepal. Complementary interviews and focus group discussions can be organized during the stakeholder consultation phase.

- **Field visit:**

Field visits shall be carried out by the consultant in some representative interventions sites to meet all the stated objectives specially to document actual practices from the ground and explore the best feasible risk mitigating interventions.

- **Consultation and Outreach Meetings:**

The assignment may require extensive consultation and outreach meetings with relevant stakeholders in ETL. The team may also assess existing rules, regulations in Nepal for understanding national context regarding, access restrictions, indigenous people engagement and community health, safety and security. Recommendations from stakeholder consultation shall be equally useful to design interventions for human wildlife interface mitigation and livelihood safeguarding and improvement.

The methodology should ensure that the evaluation process:

- is participatory and inclusive, involving targeted stakeholders including the beneficiaries, right holders' and duty bearers' view.
- takes into consideration aspects of gender and human rights.
- respects local traditions and cultural norms.

5. ESMF Preparation Process, Schedule and Reporting

It is expected that the consultant will:

- Finalize the methodology and prepare an inception report which will be reviewed by WWF Nepal before field consultation begins.
- Review Safeguards screening results and Categorization Memo to understand the triggered environment and social risks as per the substantive safeguards and cross-cutting issues on human rights, gender equality, children's rights, climate change, conflict sensitivity and climate change.
- Based on the identified risks, carry out field visits and observations.
- Interact/discuss with relevant stakeholders (Focused Group Discussions, KIIs).
- Prepare draft ESMF with assessment findings and recommendations.
- Receive and incorporate feedback from WWF Nepal before finalizing the reports.
- Organize a feedback session with WWF Nepal to receive comments and test the results.
- Prepare final mitigation plan in English and submit it to WWF Nepal. The consultant should submit 2 copies each (hard and soft copies) of the final report.
- Present the final report to WWF Nepal to present and discuss the findings and clarify questions.

S.N.	Activities	Aug 2025		Sep 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025
		1 st half	2 nd half			1 st half
2.	Finalize methodology and prepare an inception report					
3.	Field visit and consultation					
4.	Prepare and submit the draft ESMF and Stakeholder Engagement Plan					

5.	Incorporate feedback and finalize the documents					
6.	Final submission of ESMF, SEP and financial report					

The ESMF should include the following sections. The overall document should not exceed 20 pages in length. Sections 3 should be the focus of the document. Any additional information (including recommendations for key documentation needs and mechanisms) can be included as appendices but not in the main mitigation plan.

- 1) Background of the landscape, WWF Nepal's project description, main activities and the environmental and social context
- 2) Analysis of the potential environmental and social impacts
- 3) Key Risk Areas and Mitigation Measures, including Implementation Arrangements
 - Summarise the key areas of risk identified.
 - Describe the contextual factors and/or WWF Nepal's activities that give rise to the risks.
 - Include information gained from any assessments that have been conducted.
 - Describe the mitigation measures.
 - Describe the Implementing Arrangements, e.g. internal process and procedures, including when new activities are introduced (screening → mitigation)
- 4) Stakeholder Engagement (and FPIC)
 - Summarise any plans or protocols, including for FPIC
 - Highlight any measures taken to engage to potentially affected peoples, including rights-holders, in the design of mitigation measures
- 5) Grievance Mechanism
 - Present a summary of WWF Nepal's Grievance Mechanism
 - Highlight any measures taken to make it accessible and communicate it to potentially affected peoples, including rights-holders.
 - Include a link to the Grievance Mechanism website page.
- 6) Capacity Needs, Monitoring and Reporting
- 7) Summary of the consultation, its results, and recommendations.
- 8) Plan for consultations and disclosure.
- 9) Any other issue that may come up during the consultation that requires attention and that may require appropriate mitigation to follow up.

The publication of the report shall be the responsibility of WWF Nepal. Also, WWF Nepal will hold copy right of the report/plan and the consultant cannot publish in part or in full any findings from the assessment or report, without prior approval from WWF Nepal.

6. Expected Output

The expected output of the consultancy is the final ESMF and SEP for Eastern Terai Landscape.

7. Deliverables

- Submission of Final ESMF (Hard Copy and Digital, in word file) by **15 November 2025.**
- Submission of the process document related to the development of the ESMF, including but not limited to details and minutes of the community consultancy by **15 November 2025.**
- Submission of Other relevant documents, Digital photographs, Data, Maps produced under this assignment, if any by **15 November 2025.**
- Submission of Final Financial Report along with VAT Invoices, approved timesheet of consultant, copies of verified supporting invoices / receipts and signed participants list by **15 November 2025.**

8. Proposal Submission Details

Interested individuals and organizations are requested to submit technical and financial proposals providing a detailed breakdown of total budget in Nepali rupees, electronically to proposalsubmission@wwfnepal.org. Please mention “**Proposal- ESMF and SEP for Eastern Terai Landscape**” as an email subject and submit the proposal by 5 p.m. Nepal Standard Time, 31 July 2025.

The proposal must include the following:

For organization

- Signed cover letter specifying the value of the proposal.
- Signed Curriculum Vitae of team members
- Technical proposal (Not exceeding 5 pages)
- Organization profile with experience (Not exceeding 2 pages).
- Financial proposal.
- Organization Registration, and latest renewal – applicable to NGO
- VAT registration certificate
- Latest tax clearance certificate (for private company)
- Registration with Social Welfare Council for NGO
- Tax Exemption Certificate, if applicable
- Audit Report
- Latest signed curriculum vitae/s for all Experts
- Authorization letter from the current employer, if working

For Individuals

- Signed cover letter specifying the value of the proposal.
- Signed Curriculum Vitae of individuals
- Technical proposal (Not exceeding 5 pages)
- Copy of Nepali Citizenship or Passport
- PAN Registration Certificate
- No objection letter from current employer, if applicable
- Financial proposal.

Please refer to Annex 1 for Budget Template.

9. Mode of Payment

The payment will be made as per WWF Nepal norms and upon submissions of satisfactory deliverables. Note that payments are subject to tax deduction as per prevailing government rules.

Annex 1: Budget Template

S.N.	Description	Unit	Qty.	Rate	Amount (NPR)
1	Fee				XXXX
1.1	Team Leader-Name	Days			XXXX
1.2	Expert-Name	Days			XXXX
1.3					XXXX
1.4					
	Sub-Total Fee (1.1+1.2+1.3+...)				XXXX
	VAT 13% on Fee				XXXX
2	Other Expense				XXXX
2.1	Field Visit Cost				
2.1.1	Accommodation	PersonxNights			XXXX
2.1.2	Food	PersonxDays			XXXX
2.1.3	Transportation				XXXX
2.1.4					
2.2	Training Cost				
2.2.1					
2.2.2					
	Sub-Total Other Expense (2.1+2.2+....)				XXXX
	VAT 13% on Other Expense				XXXX
	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)				XXXX

**Please add/edit rows as required*