

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

Environmental and Social Management Framework

Moldova Green Shield: Enhancing Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AIPA	Agency for Interventions and Payments in Agriculture
ANR	Assisted Natural Regeneration
ATUG	Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia
BMP	Biodiversity Management Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
E&S	Environmental and Social
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EA	Environmental Agency (Moldova)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPI	Environmental Protection Inspectorate
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework (World Bank)
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESRS	Environmental and Social Review Summary
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
EWS	Early Warning System
FRM	Forest Reproductive Material
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICAS	Institute of Forestry Research and Management
IPF	Investment Project Financing
LEDP	Low Emission Development Programme
LMP	Labor Management Procedures
LPA	Local Public Authority
MAFI	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NAAM	National Agency for Forestry / territorial forestry enterprises (implementation entity)

Acronym	Meaning
NCA	Natural Capital Accounting
NCCAP	National Climate Change Adaptation Programme
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFERP	National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOIEP	National Office for Implementation of Environmental Projects
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OP	Operational Policy (World Bank)
PDO	Project Development Objective
PES	Payments for Ecosystem Services
PI NA Apele Moldovei	Public Institution National Administration Apele Moldovei
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RFRMC	Southern Regional Forest Reproductive Material Centre
SDR	Southern Development Region
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse / Sexual Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SHS	State Hydrometeorological Service
SPMP	Silvopastoral Management Plan
W-GRM	Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism
WB	World Bank

Executive summary

1. Purpose and Scope of This ESMF

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) establishes the environmental and social (E&S) risk-management architecture for the Moldova Green Shield project, a US\$49.28 million ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) investment co-financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The project is executed by the Republic of Moldova (Executing Entity) acting through the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and implemented day-to-day by the National Office for Environmental Projects Implementation (NOIEP) through a dedicated Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The World Bank serves as Accredited Entity to the GCF and provides implementation support and supervision consistent with its Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and has categorized the project as Category B under the GCF's environmental and social safeguards.

Because the precise locations and designs of restoration interventions cannot be fully defined at appraisal stage, a framework approach to E&S risk management is required. This ESMF provides: (i) the screening and assessment procedures to be applied once specific sites are confirmed; (ii) the mitigation measures and management instruments to be used throughout implementation; and (iii) the monitoring, reporting, and institutional arrangements to ensure compliance with both Moldovan law and the World Bank ESF.

The ESMF must be read in conjunction with the companion instruments that together form the project's integrated safeguards package: the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); the Labour Management Procedures (LMP); the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP); the Gender Assessment and Action Plan (GAP); and the Process Framework (ESS5).

2. Project Description

2.1 Development Objective and Geographic Scope

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve the climate resilience of targeted landscapes in southern Moldova and strengthen institutional capacity for climate-informed planning. The project targets the Southern Development Region (SDR), an area of approximately 9,200 km² spanning eight climate-vulnerable districts — Cantemir, Cahul, Leova, Cimișlia, Taraclia, Basarabeasca, Căușeni, Ștefan Vodă — and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia (ATUG). These districts form Moldova's most climate-stressed landscape, characterised by semi-arid steppe, elevated drought and land-degradation exposure, limited adaptive capacity, and strong dependence on agriculture and grazing. The project also focuses on the Lower Prut floodplain, which hosts internationally significant wetlands including the Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar site and Emerald Network areas.

2.2 Project Components

Total project financing amounts to US\$49.28 million across four components:

Component	Total (US\$M)	Key Activities
Component 1: Institutional Capacity Development and Data-Driven Planning	2.89	Institutional strengthening; integrated geospatial modelling; climate-informed restoration planning tools; NOIEP capacity development.
Component 2: Climate-Resilient Ecological Infrastructure Restoration	38.47	Afforestation/ANR on degraded lands; riparian buffer and wetland restoration; small-reservoir rehabilitation (desiltation/shoreline); shelterbelt and silvopastoral systems; Southern RFRMC nursery.
Component 3: Community Engagement, Livelihoods & Stewardship	5.45	Participatory planning; green-job creation; community stewardship systems; financing and incentive mechanisms; PES exploration.
Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation	2.47	PIU operations (NOIEP); MEL system; safeguards coordination; fiduciary management; reporting.
TOTAL	49.28	5-year implementation period.

The project is expected to benefit approximately 30,000 people directly and 155,000 indirectly. Direct beneficiaries include rural households, smallholder farmers, pastoral land users, women-headed households,

youth, and other vulnerable groups. Implementation spans five years, with ecological and institutional benefits expected to persist over a minimum 20-year timeframe.

3. Applicable Regulatory and Policy Framework

3.1 National Framework

The project operates within a robust and evolving national policy and legal framework. Key national instruments include Moldova's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC, 70% GHG reduction target by 2030); the National Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NCCAP 2030); the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP 2023–2032, Government Decision No. 55/2023); the Low Emission Development Programme (LEDP 2024–2030); the National Environmental Strategy (2024–2030); and Moldova's new Biodiversity Programme (2026–2030), aligned with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The principal legal instruments governing project activities include the Land Code (Law No. 22/2024), the Forest Code (Law No. 69/2024), the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (Law No. 86/2014, amended 2023, transposing EU EIA Directive 2011/92/EU), the Water Law (Law No. 272/2011), the Labour Code (Law No. 154-XV/2003), the Law on OHS (Law No. 186-XVI/2008), and the Law on Ensuring Equal Opportunities (Law No. 5-XVI/2006).

3.2 World Bank Environmental and Social Standards

The following World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) apply to the project:

Standard	Status	Relevance to Project
ESS1 — Assessment & Management of E&S Risks	Relevant	Framework approach required given that precise intervention sites cannot be defined at appraisal; site-specific ESMPs to be prepared during implementation.
ESS2 — Labour and Working Conditions	Relevant	Covers direct PIU staff, contractors, and up to 1,000+ seasonal community workers; labour risks rated Moderate; addressed through the LMP.
ESS3 — Resource Efficiency & Pollution Prevention	Relevant	Localized risks from soil disturbance, sediment runoff, nursery operations, fuel/lubricant use, small-scale processing, drying, and cold-storage assets (organic/effluent waste and energy use), and dredged-sediment/spoil generation and disposal from reservoir desiltation; risks limited, reversible, and manageable through GIIP.
ESS4 — Community Health and Safety	Relevant	Risks from machinery, dust, noise, and traffic at restoration sites; rated Moderate and site-specific; addressed through ESMPs and Codes of Conduct.
ESS5 — Land Acquisition & Involuntary Resettlement	Relevant	Physical displacement is not currently anticipated, though this cannot be fully excluded at this stage; potential temporary restrictions on access to communal grazing/riparian lands are possible; the Process Framework has been prepared precisely to address any such impacts should they arise and is integral to this ESMF.
ESS6 — Biodiversity & Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Relevant	Restoration in ecologically sensitive landscapes including the Lower Prut Ramsar site; critical-habitat screening and Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs) required.
ESS7 — Indigenous Peoples	Not Relevant	No Indigenous Peoples or Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities present in project area.
ESS8 — Cultural Heritage	Relevant	Earthworks for afforestation carry risk of encountering previously unknown cultural heritage; chance-find procedures embedded in all contracts.
ESS9 — Financial Intermediaries	Not Relevant	Project does not involve financial intermediaries.
ESS10 — Stakeholder Engagement & Information Disclosure	Relevant	Landscape-scale interventions on communal lands require continuous, meaningful engagement with vulnerable land-dependent populations; standalone SEP prepared.

Two additional World Bank Operational Policies are under review: OP 7.50 (Projects on International Waterways), given the project's proximity to the Prut River; and OP 7.60 (Projects in Disputed Areas). Final applicability will be confirmed at Appraisal. Where the World Bank ESF sets higher standards than national law

— particularly regarding the Process Framework (ESS5), worker GRM, critical-habitat assessment, and structured stakeholder engagement — the ESF requirements prevail.

4. Overall Risk Classification and Key Risks

4.1 Risk Ratings

Risk Category	Rating	Rationale
Environmental Risk	SUBSTANTIAL	Scale (~13,000 ha), geographic dispersion, ecological sensitivity of target landscapes (Ramsar, Emerald Network), cumulative impacts on hydrology and biodiversity, uncertainty of final site configurations.
Social Risk	SUBSTANTIAL	Land-based interventions affecting vulnerable rural communities; potential access restrictions on communal grazing and riparian lands; high livelihoods dependence; limited adaptive capacity; political sensitivities.
SEA/SH Risk	LOW	No large-scale civil works camps or significant labour influx; locally sourced, dispersed workforce; mitigated further through Codes of Conduct, LMP, and GRM.

GCF categorization. For GCF purposes, the project is categorized as Category B: anticipated adverse E&S risks and impacts are limited and, individually or cumulatively, few, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and readily addressed through the mitigation measures in this ESMF. The World Bank ESF “Substantial” ratings reflect scale, geographic dispersion, and cumulative interactions and are consistent with the GCF Category B determination.

4.2 Key Environmental Risks

- Biodiversity: inappropriate species selection or introduction of invasive alien species (IAS) during afforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation could reduce native biodiversity and undermine ecosystem resilience (ESS6 — Substantial).
- Ecological sensitivity: restoration activities near the Lower Prut Ramsar site and Emerald Network areas; critical-habitat screening required at site level.
- Soil and water: temporary soil disturbance, erosion, and sediment runoff during site preparation; localized water-quality risks near riparian and floodplain zones (ESS3).
- Cumulative impacts: simultaneous restoration across ~13,000 ha in hydrologically connected systems may generate cumulative impacts on hydrology, sediment dynamics, and habitat connectivity not fully assessable at Concept stage.
- Nursery operations: fuel/lubricant use, water over-abstraction, and organic waste at the Southern Regional Forest Reproductive Material Centre (RFRMC) if not properly managed.
- Cultural heritage: earthworks for planting may encounter previously unknown archaeological resources (ESS8).

4.3 Key Social Risks

- Land access restrictions: afforestation and riparian buffer restoration on communal lands may temporarily or permanently restrict smallholder farmers and livestock keepers from customary grazing and resource-use areas (ESS5 — Substantial).
- Vulnerable group exclusion: women, Roma, Gagauz, elderly, youth, and persons with disabilities may be disproportionately affected by access restrictions or excluded from project benefits if engagement is inadequate.
- Inequitable benefit distribution: perceptions of unfair site selection or benefit-sharing could generate community contestation, particularly in politically sensitive contexts.
- NOIEP institutional capacity: limited prior experience implementing World Bank-financed projects under the ESF, combined with ongoing institutional restructuring, creates risk of inconsistent safeguards compliance.
- Labour: heat stress, terrain hazards, machinery use, and informal employment risks in seasonal/community worker activities (ESS2 — Moderate).

5. Exclusion List

The following categories of activities are excluded from project financing and will be confirmed at screening stage:

- Any construction in protected areas or priority biodiversity areas unless explicitly aligned with conservation objectives.
- Activities causing significant loss or degradation of critical natural habitats, directly or indirectly.
- Use of pesticides in WHO Categories 1A/1B or nationally banned substances.
- Conversion of forestland to agricultural land; logging in primary forest; large-scale commercial harvest of forest resources.
- Construction of new dams or structural rehabilitation of existing dams.
- Activities affecting known cultural heritage sites (graves, temples, archaeological sites).
- Physical displacement of households or use of eminent domain.
- Activities with significant E&S risks requiring a full ESIA.
- Activities involving child labour, forced labour, or human trafficking, or engaging persons under 18 in hazardous work.
- Activities on land with disputed ownership or tenure rights.
- Any activity requiring Free, Prior and Informed Consent under ESS7.

6. Key Environmental and Social Management Instruments

6.1 Screening and Site-Specific ESMPs

All proposed restoration sites will be screened using the ESMF Environmental and Social Screening Form prior to implementation. Screening criteria include land tenure and customary use status, ecological sensitivity (proximity to protected areas, Emerald Network sites, Ramsar wetlands, critical habitats), cultural heritage, and presence of vulnerable land users. Sites triggering specific risks will require preparation of site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) before any physical works commence.

6.2 Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs)

BMPs will be prepared for restoration sites where biodiversity risks are elevated, consistent with ESS6 criteria for critical-habitat assessment. BMPs will specify biodiversity-sensitive species selection protocols, provenance-verified seed sourcing through the Southern RFRMC, IAS exclusion lists, habitat connectivity requirements, and biodiversity monitoring indicators including amphibians, reptiles, and predatory birds as ecological restoration indicators.

6.3 Process Framework (ESS5)

A Process Framework has been prepared as an integral part of this ESMF, consistent with ESS5. It establishes participatory procedures for identifying, documenting, and mitigating any temporary or permanent restrictions on access to communal lands, grazing areas, or natural resources resulting from project activities. Voluntary land-access protocols are embedded in the Process Framework. No physical works may commence on sites involving access restrictions until the Process Framework consultation process has been completed and documented.

6.4 Labour Management Procedures (LMP)

The standalone LMP addresses all five categories of project workers: direct PIU staff, contracted workers (200+ persons over the project lifecycle), community/seasonal workers (up to 1,000+ cumulative), primary supply chain workers, and government civil servants. Key provisions include: written employment contracts or Letters of Engagement for all workers; OHS management plans covering terrain hazards, heat stress, machinery use, and biological risks; heat stress protocols restricting work during peak afternoon hours (11:00–16:00) during heatwaves; mandatory PPE by task category; child labour prevention (minimum age 18 for hazardous work); forced labour prohibition; and a Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism (W-GRM) separate from the community GRM.

6.5 Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

A standalone SEP has been prepared consistent with ESS10, covering the full project lifecycle from preparation through closure. The SEP identifies affected parties — including smallholder farmers, pastoral land users, forest-adjacent communities, Roma and Gagauz communities, women-headed households, elderly, youth, and persons with disabilities — and specifies differentiated engagement methods. Consultation materials are provided in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz where feasible. Engagement activities conducted during preparation (2022–2026) are documented and have directly shaped project design.

6.6 Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

A three-level community GRM has been established: Level 1 (LPA Grievance Focal Points at all mayoralty offices across the SDR); Level 2 (NOIEP PIU — primary resolution authority); and Level 3 (Ministry of Environment — escalation). External recourse is available through the World Bank Grievance Redress Service

(GRS). Key principles include accessibility (submissions accepted in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz; verbal submissions accepted; no cost to complainant), confidentiality, non-retaliation, and timeliness (acknowledgment within 2 working days; resolution within 30 working days). SEA/SH complaints are handled through a separate, highly confidential pathway managed exclusively by the PIU GBV Focal Point, with survivors referred to national GBV services within 24 hours.

7. Institutional Arrangements and Implementation

7.1 Institutional Responsibilities

Institution	Role in ESMF Implementation
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Recipient/Borrower; strategic oversight and policy coordination; hosts NOIEP.
NOIEP / PIU	Lead implementing agency; daily coordination of safeguards compliance; preparation of site-specific ESMPs; GRM management; preparation of quarterly E&S monitoring reports; reporting to World Bank.
Agency Moldsilva	Technical oversight of afforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation; vegetation establishment monitoring; species compliance verification.
Apele Moldovei	Monitoring of riparian and floodplain restoration; hydrological and water-quality monitoring in the Prut catchment.
Environmental Agency (EA)	Review and approval of EIAs and biodiversity assessments; issuance of Environmental Permits; compliance monitoring.
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Community-level GRM access points; land-access documentation; implementation of participatory planning; on-the-ground stewardship support.
Implementing NGOs	Community outreach; stakeholder engagement documentation; gender-disaggregated participation data collection; GRM accessibility support.
World Bank Task Team	Implementation support and supervision (minimum biannual missions); ESCP compliance review; ISR preparation; adaptive management support.

7.2 Capacity Building

Given NOIEP's limited prior experience implementing World Bank-financed projects under the ESF and its ongoing institutional restructuring, substantive E&S capacity building is planned from project preparation through implementation. Key measures include: dedicated E&S Specialists and a GBV Focal Point within the PIU; ESF monitoring and reporting training for PIU staff; contractor induction training on ESMP requirements, OHS, incident notification, chance-find protocols, and Codes of Conduct; community-level GRM orientation by implementing NGOs; LPA capacity development for land-access documentation; and annual refresher training adapted to monitoring findings.

8. Monitoring, Reporting, and Adaptive Management

8.1 Three-Level Monitoring Structure

The E&S monitoring system operates at three complementary levels:

- Level 1 — Site: Daily OHS compliance by contractors; ESMP checklists; photographic documentation; incident reporting; land-access verification.
- Level 2 — PIU (NOIEP): Consolidation of contractor reports; periodic field verification visits; GRM tracking; preparation of quarterly safeguards summaries and annual performance reports.
- Level 3 — World Bank: Biannual supervision missions; ESCP commitment review; Implementation Status Report (ISR) preparation; adaptive management support.

8.2 Key Performance Indicators

Indicative safeguards monitoring KPIs include:

- Vegetation survival rate: ≥70% at Year 1; ≥60% at Year 3.
- Zero confirmed IAS introductions at any restoration site.
- PPE compliance rate: ≥95% at all active sites.

- Grievance resolution: ≥90% resolved within 30 working days per quarter; complainant satisfaction ≥80%.
- Women's participation in consultations: target ≥40%.
- 100% of workers with signed Codes of Conduct and pre-mobilization SEA/SH training.
- 100% of SEA/SH survivors referred to GBV services within 24 hours.
- All voluntary land-access arrangements documented per Process Framework before works commence.

8.3 Reporting Schedule

Key reporting instruments include monthly Contractor Safeguards Logs; quarterly PIU Safeguards Monitoring Summaries (to World Bank and Project Steering Committee); semi-annual SEP Implementation Progress Reports; annual Vegetation Establishment Reports and Annual Safeguards Performance Summaries; and a Mid-Term Safeguards Review (estimated Year 3) conducted by an independent consultant.

8.4 Adaptive Management Triggers

Automatic escalation and corrective action processes will be triggered by: vegetation survival below 60% at 12 months; confirmed IAS introduction; water quality exceedance or pollution incident; significant community grievance unresolved beyond 30 days; undocumented restriction on communal land access; OHS incident causing serious injury or fatality; cultural heritage chance find; and SEA/SH incident. Corrective action timelines range from immediate (24–48 hours) for pollution incidents, chance finds, and SEA/SH to 30 days for vegetation management adjustments.

9. ESMF Implementation Budget

The indicative budget for ESMF implementation — covering E&S staffing in the PIU, preparation of site-specific ESMPs and BMPs, stakeholder engagement activities, GRM operation, capacity-building training, independent safeguards audits, and monitoring tools — is integrated within Component 4 (Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, US\$2.47M) and in the E&S risk management provisions across Component 2. The indicative total E&S implementation budget is US\$500,000, itemized in the Estimated Budget table (Section 5.8). Budget details will be confirmed in the ESCP and Project Operations Manual.

10. Disclosure and Consultation

This ESMF, together with other documents, has been prepared through a consultative process that included public consultations with communities, civil society, and public institutions across the SDR during 2022–2026. These preparation-stage consultations were initiated and led by the Client (Government of Moldova) and other development partners; the World Bank became engaged in the project only in July 2026. Key stakeholder feedback has been incorporated into project design, including: selection of restoration sites prioritizing co-benefits for agriculture and livelihoods; inclusion of community-based stewardship and incentive mechanisms; commitment to multi-language communication (Romanian, Russian, Gagauz); and accessible, multi-channel GRM design. Two appraisal-stage public consultations were additionally held in July 2026 — on 9 July 2026 in Chişinău with scientific and academic institutions (15 participants), and on 9 July 2026 with civil society and NGOs (22 participants) — confirming broad stakeholder support and informing the final project design.

The ESMF and companion instruments have been disclosed on the NOIEP website (www.NOIEP.gov.md) and the World Bank external website prior to Appraisal, in accordance with the World Bank Access to Information Policy and ESS10 disclosure requirements. Hard copies are available at NOIEP offices in Chişinău.

1. Introduction

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been developed to support the environmental and social due diligence provisions for activities financed under the project Moldova Green Shield: Enhancing Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (Project ID: P516908). The project is being prepared and implemented under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and is co-financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

The Republic of Moldova, acting through the Ministry of Environment (MoE), is the Recipient/Borrower. Day-to-day project implementation will be undertaken by the National Office for Environmental Projects Implementation (NOIEP), the MoE's specialized project implementation structure, through a dedicated Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The World Bank serves as Accredited Entity to the GCF and will provide implementation support and supervision consistent with the ESF.

The project pursues a Project Development Objective (PDO) of enhancing ecosystem functionality and reducing climate vulnerability in selected areas of southern Moldova. PDO-level indicators include (i) area of land under climate-resilient restoration practice in targeted landscapes (hectares); (ii) people benefiting from improved climate resilience of landscapes (number, disaggregated by gender); and (iii) adoption of climate-informed planning instruments into spatial planning processes (number).

1.1 Purpose of the ESMF

The objective of this ESMF is to provide guidance to assess and mitigate potential negative environmental and social risks and impacts of the project consistent with the World Bank's ESSs and national requirements. Specifically, the ESMF aims to:

- assess the potential environmental and social risks and impacts of the proposed project and propose mitigation measures;
- establish procedures for environmental and social screening, review, approval, and implementation of activities;
- specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline necessary reporting procedures for managing and monitoring environmental and social issues;
- identify staffing requirements as well as training and capacity-building needs to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF;
- address mechanisms for public consultation and disclosure of project documents and for redress of possible grievances;
- establish the budget requirements for implementation of the ESMF.

This ESMF should be read together with the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labor Management Procedures (LMP), Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), and Gender Assessment and Action Plan, all of which form an integrated safeguards package consistent with the World Bank ESF.

2. Project Description

2.1. Project Development Objective and Key Results

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is improve the climate resilience of targeted landscapes in southern Moldova and strengthen institutional capacity for climate-informed planning. The PDO will be achieved through ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA), integrated restoration practices, adaptive governance systems, and the deployment of climate-informed decision-making tools.

Key results indicators include:

- Area of land under climate-resilient restoration practice in targeted landscapes (approximately 13,000 hectares targeted);
- People benefiting from improved climate resilience of landscapes (approximately 30,000 direct and 155,000 indirect beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender);
- Adoption of climate-informed planning instruments into spatial planning processes (number).

2.2. Geographic Context

Project activities will be implemented in the Southern Development Region (SDR) of Moldova, covering approximately 9,200 km² across eight climate-vulnerable districts: Cantemir, Cahul, Leova, Cimișlia, Taraclia, Basarabeasca, Căușeni, Ștefan Vodă, and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia (ATUG). These areas form Moldova's most climate-vulnerable region, characterized by semi-arid steppe and forest-steppe ecosystems, high exposure to drought and land degradation, limited adaptive capacity, and strong dependence on agriculture and grazing. The SDR also hosts the ecologically significant Bugeac steppe with important biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

The project also includes a strong focus on the Prut river catchment, which supports hydrologically dynamic ecosystems and biodiversity values including the Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar site and Emerald Network areas of international ecological significance.

2.3. Project Components

The project is structured around four mutually reinforcing components. Total project financing amounts to US\$49.28 million, allocated as set out below.

Table 2.3 Project costs by component and source of financing (US\$, millions)

Component	Total	%
Component 1: Institutional Capacity Development and Data-Driven Planning	2.89	5.9%
Component 2: Climate-Resilient Ecological Infrastructure Restoration in Production Landscapes	38.47	78.1%
Component 3: Community Engagement, Climate-Resilient Livelihoods and Local Stewardship	5.45	11.0%
Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation	2.47	5.0%
Total	49.28	100%

Component 1: Institutional Capacity Development and Data-Driven Planning (US\$2.89M)

The main objective of this component is to strengthen the institutional, technical, and operational capacity of both national and local stakeholders. This will help them effectively plan, implement, and sustain climate-informed ecosystem restoration and EbA efforts across Moldova, establishing the institutional, human, and social foundations required for effective ecosystem restoration. It addresses key barriers identified in national implementation experience, including weak inter-sectoral coordination, limited local implementation capacity, insufficient maintenance systems, and low community ownership of restoration outcomes. It ensures that EbA-type interventions are not only technically feasible but institutionally implementable and socially sustained, thereby enabling long-term effectiveness of restoration investments under Components 2 and 3.

Sub-Component 1.1 — Institutional Strengthening, Implementation Capacity Building and Knowledge Platforms

The objective of this sub-component is to enhance institutional coordination, technical implementation capacity, and operational effectiveness of national and local actors responsible for ecosystem restoration and EbA interventions in Moldova. It will establish the institutional, technical, and operational foundations required for

effective implementation of restoration investments planned under Component 2, including climate-informed planning, inter-sectoral coordination, technical guidance systems, and implementation support mechanisms for climate-resilient landscape management.

This sub-component will include the following grouped activities:

(a) Development of operational guidelines that consider restoration typologies, technical standards, site-selection and prioritization approaches, specific site-species and land condition criteria, and implementation manuals for ecosystem restoration under climate-stressed conditions; appropriate matching of restoration interventions to local ecological, hydrological, climatic, and socio-economic conditions;

(b) Development of a climate-resilient landscape knowledge platform to support data sharing, communication, and institutional learning. The platform will integrate restoration prioritization outputs, modelling results, and implementation experience generated under other project components, and make these accessible to national and local stakeholders. It will support restoration investment planning by integrating restoration priorities, ecosystem service assessments, climate risks, and natural capital information to inform future public and private investments in resilient landscapes.

(c) Capacity development for national and local institutions involved in field implementation, including training on ecosystem restoration techniques, climate-resilient forestry, silvopastoral systems, riparian buffer restoration, wetland rehabilitation, and adaptive management under increasing drought and climate variability. The sub-component will place particular emphasis on strengthening NAAM, Moldsilva territorial enterprises and LPAs as primary implementation entities responsible for on-the-ground execution and long-term stewardship of restored landscapes. The sub-component will also finance the overall capacity development of NOIEP, enabling it to become an effective and efficient environmental project implementation agency for the Republic of Moldova.

Sub-Component 1.2 — Integrated Data Systems and Climate-Informed Ecosystem Planning for the Prut River and Southern Landscapes

The objective of this sub-component is to establish a robust, integrated, and climate-informed decision-support system to guide ecosystem restoration and ecosystem-based adaptation planning across southern Moldova, with a focus on the Prut River catchment (a priority landscape), degraded forest-steppe zones, and climate-vulnerable agricultural production systems. It will strengthen the analytical foundation for climate-informed restoration planning and further support development and application of Natural Capital Accounting approaches in ecosystem restoration and monitoring of outcomes.

This sub-component will include the following grouped activities:

(a) Development of an integrated climate, hydro-ecological, and ecosystem planning systems to support evidence-based decision-making for floodplain in transition. The focus will be placed on the Lower Prut landscape of interconnected floodplain and adjacent production landscapes extending along the Lower Prut River corridor;

(b) Conducting scenario-based climate and ecosystem modelling to assess drought risk, flood exposure, hydrological variability, habitat connectivity, ecosystem service provision, and land degradation dynamics, particularly in climate-vulnerable southern districts. The outputs will directly inform spatial prioritization of ecosystem restoration investments under the NFERP and related national programs;

(c) Modernization of environmental monitoring and geospatial data infrastructure, including standardized systems for sharing and presenting data on hydrology, land use, vegetation cover, soil degradation, forest condition, and ecosystem health indicators. Accessing diverse datasets via data exchange protocols transforms resource management by replacing static maps with near-real-time, predictive monitoring of environmental changes and ecological threats in alignment with the EU Inspire Directive. This continuous data flow democratizes complex spatial statistics, allowing stakeholders across multiple institutions to dynamically quantify ecosystem services and make immediate, evidence-based conservation decisions;

(d) Conducting Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) to assess and integrate the economic value of ecosystems and biodiversity into national and local planning. This includes mapping and valuing ecosystem services from protected and restored landscapes, including pollination, soil fertility, water regulation, and carbon sequestration. The project will conduct spatial and economic assessments of pollination services to quantify their contribution to crop and fruit production in surrounding agricultural areas. The outputs will support ecosystem service assessments, restoration planning, and future ecosystem financing mechanisms, including Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), biodiversity finance, and other nature-based financing approaches.

Sub-Component 1.3 — Climate-Resilient Digitalization and Modernization of the Early Warning System

The objective of this sub-component is to deliver timely, impact-based advisories on droughts, heatwaves, and other climate-related hazards — with a particular focus on ecosystem restoration, agriculture, and vulnerable communities. Building on national-level climate information systems and decision-support investments already underway through complementary initiatives, the project will reinforce last-mile early warning capacity at the (LPA and community levels, ensuring that local actors can effectively access, interpret, and act on the information and tools being developed at the national scale.

This sub-component will include the following grouped activities:

(a) Enhancing of an integrated, digital multi-hazard early warning platform hosted by Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring Authority (MEMA) and linked with the National Crisis Management Center, with a deliberate orientation toward local usability and last-mile delivery. The platform will enable real-time integration and analysis of meteorological, hydrological, climate, and ecosystem data — incorporating climate projections and localized risk layers that reflect hazard patterns relevant to specific landscapes, agricultural zones, and communities across Moldova. Critically, the platform will be designed to generate actionable, place-specific outputs — including drought alerts, heatwave advisories, and ecosystem stress indicators — that local public authorities (LPAs) and community-level actors can readily interpret and act upon, without requiring advanced technical capacity. It will also support climate-informed restoration planning, drought monitoring, and adaptive landscape management at the sub-national level, complementing national investments in disaster risk management while ensuring those investments translate into tangible tools and information for the communities most exposed to climate hazards.;

(b) Modernizing climate and hydrometeorological data systems and services through a centralized, cloud-based infrastructure, improved interoperability across institutions. Automated monitoring systems will be selectively expanded where required to support restoration planning and climate risk assessment, with priority coverage in climate-vulnerable southern districts. Satellite-based observations will complement ground-based monitoring systems, all data being available via data sharing protocols developed under Sub-component 1.1;

(c) Strengthening multi-channel warning dissemination with user-oriented climate information services through SMS, mobile applications, and media integration, with geo-targeted alerts and tailored communication for farmers and rural communities in Southern Moldova. It will also develop digital climate services, including local dashboards, farmer advisory tools, and two-way communication systems that support ecosystem restoration, climate-resilient agriculture and adaptive landscape management to support anticipatory action and climate-informed decision-making.

Component 2: Climate-Resilient Ecological Infrastructure Restoration in Production Landscapes (US\$38.47M)

The primary objective of this component is to restore ecosystem functionality and reduce climate vulnerability across southern Moldova, particularly in drought-prone districts including the Lower Prut basin, all through large-scale, climate-informed EbA interventions. Restoration will focus not only on vegetation establishment, but also on recovery of ecosystem structure, ecological processes, connectivity, and long-term ecosystem functionality. Component 2 emphasizes ecosystem recovery through a combination of approaches. It aims at restoring ecological infrastructure at landscape scale by integrating forest, water, agricultural, and pasture systems into a coherent adaptation framework. It addresses systemic drivers of ecosystem degradation while strengthening ecological connectivity and ecosystem services, including pollination services that support climate-resilient agricultural production systems. It generates inclusive socio-economic co-benefits and enhances resilience while aligning directly with Moldova's climate, biodiversity, forest restoration, and land degradation neutrality objectives.

Sub-Component 2.1 — Climate-Resilient Forest Restoration and Ecological Connectivity Enhancement

The objective of this sub-component is to restore and enhance the resilience, structural diversity, and ecological functionality of forest ecosystems in selected areas in the southern Moldova through integrated afforestation, reforestation, assisted natural regeneration (ANR), and forest vegetation rehabilitation, supported by strengthened forest reproductive material (FRM) systems. Restoration interventions will be implemented within the framework of climate-resilient Forest Management Plans that prioritise ecosystem functionality, ecological connectivity, biodiversity outcomes, watershed protection and climate resilience objectives rather than solely tree establishment targets.

This sub-component will include the following grouped activities:

(a) Afforestation and ecological restoration of degraded communal lands, erosion-prone slopes, and fragmented forest-steppe landscapes, with priority given to ecological corridors and connectivity areas. It will also support maintenance and assisted recovery of naturally expanding forest and woody vegetation on forest-adjacent landscapes and other suitable areas, particularly near key forest massifs such as Codrii Tigheciului or Flamanda Forest;

(b) Rehabilitation of degraded forest stands through selective silvicultural interventions. Restoration approaches will promote structurally diverse, mixed-species, climate-resilient forests based on site-specific ecological assessment and climate projections, improving soil moisture retention, groundwater recharge, biodiversity and drought resilience.

(c) Establishment of the Southern Regional Forest Reproductive Material Centre (RFRMC), including modernization of nursery systems, improved local seed sourcing, provenance selection, and genetic diversity management. The Centre will support the assessment and deployment of locally adapted genetic resources,

focussing on native species (with any use of climate-adapted provenances from neighbouring regions subject to invasive-species screening and biodiversity safeguards), all aligned with climate adaptation needs, relevant EU standards and international best practices.

Sub-Component 2.2 — Climate-Resilient Watershed and Floodplain Restoration (Prut River Catchment)

The objective of this sub-component is to enhance water security and climate resilience in southern Moldova by restoring the natural capacity of landscapes to capture, store, retain, and regulate water across river basins, floodplains, and associated catchments. Through restoration of wetlands, riparian systems, sediment regulation, floodplains, and watershed functions, the sub-component will increase water availability during dry periods, reduce vulnerability to droughts and floods, improve groundwater recharge, and strengthen ecosystem services that support climate-resilient agricultural production and rural livelihoods. The following activities are proposed:

(a) Rehabilitation and ecological restoration of wetlands and floodplains including hydrologically connected systems, restored natural hydrological processes, enhancement of water storage and retention functions, reconnection of floodplain habitats where appropriate, and recovery of native wetland/meadow vegetation and associated biodiversity;

(b) Restoration of degraded river corridors to improve water quality, stabilize riverbanks, reduce erosion and sedimentation, restore aquatic and terrestrial habitats, enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity, strengthen climate resilience to floods and droughts, and support sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem services for local communities;

(c) Watershed protection and enhancement measures, including rehabilitation of small reservoirs through targeted desiltation, shoreline stabilization, and improved water regulation to enhance groundwater recharge, restore water storage capacity, and improve drought buffering and flood risk management, with priority given to catchments and water bodies serving climate-vulnerable agricultural communities in southern Moldova.

Restoration planning processes under this sub-component will be supported by modelling outputs developed under Component 1, ensuring adaptive watershed and floodplain management and avoiding maladaptive grey infrastructure approaches.

Sub-Component 2.3 — Climate-Resilient Agricultural Landscapes, Shelterbelts, and Silvopastoral Systems

The objective of this sub-component is to reduce climate exposure and enhance resilience of agricultural and pasture systems in selected areas through restoration and expansion of ecological infrastructure and multifunctional forest-steppe landscape elements. That will enhance habitat connectivity and ecosystem services, including support for pollinators important for orchards, vineyards, and other agricultural systems.

This sub-component will include the following activities:

(a) Restoration and establishment of shelterbelts in wind-exposed agricultural landscapes through: (i) rehabilitation of degraded shelterbelts by enrichment planting, structural restoration, and multi-species systems adapted to local ecological conditions and projected climate variability. The restored shelterbelt networks will help reduce wind erosion, stabilize soils, improve microclimatic conditions, reduce evapotranspiration losses, and strengthen climate resilience of adjacent agricultural production systems. The shelterbelt network will also support pollinator habitat and associated ecosystem services important for fruit production, viticulture, and household properties.

(b) Development of climate-resilient silvopastoral systems including in the Bugeac Steppe region, integrating trees into grazing systems to improve soil moisture, reduce erosion, stabilize soils, and enhance pasture productivity. Interventions will improve soil fertility, reduce evapotranspiration losses, and strengthen ecological connectivity across production landscapes.

Component 3: Community Engagement, Climate-Resilient Livelihoods and Local Stewardship Systems (US\$5.45M)

The objective of this component is to ensure the long-term sustainability, local ownership, and resilience benefits of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) investments implemented under Component 2. While Component 2 finances the physical restoration of forests, shelterbelts, riparian systems, wetlands, and silvopastoral landscapes, Component 3 focuses on site-level landscape and forest management planning, stewardship arrangements, community engagement, sustainable financing mechanisms, and livelihood activities necessary to reduce pressure on restored ecosystems and maximise their adaptation benefits.

The component is structured around three mutually reinforcing pillars. First, it will strengthen local planning systems, ecosystem stewardship arrangements, and participatory management processes to ensure that restoration investments are integrated into formally recognized planning and management frameworks and supported by local stakeholders. Second, it will promote climate-resilient rural livelihood solutions that reduce dependence on unsustainable resource use while enhancing the adaptive capacity of vulnerable rural households. Third, it will assess and pilot sustainable financing and incentive mechanisms that can support the

long-term maintenance of restored ecological infrastructure and create incentives for continued stewardship by local authorities, communities, and land users.

Through these interventions, the component will help ensure that restored forests, shelterbelts, wetlands, riparian systems, and silvopastoral landscapes continue to deliver adaptation benefits after project completion by strengthening the institutional, financial, and socio-economic foundations required for their long-term management. The component complements Moldova's Forest Code (2024), the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP) 2023–2032, and the National Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NCCAP 2030), while contributing to GCF priorities related to strengthening adaptive capacity, enhancing resilience of vulnerable communities, and promoting the long-term sustainability of climate adaptation investments.

Participating communities will be identified from within the project intervention areas using transparent eligibility criteria linked to the restoration site selection process. The criteria will consider factors such as proximity to restoration sites, climate vulnerability, dependence on ecosystem services and community commitment to activity area targets to be achieved under Component 2. These criteria, along with a detailed selection procedure and eligibility requirements for stewardship support will be outlined in the Project Operations Manual (POM).

Sub-Component 3.1 — Inclusive Community Engagement, Capacity Development, and Green Rural Livelihoods

The objective of this sub-component is to strengthen local ownership, governance capacity, and long-term stewardship of ecosystem restoration investments through participatory planning, climate-resilient forest and landscape management, community capacity development, and restoration-linked livelihood opportunities. The sub-component recognises that the long-term sustainability of ecosystem restoration depends not only on physical investments, but also on the existence of effective planning systems, clearly defined management responsibilities, and tangible socio-economic benefits for participating communities. Activities under this sub-component will therefore establish the institutional and community foundations required to sustain restoration outcomes beyond the lifetime of the project, while enhancing the adaptive capacity of rural communities and local institutions. Participation will be formalised through cooperation agreements between MOE and participating LPAs with agreements (described in the POM) to cover land availability, consultation requirements, maintenance obligations, gender inclusion, beneficiary targeting. This sub-component will finance:

(a) Supporting participatory landscape planning and strengthening local governance systems

The project will support the preparation and implementation of climate-resilient Forest Management Plans (FMPs) and Community Stewardship Plans for targeted restoration landscapes supported under Component 2. These instruments will provide the operational framework for restoration, management, protection, monitoring, and long-term stewardship of restored ecosystems.

Climate-resilient FMPs will be prepared by ICAS, through participatory processes and working in collaboration with Moldsilva, State Forest Enterprises, LPAs and other relevant stakeholders.

Community Stewardship Plans will be developed for shelterbelts, communal pasture lands, wetlands, riparian corridors, rehabilitated forest areas, naturally expanding ecosystems and other restoration assets supported under the project.

These plans will define management responsibilities, maintenance obligations, sustainable use provisions, monitoring arrangements, and mechanisms for resolving conflicts related to resource use. The plans will be endorsed by participating LPAs and incorporated into local development plans and strategies to enhance sustainability beyond project completion.

(b) Improving women's empowerment, and green livelihoods through financing of a comprehensive package of investments, tools and assets, and enabling support to establish and scale climate-resilient, restoration-compatible enterprises — with a particular focus on women-led and youth-led businesses in rural areas.

The project will finance the direct procurement and transfer of tools and assets — including beehives and honey extraction equipment, NTFP processing units, seedling production infrastructure, drip irrigation systems for agroforestry plots, and cold storage or drying facilities for medicinal and aromatic plant value chains. Asset packages will be standardized by enterprise type and delivered through transparent, community-verified allocation processes. The project will also finance the improvement of collection points for NTFPs and agroforestry products, in targeted landscape areas. Technical assistance, vocational training, mentoring, and business development support will also be provided as enabling complements to the investment financing.

Sub-Component 3.2 — Financing Mechanisms and Community-Based Stewardship

The objective of this sub-component is to strengthen the institutional and long-term financial sustainability of restoration investments, and to support mechanisms for the maintenance and sustainability of ecosystems restored under Component 2. It does so through two set of activities: building the community stewardship

capacity that ensures restored ecosystems are actively managed at the local level and development of the institutional and financial frameworks that can sustain that stewardship beyond the project's lifetime.

(a) Supporting community stewardship. The project will support the implementation of the plans through procurement and distribution of stewardship equipment and materials for LPAs, including tools for replanting and maintenance, monitoring equipment (GPS devices, field data collection tablets), and basic protective gear, allocated to registered groups against verified stewardship plans. In addition, it will include trainings of community stewards in ecosystem monitoring protocols, restoration maintenance techniques, and use of simple data collection tools.

(b) Exploring and Enabling Sustainable Ecosystem Financing

Building directly on the stewardship infrastructure established under 3.1 (a), this track will develop the institutional readiness, analytical foundations, and pilot frameworks needed to mobilize sustainable financing for ecosystem maintenance beyond the project's lifetime. The community stewardship groups and spatial data established under track (a) constitute the primary asset base upon which ecosystem financing approaches will be assessed and piloted.

Activities will include assessment of ecosystem services opportunities associated with watershed protection, carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and pollination services generated through restoration activities, drawing on the Natural Capital Accounting framework and ecosystem valuation tools developed under Component 1. The project will finance feasibility studies for biodiversity finance, carbon finance, and other innovative financing mechanisms, evaluating technical, legal, and institutional prerequisites for each restored landscape under component 2 of the project. The project will also finance the assessment of options for integrating restoration maintenance costs into local government budgeting and natural resource management systems, including analysis of fiscal transfer mechanisms and co-financing arrangements with sector agencies.

(c) Supporting stewardship monitoring and adaptive management systems to track restoration maintenance, ecosystem condition, and stewardship outcomes, building upon monitoring and geospatial information systems developed under Component 1 and complementing the project MEL framework.

Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$2.47M)

The objective of this component is to ensure efficient, compliant, and adaptive implementation of the project through strengthened institutional capacity, robust monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, and continuous improvement of restoration and EbA interventions. This component will include the following activities:

(a) Technical and operational support for the establishment and operation of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within NOIEP at the Ministry of Environment (MoE), a project-dedicated unit responsible for overall project coordination, fiduciary management, procurement, environmental and social risk management, and technical supervision of project activities. ;

(b) Development and operation of an integrated Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system to track project results and inform adaptive management. The MEL system will monitor progress of restoration investments, ecosystem condition indicators (including erosion control, vegetation recovery, and landscape connectivity), and climate resilience outcomes aligned with the project results framework.

2.4 Beneficiaries

Approximately 30,000 people are expected to benefit directly from the project, including rural households whose livelihoods depend on climate-sensitive ecosystem services — particularly smallholder farmers, pastoral land users, forest-adjacent communities, women-headed households, youth, persons with disabilities, and other socially or economically vulnerable groups. An estimated 155,000 people are expected to benefit indirectly through improved delivery of ecosystem services, enhanced soil protection, improved vegetation cover, strengthened water-regulation functions, and reduced exposure to climate-related hazards.

2.5 Duration and Implementation Period

The project will be implemented over a period of five years. Ecological and institutional benefits generated through ecosystem restoration are expected to persist well beyond the implementation period, with restoration impacts anticipated to continue delivering adaptation benefits over a minimum 20-year timeframe.

2.6 Expected Outcomes and Climate Co-Benefits

Through restoration of degraded ecological infrastructure and strengthening of climate-informed restoration planning systems, the project is expected to deliver sustained adaptation benefits including improved resilience of climate-sensitive livelihoods, strengthened regulation of soil and water resources, enhanced vegetation cover, and improved delivery of ecosystem services.

Restoration interventions implemented under the project will improve ecological connectivity across forest-steppe production landscapes through afforestation and assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation of degraded forest ecosystems, establishment of shelterbelt systems and riparian vegetative buffers, and restoration of silvopastoral land-use mosaics. These measures are expected to reduce exposure of rural

communities to drought impacts, soil erosion, and climate variability while strengthening long-term ecosystem functionality.

At the institutional level, the project will strengthen restoration prioritization systems, improve availability of climate-resilient forest reproductive material, and enhance technical capacity for climate-informed ecosystem restoration planning. Hydrological and ecosystem-response modelling developed for the Lower Prut floodplain system will support evidence-based decision-making for long-term adaptation pathway planning without involving construction of hydraulic infrastructure.

At a broader scale, ecosystem restoration supported by the project will contribute to improved soil fertility, strengthened natural water-regulation functions, increased biodiversity habitat quality, and enhanced landscape connectivity. These outcomes generate long-term co-benefits for agricultural resilience, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable natural resource governance.

Through its integrated ecosystem-based adaptation approach and alignment with national climate and forest-sector strategies, the project provides a scalable model for strengthening climate resilience of production landscapes and supporting mainstreaming of EbA approaches within Moldova's climate adaptation and land management frameworks.

3. Environmental and Social Policies, Regulations, and Laws

This section presents the policy, legal, and institutional framework applicable to environmental and social risk management for the project. It includes the national framework of the Republic of Moldova and the applicable World Bank Environmental and Social Standards, with key gaps identified and addressed through gap-filling measures embedded in this ESMF.

3.1 National Policy Framework

Environmental and social dimensions of development in Moldova are guided by several key national policy frameworks reflecting the Government's commitment to sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation, and climate change adaptation. The frameworks most directly relevant to the project include:

Policy	Description
Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC, updated)	Moldova's updated NDC commits to reducing GHG emissions by 70 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and highlights land use, forestry, and EbA as priority sectors. The NDC specifically calls for increased forest cover, improved management of degraded lands, and climate-proofing of rural development.
National Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NCCAP 2030)	The NCCAP identifies Moldova's southern and semi-arid regions as priority climate-vulnerable areas. The programme emphasizes ecosystem restoration, expansion of vegetation cover, and improved water and soil regulation as core adaptation measures, and explicitly promotes EbA approaches. It also calls for strengthened coordination across agriculture, forestry, and environmental sectors to support integrated landscape-scale adaptation planning and implementation.
National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP) 2023–2032	Adopted through Government Decision No. 55/2023, this strategic initiative seeks to expand the forest fund by approximately 145,000 ha nationwide and integrate ecosystem services into rural development planning. It serves as the primary policy framework guiding investments in forest restoration, biodiversity corridors, and sustainable land-use practices, and provides the foundational policy alignment for Component 2 of the project.
Low Emission Development Programme (LEDP 2024–2030)	Provides the national framework for transitioning Moldova towards a low-emission economy, with explicit linkages to forest expansion, ecosystem restoration, and nature-based solutions as enabling pillars for greenhouse gas removal and resilience.
National Environmental Strategy 2024–2030	Approved through Government Decision No. 409/2024, the Strategy sets a national vision for climate-resilient green growth, ecosystem restoration, and alignment with the EU environmental acquis. It promotes cross-sectoral integration of adaptation and ecosystem resilience and serves as a policy anchor for institutional strengthening under Component 1.
Biodiversity Programme of Moldova (2026–2030)	Moldova has developed a new Biodiversity Programme for 2026–2030, replacing the previous NBSAP and serving as the main national framework for biodiversity conservation and restoration. Aligned with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, it emphasizes ecosystem restoration, enhancement of ecosystem services, and integration of biodiversity considerations into sectoral and local-level planning. The project is fully aligned with this framework, particularly with respect to biodiversity-compatible restoration and landscape-scale EbA interventions.
National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD) 2022–2028	Supports sustainable land use and climate adaptation in Moldova's least developed districts, including those in the SDR. It provides the geographic rationale for prioritizing the project's target regions.

3.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

The legal framework governing environmental and social management in Moldova provides the basis for environmental protection, forest governance, social safeguards, and sustainable development. Key legal instruments directly relevant to the project are summarized below.

Table 3.2.1 National legal framework on environment relevant to the project

Law / Regulation	Description and Relevance to Project Activities
Land Code (Law No. 22 of 15.02.2024)	Provides the legal framework for land ownership, use, and protection. Regulates land-use categories, tenure arrangements, obligations for soil and land protection, including land under water bodies, riverside strips, water protection zones, and sanitary protection zones. Establishes rules for organization and planning of agricultural territory and for changing land-use categories (e.g., conversion of degraded agricultural land for afforestation). Forms the statutory basis for implementing EbA measures on agricultural, pasture, and other non-forest lands targeted by the project.
Forest Code (Law No. 69 of 28.03.2024)	Establishes a modern legal framework for sustainable management, restoration, and expansion of the forest fund, irrespective of ownership. The Code prioritizes biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and climate change adaptation; recognizes forests as a strategic national resource; and embeds ecosystem services and carbon functions within forest management objectives. Aligns forest governance with EU environmental standards. Defines degraded land subject to afforestation and ecological reconstruction; provides legal basis for EbA and forest-related investments under Component 2.
Law on Environmental Protection (Law No. 1515-XII/1993, amended)	Establishes core principles of sustainable development, environmental rights, and public participation. Mandates environmental impact assessment for projects affecting ecosystems or natural resources.
Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (Law No. 86 of 29.05.2014, as amended 2023)	Establishes the legal framework for EIA in Moldova, fully transposing Directive 2011/92/EU and partially incorporating provisions of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive). Includes mandatory consideration of impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural habitats. Afforestation of areas exceeding 20 ha, and afforestation within state-protected natural areas or their buffer zones of 5 ha or more, may trigger EIA. Activities likely to have significant effects on Emerald sites are subject to Biodiversity Assessment (equivalent to Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive).
Biodiversity Assessment Guidelines (Order of the Minister of Environment No. 105 of 18.06.2024)	Provides detailed methodological instructions for assessing effects of planned activities on biodiversity within the EIA process and for activities affecting Emerald Network sites.
Water Law (Law No. 272 of 23.12.2011)	Legal framework for protection and sustainable use of surface and groundwater based on river-basin management principles. Regulates water abstraction, discharge permitting, water quality, and water-protection zones. Direct legal basis for hydrological assessments, restoration of riparian ecosystems, floodplain and wetland management, and erosion-control measures under Component 2.
Law on the Ecological Network (Law No. 94/2007)	Establishes the framework for the national and local ecological network as an integral component of the Pan-European Ecological Network, partially transposing Directive 92/43/EEC. Provides legal basis for habitat connectivity, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem coherence relevant to landscape-scale EbA interventions.
Law on the Fund of Natural Areas Protected by the State (Law No. 1538/1998)	Legal framework for designation, management, and conservation of protected areas; aligns classification and management with international conventions (CBD, Bern, Bonn, Ramsar). Relevant where project activities are located in proximity to protected areas or Emerald Network sites.
Law on plant kingdom (Law No. 239-XVI of 08.11.2007)	Legal framework for conservation, protection, restoration, and use of the plant kingdom, including responsibilities of public authorities and scientific institutions.

Table 3.2.2 National legal framework on labor and occupational health and safety

Law / Regulation	Description and Relevance to Project Activities
Labor Code (Law No. 154-XV of 28.03.2003)	Establishes national standards for labor relations, occupational health and safety, workers' rights, and gender equality in employment. Provides the legal basis for fair working conditions, non-discrimination, and workplace safety applicable to project contractors and to the creation of local green jobs under the project.
Law on Safety and Health at Work (Law No. 186-XVI of 10.07.2008)	Regulates measures for ensuring the safety and health of workers; establishes general principles concerning prevention of occupational risks, protection of workers, information, consultation, balanced participation, and training. Foundational for the project's Labor Management Procedures (LMP).
Law on State Public Health Surveillance (Law No. 10-XVI of 03.02.2009)	Establishes general public health requirements and the system of state public health supervision. Relevant for managing community health and safety risks under ESS4.
Law on Fire Protection (Law No. 267-XIII of 09.11.1994)	Regulates the fire protection system, including fire risk assessment, fire safety standards, and certification. Relevant for nursery operations, vegetation management, and emergency preparedness.
Government Decision No. 95/2009 on implementation of the Law on OHS	Establishes minimum requirements for the activities of protecting workers at work and preventing occupational risks.
Government Decision No. 353/2010 on minimum requirements for health and safety at work	Establishes minimum requirements for health and safety at work.
Government Decision No. 80/2012 on minimum safety and health requirements for temporary or mobile construction sites	Establishes functional conditions of temporary or mobile construction sites; relevant for nursery construction, riparian works, and other small-scale civil works under Component 2.
Government Decision No. 918/2013 on minimum requirements for safety and health markings at the workplace	Establishes requirements for safety and health signage at worksites.
Government Decision No. 603/2011 on minimum safety requirements for the use of work equipment	Establishes minimum safety and health requirements for work equipment, relevant for forestry and field-restoration machinery.
Government Decision No. 362/2014 on protection of workers from exposure to noise	Establishes minimum requirements for the protection of workers from risks to health and safety arising from exposure to noise.
Government Decision No. 324/2013 on protection from chemical agents at work	Establishes requirements for the protection of workers from risks related to chemical agents (relevant for nursery operations and use of fuels/lubricants).

Table 3.2.3 Relevant social, anti-discrimination, and transparency framework

Law / Regulation	Description and Relevance
Law on Ensuring Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men (Law No. 5-XVI of 09.02.2006)	Enforces gender equality and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, supporting gender-responsive implementation and SEA/SH risk prevention.
Law on Ensuring Equality (Law No. 121/2012)	Strengthens protection for vulnerable groups, minorities, and persons with disabilities in access to services, employment, and development benefits.
Law on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (Law No. 60 of 30.03.2012)	Ensures rights of persons with disabilities for social inclusion and equal access to services, employment, and project benefits.
Law on Promotion of Employment and Unemployment Insurance (Law No. 105 of 14.06.2018)	Aims to prevent and reduce unemployment and adapt to labor-market demands; relevant for green-job creation under Component 3.
Law on Access to Information of Public Interest (Law No. 148 of 09.06.2023)	Ensures transparency of public sector activities and regulates access to public-interest information. Supports project disclosure obligations.
Law on Open Data and Reuse of Public Sector Information (Law No. 109 of 22.05.2025)	Establishes minimum rules for the commercial and non-commercial reuse of public-sector information.
Law on Transparency in Decision Making (Law No. 239 of 13.11.2008)	Establishes norms for ensuring transparency in decision making by central and local public administration; supports inclusive stakeholder engagement under ESS10.

3.3. Institutional Arrangements and Responsibilities

Multiple institutions in Moldova have mandates relevant to environmental and social management for the project. Their roles, mandates, and applicability to the project are summarized below.

Table 3.3 Key national institutions and their roles

Institution	Role and Relevance to Project
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Central specialized body of public administration ensuring implementation of government policy in environmental protection, climate change, and sustainable management of natural resources. Provides strategic oversight and policy coordination for the project. Hosts NOIEP.
National Office for Implementation of Environmental Projects (NOIEP)	Subordinated to the MoE; established by government decree in 2018. NOIEP is the project's implementing agency and will host the PIU responsible for fiduciary, technical, and safeguards implementation. NOIEP is currently undergoing institutional restructuring; capacity building under Component 1 will support strengthening of safeguards implementation capacity.
Environmental Agency (EA)	Administrative authority subordinated to the MoE; responsible for implementation of state policy in environmental management. Reviews and approves EIAs and biodiversity assessments; issues Environmental Permits; monitors compliance with permit conditions; issues permits for afforestation works and water abstraction (subject to ongoing reorganization).
Environmental Protection Inspectorate (EPI)	Administrative authority under the MoE empowered to carry out state supervision and control in environmental protection and natural resource use. Involved in issuance and post-issuance compliance monitoring of environmental permits.
Public Institution National Administration "Apele Moldovei" (PI NA Apele Moldovei)	Self-managed public institution for which the MoE exercises the function of founder. Manages water-fund lands, hydrotechnical constructions, reservoirs/ponds, surface and underground water bodies. Key partner for restoration of riparian buffers, wetlands, and floodplain interventions, particularly in the Prut Catchment.
Agency "Moldsilva"	Sectoral agency responsible for management of state forest fund and implementation of forest management plans. Primary implementing partner for afforestation, reforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation activities under Component 2.1. Ongoing reforms anticipated; project provides capacity-building support.
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI)	Sectoral coordination on agricultural land use, silvopastoral systems, and shelterbelts on agricultural lands.
Institute of Forestry Research and Management (ICAS)	Provides technical and research-based support for forest management planning and silvopastoral management plans (SPMPs).
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Manage communal lands, including pastures and degraded lands eligible for afforestation. Key implementing partners for community-level activities and for screening, planning, and monitoring under the ESMF.
State University of Moldova and academic institutions	Technical partners for biodiversity assessment, species selection, and climate-resilience research; potential host of a Climate Resilience Center of Excellence under cross-cutting initiatives.

3.4 National Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure in the Republic of Moldova is carried out under Law No. 86/2014 on EIA. Amendments that entered into force in October 2023 fully transpose Directive 2011/92/EU and partially incorporate Article 6, paragraphs 3 and 4 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) — including the requirement for Biodiversity Assessment (the national equivalent of Appropriate Assessment) for activities that may have significant impacts on Emerald Network sites.

The EIA procedure is conducted by the Environmental Agency. It is preceded by a preliminary screening of the proposed activity and includes the procedural steps summarized in Annex 3 of this ESMF. The Environmental Permit (Acord de Mediu) is issued as an annex to the EIA decision and serves as a guide for project designers and inspectors to comply with measures and conditions set out in the Permit at all stages of project development.

For the Moldova Green Shield project, certain activities under Component 2 may trigger national EIA procedures depending on scale and location, particularly:

- Initial afforestation of areas exceeding 20 ha (Annex 2, point 11(k) of Law No. 86/2014);
- Afforestation within state-protected natural areas or their protection zones of 5 ha or more;
- Works to combat river erosion and riparian/wetland rehabilitation works (Annex 2, point 10(k));
- Rainwater erosion control and land restoration works (from 1.5 ha — point 10(o));
- Activities likely to significantly affect Emerald Network sites — subject to Biodiversity Assessment regardless of scale or whether listed in Annex 1 or 2 of the EIA Law.

Once specific intervention locations and scales are confirmed, NOIEP will conduct site-specific screening to determine the applicability of national EIA and Biodiversity Assessment procedures. The Executing Entity will be responsible for obtaining any such licenses or permits..

3.5. World Bank Environmental and Social Standards

The project will be implemented under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), which sets out ten Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs). The relevance of each standard to the project, as confirmed in the Concept ESRS (Report No. ESRSC05644, 8 May 2026), is summarized below.

Table 3.5 Applicability of World Bank ESSs to the project

ESS	Relevance	Application to the Project
ESS1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant	The project will finance large-scale, landscape-level EbA interventions across rural areas of southern Moldova where site-specific E&S risks and impacts cannot be fully determined at Concept stage. A framework approach to risk management is required. This ESMF (including Process Framework) and site-specific instruments to be prepared during implementation will operationalize ESS1 requirements.
ESS2: Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant	The project will involve direct, contracted, and potentially community workers in afforestation, reforestation, ANR, shelterbelt establishment, riparian restoration, nursery operations, and project management functions. Labor risks are considered moderate and will be addressed through the Labor Management Procedures (LMP).
ESS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Relevant	Potential localized risks related to soil disturbance, sediment runoff, water-quality impacts, use of fuels and lubricants for small-scale machinery, generation of organic and non-hazardous waste, and water-use efficiency in nursery operations. Risks expected to be limited in scale, reversible, and manageable through good international industry practice.
ESS4: Community Health and Safety	Relevant	Localized risks to community health and safety from site access, machinery and tool use, traffic movement, dust, noise, and occupational safety practices. Risks expected to be moderate, site-specific, and reversible given the dispersed nature of activities and absence of large civil works or labor influx.
ESS5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Relevant	Land acquisition and physical displacement are not currently anticipated, though these possibilities cannot be fully excluded at this stage of project preparation. Activities may result in temporary or longer-term restrictions on access to land or natural resources, particularly on communal or publicly accessible lands used for grazing and other livelihood activities. The Process Framework (Section 9 of this ESMF) has been prepared precisely to provide a mechanism for addressing any such impacts should they arise during implementation.
ESS6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Relevant	Restoration activities will be implemented in landscapes that may include natural and modified habitats, including ecologically sensitive areas such as forest–agriculture interfaces and riparian/floodplain systems (Lower Prut basin). Critical-habitat screening will be

ESS	Relevance	Application to the Project
		conducted at site level. Biodiversity Management Plans will be prepared as required. Species selection will avoid invasive species and prioritize native, climate-adapted species.
ESS7: Indigenous Peoples / Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Not Currently Relevant	No Indigenous Peoples or Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities are present in the project area as defined under ESS7.
ESS8: Cultural Heritage	Relevant	The project is not expected to involve activities in areas of known cultural heritage significance; however, earthworks for afforestation and restoration carry a possibility of encountering previously unknown cultural heritage. Chance-find procedures will be included in the ESMF and applied to all project activities.
ESS9: Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant	The project does not involve financial intermediaries.
ESS10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant	Meaningful, early, and continuous stakeholder engagement is critical given the landscape-level scale of interventions, the use of communal and publicly managed lands, and the presence of vulnerable, land-dependent populations. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will guide engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

3.6 World Bank Operational Policies

Two additional World Bank Operational Policies have been preliminarily flagged in the Concept ESRS as potentially applicable:

- **OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways:** applicability under review. The Prut River is an international waterway shared between Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine. Although the project does not finance infrastructure affecting international water flows, compliance screening will be undertaken in consultation with the World Bank, and any notification obligations under OP 7.50 will be addressed prior to Appraisal.
- **OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas:** applicability under review. Project activities are located on the right bank of the Dniester and in southern districts not affected by territorial disputes. Final applicability will be confirmed during Appraisal.

3.7 World Bank Group EHS Guidelines and International Agreements

World Bank Group Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines. The WBG EHS General Guidelines apply to all project activities, along with the following industry-specific guidelines relevant to the project's intervention types: EHS Guidelines for Afforestation and Reforestation; EHS Guidelines for Sawmilling and Manufactured Wood Products (for nursery construction); and EHS Guidelines for Water and Sanitation. Where WBG EHS Guidelines are more stringent than Moldovan national standards, the WBG EHS Guidelines prevail.

International environmental and social agreements. Moldova is a Party to the following international agreements directly applicable to proposed project interventions: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (applicable to the Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar site within the project area); Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (relevant to Emerald Network sites); UNFCCC and Paris Agreement (project contributes to Moldova's NDC and NCCAP 2030 commitments); UNCCD (project contributes to land degradation neutrality targets). Obligations under these agreements have been considered in the design of the project's environmental and social risk management approach and are reflected in the applicable ESSs and this ESMF.

3.8 Alignment between National Framework and World Bank ESF

Moldova's environmental and social legal framework is broadly aligned with the World Bank ESF, particularly given the ongoing transposition of EU environmental acquis. National law provides robust requirements for EIA and Biodiversity Assessment, labor protection, gender equality, and non-discrimination. However, the project will apply the World Bank ESF where it sets higher requirements than national law — particularly in areas of:

- Process Framework approach for managing restrictions on access to natural resources (ESS5) — not explicitly required under Moldovan law;

- Worker grievance mechanism separate from the community GRM, with confidential SEA/SH pathway (ESS2);
- Critical-habitat assessment using ESS6 criteria as supporting technical guidance for implementation;
- Continuous, structured stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle with specific attention to vulnerable groups (ESS10);
- Chance-find procedures included in all contracts (ESS8);
- Cumulative impact considerations at landscape scale.

Where gaps exist, this ESMF and its companion instruments (SEP, LMP, ESCP) include gap-filling measures to ensure full compliance with both national requirements and the World Bank ESF. The project will not use the Borrower's E&S Framework in lieu of the World Bank ESF.

4. Potential Environmental and Social Risk Impacts and Standard Mitigation Measures

4.1 Overall Risk Classification

Both the Environmental Risk Rating and the Social Risk Rating are assessed as Substantial. The SEA/SH Risk Rating is Low. The risk classification will be reassessed at Appraisal, once intervention locations, designs, and mitigation measures are further defined and ESF instruments are finalized. The World Bank classifies both the Environmental Risk Rating and the Social Risk Rating as Substantial, reflecting the scale of activities (~13,000 ha), geographic dispersion, cumulative landscape interactions, and the ecological sensitivity of target areas. This project is implemented under the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). As the Accredited Entity under the AMA, the World Bank applies its own policies and procedures, including the ESF, and compliance with these satisfies GCF's environmental and social requirements. The following project characteristics inform the Substantial risk rating: (i) physical displacement of households or permanent acquisition of private land is not currently anticipated, though this cannot be fully excluded at this stage — which is precisely why the Process Framework has been prepared; (ii) activities in or near critical habitats and Ramsar sites will be subject to site-level critical habitat screening and Biodiversity Management Plans prior to implementation; (iii) potential access restrictions affecting smallholders and vulnerable groups will be managed through the ESS5-compliant Process Framework; (iv) mitigation measures are clearly defined and proportionate; and (v) activities with significant, irreversible, or wide-reaching adverse environmental and social impacts are excluded under the Exclusion List. The project does not involve financial intermediation; reference to classification “I-2” has accordingly been removed from Section G.1 of the main funding proposal. Land acquisition or involuntary resettlement is not currently anticipated, though this possibility cannot be fully excluded at this stage of project preparation; the Process Framework has been prepared to address any such impacts should they arise.

GCF Environmental and Social Safeguards Categorization. For the purposes of the GCF's environmental and social risk categorization, and based on the Accredited Entity's due diligence at this stage, the project is categorized as Category B. The adverse environmental and social risks and impacts anticipated are limited in nature. Such impacts and risks, individually or cumulatively, are few, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and readily addressed through the mitigation measures set out in this ESMF and its companion instruments. This determination is supported by: (i) the exclusion from financing of any activity with significant, irreversible, or wide-reaching adverse impacts, or that would require a full ESIA or FPIC (Section 4.2); (ii) the absence of anticipated physical displacement or permanent land acquisition, with any residual land-access effects managed under the Process Framework (ESS5); (iii) the site-specific and largely temporary character of the localized environmental risks (soil disturbance, sediment runoff, nursery operations), which are reversible through GIIP; and (iv) clearly defined, proportionate mitigation applied through site-level screening, ESMPs, and Biodiversity Management Plans. The World Bank ESF ratings of “Substantial” for environmental and social risk reflect the scale (~13,000 ha), geographic dispersion, and cumulative landscape interactions of the interventions and the precautionary need for a framework approach at Concept stage; they are consistent with, and do not displace, the GCF Category B determination, as the Accredited Entity applies its own ESF and compliance with the ESF satisfies GCF's environmental and social requirements under the AMA.

Environmental Risk Rating: Substantial

Environmental risk is assessed as Substantial due to the scale, geographic dispersion, and cumulative nature of proposed EbA interventions, combined with the ecological sensitivity of the target landscapes and uncertainty at this stage regarding final site selection. Component 2 will finance large-scale afforestation, reforestation, assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation of degraded forest ecosystems, establishment of shelterbelts, restoration of riparian buffers, and expansion of nursery infrastructure across approximately 13,000 hectares in southern Moldova.

While individually these interventions are intended to deliver positive environmental outcomes, their simultaneous implementation across interconnected forest, agricultural, pasture, and riparian systems introduces the potential for cumulative impacts on soil stability, hydrology, biodiversity, and habitat connectivity that cannot be fully defined at Concept stage.

Environmental risk is further elevated by uncertainty regarding site-specific ecological conditions and sensitivities. At this stage, it is not possible to rule out the presence of ecologically sensitive habitats, high-value biodiversity areas, or zones requiring specialized management, including areas near Ramsar-designated wetlands. Inappropriate species choice or restoration design could result in unintended ecosystem alteration, reduced biodiversity, or long-term sustainability risks under ESS6.

Social Risk Rating: Substantial

Social risk is assessed as Substantial due to land-based interventions affecting vulnerable, land-dependent rural populations, combined with uncertainty around land-use arrangements and potential access restrictions at the Concept stage. Activities will be implemented on state, municipal, and communal lands, including areas used by smallholder farmers for production and grazing. While land acquisition is not currently anticipated, this possibility cannot be fully excluded at this stage; the Process Framework has been prepared to address any such impacts should they arise. Interventions such as afforestation, shelterbelts, and riparian buffers may result in temporary or localized restrictions on access to land and natural resources, particularly affecting pasture users.

Risk is further elevated by high vulnerability in southern Moldova, where livelihoods depend heavily on land productivity and adaptive capacity is limited. Smallholder farmers are the primary group likely to be affected, and even short-term changes in land use or access may disproportionately impact poorer households if not carefully managed. While significant community resistance is not expected, political sensitivities and perceptions of inequitable site selection or benefit distribution could lead to stakeholder contestation in the absence of adequate engagement.

Uncertainty regarding land-use arrangements and potential access restrictions will be addressed through ESS5-compliant site screening procedures. Potential sites will be screened during preparation and appraisal against environmental and social criteria, including land tenure and land-use status, presence of informal or customary uses, reliance of local users on affected land or resources, ecological sensitivity, and risks of temporary or longer-term restrictions on access.

SEA/SH Risk Rating: Low

Given the nature, scale, and implementation modality of project activities, combined with the absence of known contextual SEA/SH risk-aggravating factors, the SEA/SH risk for the operation is Low. The project does not involve large-scale civil works, labor camps, or significant influx of temporary workers. Project activities are primarily focused on ecosystem restoration and planning and capacity-building interventions, implemented largely through existing national and local institutions. The workforce required is expected to be limited in scale, locally sourced, and dispersed across multiple rural sites. It is acknowledged, however, that some activities sites may be located in isolated or remote rural and natural areas that are more difficult to supervise, with both men and women participating in community labour activities. The isolated nature of such sites is recognised as a contextual SEAH risk factor. SEAH awareness training and GRM access points will be adapted for remote and isolated sites, including through mobile outreach, community-level focal points, and communication channels accessible to women in remote locations (see also Section 4.6). Measures under ESS2 and ESS10 — including Codes of Conduct for project workers, Labor Management Procedures, community-level grievance mechanisms, and inclusive stakeholder engagement — will further mitigate residual risks and provide channels for confidential reporting.

4.2 Exclusion List

The operative Exclusion List for this project is the list set out in this Section 4.2. The reference to exclusion criteria in the Executive Summary (Section 5 of the Executive Summary) is a condensed summary only; Section 4.2 governs. As a first step, all proposed activities will be screened to ensure they fall within the boundaries of eligible project activities and are not on the exclusion list set out below. Any activity that meets one or more of the following criteria is excluded from project financing:

- Weapons, including mines, guns, ammunition, and explosives;
- Production of any hazardous good, including alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances;
- Any construction in existing and proposed protected areas or priority areas for biodiversity conservation as defined in national law, unless explicitly designed to support conservation objectives consistent with the management regime;
- Activities that have the potential to cause any significant loss or degradation of critical natural habitats, whether directly or indirectly, or adverse impacts on natural habitats;
- Activities involving extensive harvest and sale/trade of forest resources (timber, charcoal, wildlife) for large-scale commercial purposes;
- Activities involving conversion of forestland to agricultural land, or logging activities in primary forest;
- Purchase or use of banned/restricted pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, and other dangerous chemicals (banned under national law and WHO Category 1A and 1B pesticides); Consistent with ESS 3, the purchase, storage, use, manufacture, or trade of WHO Class II (moderately hazardous) pesticides will not be permitted unless: (a) appropriate controls on procurement, distribution, and use are in place; (b) users have received adequate training and possess appropriate equipment to handle, store, apply and dispose of such products safely; and (c) use is documented and reported to the PIU.

Where feasible, integrated pest management (IPM) approaches will be preferred over chemical controls;

- Construction of any new dams or rehabilitation of existing dams (structural or operational changes); or irrigation/water-supply activities dependent on storage and operation of an existing dam or a dam under construction;
- Activities affecting physical cultural heritage such as graves, temples, churches, historical relics, archaeological sites, or other cultural structures;
- Activities that may cause or lead to forced labor, child labor exploitation, or human trafficking, or that engage persons under 18 in hazardous work;
- Activities on land with disputed ownership or tenure rights;
- Activities that will cause physical displacement of households or require the use of eminent domain;
- Any activity with significant E&S risks and impacts that would require a full Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA);
- Any activity that would require Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as defined in ESS7.

4.3 Component-Wise Risk Matrix

Table 4.3 Component-wise environmental and social risk matrix

Component / Activities	Key Risks	Applicable ESS	Risk Level	Mitigation Instruments
Component 1: Institutional Capacity Development and Data-Driven Planning — Institutional strengthening; capacity building and knowledge platforms; integrated data systems and climate-informed planning; early warning system digitalization.	Social inclusion risks; limited stakeholder participation; institutional coordination constraints; technical uptake risks; minor stakeholder-engagement risks during planning integration. Risk that capacity development processes do not fully capture priorities of vulnerable or underrepresented groups (women-headed households, youth, smallholders, ethnic minorities). Substantial risk related to NOIEP's limited prior experience implementing World Bank-financed projects under ESF and ongoing institutional restructuring, creating risks to consistent safeguards compliance and capacity continuity. Risk of fragmented planning outputs due to dispersed institutional responsibilities across MoE, Moldsilva, Apele Moldovei, MAAI, and EPA. Risk that planning instruments are not fully operationalized by national and local institutions without continued technical support.	ESS1, ESS2, ESS10	Moderate (Substantial for ESF institutional capacity sub-component per ESRS C1-02)	ESMF; SEP with inclusive consultation procedures; capacity-building support; institutional coordination arrangements; technical training; data interoperability standards. Gender-responsive and inclusive stakeholder engagement per SEP; vulnerability mapping; disaggregated participation monitoring. Substantive ESF capacity-building program for NOIEP; dedicated E&S specialists in PIU; WB supervision support; ESF instruments validated before project effectiveness. Inter-institutional coordination protocols in POM; clearly defined roles and reporting lines; PIU coordination committee.
Component 2: Climate-Resilient Ecological Infrastructure Restoration (≈13,000 ha) — Afforestation, reforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, shelterbelts, riparian	Biodiversity risks from inappropriate species selection or maladapted species; soil disturbance and erosion during planting and site preparation; sediment runoff and water-quality impacts; OHS risks for workers; temporary access restrictions for pasture and resource users; localized land-use conflicts; chance-find risks near cultural	ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4, ESS5, ESS6, ESS8, ESS10	Substantial	ESMF screening procedures; site-specific ESMPs; Biodiversity Management Plans (where triggered); native species selection and invasive-species prevention protocols; OHS

Component / Activities	Key Risks	Applicable ESS	Risk Level	Mitigation Instruments
buffers, silvopastoral systems, RFRMC.	heritage; cumulative impacts in clustered sites; risks to floodplain ecology in the Lower Prut basin.			procedures; community health & safety measures; chance-find procedure; ESS5 site screening for restrictions on access; voluntary land-access protocol where required; SEP; GRM.
Component 3: Community Engagement, Livelihoods and Stewardship — Participatory planning; capacity development; green job creation; community-based stewardship; financing/incentive mechanisms.	Social inclusion and elite-capture risks; exclusion of women, youth, Roma, Gagauz, elderly, and persons with disabilities; OHS risks for community workers; SEA/SH risks in dispersed rural worksites; risks of inequitable benefit distribution; perception risks linked to incentive systems.	ESS1, ESS2, ESS10	Moderate	SEP with gender-responsive and language-inclusive engagement; LMP including community-worker provisions; Codes of Conduct and SEA/SH prevention measures; transparent eligibility and selection criteria; community-level GRM; Gender Action Plan.
Component 4: Project Management and M&E — PIU operations; fiduciary management; safeguards compliance; MEL system; communication.	Limited environmental risks; OHS risks during supervision missions; SEA/SH exposure risks during stakeholder engagement; institutional coordination risks affecting safeguards implementation; monitoring-system interoperability.	ESS1, ESS2, ESS10	Low	ESMF implementation procedures; SEP; LMP; Codes of Conduct; GRM; MEL framework; supervision protocols.

4.4 Risks and Mitigation Measures by Activity

Standard environmental and social risks and mitigation measures applicable to specific activities under the project are summarized below. These standard measures will be incorporated into site-specific ESMPs and into bidding documents and contracts.

Table 4.4 Environmental and social risks and mitigation measures by sub-component

Sub-component / Activity	Risks and Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Sub-Component 1.1: Institutional Strengthening, Implementation Capacity Building	Weak enforcement of policies due to limited capacity in local authorities; stakeholder resistance from authorities or interest groups perceiving change as a threat; prolonged implementation delays if institutional issues are not addressed.	Conduct structured capacity-building activities — training sessions, workshops, technical assistance for local authorities and sectoral agencies. Ensure stakeholder engagement and participatory decision-making through regular consultations with community leaders and LPAs. Build trust through transparent communication and contextual alignment of policies.
Sub-Component 1.2: Integrated Data Systems and Climate-Informed Planning	Limited environmental risks given the analytical nature of activities; institutional coordination risks; data interoperability constraints; limited uptake of modelling outputs; minor stakeholder-engagement risks.	Define institutional coordination arrangements early; apply standardized modelling methodologies and interoperable data frameworks; provide capacity-building for planning integration; stakeholder validation through SEP.
Sub-Component 1.2: Integrated Data Systems	Accelerating climate change (projected temperature rises of 1.9–2.3°C by mid-	Scenario-based climate modelling using SSP2-4.5 and SSP5-8.5 projections;

Sub-component / Activity	Risks and Impacts	Mitigation Measures
and Climate-Informed Planning	century, intensifying droughts) may outpace planning tool calibration, reducing the adequacy of climate-informed restoration prioritization frameworks over the project lifetime.	adaptive management triggers; periodic recalibration of models; integration with NCCAP 2030 and NDC 3.0 targets.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Inappropriate species selection or use of non-native/maladapted species during afforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation may reduce native biodiversity, introduce invasive alien species (IAS), and undermine long-term ecosystem resilience across forest-steppe landscapes.	Biodiversity-sensitive species selection protocols; provenance-verified seed sourcing through Southern RFRMC; IAS exclusion lists; site-level critical habitat screening per ESS6; Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs) as required.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Site preparation for afforestation and ANR on degraded slopes may cause temporary localized soil disturbance and erosion risk, with potential for sediment runoff affecting adjacent land and water courses.	Seasonal scheduling of earthworks; erosion-control measures in site-specific ESMPs; appropriate site preparation techniques (minimum tillage where feasible); immediate revegetation post-intervention; GIIP application.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Final afforestation and ANR sites will be confirmed only after appraisal. At Concept stage it is not possible to rule out ecologically sensitive habitats, high-value biodiversity areas, or zones requiring specialized management within the ~13,000 ha footprint.	ESMF mandatory pre-implementation screening; site selection criteria exclude or apply enhanced due diligence to Emerald Network sites, protected areas, and critical habitats; E&S risk classifications reassessed at Appraisal.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Nursery operations at the Southern RFRMC may generate localized risks from use of pesticides, fuel/lubricant use, water over-abstraction, organic waste, and contaminated runoff if not properly managed.	Pest management Plans, Waste management and spill-prevention procedures in ESMF/ESMPs; water-efficiency measures; hazardous materials handling protocols; GIIP.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Planting and nursery operations may involve limited use of herbicides for site preparation and pesticides for plant health management. If not properly controlled, these activities may result in chemical exposure risks to workers, contamination of soil and adjacent water bodies, and adverse impacts on non-target species and biodiversity (ESS3 — Moderate).	Pest Management plans; Exclusion list
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Earthworks for tree planting may uncover previously unknown cultural heritage or archaeological resources.	Chance find procedures in ESMF applied to all earthwork activities; mandatory work stoppage and authority notification upon discovery; provisions in bidding documents and contracts.
Sub-Component 2.1 Climate-resilient forest restoration and ecological connectivity enhancement (Afforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, RFRMC)	Afforestation on communal or publicly accessible degraded lands may restrict access to grazing areas and natural resources for smallholder farmers and livestock keepers, including temporary or longer-term restrictions on customary land use (ESS5 — Substantial). Outdoor manual labor for afforestation and ANR involves OHS risks including heat stress and tool/machinery hazards, particularly for a dispersed rural workforce (ESS2 — Moderate).	Process Framework as integral part of ESMF consistent with ESS5; site screening against land tenure and customary use; participatory decision-making; livelihood impact mitigation; accessible GRM. LMP consistent with ESS2; OHS provisions including PPE, training, and site safety protocols; worker-specific GRM channel; employment terms compliant with national Labor Code.

Sub-component / Activity	Risks and Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Sub-Component 2.2 Climate-resilient watershed and floodplain restoration (Lower Prut and southern catchments)	Restoration of riparian buffers along rivers and tributaries may restrict existing informal or customary access to riparian zones used for fishing, livestock watering, and small-scale agriculture (ESS5 — Moderate). Flash floods and extreme rainfall events may endanger field workers and communities during riparian and floodplain restoration works (ESS4 — Moderate).	Systematic screening of sites against informal/customary uses; Voluntary Land Donation procedures per WB ESF guidance; Process Framework mitigation measures; participatory engagement with affected riparian communities. Seasonal scheduling to avoid peak flood-risk periods; OHS protocols for extreme weather; early warning system integration.
Sub-Component 2.2 Climate-resilient watershed and floodplain restoration (Prut River catchment)	Riparian buffer and wetland/floodplain restoration in hydrologically dynamic areas of the Prut river basin may affect sediment transport, water quality, and floodplain ecology if not carefully designed, sequenced, and monitored. Proximity to Ramsar-designated wetlands (Lower Prut Lakes) heightens ecological sensitivity. Rehabilitation of small reservoirs through desiltation, shoreline stabilization, and water-regulation works may generate dredged sediment/spoil requiring characterization and safe disposal, disturb aquatic habitats and benthic communities, cause temporary turbidity and water-quality impacts, and, where built measures are used, alter local hydrology.	Coupled hydrological and sediment-transport modelling (Component 1.2); integration with Danube-Prut River Basin Management Plan; minimization of grey infrastructure, with environmental and social assessment of any built water-regulation measures; adaptive floodplain management protocols in ESMPs; sediment/spoil characterization and disposal-management plan and turbidity controls for desiltation works (ESS3); dredging-window restrictions to protect sensitive aquatic breeding periods (ESS6); site-specific BMPs/ESMPs for reservoir rehabilitation; OP 7.50 applicability screening for international waterways.
Sub-Component 2.2 Climate-resilient watershed and floodplain restoration (Lower Prut and southern catchments)	Large-scale simultaneous restoration across hydrologically connected forest, riparian, and floodplain systems introduces potential cumulative impacts on hydrology, sediment dynamics, biodiversity, and habitat connectivity that cannot be fully assessed at Concept stage.	Framework-level risk management through ESMF; landscape connectivity and cumulative impact assessment in restoration prioritization tools; adaptive monitoring; sequential site implementation where cumulative risks are elevated.
Sub-Component 2.3 Climate-resilient agricultural landscapes, shelterbelts, and silvopastoral systems	Restoration activities including machinery use, traffic movement, dust, and noise associated with shelterbelt and silvopastoral works may pose localized and temporary risks to community health and safety.	Site access controls and appropriate signage; community health and safety provisions in ESMF and site-specific ESMPs; worker codes of conduct; consistent with ESS4.
Sub-Component 2.3 Climate-resilient agricultural landscapes, shelterbelts, and silvopastoral systems	Shelterbelt establishment and silvopastoral system development on communal pasture lands may cause temporary access limitations to agricultural plots and grazing areas (ESS5 — Moderate). Smallholder farmers, women-headed households, elderly, Roma communities, and other vulnerable groups may be disproportionately affected by access restrictions and excluded from benefits if engagement is inadequate (ESS1, ESS10 — Substantial). Risk of child labor or forced labor in community-based activities (ESS2 — Low). Short-term land-use changes may disproportionately affect poorer rural households (ESS5, ESS1 — Moderate). Perceptions of inequitable site selection or benefit distribution may generate stakeholder contestation (ESS10 — Moderate).	Participatory planning with affected communities prior to site confirmation; transparent benefit-sharing arrangements; Process Framework measures; community-based stewardship agreements. Vulnerability and social inclusion mapping; gender-responsive engagement per SEP; Gender Action Plan (GAP); disaggregated participation monitoring; benefit-sharing criteria prioritizing affected and vulnerable households. Explicit prohibition of child labor (ILO Conventions 138 and 182) and forced labor in LMP; contractual clauses binding all contractors. Transparent, publicly disclosed site selection criteria; proactive communication; multi-language GRM. Social vulnerability screening; Process Framework livelihood impact measures; household-level livelihood monitoring.

Sub-component / Activity	Risks and Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Sub-Component 3.1 Inclusive community engagement, capacity development, and green rural livelihoods	Limited institutional and technical capacity of implementing NGOs responsible for community outreach may result in ineffective or exclusionary stakeholder engagement, undermining meaningful community participation and grievance uptake across restoration sites (ESS10 — Substantial). Green jobs and capacity development activities may not equitably reach the most vulnerable rural households — particularly women, Roma, youth, and persons with disabilities — if outreach is not deliberately inclusive (ESS1, ESS10 — Moderate). Procurement and transfer of tools and assets (drip-irrigation systems, cold-storage and drying units, honey and NTFP processing equipment) may create localized occupational health and safety, waste-management, energy- and water-use, and food-safety risks, and risks of inequitable or non-transparent asset allocation (ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4 — Moderate).	SEP consistent with ESS10; facilitation support and capacity building for implementing NGOs; community-level GRM access points; monitoring of participation quality and inclusivity indicators; PIU supervision; regular PIU reporting. Inclusive targeting criteria for livelihood and training activities; GAP gender-responsive delivery; targeted outreach to Roma settlements in Leova and Cimislia; disability-inclusive participation design. Transparent, community-verified asset-allocation criteria; supplier and GIIP standards with basic OHS and food-safety requirements for tools; waste-management and safe energy- and water-use guidance; inclusion of asset transfers in E&S screening and, where warranted, site-specific ESMPs/BMPs.
Sub-Component 3.2 Financing mechanisms, incentive systems, and community-based stewardship	Risk that restored ecosystems are not sustained beyond project completion due to inadequate post-project stewardship systems, insufficient maintenance financing, and lack of community ownership.	Community-based stewardship systems and formalized management agreements with LPAs; incentive mechanisms linked to ecosystem services; MRV for ecological outcomes; exploration of PES and carbon crediting as long-term financing.
Sub-Component 3.2 Financing mechanisms, incentive systems, and community-based stewardship	Development of results-based and ecosystem service financing pilots (PES, carbon crediting) may face regulatory and market readiness constraints, limiting the long-term financial sustainability of stewardship arrangements.	Cautious, phased approach to PES and carbon crediting development; alignment with Moldova's regulatory framework; legal and market feasibility assessment prior to instrument deployment; alternative financing contingencies.
Sub-Component 4.1 Project coordination, fiduciary management, and safeguards compliance (PIU)	Environmental and social instruments (ESMF, ESMPs, SEP, LMP) may require continued institutional support to ensure consistent implementation across all restoration sites, with risk of uneven safeguards compliance.	ESMF implementation procedures with clear site-level checklists; PIU E&S specialists for oversight; WB supervision missions; adaptive corrective action protocols; safeguards performance indicators in MEL.
Sub-Component 4.1 Project coordination, fiduciary management, and safeguards compliance (PIU)	NOIEP's fiduciary capacity has not been tested in a World Bank-financed project context. Ongoing institutional restructuring and staff changes may result in procurement delays, financial management non-compliance, and inconsistent safeguards implementation (ESS1 — Substantial). PIU supervision missions and community engagement activities present residual exposure to SEA/SH risks during field interactions with local communities (ESS2, ESS10 — Low).	Dedicated financial management and procurement specialists in project team; early training and POM development; regular WB fiduciary supervision; compliance monitoring in Component 4 MEL framework. Codes of Conduct for all project staff; mandatory SEA/SH awareness training; confidential GRM reporting; GAP provisions applicable to PIU operations.
Sub-Component 4.2 Monitoring, evaluation, learning, and knowledge systems	Monitoring and evaluation systems may require strengthening to ensure consistent tracking of restoration progress, safeguards performance, and ecological outcomes across all dispersed districts.	MEL framework with defined monitoring indicators, roles, and reporting schedules; environmental information systems aligned with national platforms; independent reviews and audits; adaptive management and corrective action protocols.

4.5 Risk related to pest management

Principles of Integrated Pest Management.

The main goal of pest management is to control pests and diseases that can damage production in the nursery tree, so that they remain at a level below the threshold for economic injury. Pesticides must be managed to reduce human exposure and health hazards, to avoid their migration to land or water outside the site, and to avoid environmental consequences such as the destruction of useful species and the development of pesticide resistance. An important strategy is to promote and facilitate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by preparing and implementing the Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP). IPM consists of judicious use of both chemical and non-chemical control methods. They are used to achieve effective and cost-effective pest control with minimal environmental pollution. Therefore, IPM may include the use of: a) mechanical and physical control; b) biological control; and c) efficient chemical control. Although IPM emphasizes the use of non-chemical strategies, chemical control may be used in combination with other methods. Integrated Pest Management strategies depend on surveillance to establish the need for control and monitor the effectiveness of management efforts.

Alternatives to Pesticide Use. If possible, the following alternatives to pesticides should be considered:

- choose species resistant to local pests
- use pest-resistant species ;
- use a power-driven method of weed control and/or thermal weeding;
- support and use beneficial organisms such as insects, birds, mites and microbial agents to implement biological pest control;
- protect natural enemies from pests by providing a favorable habitat, such as bushes for nesting and other original vegetation that may contain pest predators, and avoid using of broad-spectrum pesticides;
- use power-driven management tools such as manual removal, traps, barriers, lighting, and sound to kill, move, or repel pests.

Pesticide Use. If the pesticides use is reasonable, users are encouraged to take the following actions:

- Training staff to use pesticides and ensuring that staff receive appropriate certificates or equivalent training if those are not required;
- Review and follow manufacturer's instructions for maximum dosage or treatment, as well as published reports on reducing speed for pesticides use without losing the effect, and apply the minimum effective dosage;
- Avoid regular calendar-based application and use pesticides only when necessary and useful based on criteria such as field observations, weather data (e.g. appropriate temperature, light wind, etc.).
- Avoid the use of highly hazardous pesticides, especially by non-certified, untrained, or under-equipped users. This includes:
 - Pesticides of hazard class 1a and 1b recommended by the World Health Organization should be avoided in almost all cases. They should only be used if there are no practical alternatives and when the processing and use of products will be carried out in accordance with national laws by certified personnel due to monitoring of health and environmental impacts;
 - It is recommended to avoid using pesticides of hazard class II if there are no restrictions on distribution and use of these chemicals in the host country, or if they can be accessed by personnel without proper training, equipment and facilities for the proper handling, storage, use and disposal;
 - Avoid using pesticides listed in Annexes A and B of the Stockholm Convention, except in cases specified in the Convention and those subject to international bans or phase-out;
 - Use only those pesticides that are produced under license, registered and approved by the relevant authority and in accordance with the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);
 - Use only those pesticides that are labeled in accordance with international standards and regulations, such as the Revised FAO Guidelines on good practice for labeling pesticides;
 - Select application technologies and practices designed to reduce unintentional drift or runoff only in accordance with the instructions in the IPM program, and under controlled conditions;
 - Maintain and calibrate the pesticide application equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Use application equipment registered in the country of use;

- Create untreated buffer zones or strips along water sources, rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, and ditches to help protect water resources;
- Avoid using pesticides that are associated with local environmental problems and threats.
- The national pesticide registration list should also be used.

Treatment and storage of pesticides. Contamination of soil, underground or surface water resources due to accidental spills during the transfer, mixing and storage of pesticides should be prevented by following the recommendations for storage and handling of hazardous materials. These are the following:

- Store pesticides in their original packaging, in a designated, dry, cool, frost-free and well-ventilated place that can be locked and properly marked. Only authorized persons can access it. You can't store human or animal food in this place. The storage area must also be designed with consideration of spill containment measures and placed with possible contamination of soil and water resources;
- Mixing and transfer of pesticides should be carried out by trained personnel in well-ventilated and well-lit areas using containers designed and intended for this purpose.
- Containers should not be used for any other purpose (e.g. for drinking water). Contaminated containers should be treated as hazardous waste and placed in designated areas for hazardous waste. Ideally, containers contaminated with pesticides should be disposed of in accordance with FAO guidelines and manufacturer's instructions;
- Buy and store no more pesticides than the necessary amount, and change stocks on a first-in-first-out basis so that the pesticides are not outdated. In addition, the use of obsolete pesticides should be avoided at all times; The Management Plan, which includes measures for the containment, storage and final destruction of all obsolete stocks, should be prepared in accordance with FAO guidelines and with countries' obligations under the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions;
- Collect wash water from the cleaning equipment for reuse (e.g. dilution of identical pesticides to concentrations used for application);
- Make sure that protective clothing worn during the application of pesticides is cleaned or disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner; and
- Keep records of the use and effectiveness of pesticides.

Pest Management Plan (PMP). Pest Management Plan should apply to all activities and persons working. It should also be emphasized that chemical control efforts will be used to the maximum extent possible before the use of pesticides. The Pest Management Plan should be the basis for defining and implementing pest control. The plan should define the elements of the program, including health and environmental safety, pest identification and control, as well as storage, transportation, use, and disposal of pesticides. The Management Plan should be used as a tool to reduce dependence on pesticides, enhance environmental protection, and maximize the use of integrated pest management methods.

The Pest Management Plan should contain pest control requirements, outline the resources needed for supervision and control, and describe administrative, safety, and environmental requirements. The plan should contain guidance on how to operate and maintain an effective pest control program/activity. Pests considered in the Plan may include weeds and other unnecessary vegetation, crawling insects, and other vertebrate pests. Without control, these pests provoke the death of plants. Compliance with the Plan will ensure effective, cost-effective and environmentally acceptable pest control and ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Review and approval of the Pest Management Plan. The PMP should be prepared in all cases of direct purchase and use of pesticides by all sub-project beneficiaries. The PMP project should be reviewed by a specialist in environmental and social issues of the PIU, who will ensure their approval. These documents are also subject to preliminary review by the WB for the first two of these sub-projects.

Suggested modules for pest control trainings. A Pest Management Plan may include training activities organized either on a large scale in the project areas, or in a specific area of greater significance. Suggested modules are followings:

- Basic concepts of an integrated method for plant and animal protection;
- Alternatives to pesticides, training workers to use them and applying the minimum effective dosage;
- Studying pests, entomophages, their biology, microbiological preparations and the role of biological factors in regulating the number of pests;

- Compliance with the environmental requirements of the pest control system, crop diseases and weeds. Description of conservation measures to conserve and improve crops;
- Requirements for environmental and industrial safety during storage, transportation and use of pesticides;
- Selecting technologies and applications to reduce unintended releases or leaks of chemicals in accordance with the provisions of the Integrated Pest Management Program under controlled conditions, in compliance with international and local standards and environmental safety standards;

The project will use the proposed template for Pest Management Plan as in Annex 9

4.6 Risks Specific to Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

Certain disadvantaged and vulnerable groups may be disproportionately affected by project activities or face barriers to accessing project benefits. These groups include:

- Rural and low-income communities dependent on agriculture and natural resources for livelihoods;
- Women and female-headed households, particularly in areas of high outmigration;
- Elderly persons and persons with disabilities with mobility or accessibility constraints;
- Ethnic minorities including Gagauz and Roma communities, and Russian-speaking communities;
- Seasonal and informal workers lacking employment protections;
- Youth and unemployed individuals lacking skills or opportunities to engage in sustainable land management;
- Smallholder pasture users dependent on common-property grazing land.
- Informal and customary land and natural-resource users (seasonal, mobile, or undocumented grazing, fishing, or NTFP-collection patterns), including households lacking formal documentation of land or resource use rights.

Targeted mitigation measures to ensure equitable access include:

- **Economic inclusion:** livelihood support through agroforestry, sustainable farming, and silvopastoral activities under Component 3.
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment:** participation in decision-making; targeted skills development; gender disaggregation of indicators; SEA/SH prevention; implementation of the Gender Action Plan.
- **Persons with disabilities and elderly:** accessible consultation formats (sign language, audio-visual materials); mobility assistance; tailored participation options.
- **Ethnic minorities and traditional knowledge:** culturally appropriate consultations in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz; integration of traditional ecological knowledge into restoration design.
- **Youth engagement:** internship and education programs in landscape restoration; partnerships with educational institutions.
- **Smallholder pasture users:** engagement in silvopastoral planning; documented agreements; avoidance of works during peak grazing periods; alternative access where feasible — addressed through ESS5-compliant site screening and mitigation measures.

4.7 SEA/SH Risks and Mitigation

SEA/SH risks under the project are assessed as Low. Works are small-scale and dispersed; no significant labor influx is anticipated as the project intends to use community and contracted labor sourced locally. Some activities sites may be in more isolated rural and natural areas that are more difficult to supervise, with both men and women participating in community labor.

Mitigation measures include:

- All project workers (direct, contracted, and community) will sign and be trained on Codes of Conduct on respectful behavior (Annex 2);
- The Grievance Redress Mechanism will include a sensitive, confidential pathway for SEA/SH reporting consistent with the World Bank Good Practice Notes on Prevention of SEA/SH;
- A GBV focal point will be designated within the PIU, with referral pathways to qualified GBV service providers;
- SEA/SH allegations will be handled through a survivor-centered approach, with no requirement of proof, and without resolution through traditional grievance steps;
- The project will operationalize gender measures through the Gender Action Plan, including disaggregation of indicators and targeted skill-development opportunities for women.
- SEAH awareness training will be conducted for all project workers and community members prior to mobilisation and annually thereafter, covering prohibited behaviors, reporting pathways, non-retaliation protections, and referral services. For isolated or remote activities sites, SEAH awareness training and

GRM access points will be adapted for effectiveness, including through mobile outreach, community-level focal points, and communication channels accessible to women in remote locations (see also Sections 4.1 and 5.6);

- All contracts with contractors, subcontractors, and service providers will include SEAH-related contractual provisions, including: mandatory adherence to the Code of Conduct; prohibition of SEA/SH; obligation to report any SEA/SH incidents to the PIU GBV Focal Point within 24 hours; requirement to facilitate and not obstruct the confidential SEA/SH reporting pathway; zero-retaliation obligation; and immediate dismissal provisions for confirmed perpetrators.

5. Procedures and Implementation Arrangements

This section describes how environmental and social risk-management procedures will be applied throughout the project lifecycle. The procedures are organized around four sequential stages of the project cycle: (a) Assessment and Analysis (screening); (b) Formulation and Planning; (c) Implementation and Monitoring; and (d) Review and Evaluation. The same logic applies to all activities under Components 1–4.

5.1 E&S Considerations within the Project Cycle

Table 5.1 Project cycle and E&S management procedures

Project Stage	E&S Stage	Management Procedures
(a) Assessment and Analysis: Activity identification	Screening	All proposed activities are screened against ESMF criteria and the Exclusion List. The Screening Form (Annex 1) is used to identify and evaluate potential environmental and social risks and to determine appropriate mitigation measures. Screening reviews proximity to sensitive ecosystems (Ramsar sites, Emerald Network areas, protected areas), risks of land-use restrictions, labor/OHS requirements, and biodiversity values. Communities, LPAs, and key sectoral agencies are consulted to identify potential risks and confirm alignment with local needs. While land acquisition and physical displacement are not currently anticipated, they cannot be fully excluded at this stage; should screening confirm such impacts, the activity would be excluded from the project scope. Activities involving significant adverse impacts or requiring a full ESIA are likewise excluded. In addition, any activity with potential adverse environmental and social risks and impacts that are significant in scale, irreversible, unprecedented, or wide-reaching — and therefore ineligible under the Exclusion List and ESS1 requirements — will not be supported under this project and must be excluded from the project scope. The PIU E&S Specialists are responsible for identifying and flagging any such activity during screening. Required documentation, permits, and clearances under national environmental regulation are identified.
(b) Formulation and Planning: Activity design	Planning	Once activities are screened as eligible, they are designed in detail with integrated risk management. The PIU ensures E&S mitigation measures are incorporated into technical designs, budgets, and workplans. Roles and responsibilities for E&S compliance are assigned (PIU safeguards team, contractors, LPAs), with training provisions built into plans. For moderate-risk activities, the standard mitigation measures specified in this ESMF apply. For activities presenting site-specific risks (e.g., proximity to sensitive habitats, larger-scale restoration works, overlapping interventions), a site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is prepared. Where critical-habitat screening triggers ESS6 provisions, a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) is prepared. Where access restrictions to natural resources are anticipated, ESS5-compliant access restriction mitigation measures apply. All required permits and clearances under national EIA legislation are obtained before implementation.
(c) Implementation and Monitoring	Implementation	Contractors and implementing partners apply E&S safeguards as planned, with ongoing supervision and adaptive management. Contractors comply with ESMF protocols (environmental management, labor conditions, OHS, community health and safety). On-the-job training and technical assistance are provided to ensure compliance. The PIU conducts site visits and reviews reports to verify application of safeguards. Monitoring includes environmental parameters (soil erosion, water quality, biodiversity establishment)

Project Stage	E&S Stage	Management Procedures
		and social parameters (stakeholder participation, gender inclusion, access restrictions). The GRM remains operational to capture and resolve concerns in real time. Serious incidents are reported to the World Bank within 48 hours.
(d) Review and Evaluation	Completion	At regular intervals and at activity completion, performance is evaluated against ESMF standards. Both qualitative and quantitative data are collected to assess environmental results (e.g., hectares restored, vegetation establishment, biodiversity recovery) and social outcomes (e.g., community benefits, gender participation, avoided conflicts). Communities and local stakeholders are involved in participatory monitoring. Findings are documented and fed back into project management. Sites are restored to at least pre-activity condition; outstanding E&S issues are resolved before activity closure. A completion report describing final compliance is submitted to the World Bank.

5.2 Screening — Step-by-Step

As a first step, the PIU screens each proposed activity to ensure it is within the boundaries of eligible activities and not on the Exclusion List (Section 4.2). As a second step, the PIU uses the E&S Screening Form (Annex 1) to identify and assess relevant environmental and social risks and to identify appropriate mitigation measures. The Screening Form references possible mitigation measures, applicable ESSs, and documentation, permits, and clearances required under national regulation. As a third step, the PIU confirms that no proposed activity presents significant, irreversible, unprecedented, or wide-reaching adverse environmental and social risks ineligible under the Exclusion List. Any such activity must be excluded from the project scope and the World Bank Task Team notified promptly. The screening process also incorporates SEA/SH risk screening, in accordance with the World Bank's SEAH Risk Screening Tool. The PIU assesses each proposed activity and activities site for SEAH risk factors, including: site isolation and remoteness; presence of external workers or labour influx; proximity to vulnerable community members; and adequacy of supervision capacity. Where elevated SEAH risk is identified, additional mitigation measures are applied (see Section 4.6), including adapted GRM access points, targeted community outreach, and enhanced Code of Conduct oversight for workers in isolated sites. Screening results are documented in the Screening Form and retained in the project safeguards file.

Where screening identifies potential proximity to ecologically sensitive habitats, Ramsar sites, or Emerald Network areas, a site-level critical habitat screening is conducted. Sites flagged for critical-habitat triggers undergo expert field verification before activity design is finalized.

5.3 Planning — Preparation of Site-Specific Instruments

Based on screening outcomes, NOIEP/PIU integrates required E&S management measures into each activity. For moderate-risk activities, the mitigation measures specified in this ESMF will be directly applied. For activities presenting particular risks (proximity to sensitive habitats, larger-scale restoration works, overlapping interventions), site-specific ESMs or BMPs will be prepared.

In parallel, the Executing Entity will obtain all required documentation, permits, and clearances under the Government of Moldova's environmental regulations — including EIA decisions and Environmental Permits where triggered — before activity implementation begins. Consistent with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), for any activity or intervention, a fit-for-purpose Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and/or Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) will be prepared prior to implementation. The scope of the ESIA/ESMP will be proportionate to the nature, scale, and risks of the specific intervention. For activities presenting lower residual risks (small-scale, dispersed restoration interventions on non-sensitive sites without critical habitat triggers or access restriction issues), a concise ESMP checklist aligned with the ESMF standard mitigation measures will suffice. For activities presenting higher risks (large-scale afforestation blocks, riparian and wetland restoration near Ramsar sites or Emerald Network areas, interventions triggering ESS5 access restrictions), a fuller site-specific ESMP — and where critical habitat is triggered, a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) — will be required. An indicative ESIA/ESMP outline, which may be adapted as appropriate depending on the scale and risk profile of the specific intervention, is provided in Annex [X] to this ESMF. Activities will be packaged individually at site level; there is no expectation of aggregating all interventions into a single ESIA. Each site confirmed through the screening process (Section 5.2) constitutes an individual activity for ESIA/ESMP purposes.

Draft site-specific ESMPs shall be disclosed sufficiently in advance to enable meaningful stakeholder consultation, in accordance with ESS1, ESS10, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), and applicable national legislation. The draft ESMP shall contain sufficient information on the proposed activities, identified environmental and social risks and impacts, mitigation and monitoring measures, institutional responsibilities, and the Project Grievance Mechanism to enable informed stakeholder feedback. Comments received during the consultation process shall be documented and appropriately considered in the finalization of the ESMP. The final ESMP shall be updated, as necessary, based on the consultation outcomes, disclosed via electronic links on the World Bank's website and NOIEP's website, as well as on the GCF project portal as required, and finalized prior to the commencement of the relevant activities.

Capacity-building is a critical element of this stage:

- Field staff engaged in implementation are trained in applying relevant E&S measures;
- Contractors, subcontractors, and vendors are required to integrate mitigation measures into their standard operating procedures; NOIEP/PIU provides training to contractors and ensures cascading training is delivered to subcontractors;
- Operations and maintenance entities or community-based organizations responsible for sustaining project investments receive targeted training on environmental and social management measures applicable to the operational phase.

5.4 Implementation — Roles, Reporting, and Incident Notification

During implementation, NOIEP consistently applies all E&S risk-management measures outlined in the ESMF. Monitoring is carried out through a combination of PIU/NOIEP oversight, contractor self-reporting, and field-level verification.

Roles and Responsibilities

Contractors and subcontractors are directly responsible for implementing the E&S mitigation measures specified in the bidding documents, contracts, ESMPs, OHS requirements, and LMP. PIU safeguards staff supervise contractor compliance, conduct regular monitoring visits, and document results. Local Public Authorities and community representatives support monitoring at the field level, providing feedback on access restrictions, community health and safety, and stakeholder engagement.

Scope of Monitoring

Monitoring covers both environmental and social dimensions of the project. Reporting includes at a minimum:

- Implementation of E&S risk-management instruments (ESMF, ESMPs, BMPs, LMP, OHS protocols, GRM, SEP actions);
- Environmental or social issues arising from activities, corrective actions taken, and associated timelines;
- OHS performance, including records of incidents, accidents, and near-misses;
- Community health and safety, including potential access restrictions and mitigation measures applied;
- Updates on stakeholder engagement activities in line with the SEP;
- Public notification and communication efforts;
- Progress on implementation and completion of works;
- Grievances and beneficiary feedback received, actions taken, and complaints resolved, consistent with the GRM and SEP.

Reporting Arrangements

Contractors submit monitoring reports to NOIEP monthly. NOIEP consolidates reports from contractors, LPAs, and supervision missions and submits an aggregated E&S report to the World Bank quarterly (or semi-annually, as agreed).

Incident Reporting

If NOIEP becomes aware of a serious incident linked to the project that may have significant adverse effects on the environment, affected communities, the public, or workers, it will notify the World Bank within 48 hours. Serious incidents include fatalities, cases of child or forced labor, GBV/SEA/SH, violent community protests, or kidnappings. Incident investigations and corrective actions will be documented and reported to the World Bank.

5.5 Completion — Review and Evaluation

Upon completion of activities, NOIEP reviews and evaluates implementation and fulfillment of required E&S mitigation measures. For physical works, NOIEP monitors site restoration in affected areas to ensure that works are completed to an acceptable standard before contract closure. Project sites are restored to at least the same condition that existed prior to commencement of works. Any outstanding E&S issues are resolved before an

activity is considered fully completed. Following this process, NOIEP prepares a completion report describing final compliance status and submits it to the World Bank.

5.6 Implementation Arrangements

Table 5.6 Roles and responsibilities for ESMF implementation

Level / Responsible Party	Roles and Responsibilities
National / Regional — Ministry of Environment, NOIEP, PIU, PI NA Apele Moldovei, Agency Moldsilva, Environmental Agency, Environmental Protection Inspectorate	Provide overall project oversight, coordination, and compliance with national laws and World Bank ESSs. Lead environmental and social risk screening and ensure activities comply with the ESMF and eligibility criteria. Prepare or oversee preparation of E&S instruments (ESMPs, BMPs, LMP, SEP, GRM, ES checklists). Secure environmental permits, clearances, and approvals under national regulations. Supervise contractors, review E&S reports, and consolidate quarterly/semi-annual E&S monitoring reports for submission to the World Bank. Provide training and capacity-building to regional/local staff, contractors, and communities. Manage the GRM at the national level and ensure escalation of unresolved cases. Notify the World Bank within 48 hours of any serious incident. The PIU includes the following E&S specialists: (i) an Environmental Specialist responsible for environmental risk screening, ESMP oversight, biodiversity management plan coordination, and environmental monitoring; (ii) a Social Specialist responsible for social risk screening, SEP implementation, Process Framework compliance, stakeholder engagement monitoring, and community GRM management; and (iii) a GBV/Gender Focal Point responsible for SEA/SH prevention, confidential SEA/SH reporting channel management, gender mainstreaming oversight, and GAP monitoring. The PIU E&S Specialists will also be responsible for occupational health and safety (OHS) oversight, and will receive appropriate OHS training to fulfil this function. Biodiversity expertise required for critical habitat screening and critical habitat assessments under ESS6 will be secured through dedicated biodiversity specialists engaged under the project (Component 2) or through engagement of suitably qualified consultants during site-specific ESMP/BMP preparation. SEA/SH responsibilities at PIU and national/regional levels are further defined in the ESMF Section 4.6 and the Gender Action Plan (Section 16). At LPA level, community-based SEA/SH focal points will be identified during project launch to support GRM accessibility and community-level SEAH awareness activities.
Regional / Local — PIU regional officers, LPAs, community facilitators	Support site-level activity identification and environmental/social screening. Engage directly with communities to ensure participatory planning and inclusive consultations. Monitor day-to-day implementation of E&S mitigation measures on site. Collect and report local-level E&S monitoring data (OHS incidents, grievances, community engagement activities). Act as the first point of contact for the GRM at local level, ensuring grievances are documented, addressed, or escalated. Facilitate awareness campaigns and community capacity-building.
Contractors and service providers (including subcontractors and vendors)	Implement all environmental and social mitigation measures as specified in contracts, ESMPs, BMPs, and relevant safeguard instruments. Ensure workers' compliance with the LMP, OHS protocols, and Codes of Conduct (including SEA/SH prevention). Provide induction and cascading training for all workers and subcontractors on E&S requirements. Maintain incident logs and immediately report serious incidents to the PIU. Cooperate with field-level monitoring staff, facilitate site inspections, and provide documentation as required. Engage with local communities respectfully and transparently, ensuring minimal disruption to local livelihoods.
Community-based participation structures	Local civil society organisations supporting stakeholder engagement; pasture-user groups supporting implementation of silvopastoral planning instruments; community representatives supporting monitoring of restoration activities; local grievance-intake points supporting accessibility of the GRM. Community-level structures support outreach, participation, and feedback processes but do not assume formal safeguards decision-making responsibilities.
World Bank (Accredited Entity)	Provides implementation support and supervision consistent with ESF requirements. Reviews safeguards performance documentation. Supports adaptive safeguards management where required.

5.7 Capacity Building and Training

The project includes dedicated resources to strengthen environmental and social safeguards capacity at national, sub-national, and local levels. Capacity-strengthening measures will be implemented throughout the project lifecycle and will include:

- Targeted training for PIU staff, implementing partners, contractors, and field personnel on World Bank ESF requirements, E&S risk management, SEA/SH prevention, and inclusive stakeholder engagement;
- Preparation and dissemination of practical, context-specific guidance materials and tools, translated into Romanian and Russian as appropriate;
- On-site mentoring, supervision, and implementation support during critical phases of project rollout;
- Knowledge exchange and peer-learning activities among districts and implementing entities.

Table 5.7 Indicative training programme for ESMF implementation

Level	Audience	Topics / Themes
National	PIU staff responsible for overall ESMF implementation; safeguards specialists	ESMF approach; identification and assessment of E&S risks; selection and application of E&S risk-management instruments; E&S monitoring and reporting; incident and accident reporting; application of LMP including Code of Conduct, incident reporting, and SEA/SH prevention; application of SEP and GRM; biodiversity screening and critical-habitat assessment.
Regional	Regional staff and contractors	ESMF approach; screening procedures; selection and application of E&S risk-management measures; E&S monitoring and reporting; incident and accident reporting; LMP application; SEP and GRM application.
Local / site	Local staff, contractors, supervisors	Application of SEP and GRM; application of LMP including Code of Conduct, incident reporting, SEA/SH prevention; application of site-specific ESMFs or ES checklists; safe handling of nursery operations; soil and erosion management.
Community	Community members, community workers	Basic OHS measures and PPE; community health and safety issues; worker Code of Conduct; SEA/SH issues, prevention and reporting; grievance redress; workers' grievance redress; native species and invasive species awareness.

5.8 Estimated Budget

ESMF implementation costs will be covered from the project budget. The Environmental Specialist and Social Specialist, employed within the PIU at NOIEP, will ensure that management is informed about the required budget for all activity-specific mitigation measures required to comply with the ESMF.

The Project Manager at NOIEP will oversee ESMF implementation, with relevant support from supervision and social and environmental safeguards consultants. The budget for conducting site-specific E&S mitigation measures and the costs of obtaining clearances or permits will be included under the project's direct budget and/or contracts under Components 1 and 2. The budget for capacity-building on ESMF implementation, travel costs, and workshops and meetings for safeguards monitoring is included in the overall monitoring and evaluation budget under Component 4. The allocations in Table 5.8 are indicative only and do not constitute firm financial commitments. They will be reviewed and confirmed during preparation of the site-specific E&S instruments and finalisation of the ESCP and Project Operations Manual, so that E&S resourcing remains proportionate to the restoration footprint (approximately 13,000 ha) without over-committing project funds.

Table 5.8 Indicative ESMF budget allocations

Budget Item	Estimated Allocation (USD)	Description
Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists (PIU)	360,000	Salaries of full-time E&S Specialists in the PIU over five years.
Site-specific ESMPs and BMPs (preparation and consultation)		Prepared by E&S specialists.
OHS (training/monitoring)		delivered by PIU specialists.
Process Framework — consultations, census, PoA (logistics; PIU-led)		Consultation logistics, census field costs, PoA documentation; process work led by PIU specialists (staff time in salaries) and PIU operational costs
Labour Management compliance monitoring / labour audit		Field audits, contractor compliance checks, labor condition spot inspections. Delivered by PIU specialists
OHS (PPE, site OHS, training/monitoring)	10,000	PPE, signage, first-aid kits; site OHS
EIA / Biodiversity Assessment fees (national procedures)	35,000	Fees and supporting studies for EIA / Biodiversity Assessment where triggered.
GRM operation (project and PF grievances)	20,000	Grievance registration tools, communications materials, hotline/SMS maintenance. Covered by PIU Specialists
SEA/SH prevention, awareness and referral	15,000	Sensitization sessions, partnership with GBV service providers.
Inclusive Recruitment and Outreach Campaigns	12,000	Awareness materials targeting women, Roma, Gagauz, and other marginalized groups.
External independent PF monitoring (semi-annual)	25,000	Independent monitoring of access-restriction impacts (ESS5); external to the PIU as required.
Independent reviews and audits (as required)	17,000	Targeted safeguards compliance reviews.
Contingency	6,000	Reserved for unforeseen ESMF-related expenses.
Total (indicative)	500,000	

6. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

6.1 Overview and Relationship to Standalone SEP

This chapter summarises the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for the Moldova Green Shield project (P516908) and its key provisions as they relate to the environmental and social management framework. The full SEP — including the complete stakeholder engagement action plan, budget, KPIs, reporting schedule, and GRM registration forms — is a standalone safeguard instrument prepared in accordance with World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) and disclosed alongside this ESMF prior to Appraisal.

The SEP is one of four safeguard instruments required at Appraisal, alongside the ESMF (including Process Framework), Labour Management Procedures (LMP), and Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

6.2 Objectives

The SEP pursues the following main objectives:

- Identify all stakeholders affected by or interested in the project, including vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion;
- Establish a transparent and inclusive engagement process giving stakeholders a genuine opportunity to participate and influence project design and implementation;
- Define information disclosure requirements and mechanisms to ensure timely and accessible information sharing;
- Establish a project-level community Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) — detailed in Chapter 7 of this ESMF;
- Define roles, responsibilities, and resources for SEP implementation and monitoring;
- Ensure alignment with Law No. 239/2008 on Transparency in Decision-Making and Law No. 148/2023 on Access to Information.

6.3 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

6.3.1 Methodology

Stakeholder identification was conducted through systematic mapping combining desk review of national institutional frameworks, analysis of past project engagement records (RE-MAP, TerraMoldova), field consultations (2022–2026), and analysis of land tenure and livelihood systems in the Southern Development Region (SDR). Stakeholders are classified into three categories per ESS10: (i) Affected Parties; (ii) Other Interested Parties; and (iii) Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Individuals or Groups.

Stakeholder engagement shall remain iterative throughout implementation, particularly where site-specific risks, access restrictions, or land-use conflicts emerge during detailed planning and screening processes.

6.3.2 Affected Parties

Table 6.1 identifies the primary affected parties, the nature of their interaction with the project, and their engagement priority.

Table 6.3.2. Affected Parties

Affected Party	Nature of Impact / Benefit	Engagement Priority
Rural communities in SDR intervention areas	Direct beneficiaries of restored ecosystem services. Potential temporary disruption from site works. Risk of access restrictions to communal grazing lands.	HIGH — primary audience for community meetings, participatory planning, and GRM outreach.
Smallholder farmers and agricultural land users	Benefit from shelterbelts and agroforestry. Risk of temporary exclusion from land parcels near restoration zones.	HIGH — dedicated consultations on site selection and ESS5 access restrictions.
Pastoralists and communal pasture users	At risk of temporary or longer-term access restrictions where afforestation overlaps with communal grazing.	HIGH — targeted engagement under Process Framework; silvopastoral planning consultations.
Women and women-headed households	Disproportionately affected by climate impacts; barriers due to care	HIGH — gender-responsive scheduling; female engagement intermediaries; dedicated outreach.

DISCLAIMER: this draft is subject to consultations and design change

Affected Party	Nature of Impact / Benefit	Engagement Priority
	responsibilities; eligible for targeted livelihood support.	
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Critical implementing partners; land administrators; co-sign stewardship agreements; responsible for post-project maintenance.	HIGH — bilateral meetings; co-design site selection; integration into Local Development Strategies.
Community workers under Component 3	Directly employed in restoration; entitled to LMP protections, OHS training, and W-GRM access.	HIGH — pre-engagement induction; ongoing LMP communication.
Private landowners in project intervention areas	Eligible for voluntary participation in agroforestry and silvopastoral on private lands.	MEDIUM-HIGH — information sessions; simplified application support.
Local Action Groups (LAGs)	LEADER-approach intermediaries for microgrant programs and community entrepreneurship.	MEDIUM-HIGH — active partners in Component 3 design and delivery.

6.3.3 Other Interested Parties

Table 6.2 lists key government institutions and Table 6.3 lists civil society organisations and international partners with an interest in the project.

Table 6.3.3.1 Other Interested Parties — Government Institutions

Institution	Interest and Role
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Central environmental authority; project owner; chairs Project Steering Committee; strategic oversight.
NOIEP / PIU	Implementing agency; manages fiduciary, technical, and safeguards implementation; leads SEP.
Agency Moldsilva	Key implementing partner for afforestation, reforestation, ANR, forest rehabilitation, and RFRMC.
Apele Moldovei	Manages water-fund lands and water bodies. Key partner for riparian buffer restoration and rehabilitation.
AIPA	Formerly designated to administer a Component 3 green grant scheme; under the revised design, livelihood support is delivered through direct procurement and transfer of tools and assets by the PIU.
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry (MAFI)	Coordination partner for agroforestry and silvopastoral; agricultural-environmental policy coherence.
Environmental Agency (EA)	Reviews and approves EIAs; issues Environmental Permits; monitors compliance.
Environmental Protection Inspectorate (EPI)	Enforces environmental regulations; monitoring and enforcement support during implementation.
State Hydrometeorological Service	Provides climate, meteorological, and hydrological data for climate-informed planning.

Table 6.3.3.2 Other Interested Parties — Civil Society and International Partners

Organization	Interest and Role
EcoContact (Aarhus Centre)	Leading environmental NGO; implementation partner for community engagement and awareness campaigns.
BIOTICA Ecological Society	Science and policy NGO for biodiversity conservation and ecological network restoration; ecological monitoring.
Eco-TIRAS River Keepers Association	Environmental NGO focused on Prut and Dniester river ecosystems; community stewardship.
National Environmental Center	Environmental education, youth participation, community mobilization, and citizen science.
European Investment Bank (EIB)	€200M loan for Moldova's forestry modernization. Coordination required to avoid duplication.
FAO / UNDP / AFD / World Bank	International development and financing partners; donor coordination.

6.3.4 Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

Table 6.4 identifies groups facing particular barriers to meaningful engagement and the targeted measures in place to address them.

Table 6.3.4 Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

Group	Specific Barriers	Targeted Mitigation Measures
Women and women-headed households	Limited access to resources; childcare constraints; employment discrimination.	Flexible scheduling; minimum 40% female participation per event; dedicated asset-transfer allocations for women-led enterprises; female intermediaries.
Elderly persons	Limited digital literacy; limited mobility; hearing impairments.	Accessible venues; printed materials; house visits via LPAs and NGOs.
Youth and out-migrants	High outmigration; limited employment opportunities.	Green job creation; vocational training; environmental education; innovation challenge fund.
Roma communities	Language barriers; social stigma; limited integration.	Materials in Romanian and Russian; Roma National Center as intermediary; CBOs with Roma membership prioritized.
Gagauz and other ethnic minorities	Language barriers; cultural differences.	Gagauz-language summaries for ATUG; dedicated ATUG consultation events.
Persons with disabilities	Physical accessibility barriers; communication challenges.	Accessible venues; adapted materials; accessible digital content on project platform.
Low-income rural households	Limited technology access; potential income loss from access restrictions.	Outreach through LPAs and NGOs; simplified allocation processes; advance consultation; livelihood support under Process Framework.
Seasonal workers	High turnover; fear of losing welfare benefits.	Longer-term employment modalities; coordination with social authorities; clear LMP provisions.
Children	Limited understanding of risks; dependence on caregivers.	School environmental education programs; involvement of teachers; zero child labor per LMP.

6.4 Stakeholder Engagement during Project Preparation (2022–2026)

6.4.1 Consultation Events

Table 6.5 summarises the fifteen consultation events conducted between 2022 and 2026. These preparation-stage consultations (2022–2026) were initiated and led by the Client (Government of Moldova) and other development partners; the World Bank became engaged in the project only in March 2026. The events below are presented for completeness and continuity of the engagement record and do not imply World Bank involvement prior to that date.

Table 6.4.1 Consultation Events during Project Preparation

Date	Activity	Location	Key Outcomes /
6 Jul 2022	Regional inception workshop	Cahul	EbA concept introduced; regional priorities and beneficiaries identified; input for GCF concept note.
8 Jul 2022	Regional inception workshop	Ștefan Vodă	Regional insights on restoration measures; local challenges and opportunities assessed.
27–28 Sep 2022	National consultation workshop	Chișinău	Concept note developed; EbA measures, wetland restoration, pastureland management discussed.
20 Feb 2024	Online validation workshop	Online	Theory of Change validated; beneficiaries recalculated; institutional arrangements confirmed.
4–5 Mar 2025	Full Proposal inception workshop	Chișinău (hybrid, 45 participants)	Data gaps identified; Lake Manta NBS-only confirmed; gender and E&S risks identified.
16 Apr 2025	Local consultation	Cahul district	Climate impacts and priorities confirmed; capacity barriers documented.
13 May 2025	Local consultation	Leova (3 districts)	Water scarcity, degraded pastures, invasive species; improved nurseries recommended.
21 May 2025	Local consultation	Căușeni / Ștefan Vodă	Agroforestry incentives; upgrade of Cîrnățeni nursery to genetics centre recommended.
19 May 2025	Local consultation	Comrat (ATUG)	Water/land scarcity; financial support for agroforestry requested.
27–28 May 2025	Joint field mission	Cahul district	Lake Beleu removed from scope
9 Oct 2025	Local consultation	Cimișlia / Basarabeasca	Water scarcity, soil erosion; equipment sharing enterprises recommended.
15 Oct 2025	Local consultation	Cantemir	Low sapling survival; school environmental education requested.
17 Sep 2025	Online validation workshop	Online via Zoom (56 participants)	Land prioritization criteria validated; mixed public/private nursery approach endorsed.
9 Jul 2026	Public consultation (appraisal stage)	Chișinău (22 participants)	Scientific and academic institutions provided technical feedback: hydrological assessment before wetland restoration; drought-resistant native species and cautious use of black locust in southern Moldova; integrated silvopastoral systems; forest-health, biodiversity and ecosystem-connectivity assessments; and a proposed permanent scientific advisory mechanism.

14 Jul 2026	Public consultation (appraisal stage)	In-person meeting (15 participants)	Civil society and NGOs consulted on project objectives, components, timelines and budget. Key issues: alignment with the National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP); land availability for afforestation (~7,000 ha of degraded land); climate-informed species selection; need for biodiversity assessments before afforestation in steppe ecosystems and Emerald Network sites; and the role of NGOs under Component 3.
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6.4.2 How Stakeholder Feedback Shaped Project Design

Stakeholder inputs have directly influenced project design in the following ways:

- Lake Beleu removed from project scope;
- Under the revised design, the AIPA green grant mechanism is superseded by direct procurement and transfer of tools and assets under Component 3;
- Nursery upgrade incorporated into RFRMC design based on Căușeni consultation recommendations;
- Community-based equipment sharing enterprises incorporated into Component 3 based on Cimișlia/Basarabeasca recommendations;
- Dedicated Gagauz-language engagement for ATUG communities added to the SEP based on ATUG consultation findings.
- Two appraisal-stage public consultations held in July 2026 — on 9 July 2026 in Chișinău with scientific and academic institutions, and on 14 July 2026 with civil society and NGOs — confirmed broad stakeholder support and generated technical recommendations reflected in the final project design;
- Climate-informed species selection, prioritising drought-resistant native species and cautious use of black locust in southern Moldova, reinforced in restoration planning based on appraisal-stage consultation feedback;
- Requirement for site-level biodiversity and hydrological assessments prior to afforestation and wetland restoration — particularly in steppe ecosystems and Emerald Network sites — reinforced in the ESMF screening procedures following appraisal-stage consultations;
- Integrated silvopastoral and landscape-mosaic approaches, and the proposed establishment of a permanent scientific advisory mechanism with national research institutions, incorporated into project preparation in response to appraisal-stage consultation recommendations.

6.5 Stakeholder Engagement Program for Project Implementation

6.5.1 Engagement Methods

Table 6.6 describes the engagement methods to be applied during implementation, adapted to the needs, languages, and accessibility requirements of different stakeholder groups. All materials are available in Romanian and Russian; Gagauz-language summaries are provided for ATUG communities.

Table 6.5.1 Engagement Methods

Method	Description	Target Groups
Online Platform	Dedicated project webpage on www.NOIEP.gov.md . Publishes all E&S instruments, consultation notices, meeting minutes, GRM information, and progress reports.	All stakeholders; general public.
Community Meetings	District and community level for site selection, E&S disclosure, and restoration planning. Min. 24 meetings over project lifetime (6/year). Accessible venues.	Local communities; LPAs; farmers; pastoralists.
Seminars and Workshops	Technical workshops on EbA, NBS, watershed management for institutional stakeholders; on-the-job trainings for community workers.	MoE; Moldsilva; PI NA Apele Moldovei; LPAs.

Social Media and Digital Channels	Facebook, Viber, and WhatsApp groups; short video reels and infographics; regular project updates.	Youth; LPAs; communities with internet access.
Information Boards and Printed Materials	Physical boards at LPA offices, schools, and community centres. Romanian, Gagauzian, and Russian leaflets. Min. 1 board per intervention community; updated quarterly.	Elderly; communities with limited digital access.
Beneficiary Surveys	Mid-project (Year 2) and end-of-project (Year 4) perception surveys. Door-to-door for no-internet communities. Target: ≥70% satisfied.	All affected parties.
Focus Groups	Targeted sessions for vulnerable groups. Min. 2 vulnerable-group sessions per year. Household visits where direct participation is not feasible.	Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
GRM Channels	Multi-channel mechanism via phone, email, online platform, and physical suggestion boxes at all LPA offices. Full details in Chapter 7.	All project-affected parties.

6.5.2 Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan

Table 6.7 presents the Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan for the full project implementation period.

Table 6.5.2 Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan

Stage	Activity	Topics / Messages	Methods	Stakeholders	Responsible
Pre-Appraisal (Aug–Sep 2026)	E&S disclosure	ESMF, SEP, LMP, ESCP, GAP. public comment period prior to Appraisal, consistent with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework disclosure requirements. Romanian and Russian.	NOIEP/WB websites; emails.	All stakeholders.	NOIEP/PIU; MoE.
Month 3 (Launch)	Launch event	Project objectives, components, GRM channels.	Launch event; press release; social media; info boards.	All stakeholders; media.	NOIEP/PIU.
Year 1 Q1	Site selection consultations	Participatory restoration priorities; ESS5 access restriction screening.	Focus groups; field visits; community meetings.	LPAs; communities; farmers; pastoralists.	NOIEP/PIU; Moldsilva.
Year 1 Q1– Q2	GRM awareness campaign	GRM channels; access; anonymity protections.	Info boards; leaflets; community meetings.	All affected parties.	PIU E&S Specialists.
Years 1–2	Component 1 workshops	EbA; restoration planning; NBS; watershed management.	Seminars; workshops; study tours.	MoE; Moldsilva; PI NA Apele Moldovei; LPAs.	NOIEP/PIU.
Years 1–2	Component 2 community engagement	Site selection; participatory restoration planning; Process Framework consultations.	Community meetings; focus groups; info boards.	LPAs; communities; farmers; pastoralists.	NOIEP/PIU.
Years 2–4	Community restoration activities	Tree planting, wetland revitalization, habitat restoration; citizen engagement.	Info boards; video tutorials; online platform; surveys.	Local communities; NGOs; vulnerable groups.	NOIEP/PIU.
Year 2	Mid-project survey	Satisfaction with engagement; perceived benefits; GRM effectiveness.	Online survey; interviews; door-to- door.	LPAs; residents; NGOs; vulnerable groups.	NOIEP/PIU.

Years 2–4	Asset-transfer consultations	Asset-transfer eligibility; application support for private landowners and women-led enterprises.	Info sessions; application workshops.	Private landowners; cooperatives; women-led enterprises.	NOIEP/PIU.
Annual (Years 1–4)	Vulnerable group consultations	Targeted consultations with women, elderly, Roma, Gagauz, persons with disabilities.	Focus groups; household visits.	Vulnerable groups.	PIU Social Specialist.
Year 4	End-of-project survey	Final satisfaction; lessons learned; post-project stewardship recommendations.	Online and household survey; community meetings.	All affected parties.	NOIEP/PIU.
Post-project	Maintenance engagement	Importance of maintenance; monitoring of outcomes; stewardship obligations.	Public meetings; monitoring visits; bilateral meetings.	LPAs; communities; Moldsilva.	MoE; NOIEP.

No site-specific intervention shall commence before site-level stakeholder consultations, screening of land use and access restrictions, disclosure of relevant site-specific E&S instruments, and documentation of feedback received from affected land users, including farmers, pastoralists, vulnerable households, and LPAs.

Draft site-specific ESMPs shall be disclosed and made available via electronic links on NOIEP's website, the World Bank's website as well as on the GCF project portal to enable meaningful stakeholder consultation, in accordance with ESS1, ESS10, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), and applicable national legislation. The draft ESMP shall contain sufficient information on the proposed activities, identified environmental and social risks and impacts, mitigation and monitoring measures, institutional responsibilities, and the Project Grievance Mechanism to enable informed stakeholder feedback. Comments received during the consultation process shall be documented and appropriately considered in the finalization of the ESMP. The final ESMP shall be updated, as necessary, based on the consultation outcomes, disclosed and made available via electronic links on NOIEP's website, the World Bank's website as well as on the GCF project portal as required, and finalized prior to the commencement of the relevant activities.

6.5.3 Reporting Back to Stakeholders

Consultation records shall document not only attendance and questions raised, but also objections, unresolved concerns, proposed mitigation/alternatives, agreed follow-up actions, and explanations of how stakeholder feedback was considered in project decision-making.

- Consultation meeting minutes published on the project online platform within 10 working days;
- Quarterly summaries of stakeholder engagement submitted to the World Bank;
- Annual stakeholder engagement reports published on NOIEP and MoE websites;
- Quarterly GRM monitoring reports shared with the World Bank (aggregated and anonymized).

Where significant objections are raised by affected users, the PIU shall not proceed with the site until the issue is assessed and addressed through the Process Framework and relevant E&S procedures.

6.6 Resources and Responsibilities

6.6.1 Institutional Responsibilities

Day-to-day SEP implementation is the responsibility of the PIU Social Specialist, supported by the PIU Environmental Specialist for site-level engagement, and the PIU GBV Focal Point for SEA/SH matters. NGO

partners support community mobilisation and inclusive participation, under the supervision and quality assurance of the PIU Social Specialist.

6.6.2 SEP Budget

Table 6.8 presents the SEP budget. E&S staff costs are covered under Component 4 and are not included below. The SEP budget is financed from GCF grant proceeds and IBRD loan resources and is sourced from the overall project budget under Component 4 (Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation), where operational and E&S management costs are consolidated. E&S staffing costs (PIU Social Specialist, Environmental Specialist, and GBV Focal Point) are budgeted in the consolidated E&S budget (Section 5.8), within Component 4. This social protection, environmental, and gender/GBV specialist positions are retained in full. Different activities budget is drawn from service providers activities under project activities and dedicated Component 4 budgets as applicable. All SEP budget allocations are reflected in the Project Operations Manual and the detailed project budget attached to the Funded Activity Agreement.

6.7 Monitoring, Reporting, and Disclosure

Key performance indicators for SEP implementation are monitored quarterly and reported to the World Bank. The main KPIs are: minimum 24 community meetings over the project lifetime (6/year); minimum 40% female participation per consultation event; minimum 70% beneficiary satisfaction at mid-project and end-of-project surveys; and minimum 2 dedicated vulnerable group consultations per year. Full KPI table and reporting schedule are provided in the standalone SEP.

Safeguards instruments are disclosed prior to appraisal and are made available via electronic links on the World Bank's website and NOIEP's website, as well as on the GCF project portal, and in locations convenient to affected peoples. NOIEP is responsible for ensuring that updated instruments remain accessible throughout implementation. The PIU Social Specialist will consolidate SEP implementation data and include a dedicated SEP progress section in each Annual Performance Report (APR), covering: consultation events held; sex-disaggregated participation data; GRM performance; disclosure compliance; and adaptive engagement actions taken in response to monitoring findings.

Annual Safeguards Performance Summary includes a dedicated section on SEP implementation progress for APR reporting under the Funded Activity Agreement, covering consultation events, sex-disaggregated participation data, GRM performance, disclosure compliance, and adaptive engagement actions.

7. Grievance Redress Mechanism

7.1 Overview and Scope

The project operates two distinct grievance mechanisms: (i) a Community GRM for project-affected communities and other external stakeholders, governed by ESS10; and (ii) a Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism (W-GRM) for all project workers, governed by ESS2 and detailed in the Labour Management Procedures (LMP). Both mechanisms are coordinated by the PIU and share reporting channels to the World Bank, but are operationally separate to ensure confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interest.

The GRM also performs a specific function within the Process Framework (ESS5): grievances related to restrictions on access to natural resources trigger a dedicated pathway linked to the Process Framework consultation process. This is described in Section 7.4.

For SEA/SH complaints, a separate confidential pathway applies to both community complainants and workers, described in Section 7.5.

7.2 Community GRM

7.2.1 Guiding Principles

Table 7.1 presents the guiding principles of the community GRM.

Table 7.2.1 Community GRM Guiding Principles

Principle	Application
Accessibility	Available in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz (where feasible). Verbal submissions accepted. No cost to the complainant.
Confidentiality	Anonymous submissions accepted. Identities protected. SEA/SH through dedicated confidential pathway.
Impartiality	No conflict of interest for persons handling grievances. NOIEP Director ensures independence.
Timeliness	Acknowledgment within 2 working days; resolution within 30 working days (extendable to 60 with notification).
Non-Retaliation	Zero tolerance toward reprisals. Complainants explicitly informed of this protection upon receipt.
Free of Charge	No cost, fee, or charge imposed at any stage.
Transparency	Complainants informed of process, timelines, outcomes, and escalation options at each step.

7.2.2 GRM Structure: Three Levels

The community GRM operates across three escalating levels, plus external mechanisms. Table 7.2 describes each level, its contact channels, responsible actors, and target complainant groups.

Table 7.2.2 Community GRM Structure

Level	Contact Channels	Responsible	Target Complainants
Level 1 — Local (LPA Grievance Focal Points)	Physical suggestion/petition boxes at all LPA mayoralty offices (min. 50 boxes across SDR). Written, verbal, and online submissions accepted.	LPA Grievance Focal Point forwards to PIU within 2 working days.	All affected community members, including those without internet or phone access.
Level 2 — PIU (NOIEP Project Implementation Unit)	Online: https://onipm.gov.md/en Email: cancelaria@onipm.gov.md Address: str. Gheorghe Tudor 5, etajul 4, mun. Chișinău, MD-2028 Tel.: 068 222 249	NOIEP E&S Specialist; NOIEP Director for escalations.	Any complainant; escalations from Level 1; direct submissions preferred for complex or sensitive grievances.
Level 3 — Ministry of Environment	Online: www.mediugov.md Email: cancelaria@mediugov.md Address: Bd. Ștefan Cel Mare și Sfânt 162, MD-2004 Chișinău Tel.: (022) 204-587	MoE focal point; escalation only after PIU response is unsatisfactory.	Complainants dissatisfied with PIU resolution.
External — WB GRS (World Bank Grievance Redress Service)	World Bank Grievance Redress Service (GRS): www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service	Independent of project management.	Available to all complainants who have exhausted project-level channels.

7.2.3 GRM Process Steps

Table 7.3 describes the seven-step GRM process from initial uptake through to closure.

Table 7.2.3 Community GRM Process Steps

Step	Activity	Description	Timeframe	Responsible	Channel
1	Uptake	Grievance received via any channel. Staff completes Grievance Registration Form and enters in GRM Register.	Day 0	Local focal point; NOIEP staff.	All channels.
2	Acknowledgment	Complainant informed of receipt, reference number, expected timeframe, and escalation procedure.	Within 2 working days	NOIEP E&S Specialist.	Phone / email / in person.
3	Sorting	Forwarded to NOIEP legal department; categorized per 10-category system; NOIEP Director notified.	Within 3 working days	NOIEP legal department.	Internal.
4	Investigation	Facts gathered; proposed resolution submitted to NOIEP Project Coordinator for decision.	Within 15 working days	Complaint committee.	Internal; site visits if needed.
5	Resolution	Complainant informed of findings and resolution in person (preferred), by phone, or in writing.	Within 30 working days	NOIEP Director.	In person / phone / letter.
6	Appeal	Complainant informed of right to escalate to next level, national courts, WB GRS	At any time	NOIEP; WB GRS	As preferred by complainant.
7	Closure	Grievance closed in register with documentation. Aggregate data reported quarterly to WB.	After confirmation	NOIEP E&S Specialists.	Internal; quarterly report.

Grievance categories: Cat.1 — Social Safeguards; Cat.2 — Environmental Safeguards; Cat.3 — Policy/procedure violations; Cat.4 — Contract violations; Cat.5 — Financial concerns; Cat.6 — Abuse of power; Cat.7 — PIU staff performance; Cat.8 — Force majeure; Cat.9 — Project interventions; Cat.10 — Other.

7.2.4 GRM Awareness and Accessibility

GRM channels, procedures, and non-retaliation protections are communicated to all affected communities at project launch and throughout implementation through:

- Information boards installed at all LPA offices (min. 50 boards across SDR), updated quarterly;

- Leaflets in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz distributed at community meetings;
- GRM section on the NOIEP project platform (www.NOIEP.gov.md), including online submission form;
- Verbal explanation at all community consultation events;
- Annual GRM awareness refresher campaign (Years 1–4).
- External recourse mechanisms, including the World Bank GRS (www.worldbank.org/grievances) is communicated to affected communities at project launch and referenced in GRM information materials.

7.3 Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism (W-GRM)

Table 7.4 summarises the key elements of the W-GRM. The full W-GRM procedures, including reporting templates and contractor compliance requirements, are set out in the Labour Management Procedures (LMP).

Table 7.3. Worker GRM (W-GRM) Key Elements

Element	Description
Scope	Covers all workers engaged under the project: direct NOIEP/PIU staff, Moldsilva personnel, contractor and subcontractor workers under Component 2, and service providers under Component 3.
Channels	Verbal or written submission to direct supervisor, PIU Labour Officer, or anonymous suggestion boxes at work sites. Workers may also submit directly to NOIEP if uncomfortable with supervisor channel.
Confidentiality	Identity of workers raising grievances is protected. Anonymous submissions accepted. No retaliation of any kind tolerated — violation treated as disciplinary matter.
Timeframe	Acknowledgment within 2 working days; resolution within 15 working days; escalation to NOIEP Director if unresolved.
Categories	OHS conditions; wages and benefits; working hours; discrimination or harassment; contract violations; SEA/SH (separate confidential pathway — see Section 7.5).
SEA/SH pathway	Handled separately through PIU GBV Focal Point per WB Good Practice Note. Survivors referred to national GBV service providers within 24 hours. Not processed through standard W-GRM steps.
Relationship to LMP	W-GRM is governed by and detailed in the Labour Management Procedures (LMP). Contractor compliance verified through ESMP implementation monitoring.
Contractor obligations	All contracts must include provisions requiring contractors to: inform workers of W-GRM at induction; maintain site-level suggestion boxes; forward unresolved grievances to PIU within 5 working days; prohibit retaliation; report W-GRM status monthly to PIU.

The W-GRM is distinct from the community GRM. Workers must not be directed to community-level channels for employment-related grievances. Contractors are contractually obligated to maintain site-level W-GRM channels and are prohibited from taking any retaliatory action against workers who raise grievances.

7.4 GRM and the Process Framework (ESS5)

The project involves afforestation, reforestation, riparian buffer restoration, and wetland rehabilitation activities that may result in temporary or permanent restrictions on community members' access to communal grazing lands, agricultural plots, or water resources. Such access restrictions are governed by the Process Framework prepared under ESS5 and included as an annex to this ESMF. The GRM plays a critical role in ensuring these restrictions are identified, communicated, and addressed. The Process Framework (ESS5), included as Annex [5] to this ESMF, covers: (i) description of the project interventions that may involve restrictions on access to natural resources or communal land; (ii) criteria for determining eligibility of persons potentially affected by access restrictions; (iii) measures to assist affected persons in improving or at minimum restoring their

livelihoods and living standards in real terms relative to pre-project levels; (iv) a process for resolving disputes and grievances arising from access restrictions, including linkages to the GRM; (v) administrative and legal procedures applicable to access restriction measures; and (vi) monitoring arrangements to assess the effectiveness of livelihood restoration measures. At activity level, once specific intervention sites are identified through site screening, a Plan of Action (PoA) will be prepared where access restrictions are confirmed, consistent with the Process Framework procedures and timelines.

Table 7.4. GRM Interface with Process Framework (ESS5)

Element	Description
Nature of ESS5 grievances	Complaints related to temporary or permanent restrictions on access to communal grazing lands, agricultural plots, forests, or water resources resulting from project interventions (afforestation, buffer strips, wetland rehabilitation).
Entry point	Standard GRM channels (Level 1 or Level 2). Categorized as Cat.1 — Social Safeguards upon intake.
Dedicated Process Framework pathway	ESS5 access restriction grievances are automatically escalated to the PIU Social Specialist and Environmental Specialist, who assess whether the Process Framework participatory consultation process was properly followed for the affected site. Independent verification by implementing NGOs of the voluntary nature of any community agreement — separate from the LPA co-signing role — is a mandatory Process Framework requirement, addressing the risk that LPAs or mayors may hold a dual role as project partners and informal community authorities.
Link to site intervention moratorium	Where an ESS5 grievance is filed before or during site preparation, no physical intervention may commence or continue until the grievance is assessed and, if valid, resolved through the Process Framework consultation process.
Livelihood restoration	Where access restrictions have caused demonstrable livelihood loss, the Process Framework mitigation measures apply (alternative livelihood support, priority employment in restoration activities, and compensation for verified income loss only as an exceptional, last-resort measure under the applicable ESS5 instrument).
Documentation	All ESS5 grievances logged separately in the GRM Register (Cat.1). Quarterly report to WB includes ESS5 sub-category data.

7.5 SEA/SH Complaints

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) complaints from both community members and workers are handled through a separate, highly confidential pathway, consistent with the World Bank Good Practice Note on Addressing SEA/SH in Investment Project Financing. Key elements:

- Managed exclusively by the PIU GBV Focal Point; not processed through standard grievance steps;
- No proof required to initiate the pathway;
- Separate confidential SEA/SH register, accessible only to the GBV Focal Point;
- Survivors referred to national GBV service providers (psychosocial, medical, legal) within 24 hours;
- Survivors retain independent access to national legal remedies, World Bank GRS;
- No identifying survivor information included in routine quarterly GRM reports.

To ensure gender-responsiveness of the GRM for SEA/SH complaints, the following additional provisions apply: (i) Ethical documentation — all SEA/SH case records are documented using a trauma-informed, ethical documentation protocol that prioritises survivor safety, privacy, and dignity; case files are accessible solely to the GBV Focal Point and are stored securely with restricted access; (ii) Clear incident reporting system — a dedicated, multi-channel SEA/SH reporting pathway is maintained, accessible through the project GRM hotline, direct contact with the GBV Focal Point, and anonymous physical drop-boxes; intake is available in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz; (iii) Follow-up communication — survivors are informed at each stage of the response process and regularly updated on actions taken, in a manner consistent with their expressed preferences and safety considerations; (iv) Non-retaliation guarantee — the project maintains a strict zero-retaliation policy; any act of retaliation against a person who reports a SEA/SH concern is treated as a serious disciplinary matter and

reported to the World Bank; (v) Survivor-centred approach — no standardised grievance resolution steps (mediation, escalation) are applied; the survivor's safety, wellbeing, and informed consent guide all response actions. These provisions are detailed in the project's SEAH Action Plan maintained by the PIU GBV Focal Point.

7.6 GRM in the Context of E&S Management

7.6.1 Integration with ESMP Implementation

Site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) prepared for individual restoration sites must include a section confirming that: (i) GRM channels have been disclosed to affected communities before works commence; (ii) the site-level LPA Grievance Focal Point has been identified and trained; and (iii) suggestion boxes are installed at the LPA office serving the intervention area. No site works may commence until these conditions are met.

7.6.2 Contractor Obligations

All civil works and service contracts issued under the project must include the following GRM-related provisions:

- Contractor to inform all workers of W-GRM channels at pre-mobilisation induction;
- Contractor to install and maintain at least one anonymous suggestion box at each active work site;
- Contractor to forward any community grievances received at site level to the PIU E&S Specialist within 3 working days;
- Contractor to submit a monthly W-GRM status report to the PIU, including number, type, and status of worker grievances;
- Contractor to ensure zero retaliation against any complainant, with contractual penalty for non-compliance;
- Non-compliance with GRM obligations to be reflected in contractor performance assessments and may result in contract suspension.

7.7 Monitoring, Reporting, and Corrective Action

GRM performance is monitored continuously and reported to the World Bank on a quarterly basis. Table 7.6 presents the GRM KPIs.

Table 7.7 GRM Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Measurement Method	Target
Grievances received (total and by category)	GRM Register — quarterly count	All grievances logged; zero unaddressed after 60 working days.
Timeliness of resolution	% grievances resolved within 30 working days	Minimum 90% per quarter.
Gender disaggregation	% grievances filed by women	Tracked and reported; no target — for trend monitoring.
ESS5 sub-category	Number of access restriction grievances	All resolved via Process Framework; zero outstanding at site commencement.
W-GRM cases	Number of worker grievances by type	All logged; zero unresolved OHS grievances after 15 working days.
SEA/SH referrals	Number of survivors referred to GBV services	100% referred within 24 hours; not disaggregated in public reports.
Escalations to Level 3 / external	Number of grievances escalated beyond PIU	Tracked; high numbers trigger corrective action review.
Complainant satisfaction	% complainants satisfied with resolution (exit survey)	Minimum 75% satisfied.

GRM monitoring data (aggregated and anonymised) are included in the quarterly E&S monitoring reports submitted to the World Bank Task Team. Where GRM data reveal systemic issues (e.g., repeated grievances on the same topic, low resolution rates, concentration of complaints in a specific area), the PIU shall prepare a corrective action plan within 30 working days and submit it to the World Bank for review.

The GRM Register is maintained electronically by the NOIEP E&S Specialist and backed up monthly. Access to the Register is restricted to PIU E&S staff and the NOIEP Director; the SEA/SH sub-register is accessible only to the GBV Focal Point.

8. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation of the ESMF

Monitoring and adaptive management of environmental and social (E&S) risks and mitigation measures constitute a core component of the implementation of this Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). In the context of the Moldova Green Shield project — a landscape-scale ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) investment implemented across climate-vulnerable, land-dependent rural communities in southern Moldova — continuous safeguards monitoring is essential to ensure that project activities remain environmentally sound, socially inclusive, compliant with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and responsive to stakeholder feedback.

The monitoring, reporting and evaluation (MRE) system described in this chapter is consistent with the requirements of ESS1 (Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts) and supports implementation of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). It is designed to function as an integrated, multi-level system linking site-level contractor monitoring with PIU safeguards oversight and structured World Bank supervision. The system also provides feedback loops to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labor Management Procedures (LMP), and Process Framework, ensuring that safeguards performance informs adaptive management throughout the project cycle.

Note: The overall ESRC for this project is Substantial (ESRS Report No. ESRSC05644, May 2026). E&S risk classifications will be reassessed at Appraisal once intervention sites, designs, and ESF instruments are finalized. The monitoring framework will be updated accordingly in the site-specific ESMPs and the final ESCP.

8.1 Objectives of the Monitoring System

The E&S monitoring system for the Moldova Green Shield project pursues the following objectives:

- Ensure effective, timely, and documented implementation of mitigation measures defined in the ESMF and in site-specific ESMPs prepared for each restoration intervention;
- Verify compliance with Moldovan environmental and social legislation and the requirements of the World Bank ESF, including all applicable Environmental and Social Standards (ESS1–ESS6, ESS8, ESS10);
- Identify emerging environmental and social risks, unexpected impacts, and community concerns at the earliest possible stage, enabling timely corrective action before risks escalate;
- Monitor the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement processes, social inclusion measures, gender mainstreaming, and SEA/SH prevention measures, including through disaggregated participation data;
- Track implementation of the Process Framework commitments related to restrictions on land use and access to natural resources, consistent with ESS5;
- Generate structured safeguards performance data to support reporting to the World Bank Task Team, the Project Steering Committee (World Bank) reporting arrangements;
- Provide a documented evidence base for mid-term and end-of-project safeguards performance reviews, adaptive management decisions, and lessons-learned processes.

8.2 Structure of the E&S Monitoring System

The Moldova Green Shield monitoring system operates at three levels, reflecting the multi-tier institutional structure of the project:

8.2.1 Site-Level Monitoring (Level 1)

Site-level monitoring is the primary operational layer of the E&S monitoring system. It is conducted at each restoration intervention site by contractors and supervised by the PIU's Environmental and Social Specialists.

Site-level monitoring covers:

- Daily OHS compliance monitoring by contractor site supervisors;
- ESMP implementation checklists completed at each active site;
- Photographic documentation of restoration progress and safeguards measures, geo-referenced where feasible;
- Incident reporting for OHS accidents, environmental events, chance finds, and SEA/SH incidents;
- Land access documentation and compliance verification prior to and during implementation.

Monthly safeguards logs prepared by contractors are submitted to the PIU Environmental and Social Specialists for review and consolidation.

8.2.2 PIU Coordination and Oversight Monitoring (Level 2)

The PIU (NOIEP) serves as the central coordination and oversight body for safeguards monitoring across all project sites and implementing partners. At this level, monitoring includes:

- Consolidation and quality review of contractor site-level safeguards logs;
- Periodic field verification visits to active restoration sites by PIU E&S Specialists;

- GRM performance tracking and management of corrective action processes;
- Coordination of technical monitoring inputs from sectoral agencies (Moldsilva, PI NA Apele Moldovei, Environmental Agency);
- Preparation of quarterly safeguards monitoring summaries and annual performance reports;
- Management of the project safeguards documentation system and records archive.

8.2.3 World Bank Supervision (Level 3)

The World Bank Task Team provides oversight, technical support, and independent verification of safeguards performance through implementation support missions conducted at minimum twice annually. Supervision activities include:

- Review of PIU safeguards monitoring reports and GRM performance data;
- Field verification of site-level ESMP implementation during supervision missions;
- Assessment of ESCP commitment implementation;
- Issuance of Implementation Status Reports (ISRs) with E&S performance ratings;
- Support for adaptive management where monitoring identifies performance gaps or emerging risks.

8.3 Monitoring Framework and Key Performance Indicators

Site-specific ESMPs will be prepared for all restoration interventions screened as requiring site-level safeguards instruments in accordance with the ESMF screening procedures. Each ESMP monitoring plan will define performance indicators, monitoring frequency, monitoring methods, assigned responsibilities, and corrective-action procedures.

Table 8.1 below presents the indicative safeguards monitoring indicators for the project, structured by risk category and aligned with the applicable Environmental and Social Standards. These indicators will be refined and operationalized in the site-specific ESMPs and the finalized ESCP at Appraisal.

Table 8.3 Indicative ESMF Safeguards Monitoring Framework — Moldova Green Shield (P516908)

Risk Category	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Monitoring Method	Responsible Institution
Soil stability & erosion control	% of sites with erosion-control measures installed and functioning; vegetation cover established per planting schedule (>60% survival at 12 months)	Quarterly during establishment; annual thereafter	Field inspection; photographic transects; ESMP compliance checklists	Contractors; PIU E&S Specialist
Biodiversity & invasive species	Use of provenance-verified native species per approved species lists; zero confirmed introductions of IAS; number of chance-find incidents reported and managed	Seasonal (pre- & post-planting); annual biodiversity survey	Site survey; nursery procurement records; IAS watch-list screening; chance-find incident log	Agency Moldsilva; PIU; WB Biodiversity Specialist
Water quality & floodplain ecology	Sediment-control structures installed before works; zero pollution incidents recorded; turbidity within baseline thresholds at sentinel monitoring points	Quarterly during active works; semi-annual during maintenance	Field inspection; photographic documentation; water-quality sampling at sentinel points; incident register	Contractors; PI NA Apele Moldovei; PIU E&S Specialist

Risk Category	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Monitoring Method	Responsible Institution
Vegetation establishment success	Survival rate of planted material (target ≥70% at year 1; ≥60% at year 3); species composition consistent with site planting plan	Annual (post-planting seasons 1–5)	Plot-based survival surveys; species composition transects; satellite-based NDVI change analysis	Agency Moldsilva; Contractors; PIU
Nursery operations & pollution prevention	Waste management plan implemented; no fuel/lubricant spills recorded; water abstraction within licensed volumes	Quarterly	Site inspection; waste management logs; fuel inventory records; water meter readings	Southern RFRMC; PIU E&S Specialist
Cultural heritage (chance finds)	All earthwork subcontracts include chance-find procedures; 100% of incidents reported to authorities within 24 hours	Pre-construction (procedure verification); continuous (incident reporting)	Contract document review; incident register; authority confirmation letters	Contractors; PIU; National Heritage Agency
Labor, OHS & working conditions	PPE usage compliance rate (≥95%); number of occupational incidents recorded and reported; LMP signed by all contractors; zero child/forced labor incidents	Continuous (site level); monthly reporting	Supervisor OHS inspections; incident register; payroll audit; worker interviews	Contractors; PIU E&S Specialist; independent auditor (if required)
SEA/SH prevention	100% of workers signed Codes of Conduct; SEA/SH training delivered pre-mobilization; number of SEA/SH incidents reported through GRM	Continuous; training verified pre-mobilization	Training attendance records; CoC signature sheets; confidential GRM log	GBV Focal Point; PIU
Land access & ESS5 compliance	All voluntary access arrangements documented per Process Framework; no undocumented restrictions on communal land use; ESS5-compliant access agreements in place prior to works; annual	Pre-implementation; then ongoing (semi-annual review)	Land access documentation audit; community verification meetings; LPA sign-off records	LPAs; PIU Social Specialist

Risk Category	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Monitoring Method	Responsible Institution
	cumulative livelihood impact review conducted, and 0 untreated cases, for any community subject to Process Framework restrictions under more than one sub-activity			
Social inclusion & vulnerable groups	% of women participants in consultations (target ≥40%); disaggregated participation data for Roma, Gagauz, elderly, and persons with disabilities; equitable access to green-jobs opportunities	Quarterly	Attendance registers disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity; livelihood beneficiary database; GAP monitoring report	PIU Social Specialist; implementing NGO
Grievance resolution	Number of grievances received, acknowledged (≤5 working days), resolved (≤30 days), and escalated; complainant satisfaction rate (target ≥80%)	Monthly	GRM register; case tracking system; follow-up satisfaction surveys	PIU GRM Officer; LPA focal points
Stakeholder engagement quality	Number and geographic coverage of consultations; quality of engagement documentation; disclosure compliance with SEP timelines	Semi-annual	SEP implementation review; meeting records; disclosure verification; quality assessment against SEP benchmarks	PIU Social Specialist

Biodiversity monitoring for restoration activities will be further detailed in the Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs) prepared for sites requiring enhanced ecological due diligence, consistent with ESS6. BMP monitoring will include species composition surveys, IAS watch-list screening, habitat connectivity assessments, and, where appropriate, indicator species monitoring (including amphibians, reptiles, and predatory birds as ecological indicators of ecosystem restoration quality).

8.4 Roles and Responsibilities for Monitoring and Reporting

Implementation of the E&S monitoring system follows the institutional structure established for project implementation. Table 8.3 summarizes the key monitoring and reporting responsibilities assigned to each actor.

Given NOIEP's limited prior experience implementing World Bank-financed projects under the ESF (as noted in the ESRS), substantive capacity-building support for E&S monitoring and reporting will be provided during the project preparation and early implementation phases. This includes training on ESMP monitoring protocols, GRM management, safeguards documentation, and preparation of safeguards reports consistent with World Bank requirements.

Table 8.4 Institutional Roles and Responsibilities for E&S Monitoring and Reporting

Institution / Actor	Key Monitoring & Reporting Responsibilities	Instruments Maintained	Reporting to
PIU (NOIEP) — E&S Specialists	Coordinate all safeguards monitoring; consolidate contractor reports; maintain ESMP compliance register; oversee GRM; prepare quarterly summaries and annual performance reports; update risk register; manage corrective actions	ESMP tracker; GRM register; safeguards reporting templates; incident log	World Bank Task Team; PSC
Contractors	Implement site-level ESMP measures; maintain daily OHS logs; report incidents within 24 hours; implement chance-find procedures; enforce Codes of Conduct; submit monthly safeguards logs to PIU	OHS incident register; daily work logs; chance-find record; CoC signature sheets	PIU E&S Specialist
Agency Moldsilva	Provide technical oversight of afforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation activities; monitor vegetation establishment; validate species compliance; submit annual establishment reports	Vegetation survival survey forms; species composition records; planting documentation	PIU; World Bank
Apele Moldovei	Support monitoring of riparian and floodplain restoration activities; provide hydrological and water-quality monitoring data; contribute to cumulative impact monitoring in the Lower Prut system	Water quality monitoring logs; hydrological observation records	PIU; Ministry of Environment
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Support community-level monitoring; facilitate access to consultation documentation; maintain community GRM access points; verify land-access arrangements with affected users; support inclusive engagement	Community meeting records; land access documentation; local GRM log	PIU Social Specialist
NGOs	Conduct community outreach monitoring; document stakeholder engagement; collect gender-disaggregated participation data; support GRM accessibility at community level; report to PIU on SEP implementation	Attendance registers; community consultation reports; SEP progress tracking forms	PIU Social Specialist
GBV Focal Point (PIU)	Monitor SEA/SH prevention measures; review CoC compliance; manage confidential SEA/SH reporting channel; coordinate response protocols; report to PIU management	Confidential SEA/SH incident register; CoC training records; response protocol log	PIU Director; World Bank Social Specialist
World Bank Task Team	Provide implementation support and supervision missions (minimum biannual); review safeguards performance reports; verify ESCP commitment implementation; support adaptive safeguards	ISRs; Aide-Mémoires; supervision back-to-office reports	World Bank Management; GCF

Institution / Actor	Key Monitoring & Reporting Responsibilities	Instruments Maintained	Reporting to
	management; issue Implementation Status Reports (ISRs)		

8.5 Monitoring Tools and Approaches

The E&S monitoring system will use a combination of technical, documentary, and participatory monitoring tools to ensure comprehensive and verifiable safeguards performance tracking:

8.5.1 Technical and Documentary Tools

- Environmental and Social Screening Forms (Annex 2 of ESMF) — used prior to confirmation of each restoration site;
- ESMP monitoring templates — standardized site-level checklists used by contractors and verified by PIU;
- Photographic documentation protocols — geo-referenced where feasible, documenting pre-intervention baseline conditions, works in progress, and post-intervention restoration status;
- OHS inspection checklists — used during site visits by PIU E&S Specialists and contractor supervisors;
- Incident notification and investigation forms — for OHS accidents, environmental events, chance finds, and SEA/SH incidents;
- Vegetation survival survey methodology — standardized plot-based surveys and transect methods aligned with Moldsilva technical standards;
- Water quality monitoring protocols — turbidity, conductivity, and visual pollution assessment at defined sentinel monitoring points;
- Satellite-based NDVI monitoring — for landscape-scale assessment of vegetation cover change, complementing field surveys.

8.5.2 Participatory and Social Monitoring Tools

- GRM registers — maintained at PIU level and accessible at community level through LPA focal points;
- Stakeholder consultation attendance registers — disaggregated by gender, age group, and self-identified vulnerability status;
- Community satisfaction surveys — administered after key consultation events and at project milestones;
- Land access documentation forms — recording voluntary access arrangements and community sign-off consistent with the Process Framework;
- GAP monitoring data collection — tracking gender-disaggregated participation in project activities, green-jobs beneficiaries, and benefit-sharing outcomes.

8.5.3 Digital Tools

Where feasible and consistent with data protection requirements, digital monitoring tools will be introduced to support field-level safeguards reporting. These may include mobile data collection applications (e.g., KoboToolbox or equivalent) for ESMP checklists and consultation documentation, and GIS-integrated monitoring databases for tracking spatial progress of restoration activities. Integration with Moldova's national environmental monitoring systems will be sought where technically feasible.

8.6 Reporting Framework and Feedback Mechanisms

Safeguards monitoring results will be documented and communicated through structured reporting arrangements coordinated by the PIU. The reporting framework ensures that safeguards performance information flows systematically from site level to PIU, to the World Bank, and where relevant to project beneficiaries and the wider public. Table 8.2 below summarizes the principal reporting instruments, their content, frequency, and distribution.

Table 8.6 E&S Monitoring Reporting Schedule — Moldova Green Shield (P516908)

Report / Instrument	Content	Frequency	Prepared by	Submitted to
Contractor Safeguards Log	OHS incidents; site-level ESMP compliance; waste management; chance finds	Monthly	Contractor site supervisor	PIU E&S Specialist
PIU Safeguards Monitoring Summary	Consolidated E&S performance across all active sites; GRM statistics;	Quarterly	PIU E&S/Social Specialists	World Bank Task Team; Project Steering Committee

Report / Instrument	Content	Frequency	Prepared by	Submitted to
	corrective actions; social inclusion data			
Vegetation Establishment Report	Survival rates; species composition; deviation from planting plan; recommendations	Annual	Agency Moldsilva; Contractors	PIU; World Bank
GRM Performance Report	Grievance statistics; resolution rates; systemic issues; corrective actions taken	Monthly (internal); Quarterly (external)	PIU GRM Officer	World Bank; PSC; community notice boards
SEP Implementation Progress Report	Consultations conducted; participation statistics; disclosure compliance; adaptive engagement actions	Semi-annual	PIU Social Specialist	World Bank; local communities (summary)
Annual Safeguards Performance Summary	Comprehensive E&S compliance assessment; achievement of ESCP commitments; updated risk register; lessons learned	Annual	PIU E&S and Social Specialists	Project Steering Committee; World Bank; Annual Safeguards Performance Summary includes a dedicated section on SEP implementation progress for APR reporting under the Funded Activity Agreement, covering consultation events, sex-disaggregated participation data, GRM performance, disclosure compliance, and adaptive engagement actions.
Biodiversity Management Plan Progress Report	Habitat screening outcomes; IAS monitoring; biodiversity co-benefit indicators; BMP adaptive measures	Annual	PIU E&S Specialist; Moldsilva Technical Staff	World Bank Biodiversity Specialist; PIU
Mid-Term Safeguards Review	Comprehensive assessment of ESMF implementation, instrument adequacy, and E&S risk reclassification	Once (mid-implementation, ~Year 3)	Independent consultant / World Bank supervision team	World Bank; Ministry of Environment.

In addition to formal reporting instruments, safeguards monitoring findings will be communicated to project-affected communities through the following mechanisms:

- Community-level GRM feedback — written or verbal feedback to grievance complainants within defined timelines;
- Community notice boards and public disclosure — summary project performance data disclosed at LPA offices and on the NOIEP website, consistent with SEP commitments;
- Annual community meetings — organized by implementing NGOs with PIU participation, providing communities with a structured forum to receive project performance updates and provide feedback;
- Adaptive stakeholder engagement — monitoring findings used to adjust community engagement approaches where gaps in inclusiveness or effectiveness are identified.

8.7 Adaptive Management and Corrective Action Procedures

The Moldova Green Shield monitoring system is designed as an adaptive management tool: monitoring findings are not only documented but are expected to trigger structured corrective responses when performance deviates from required standards. Adaptive management is integral to the ESF approach, recognizing that landscape-scale ecosystem restoration in climate-vulnerable settings involves inherent uncertainty that requires flexible, evidence-based management responses.

8.7.1 Routine Corrective Actions

Routine non-compliance issues identified through site monitoring (e.g., incomplete OHS documentation, PPE non-compliance, inadequate waste management) will be addressed by the PIU E&S Specialist through direct instruction to the responsible contractor. Corrective actions will be documented in the ESMP monitoring register with a defined close-out date and verified at the next monitoring visit. Patterns of recurring non-compliance will be escalated to PIU management and may trigger contract performance review.

8.7.2 Significant Deviation Triggers

The following significant deviation conditions will trigger a structured escalation and corrective action process as defined in Table 8.4. These triggers reflect the most material E&S risks identified in the project's risk register and ESRS risk classification:

Table 8.7.2 Adaptive Management Triggers and Corrective Action Requirements

Trigger Condition	Required Corrective Action	Timeline for Response	Escalation Authority
Vegetation survival rate falls below 60% at 12 months on any site	Root-cause analysis; revised planting protocols; supplementary planting program; species substitution if required; updated ESMP	Within 30 days of detection	PIU → Moldsilva → World Bank
Confirmed introduction of invasive alien species at any restoration site	Immediate works suspension; containment and eradication plan; independent botanical assessment; BMP revision; WB notification	Immediate (within 24–48 hours)	PIU → World Bank Biodiversity Specialist → Environmental Agency
Water quality exceedance or pollution incident in or near watercourse	Works suspension; incident investigation; pollution containment; regulatory notification; corrective ESMP; PIU incident report to World Bank within 48 hours	Immediate (24 hours)	PIU → World Bank → PI NA Apele Moldovei → Environmental Protection Inspectorate
Significant community grievance not resolved within 30-day target	Escalation to PIU management; mediation process; independent review if required; stakeholder feedback to complainant; systemic review of GRM procedures	By day 35 post-receipt	PIU GRM Officer → PIU Director → World Bank Social Specialist
Undocumented restriction on communal land access	Immediate works suspension pending Process Framework compliance review; affected user	Within 5 working days of identification	PIU Social Specialist → World Bank Task

Trigger Condition	Required Corrective Action	Timeline for Response	Escalation Authority
or customary resource use identified	identification; participatory mitigation planning; ESS5 compliance action plan submitted to World Bank		Team → Ministry of Environment
OHS incident resulting in serious injury or fatality	Immediate works suspension; medical response; incident investigation; regulatory and World Bank notification; revised OHS measures; Contractor performance review	Immediate; formal report within 48 hours	PIU → World Bank Operations → Ministry of Environment → Labor Inspectorate
Cultural heritage chance find encountered during earthworks	Immediate works stoppage; site secured; notification to National Cultural Heritage Agency; resume works only after authority clearance; document in incident register	Immediate stoppage; authority notification within 24 hours	Contractor → PIU → National Cultural Heritage Agency
SEA/SH incident reported through GRM or other channel	Confidential case management; survivor-centered response; immediate referral to support services; GBV Focal Point coordination; World Bank notification; Code of Conduct enforcement	Response protocol activated within 24 hours	GBV Focal Point → PIU Director → World Bank Social Specialist
PoA-agreed livelihood restoration targets not achieved within the planned timeframe	PIU corrective action review initiated; supplementary livelihood restoration measures identified and implemented; affected households re-verified against pre-project baseline	Within 30 days of the timeframe lapsing	PIU Social Specialist → PIU Director → World Bank Social Specialist

8.7.3 ESMP and ESMF Updates

Where monitoring findings indicate that existing mitigation measures are inadequate to manage identified risks, site-specific ESMPs will be updated by the PIU in consultation with the World Bank Task Team. Substantive revisions to ESMF procedures that affect the overall risk management approach will be subject to World Bank review and approval prior to implementation.

8.7.4 Mid-Term Safeguards Review

A comprehensive mid-term safeguards review will be conducted approximately at the mid-point of project implementation (estimated Year 3). The review will assess the adequacy of ESMF implementation, instrument effectiveness, and the continued appropriateness of the overall ESRC classification in light of implementation experience. Findings will inform the preparation of updated site-specific ESMPs and, where required, targeted capacity building for the PIU and implementing partners.

8.8 Independent Safeguards Reviews and Audits

In addition to routine PIU monitoring and World Bank supervision, independent safeguards reviews may be commissioned during project implementation where required to support verification of safeguards performance. This is particularly relevant given NOIEP's limited prior ESF implementation experience and the ongoing institutional restructuring process noted in the ESRS.

Independent reviews may include the following types of assessment:

- Targeted safeguards compliance reviews — assessing ESMP implementation quality and ESCP commitment status across a representative sample of active restoration sites;
- GRM functionality reviews — assessing the accessibility, responsiveness, and effectiveness of the grievance mechanism at both PIU and community levels, including outreach to marginalized groups;

- Social inclusion and participation audits — verifying the quality and inclusiveness of stakeholder engagement processes, including gender-disaggregated participation data and engagement with Roma, Gagauz, and other vulnerable populations;
- Biodiversity compliance reviews — technical assessment of species selection compliance, IAS monitoring, and BMP implementation, conducted in collaboration with the World Bank's biodiversity specialist;
- Labor compliance audits — review of LMP implementation, OHS records, wage payment compliance, and absence of child or forced labor, using a combination of documentation review and confidential worker interviews.

Independent audits may be commissioned by the PIU or World Bank based on supervision findings or implementation risk assessments. Terms of reference for independent reviews will be developed by the PIU with World Bank technical input.

8.9 Integration with the Project MEL Framework

The E&S monitoring system described in this chapter is fully integrated with the project's overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework (Component 4.2). Safeguards monitoring indicators will be reflected in the project's Results Framework and tracked alongside project development objective (PDO) indicators. This integration ensures that safeguards performance is visible at the highest level of project oversight and that trade-offs between ecological outcomes, social equity, and institutional compliance are systematically tracked. Specific integration points between the E&S monitoring system and the MEL framework include:

- Inclusion of key safeguards indicators (GRM resolution rate, participation rates disaggregated by gender and vulnerability, ESCP compliance status, vegetation survival rates) in the project's Results Framework;
- Coordination between PIU E&S Specialists and M&E staff to ensure consistent data collection, storage, and reporting;
- Integration of safeguards performance data into the Interim Financial Reports (IFRs) and progress reports submitted to the World Bank;
- Use of monitoring data to support the Evaluation component of the MEL framework, including assessment of E&S outcome effectiveness and lessons learned for future EbA projects in Moldova.

8.10 Capacity Building for Monitoring Implementation

Effective implementation of the E&S monitoring system requires targeted capacity building for the PIU (NOIEP), implementing contractors, Local Public Authorities, and implementing NGOs. Given the identified capacity gaps in NOIEP and the institutional reform context, the following capacity building measures are planned:

- ESF monitoring and reporting training for PIU E&S and Social Specialists — including practical training on ESMP monitoring protocol application, GRM management, safeguards documentation, and preparation of World Bank-compliant safeguards reports;
- Contractor induction training — covering ESMP requirements, OHS procedures, incident notification, chance-find protocols, Code of Conduct requirements, and site-level monitoring log maintenance;
- Community-level GRM orientation — conducted by implementing NGOs and PIU in each participating community at project launch, explaining the GRM, how to submit grievances, and expected response timelines;
- LPA capacity development — supporting LPAs to maintain local GRM access points, document community meetings, and verify land-access arrangements;
- Periodic refresher training — safeguards monitoring training will be repeated annually and adapted based on monitoring findings and supervision recommendations.
- SEAH capacity building as part of risk management — dedicated SEAH awareness training will be delivered to 100% of project staff and workers, including PIU staff, contractors, and community workers, prior to mobilisation and refreshed annually. Training will cover: prohibited behaviors; confidential reporting channels and procedures; survivor-centred response principles; non-retaliation protections; and referral pathways to national GBV services. For isolated or remote activities sites, SEAH capacity building activities will be adapted to ensure effectiveness, including through mobile outreach, community-level focal points, and communication channels accessible to women in remote locations. SEAH capacity building delivery and outcomes will be tracked as part of the project's E&S monitoring system, with the following indicators reported annually: (i) % of project staff and workers who completed SEAH awareness training (target: 100% by end of Year 1, maintained annually); (ii) # of SEAH incidents reported through the dedicated confidential mechanism (disaggregated by type and outcome); (iii) evidence that SEAH referral pathways have been tested and documented; and (iv) evidence that the SEAH mechanism has been adapted for remote/isolated activities sites.

Capacity building activities will be coordinated by the PIU and supported by the World Bank Task Team, particularly during the initial phase of project implementation. NOIEP's ongoing institutional restructuring will be taken into account in the design of capacity building arrangements to ensure continuity of safeguards monitoring capacity despite staff changes.

9. Labour Management Procedure (LMP)

This chapter of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the Moldova Green Shield: Enhancing Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project (P516908) sets out the Labour Management Procedures (LMP) applicable to all project-financed activities. The LMP has been prepared in accordance with World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 2 (ESS2) on Labour and Working Conditions, ILO Core Labour Standards, and the Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 154-XV/2003).

The LMP forms an integral part of this ESMF and must be read in conjunction with the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), the Gender Action Plan (GAP), and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

9.1. Overview and Regulatory Basis

9.1.1 Project Context

The project is co-financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with a grant of US\$39.28 million and IBRD with a loan of US\$10.00 million, for total financing of US\$49.28 million. Implementation is managed by the National Office for Environmental Projects Implementation (NOIEP) as the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), under the oversight of the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The project's E&S risk classification is Substantial (ESRS ESRSC05644, 8 May 2026), with labour risks rated Moderate and SEA/SH risks rated Low.

Labour use is concentrated in Component 2 (large-scale ecological restoration works), with supporting roles across Components 1, 3, and 4. Peak labour demand is expected in Years 2–3 for afforestation, watershed and riparian buffer restoration, and construction of the Southern Regional Forest Reproductive Material Centre (RFRMC).

9.1.2 Applicable Regulatory Framework

The LMP is grounded in the following instruments, listed in order of precedence where conflicts arise — the most protective standard shall always apply:

- World Bank ESF Environmental and Social Standard 2 (ESS2) — Labour and Working Conditions
- ILO Core Conventions ratified by Moldova: Nos. 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138, and 182
- Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 154-XV/2003)
- Law on Occupational Health and Safety No. 186-XVI/2008
- Law on Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men No. 5-XVI/2006
- Law on Ensuring Equality No. 121/2012
- Law on Protection of Children No. 140/2013
- World Bank Group Environmental, Health and Safety (WBG EHS) General Guidelines

9.2. Categories of Project Workers

Five categories of workers are engaged under the project, as defined in ESS2 paragraphs 3–4. Each category is subject to differentiated requirements under this LMP:

Worker Category	Description	Indicative Number	Key Procedures
Direct Workers	PIU staff: Project Coordinator; Procurement, FM, M&E, E&S, Gender and OHS Specialists; technical consultants for forestry, hydrology, and ecosystem modelling.	15–20 persons	Full LMP; national Labour Code; individual employment contracts or consultancy agreements.
Contracted Workers	Restoration contractors and SFEs for reforestation, gully stabilization, riparian buffers. RFRMC construction workers. Engineering and surveying firms.	200+ persons over lifecycle	LMP; contractor-level labour management plans; site-specific OHS Management Plans; Code of Conduct.
Community / Seasonal Workers	Local community members from SDR and ATUG for manual tree planting, fence installation, and site maintenance during spring and autumn planting seasons.	Up to 1,000+ persons (seasonal, cumulative)	LMP Section 11 provisions; simplified Letter of Engagement; OHS induction; full W-GRM access.

Worker Category	Description	Indicative Number	Key Procedures
Primary Supply Workers	Nursery workers producing climate-resilient seedlings; workers supplying fencing, tools, and RFRMC construction materials.	To be confirmed at inception	ESS2 risk-based screening for child labour, forced labour, OHS; Supplier Self-Declaration.
Government Civil Servants	Staff of NOIEP, MoE, Moldsilva, NA Apele Moldovei, ICAS, and Environmental Agency involved in project implementation.	50+ persons	Existing public-sector employment terms; project Code of Conduct and OHS provisions on project sites.

Where state-owned entities or public institutions are contracted to carry out project-financed works, their personnel shall be treated as Contracted Workers for ESS2 purposes and shall comply with this LMP in full.

9.3. Assessment of Key Labour Risks

The table below summarises identified labour risks, their assessed level, and the primary mitigation measures required under this LMP. Detailed procedures are set out in subsequent sections.

Risk Category	Risk Level	Primary Mitigation Measures
Terrain hazards: falls, slips on eroded slopes and gullies	Substantial	Slip-resistant PPE; safe access trails; prohibition on unstable slopes during/after heavy rain; fall-protection harnesses for gully work; daily pre-work terrain briefings.
Heat stress: heatstroke, dehydration, UV exposure in SDR summer conditions	Substantial	Mandatory hydration protocols; shift restructuring during heatwaves (restricted 11:00–16:00); mobile shaded rest stations; UV-protective clothing; supervisor heat-exhaustion training.
Machinery and tool hazards: forestry equipment, chainsaws, axes	Substantial	Certified and trained operators only; mandatory PPE (cut-resistant gloves, hard hats, chainsaw trousers, hearing protection); machinery exclusion zones; daily equipment maintenance checks.
Biological hazards: tick-borne illness, allergic reactions	Moderate	Insect repellents; long-sleeved clothing; post-shift tick checks; first-aid kits with antihistamines and epinephrine; training on biological risks.
Wildfire risk in dry steppe sites	Moderate	Seasonal wildfire prevention training; fire extinguishers and beaters at all sites; no smoking outside designated areas; pre-established evacuation routes.
Informal employment: workers without written contracts	Moderate	Written contract or Letter of Engagement required before work commences; on-site personnel registry; PIU unannounced audits.
Wage and benefit non-compliance	Moderate	No payment below national minimum wage; wages paid monthly directly to workers; payslips or bank transfer records; monthly payroll audits to PIU.
Discrimination against women, Roma, Gagauz, and marginalised groups	Moderate	Inclusive recruitment; employment information in Romanian and Russian; equal pay for equal work; disaggregated monitoring by gender and ethnicity.
Child labour: underage workers in community and supply chains	Moderate	Minimum age 18 for hazardous work; minimum 15 for non-hazardous work with parental consent and PIU risk assessment; mandatory ID verification; penalties in all contracts.

Risk Category	Risk Level	Primary Mitigation Measures
SEA/SH at worksites and in community engagement	Low	Mandatory Code of Conduct; SEA/SH prevention training; confidential reporting channel; GBV Focal Point with referral pathways; immediate dismissal for confirmed violations.
Labour influx: skilled workers from outside host communities	Low–Moderate	Local hiring preference; Labour Influx Management Plan where external labour exceeds 25 at a single site; SEA/SH induction for all external workers; community pre-mobilization meetings.
Forced or bonded labour	Low	Zero tolerance; workers free to terminate with reasonable notice; prohibition of debt bondage and retention of identity documents; verification in all procurement processes.

9.4. Terms and Conditions of Employment

All project workers shall be engaged under terms and conditions that meet or exceed the requirements of the Moldovan Labour Code and ESS2. The more protective standard shall prevail in all cases.

9.4.1 Direct Workers (PIU Staff and Consultants)

- Individual employment contracts or consultancy agreements concluded in compliance with Labour Code Article 49
- Remuneration at or above national minimum wage; transparent payment schedule
- Maximum working hours: 8 hours/day, 40 hours/week; voluntary overtime at premium rates
- 28 days paid annual leave; statutory maternity and paternity leave; nursing breaks
- Social insurance contributions fully paid; health insurance coverage
- Right to organize and bargain collectively; access to W-GRM

9.4.2 Contracted Workers

- All workers engaged under written contracts before commencing work
- Contractor required to maintain on-site personnel registry with signed contracts and OHS training certificates
- Monthly payroll audit reports submitted to PIU; wage complaints logged in W-GRM
- Flexible work arrangements (split shifts, part-time, task-sharing) for workers with care responsibilities
- Transparent public recruitment; equal opportunities for women, Roma, Gagauz, persons with disabilities, and youth

9.4.3 Community and Seasonal Workers

- Voluntary and compensated participation: remuneration not less than national minimum wage
- Simplified Letter of Engagement specifying task, duration, compensation, OHS obligations, and W-GRM access — provided in Romanian or Russian
- OHS induction before each work assignment; mandatory PPE provided free of charge
- No coercion or mandatory community contributions infringing individual rights

9.5. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Management

9.5.1 OHS Management Approach

OHS management follows the prevention hierarchy: eliminate risk > reduce at source > collective protective measures > individual PPE. All contractors shall develop and implement a site-specific OHS Management Plan approved by PIU before mobilization. Plans shall be updated following any serious incident. Within the PIU, OHS oversight is the responsibility of the E&S Specialists, who will receive appropriate OHS training to fulfil this function.

9.5.1 PPE Requirements by Task

Work Activity	Mandatory PPE
All field activities	Safety boots (slip-resistant), high-visibility vest, sun hat, UV-protective long sleeves, insect repellent
Chainsaw and heavy machinery operation	Cut-resistant gloves, safety goggles, hard hat, hearing protection, chainsaw-protection trousers
Steep slope and gully work	Fall-protection harness, slip-resistant footwear, hard hat
Nursery and seedling handling	Protective gloves, dust mask or respirator where applicable

Work Activity	Mandatory PPE
Construction (RFRMC)	Hard hat, safety boots, high-visibility vest, gloves, dust mask for concrete/masonry work
Heat exposure (>30°C)	Wide-brimmed hat, UV-protective clothing, mandatory hydration station access

9.5.3 Heat Stress Protocol

- Continuous clean water supply at all sites; minimum 1 litre/hour per worker in temperatures >30°C
- Shift restructuring during heatwaves: work restricted to early morning and late afternoon, avoiding peak heat 11:00–16:00
- Mobile shaded rest stations provided at all active restoration sites
- Supervisors trained to recognize and respond to heat exhaustion symptoms
- Workers with heat-related illness immediately removed from work and transported to medical facilities

9.5.4 Emergency Preparedness and Incident Reporting

- Fully stocked first-aid kits at every active site; at least one trained first-aid officer per team
- Emergency contacts (112, PIU OHS Focal Point, nearest hospital) displayed at all sites
- Pre-established evacuation routes and assembly points communicated in daily pre-work briefings
- Stop Work Authority: every worker has the right and obligation to stop work in case of imminent danger without fear of retaliation
- Serious incident notification: Contractor to PIU within 24 hours; PIU to World Bank within 48 hours
- Formal incident investigation report within 10 working days; corrective action plan submitted to PIU

9.6. Child Labour and Forced Labour Prevention

Measure	Standard Applied
Minimum age for hazardous work (machinery, steep slopes, chainsaw use, construction)	18 years — no exceptions
Minimum age for non-hazardous work (light planting tasks, nursery support)	15 years, with parental consent, PIU risk assessment, and continuous supervision
Age verification	Mandatory national ID check before engagement; ID copy retained in worker file
Child labour found on site	Immediate removal; referral to social services; notify World Bank within 48 hours
Forced labour prevention	Zero tolerance; workers free to terminate with reasonable notice; prohibition of debt bondage and document retention

9.7. SEA/SH Prevention

The project's SEA/SH risk is rated Low. The project does not involve large-scale civil works camps or significant labour influx. The following measures are nonetheless mandatory for all project workers:

- Mandatory Code of Conduct signed by every worker before commencing work — as a condition of employment
- Regular SEA/SH prevention training for all workers and community facilitators
- Dedicated confidential SEA/SH reporting channel, accessible only to GBV Focal Point within PIU
- GBV Focal Point designated with pre-established referral pathways to national GBV service providers
- Survivor-centered approach: confidentiality protected; survivor's wishes guide response
- Immediate dismissal and referral to law enforcement for confirmed violations
- Annual SEA/SH awareness training; pre-mobilization community meetings where external workers are present

9.8. Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism (W-GRM)

The W-GRM provides all project workers with a safe, confidential, and accessible mechanism to raise concerns, free from retaliation. It complements but does not replace existing national labour inspection and legal remedies.

9.8.1 Submission Channels

- Dedicated project hotline and SMS number (available in Romanian and Russian)
- Locked suggestion boxes at each worksite and nursery
- Direct in-person reporting to PIU Social Specialist or OHS Focal Point
- Anonymous written submissions (no identifying information required)
- SEA/SH concerns: separate confidential channel, accessible only to GBV Focal Point

9.8.2 Resolution Process and Timelines

Stage	Action	Timeline
Registration	Grievance logged in W-GRM register; reference number issued to complainant (if not anonymous)	Within 2 working days of receipt
Acknowledgement	Complainant informed of receipt and expected timeline	Within 3 working days
Investigation	PIU E&S Specialist or designated officer investigates; contractor involved as appropriate	Within 10 working days
Resolution	Proposed resolution communicated to complainant; opportunity to accept or escalate	Within 15 working days
Escalation	Unresolved grievances escalated to NOIEP Director; referral to national labour inspectorate if warranted	Within 5 working days of escalation request
Closure	Grievance closed in register once resolved and accepted by complainant; outcome documented	Within 2 working days of resolution acceptance

Target: ≥90% of grievances resolved within 15 working days. Results reported quarterly to World Bank. No retaliation is tolerated against workers who submit grievances in good faith.

9.9. Contractor Management

9.9.1 Pre-Qualification Requirements

- Demonstrated OHS capacity (past performance records, certifications, designated ESHS staff)
- No history of child labour, forced labour, or serious unmitigated OHS violations
- Demonstrated inclusive recruitment practices
- Capacity to implement project-specific Code of Conduct and W-GRM

9.9.2 Contractual Obligations

- Incorporation of this LMP by reference as a binding contract document
- Submission and PIU approval of a site-specific OHS Management Plan before mobilization
- Compliance with all LMP requirements for contracted, subcontracted, and community workers
- Monthly labour and OHS reports submitted to PIU (format: LMP Annex 6)
- ESHS performance security and remedies: warnings, financial penalties, suspension, contract termination for non-compliance
- Cascading requirements to all subcontractors

9.9.3 Performance Monitoring

- Scheduled and unannounced inspections and spot checks at project sites and nurseries
- Monthly review of contractor labour records: employment contracts; Codes of Conduct; grievance logs; OHS incident reports; training records; age verification registries
- Quarterly contractor E&S performance reports to PIU, disaggregated by gender, age, and worker category
- Standardized safety rate indicators calculated quarterly: LTAR target <1.0; LTIFR target <2.0 per 1,000,000 man-hours
- Threshold breach triggers mandatory OHS review within 10 working days

9.10. Primary Supply Chain Management

In accordance with ESS2 paragraphs 39–40, NOIEP/PIU will implement risk-based monitoring of primary suppliers (nurseries, fencing, tools, construction materials) for child labour, forced labour, and serious OHS issues.

- All primary suppliers identified at inception and registered in a PIU supplier register
- Risk screening of each primary supplier before first supply
- Purchase orders and supply contracts include mandatory anti-child-labour, anti-forced-labour, and minimum OHS clauses
- Suppliers sign a Labour Standards Self-Declaration before contract award
- Periodic site visits to nurseries and supplier facilities; corrective action required within a defined timeframe for identified violations
- Findings reported in quarterly E&S monitoring reports to World Bank

9.11. Institutional Responsibilities

Function / Entity	LMP Responsibilities
Ministry of Environment / Project Steering Committee	Strategic oversight; inter-institutional coordination; annual review of LMP implementation. Accountability for compliance with World Bank ESF and national labour legislation.
NOIEP / PIU — Project Coordinator	Overall LMP implementation; coordination with E&S and OHS Specialists; escalation of serious issues to PSC and World Bank.
PIU E&S Specialists (2)	Day-to-day LMP oversight; contractor ESHS compliance monitoring; W-GRM management; preparation of E&S monitoring reports; incident reporting.
PIU OHS Focal Point (1)	OHS policy implementation; site inspection programme; PPE procurement and distribution; OHS incident investigation and corrective action follow-up.
PIU Gender Specialist / GBV Focal Point (1)	Inclusive recruitment monitoring; SEA/SH reporting channel management; referrals to GBV service providers; Gender Action Plan integration into LMP.
PIU Social Specialist (1)	W-GRM operation; community worker engagement; coordination with LPAs for community recruitment; disaggregated data compilation.
Contractors — ESHS Supervisor (per contract)	Site-level OHS Management Plan implementation; daily safety briefings; incident reporting within 24 hours to PIU; monthly labour and OHS reports.
World Bank	Supervision and technical support; review of E&S monitoring reports; clearance of serious incident reports; verification of ESCP commitments.

9.12. Capacity Building and Training

All project workers must complete mandatory induction training before site access is granted. The training programme is set out below. PIU shall maintain a Training Master Registry with signed attendance sheets and pre/post-training evaluations.

Training Module	Target Group	Frequency
General Project Induction: LMP obligations, worker rights, Code of Conduct, W-GRM	All workers (direct, contracted, community)	Before starting; refresher at contract renewal
Occupational Health and Safety: site-specific hazards, PPE, emergency procedures, wildfire	All workers; supervisors	Before starting; refresher every 6 months
SEA/SH Prevention: prohibited behaviours, reporting channels, survivor-centered approach	All workers; management; community facilitators	Annual
Climate Stress Management: heatstroke prevention, hydration, adjusted shift scheduling	Field restoration teams; supervisors	Before summer season each year

Training Module	Target Group	Frequency
Silvicultural Safety: chainsaw safety, steep-slope planting, biological hazard protocols	Contracted field workers; Moldsilva SFE staff	Annual; updated on site change
Incident Investigation and Reporting: forms, root-cause analysis, World Bank timelines	Supervisors; PIU E&S Specialists	Annual refresher
Community Worker Safety Briefing: assembly points, basic PPE, W-GRM access	Community workers	Before each work assignment

9.13. Monitoring, Reporting, and Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target / Measurement	Frequency
Total workers by gender, age band, ethnicity, and worker category	Disaggregated workforce data	Monthly
Female participation in restoration roles	Target: 30–40%	Monthly
OHS incidents: fatalities, lost-time injuries, near misses; LTAR; LTIFR; TRIR	LTAR target <1.0; LTIFR target <2.0 per 1,000,000 man-hours	Monthly
OHS training delivered: inductions, refreshers, number of workers trained	Training Master Registry	Monthly
PPE compliance during site inspections	Target: 100% compliance	Monthly
W-GRM performance: grievances received, resolved, pending	Target: ≥90% resolved within 15 working days	Quarterly
Child / forced labour incidents: age-verification audit results, supplier screenings	Target: zero incidents	Quarterly
Contractor non-compliance: notices issued, corrective actions completed on time	Zero serious repeated non-compliance	Quarterly
Wage compliance: payroll audit results, wage complaints received	Zero underpayment incidents	Monthly
Supplier labour standards: suppliers screened, non-compliances identified and resolved	100% primary suppliers screened before first supply	Quarterly
SEAH indicators: % of project staff and workers who completed SEAH awareness training; # of SEAH incidents reported through the dedicated confidential mechanism (disaggregated by type and outcome) with documented follow-up within the agreed timeframe	Target: 100% trained by end of Year 1; reported annually. Zero unresolved SEAH cases beyond agreed response timeline.	Annual

Reporting schedule: Monthly contractor labour and OHS reports to PIU; quarterly PIU E&S monitoring reports to World Bank; preliminary serious incident notification within 24 hours (Contractor to PIU) / 48 hours (PIU to World Bank); annual E&S performance report to World Bank.

9.14. Budget and Resources

A dedicated LMP implementation budget has been incorporated into the project E&S Management budget. Contractors are contractually required to cover administrative costs of their own ESHS personnel as part of their contract price.

Annexes

Annex 1. Environmental and Social Screening Form

This screening checklist is to be applied at site level prior to the design or commencement of any project-supported activity. It supports the identification of relevant environmental and social risks and the determination of appropriate mitigation measures. Where any risk is identified, the screening result will guide the preparation of a site-specific ESMP or other instrument, or the preparation of a site-specific ESMP.

Part A — General Information

- Activity title: _____
- Location (district, GPS coordinates): _____
- Type of activity (afforestation, reforestation, ANR, shelterbelt, riparian buffer, silvopastoral, nursery, other): _____
- Estimated area / scale: _____
- Estimated duration: _____
- Implementing entity / contractor: _____
- Land tenure status (state forest land / municipal / communal / other): _____

Part B — Environmental Screening

Table A1.1 Environmental screening checklist

Activity / Potential Impact	Yes / No	Details and Risks	Reference to Mitigation
Afforestation/reforestation > 20 ha or in protected area / buffer ≥ 5 ha (triggers EIA)	☐ Yes ☐ No		EIA required under Law 86/2014; site-specific ESMP.
Activity in or near protected area, Ramsar site, Emerald Network site, or critical habitat	☐ Yes ☐ No		Biodiversity Assessment; site-level critical habitat screening; BMP.
Risk of disturbing wildlife habitats (nesting, breeding, migration routes)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Biodiversity monitoring plan; seasonal restrictions.
Activity in or affecting riparian zones / wetlands / floodplains	☐ Yes ☐ No		Water Law No. 272/2011; PI NA Apele Moldovei coordination; sediment control.
Riverbank or soil stabilization works > 1.5 ha	☐ Yes ☐ No		EIA screening; erosion control measures.
Use of non-native or potentially invasive species	☐ Yes ☐ No		Native-species selection protocol; invasive-species prevention measures.
Risk of soil erosion or sediment runoff during planting/site prep	☐ Yes ☐ No		Soil-conservation techniques; phased works.
Use of fuels, lubricants, fertilizers or biocides	☐ Yes ☐ No		Safe storage and handling; waste management.
Generation of waste (organic, plastic, debris)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Waste segregation and licensed disposal.

Activity / Potential Impact	Yes / No	Details and Risks	Reference to Mitigation
Risk of GHG emissions or air quality issues	☐ Yes ☐ No		ESS3 measures; resource efficiency.
Activity affecting international waterways (Prut, Dniester)	☐ Yes ☐ No		OP 7.50 screening; notification as required.
Other potential environmental impacts (specify)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Site-specific mitigation.
Desiltation or other in-water works in reservoirs, or watercourses	☐ Yes ☐ No		Sediment quality analysis; sediment management and disposal plan in site-specific ESMP; turbidity control; seasonal work windows; ESS4 dam-safety screening.
Activity dependent on, or affecting the structure or operation of, an existing dam (incl. irrigation water supply)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Excluded — see project Exclusion List (Section 4.2).

Part C — Social Screening

Table A1.2 Social screening checklist

Social Risk / Impact	Yes / No	Details / Risks	Reference to Mitigation
Potential restriction of access to land or natural resources (pasture, firewood, fishing, water)	☐ Yes ☐ No		ESS5 provisions via site screening; voluntary access protocol; livelihood-support measures.
Use of communal or publicly accessible land	☐ Yes ☐ No		Participatory site selection; agreements with LPAs and users.
Presence of informal or customary uses on the proposed site	☐ Yes ☐ No		Census of users; ESS5 provisions via site screening.
Risks to vulnerable groups (women, elderly, youth, Roma, Gagauz, persons with disabilities)	☐ Yes ☐ No		SEP inclusion measures; targeted outreach.
Risks of physical or economic displacement	☐ Yes ☐ No		EXCLUDED — activity not eligible if confirmed.
OHS risks for workers (tree planting, machinery, nursery)	☐ Yes ☐ No		LMP; OHS plan; PPE; training.
Risks of child labor or forced labor	☐ Yes ☐ No		LMP minimum-age verification; contractor due diligence.

Social Risk / Impact	Yes / No	Details / Risks	Reference to Mitigation
Risks of SEA/SH in dispersed sites	☐ Yes ☐ No		Code of Conduct; GRM SEA/SH pathway; GBV focal point.
Potential impacts on cultural heritage (known sites or chance finds)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Chance-find procedure (Annex 2); coordination with cultural heritage authorities.
Community engagement requirements (inclusive consultation, language access)	☐ Yes ☐ No		SEP; multilingual consultation (Ro/Ru/Gagauz).
Other potential social impacts (specify)	☐ Yes ☐ No		Site-specific mitigation.

Part D — Screening Outcome

Environmental and Social Risk Category for this activity:

- ☐ Low Risk — minimal impacts, easily mitigated through standard ESMF measures.
- ☐ Moderate Risk — site-specific, manageable impacts; site-specific ESMP required.
- ☐ Substantial Risk — substantial impacts, multiple mitigation instruments required (ESMP + BMP).
- ☐ High Risk — NOT eligible for financing under this project (referral to Exclusion List).

Recommended Safeguards Instruments (select all that apply):

- ☐ No further action required — standard ESMF measures apply.
- ☐ E&S checklist with standard measures.
- ☐ Site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).
- ☐ Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) — ESS6.
- ☐ ESS5 screening and site-level mitigation measures.
- ☐ National EIA / Biodiversity Assessment required (Law 86/2014).
- ☐ Chance Finds Procedure included in contracts.
- ☐ OP 7.50 (International Waterways) screening.
- ☐ Other: _____

Screened by (name, position, signature, date): _____

Reviewed and approved by (name, position, signature, date): _____

Annex 2 — Guideline on Code of Conduct for Project Workers

A satisfactory Code of Conduct will contain obligations on all project workers (including subcontractors and community workers) addressing the following issues as a minimum. Additional obligations may be added to respond to particular concerns of the project location and circumstances.

The Code of Conduct will be written in plain language and signed by each worker to indicate that they have:

- Received a copy of the Code;
- Had the Code explained to them in a language they understand;
- Acknowledged that adherence to this Code is a condition of employment or engagement; and
- Understood that violations of the Code can result in serious consequences, up to and including dismissal or referral to legal authorities.

Contractors will conduct continuous awareness-raising and training activities to ensure that workers abide by the Code of Conduct (including through toolbox talks). Contractors will also ensure that local communities are aware of the Code of Conduct and able to report any concerns or non-compliance.

Issues to be Addressed by the Code

- **a)** Compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations of the Republic of Moldova.
- **b)** Compliance with applicable health and safety requirements (including proper use of prescribed personal protective equipment (PPE), preventing avoidable accidents, and a duty to report conditions or practices that pose a safety hazard or threaten the environment). Workers who remove themselves from such situations will not be required to return until necessary remedial action has been taken, and will not be retaliated against.
- **c)** The use of illegal substances and alcohol while on duty is prohibited.
- **d)** Non-discrimination (for example on the basis of family status, ethnicity, race, gender, religion, language, marital status, birth, age, disability, or political conviction).
- **e)** Respectful interactions with community members (conveying an attitude of respect and non-discrimination).
- **f)** Sexual harassment: prohibition of use of language or behavior, in particular towards women or children, that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, or culturally inappropriate.
- **g)** Violence or exploitation: prohibition of the exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior.
- **h)** Protection of children: prohibitions against abuse, defilement, or otherwise unacceptable behavior with children; limiting interactions with children; ensuring their safety in project areas.
- **i)** Sanitation requirements: workers will use specified sanitary facilities provided by their employer and not open areas.
- **j)** Avoidance of conflicts of interest (benefits, contracts, employment, preferential treatment, or favors will not be provided to any person with whom there is a financial, family, or personal connection).
- **k)** Respecting reasonable work instructions (including regarding environmental and social norms).
- **l)** Protection and proper use of property (prohibiting theft, carelessness, or waste); responsible use of natural resources (no unauthorized cutting of vegetation, hunting, fishing, or collection of wildlife).
- **m)** Duty to report violations of this Code.
- **n)** No retaliation against workers who report violations of the Code in good faith.

Chance-Find Procedure (for inclusion in contracts and worker training)

In the event that any worker, supervisor, or community member discovers potential cultural heritage (archaeological remains, historical artifacts, burial sites, sacred items, or any feature of cultural significance) during project activities, the following procedure shall apply:

- Immediately stop all works in the affected area;
- Secure the site to prevent damage, removal, or further disturbance;
- Notify the supervisor and the PIU within 24 hours;
- The PIU will notify the relevant national authorities (Ministry of Culture and/or local heritage authority) within 48 hours;
- Works will not resume in the affected area until written authorization is received from the relevant authority, including any mitigation requirements;
- Document the find, including photographs, GPS coordinates, and circumstances of discovery.

Relevant provisions of the chance-find procedure will be incorporated into all bidding documents and contracts to ensure consistent implementation.

Annex 3 — Overview of National Environmental Impact Assessment Process

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure in the Republic of Moldova is regulated by Law No. 86/2014 on EIA, as amended in 2023 to fully transpose Directive 2011/92/EU and partially incorporate Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Article 6, paragraphs 3 and 4). The procedure is administered by the Environmental Agency under the Ministry of Environment, supported by the Guidelines for the Execution of EIA and the Biodiversity Assessment Guidelines (Order No. 105 of 18.06.2024).

The procedure is preceded by preliminary screening of the proposed activity. It includes the following procedural steps.

Table A3.1 Step-by-step national EIA procedure

Step	Activity	Scope
Step 1	Preliminary assessment (screening)	Identifies and assesses the potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed activity at an early planning stage. Activities listed in Annex 1 of Law 86/2014 are subject to mandatory EIA. Activities listed in Annex 2 require analysis of potential significant impacts. The developer submits an application for an Environmental Permit; the Environmental Agency publishes it; interested authorities and the public submit comments within 10 working days. The screening decision determines: (a) whether full EIA is required (with or without Biodiversity Assessment); (b) whether a Biodiversity Assessment alone is required (for activities affecting Emerald sites); or (c) whether the Environmental Permit may be issued directly.
Step 2	Scoping Report	Determines the level of detail of information to be provided by the developer and the experts involved, and identifies potentially significant impacts to be assessed in detail. The Scoping Report is valid for two years from issuance by the Environmental Agency.
Step 3	Preparation of the EIA Report	The developer appoints a team of qualified experts to prepare the EIA Report (per Article 102(3) of Law 86/2014). The report includes information required by law and as set out in the Scoping Report.
Step 4	Consultation of the EIA Report	The Environmental Agency publishes the EIA Report on its website; the developer publishes notice in a national and local newspaper and on its website. Comments are collected over a defined consultation period. The developer updates the EIA Report based on comments, with explanation of how comments have been addressed.
Step 5	Assessment of the Quality of the EIA Report	The Environmental Agency submits the updated report to the Technical Committee for quality analysis based on the Guidelines for Assessment of the Quality of the EIA Report. The Technical Committee provides a detailed and reasoned opinion on the report's quality. Where deficiencies are identified, the Environmental Agency issues an opinion highlighting deficiencies and recommending measures to be taken.
Step 6	Issuance of the Decision on the Environmental Permit	Within 30 working days of receiving the Technical Committee's opinion, the Environmental Agency decides whether to issue or refuse the Environmental Permit. The Environmental Permit is valid for four years and may be extended once for one year. If the developer has not obtained approval for the activity by the time the Permit expires, the EIA procedure must be restarted.

For the Moldova Green Shield project, activities likely to require EIA include initial afforestation > 20 ha, afforestation within or near protected natural areas ≥ 5 ha, riverbank erosion-control works, and rainwater erosion-control works ≥ 1.5 ha (per Annex 2 of Law 86/2014, points 10 and 11). Activities likely to significantly affect Emerald Network sites — regardless of scale or whether listed in Annex 1 or 2 — are subject to Biodiversity Assessment. Once specific intervention locations and scales are confirmed during project preparation and implementation, NOIEP will conduct site-specific screening to determine applicability of national EIA and Biodiversity Assessment procedures.

Works in or affecting water bodies — including desiltation and rehabilitation of small reservoirs — additionally require EIA screening under the national procedure and water-use/works authorizations under Water Law No. 272/2011, coordinated with PI NA Apele Moldovei.

Annex 4 — Summary of ESS Applicability and Instruments

Table A4.1 ESS applicability and project instruments to address each standard

ESS	Relevant?	Project Instruments Addressing the Standard
ESS1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Yes	This ESMF; site-specific ESMPs; integrated risk-management procedures; capacity-building.
ESS2: Labor and Working Conditions	Yes	Labor Management Procedures (Section 7); Codes of Conduct (Annex 2); Worker GRM; OHS plans.
ESS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Yes	ESMF Section 4 (mitigation measures); site-specific ESMPs covering waste management, nursery water/efficiency, sediment control. Includes e-waste collection and recycling through licensed operators for ICT and sensor equipment replaced under Sub-Component 1.3.
ESS4: Community Health and Safety	Yes	ESMF Section 4; site-specific ESMPs covering site access control, signage, traffic management, dust/noise control. Includes ESS4 dam-safety screening for desiltation and water-storage works within existing impoundments (Sub-Component 2.2).
ESS5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Yes	ESS5 provisions applied through site screening and ESMPs; voluntary access protocols; livelihood-support measures under Component 3; voluntary access protocols; livelihood-support measures under Component 3.
ESS6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Yes	Site-level critical habitat screening; Biodiversity Management Plans (site-specific where triggered); native-species selection; invasive-species prevention; coordination with national academic institutions and biodiversity specialist.
ESS7: Indigenous Peoples / Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Not Currently Relevant	Not applicable to project context.
ESS8: Cultural Heritage	Yes	Chance Finds Procedure (Annex 2); inclusion in bidding documents and contracts.
ESS9: Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant	Project does not involve financial intermediaries.
ESS10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Yes	Stakeholder Engagement Plan (separate instrument); accessible GRM embedded in SEP; inclusive multilingual engagement; inclusive multilingual engagement; SEA/SH pathway.

Annex 5 — PROCESS FRAMEWORK

Prepared in accordance with World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5) and Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Moldova Green Shield: Enhancing Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (P516908) aims to enhance ecosystem functionality and reduce climate vulnerability in selected areas of southern Moldova. With total financing of US\$49.28 million — co-funded by a Green Climate Fund (GCF) grant of US\$39.28 million and an IBRD loan of US\$10 million — the project is executed by the Republic of Moldova through the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and implemented by the National Office for Environmental Projects Implementation (NOIEP) through a dedicated Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The World Bank serves as Accredited Entity to the GCF and provides implementation support and supervision consistent with its Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

The project is structured around four components: Component 1 (US\$2.89M) strengthens institutional and technical capacity, advances climate-informed data systems and early warning digitalization, and develops data-driven planning tools; Component 2 (US\$38.47M) delivers large-scale ecological infrastructure restoration across approximately 13,000 hectares; Component 3 (US\$5.45M) supports community engagement, climate-resilient livelihoods, and stewardship systems; Component 4 (US\$2.47M) covers project management, monitoring and evaluation.

The project targets the Southern Development Region (SDR) of Moldova, spanning eight climate-stressed districts — Cantemir, Cahul, Leova, Cimislia, Taraclia, Basarabeasca, Causeni, Stefan Voda — and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia (ATUG). The Prut river catchment, hosting the internationally significant Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar site and Emerald Network areas.

Objective of the Process Framework

This Process Framework (PF) is prepared as an integral component of the project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), consistent with World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5). This PF also reflects World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure, given its reliance on consultation, disclosure, and grievance procedures. It provides procedures and measures to guide the identification, assessment, and mitigation of any adverse impacts arising from restrictions on access to communal lands, grazing areas, or natural resources resulting from project activities.

While land acquisition and physical displacement are not currently anticipated, these possibilities cannot be fully excluded at this stage of project preparation. Restoration activities — particularly afforestation, reforestation, shelterbelt establishment, riparian buffer restoration, and wetland rehabilitation under Component 2 — may result in temporary or longer-term restrictions on access to communal pastures, riparian corridors, or other shared natural resources. This Process Framework has been prepared precisely to provide the mechanism for identifying, assessing, and addressing any such impacts should they arise during implementation. It establishes the participatory processes through which affected persons and communities will be identified, consulted, and supported, ensuring that no restrictions on access to resources are imposed without prior, informed community consultation and documented mitigation commitments.

PF Monitoring and Reporting

The PIU will supervise and monitor PF implementation, with results included in quarterly and semi-annual reports to the World Bank. External monitoring will be conducted by an independent agency engaged by NOIEP over all land access restriction activities semi-annually until project completion.

A dedicated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is set out in Section VIII of this PF, providing affected persons and communities with a means to raise concerns regarding PF implementation.

Adaptive management principles established under the Project ESMF shall also apply to implementation of this Process Framework. Where monitoring identifies significant deviations, unanticipated livelihood impacts, unresolved community grievances, recurring access-related disputes, or ineffective mitigation measures, the PIU shall undertake corrective actions, which may include:

- (a) revision of mitigation measures;
- (b) supplementary consultations with affected communities;

- (c) preparation of additional livelihood restoration measures;
- (d) temporary suspension of activities in affected areas; or
- (e) revision of the applicable Plan of Action.

Any significant changes to PF implementation measures shall be documented and reported to the World Bank in accordance with the ESCP and ESMF reporting procedures.

I. Project Description and Applicability of the PF

Project Description

The Moldova Green Shield project is a five-year ecosystem-based adaptation investment targeting the Southern Development Region (SDR) of Moldova, one of the country's most climate-stressed landscapes. Southern Moldova is characterised by semi-arid steppe and forest-steppe ecosystems facing accelerating land degradation, below-average forest cover (around 8.8% in the south compared to a national average of 11%), near-absent shelterbelt systems, degraded wetlands, and deep dependence on climate-sensitive agriculture and grazing. Recurrent droughts — with six major events recorded between 2000 and 2020 — cause annual climate-related agricultural losses estimated at US\$164 million.

Component 1: Institutional Capacity Development and Data-Driven Planning (US\$2.89M)

This component strengthens the institutional, technical, and operational capacity of both national and local stakeholders to effectively plan, implement, and sustain climate-informed ecosystem restoration and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) efforts across southern Moldova. In addition to governance systems, the component advances the digitalization and modernization of climate-informed decision-support and early warning systems, enabling timely, impact-based responses to increasing climate risks. Sub-Component 1.1 builds inter-institutional coordination and develops NOIEP's capacity for effective project implementation, with particular emphasis on strengthening NAAM, Moldsilva territorial enterprises, and LPAs as primary implementation entities. Sub-Component 1.2 develops integrated hydrological and ecosystem planning systems to support evidence-based decision-making, with a focus on the Lower Prut landscape. Sub-Component 1.3 strengthens climate resilience by modernizing and digitalizing the national early warning system to deliver timely, impact-based, and climate-informed alerts, with a focus on droughts, heatwaves, and other extreme weather events.

Component 2: Climate-Resilient Ecological Infrastructure Restoration in Production Landscapes (US\$38.47M)

This component delivers the project's core restoration investments across approximately 13,000 hectares. Sub-Component 2.1 finances afforestation and ecological restoration of degraded communal lands (5,000 ha), assisted natural regeneration (ANR), and forest rehabilitation (3,500 ha), and establishment of the Southern Regional Forest Reproductive Material Centre (RFRMC). Sub-Component 2.2 finances riparian restoration (2,000 ha) including rehabilitation of wetlands and floodplains in the Prut River catchment. Sub-Component 2.3 finances shelterbelt restoration (500 ha) and development of silvopastoral systems in the Bugeac Steppe region (2,000 ha).

Component 3: Community Engagement, Climate-Resilient Livelihoods and Local Stewardship Systems (US\$5.45M)

This component ensures long-term sustainability of restoration investments through inclusive community engagement, green job creation, and stewardship systems. It finances participatory planning mechanisms, targeted capacity development, including direct procurement and transfer of tools, community-based management plans, and exploration of payments for ecosystem services (PES) and carbon crediting mechanisms. These mechanisms, including green job creation, are also drawn upon under Section V (Mitigation Measures and Livelihood Restoration) to support, to the extent practicable, restoration of livelihoods for persons affected by access restrictions under this PF.

Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$2.47M)

This component finances PIU operations, fiduciary management, safeguards coordination, and the project MEL system.

Applicability of the PF

This Process Framework applies to all project activities that may result in restrictions on access to communal lands, pastures, riparian areas, or other shared natural resources used by local communities for livelihoods. The primary activities generating this risk are located under Component 2. Annex 4 provides a sub-activity-level scope table based on preparation assessments, to be updated at project initiation.

While land acquisition and physical displacement are not currently anticipated, they cannot be fully excluded at this stage. The following types of interventions may temporarily or permanently restrict existing patterns of access and use, and the Process Framework provides the mechanism to address such impacts should they arise:

- Afforestation and reforestation on degraded communal lands currently used for informal or customary grazing;

- Shelterbelt establishment on agricultural landscape strips adjoining smallholder parcels or communal fields;
- Riparian buffer restoration along rivers and tributaries where informal access for water use, fishing, or livestock watering currently occurs;
- Wetland and floodplain rehabilitation in the Prut river catchment where communities may have customary fishing or grazing interests;
- Silvopastoral system development in the Bugeac Steppe region, which may modify existing grazing patterns on communal pastures.

Tiered Response to Access Restrictions

Not all access restriction situations require the same level of procedural response. The following tiered framework ensures proportionate application of the PF, balancing protection of affected persons with operational efficiency:

Table 1. Tiered framework

Tier	Criteria	Duration / Scale	Required Instrument	Indicative Timeline
Tier 1 — Simplified	Fewer than 5 affected households; single resource type; no vulnerable group involvement; community confirmation documented through consultation records	< 3 months	Community notification + ESMP addendum	Prior to commencement of works
Tier 2 — Abbreviated PoA	5–30 households; moderate impact; no major vulnerable group complications	3 months – 1 season	Abbreviated Plan of Action	Before implementation of restrictions and no later than 30 days after screening confirmation
Tier 3 — Full PoA	More than 30 households; vulnerable groups involved; duration exceeds one growing season; or multi-resource restrictions	Any	Full PoA with external monitoring	Before approval of site-specific works and prior to any restriction on access

The site complexity classification shall be determined by the PIU Social Specialist during the screening step (Activity 1 of the Implementation Activity Plan), informed by an initial consultation with the affected community or communities, and documented in the screening output. This classification determines the applicable PoA preparation timeline.

All restoration activities proposed under the Project shall undergo environmental and social screening prior to approval and commencement of works. Screening shall be undertaken by the PIU Social Specialist in coordination with the Environmental Specialist and relevant local authorities. Screening shall utilize the Environmental and Social Screening Form included in Annex 1 of the ESMF, including the social screening criteria related to land use, informal resource use, vulnerable groups, customary access patterns, and potential livelihood impacts.

The screening process shall identify:

- whether communal, customary, seasonal, or informal use of land or natural resources exists within the proposed intervention area;
- whether project activities may result in temporary or permanent restrictions on access to grazing areas, wetlands, riparian corridors, fishing areas, forest resources, or other livelihood-related natural resources;
- whether vulnerable households or groups may be disproportionately affected;
- whether restrictions may affect livelihoods, seasonal mobility patterns, or customary practices;

(e) land tenure status, characteristics of vulnerability, and dependence on natural resources, and the types of restrictions on land use resulting from the project's interventions;

(f) potential for leakage or displaced pressure onto neighbouring, unrestricted areas resulting from proposed mitigation measures, and options to minimise such effects;

(g) whether the intervention triggers Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 requirements under this Process Framework, (taking into account the land tenure, vulnerability, and resource-dependence factors identified under item (e) above).

No restoration activity involving access restrictions shall commence prior to:

- (i) completion of the screening process;
- (ii) community consultation;
- (iii) documentation of agreed mitigation measures; and
- (iv) preparation of a Plan of Action where required.

The Project shall not impose, formalize, or recognize retroactively any access restriction unless: (a) the applicable screening and consultation steps under this PF have been completed; and (b) the proposed restriction and associated mitigation measures have been meaningfully consulted upon and agreed with the affected communities, with the corresponding implementation arrangements in place, as documented in the relevant Plan of Action where required where required under this PF.

The screening results shall be documented and retained by the PIU as part of the Project environmental and social management records and shall be made available to the World Bank upon request. Screening documentation shall include, for each site, an explicit justification confirming that all site exclusion criteria set out in this Process Framework have been assessed and have not been triggered. Where any exclusion criterion was initially identified as a potential concern but subsequently determined not to apply, the documentation shall record the basis for that determination.

Site Exclusion Criteria

The following sites or interventions shall not be eligible for financing under the project:

- Sites involving physical displacement of households;
- Sites requiring involuntary land acquisition;
- Sites involving unresolved land disputes;
- Sites where restoration would result in significant loss of livelihoods without feasible mitigation measures;
- Sites located within critical habitats where interventions could generate irreversible adverse impacts;
- Sites associated with forced evictions or unresolved customary use conflicts;
- Sites where meaningful community consultation with directly affected persons was not conducted prior to site selection, or cannot be demonstrated through documented records;
- Sites involving conversion of natural forests;
- Sites where restrictions on access would disproportionately affect vulnerable households without viable alternatives.

The sites listed above are excluded at the screening stage against these predefined criteria. Separately, a site may be determined not to be viable at a later stage if, following the required assessments, planning, and meaningful consultation with affected communities, no feasible mitigation measures or, where required under PF, implementable Plan of Action can be established. In such cases, the corresponding activity shall not proceed.

Where such risks are identified during screening, the site shall be excluded or redesigned. Implementation requirements arising from this Process Framework shall be operationalized through the Project Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). Any material changes to Process Framework implementation arrangements, eligibility criteria, consultation procedures, or mitigation measures shall be agreed with the World Bank and reflected, as necessary, in the ESCP. Non-compliance with Process Framework responsibilities by implementing entities — including NOIEP, Moldsilva, Apele Moldovei, LPAs, and contractors — shall be addressed through corrective measures defined in the ESCP, up to and including suspension of works at the affected site where non-compliance poses risks to the rights or livelihoods of affected persons.

Persons or groups eligible for assistance under this Process Framework include individuals, households, or communities who may experience adverse impacts resulting from restrictions on access to natural resources associated with Project activities.

Eligible affected persons may include:

- users of communal grazing lands;
- seasonal livestock herders;
- informal users of riparian areas;
- individuals or households relying on fishing, livestock watering, reed collection, fuelwood collection, or NTFP harvesting;
- persons using land or resources based on customary arrangements;
- vulnerable persons whose livelihoods are dependent on affected natural resources;
- individuals without formal legal rights but with documented or recognizable patterns of resource use.

Particular attention shall be paid to vulnerable and potentially excluded groups identified through the SEP and Gender Assessment and Action Plan, including women-headed households, elderly persons, Roma communities, Gagauz communities, seasonal and informal land users, households affected by labour migration, persons with disabilities, and low-income pastoral households dependent on communal grazing systems.

Eligibility for assistance shall not be conditioned on formal ownership or legal title where customary, seasonal, or informal use can be reasonably demonstrated through community validation, local authority confirmation, participatory mapping, or other appropriate evidence.

The PIU Social Specialist shall determine eligibility through the participatory screening and consultation process. Eligibility determinations shall be based on clearly defined thresholds linked to the nature and severity of the impact identified during screening: (i) persons whose primary livelihood depends on the restricted resource (high dependency) shall be entitled to the full range of livelihood restoration measures and, where applicable, compensation for verified losses; (ii) persons whose livelihoods are partially affected (moderate dependency) shall be entitled to alternative access arrangements and transitional support measures; and (iii) persons experiencing minor or temporary impacts (low dependency) shall be entitled to information, access to the GRM, and monitoring follow-up. For each affected person or household determined to be eligible, the Plan of Action shall specify the applicable support package, including: (a) alternative access arrangements, where restrictions on access to communal lands, water points, riparian corridors, or other natural resources are imposed; (b) livelihood restoration measures proportionate to the nature and duration of the impact, maintained until monitoring confirms restoration to pre-project baseline levels; and (c) compensation for verified livelihood losses, where alternative measures are insufficient or infeasible. The eligibility determination and the corresponding support entitlements shall be documented in the household census records and in the relevant Plan of Action.

Table 2 below summarises the land use context, potential impacts, and applicable ESS5 instruments.

Table 2. Summary of Land Use, Potential Access Restrictions, and Applicable ESS5 Instruments

Activity Type	Land Classification	Potential Impacts	Applicable Instrument
Forest restoration (afforestation, ANR, rehabilitation)	State forest land, degraded communal land	Temporary grazing restrictions during establishment (3–5 years); reduced customary NTFP collection access	Process Framework (if access restrictions identified at screening)
Shelterbelt establishment	Municipal / communal agricultural land	Localized restriction on access to strips of agricultural or communal land; potential reduction in cropping area	Process Framework / ESMP

Activity Type	Land Classification	Potential Impacts	Applicable Instrument
Riparian buffer and wetland restoration	State water-fund land (Apele Moldovei), communal riparian areas	Temporary restrictions on livestock watering, informal fishing, or riparian land use	Process Framework (if access restrictions identified at screening)
Silvopastoral systems (Bugeac Steppe)	Communal pastures	Modification of grazing patterns; potential seasonal or zonal restrictions during establishment	Process Framework + Silvopastoral Management Plan

II. Legal and Administrative Framework

National Policy Framework

The project operates within an evolving national policy environment strongly oriented toward ecosystem restoration and climate adaptation. Key national policy instruments directly relevant to the PF include:

- National Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NCCAP 2030) — identifies EbA and landscape restoration as priority approaches for strengthening climate resilience.
- National Forest Extension and Rehabilitation Programme (NFERP 2023–2032, Government Decision No. 55/2023) — targets expansion of forest cover to approximately 15–17% by 2032 through afforestation of degraded communal lands.
- Low Emission Development Programme (LEDP 2024–2030) — supports integration of ecosystem restoration into decarbonisation strategies.
- National Environmental Strategy (2024–2030) — frames Moldova's alignment with EU environmental acquis, including the EU Nature Restoration Law (Regulation 2024/1991).
- Moldova's Biodiversity Programme (2026–2030) — aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; supports restoration of degraded ecosystems including the Lower Prut Ramsar wetlands.

These instruments provide the legal and policy basis for PF implementation, while the participatory processes and livelihood support measures for affected groups will be implemented through the procedures and arrangements established under this Process Framework, in accordance with the applicable World Bank Environmental and Social Standards.

Land Tenure Typology and Applicable Instruments

The PF applies to activities across multiple land categories, each with distinct legal frameworks and applicable instruments. The table below classifies the relevant land categories and specifies whether the PF, ESMP, or no special instrument applies, and what compensation principles govern if impacts arise.

Table 3. Land Tenure Typology and Applicable PF Instruments

Land Category	Jurisdiction	Applicable Instrument	Compensation Principles
State forest land	Moldsilva	Standard ESMP (unless access restrictions arise)	No compensation for formalised use restrictions; livelihood support via PoA if informal users affected
State water-fund land	Apele Moldovei	Process Framework (if informal use documented)	Alternative access points; transitional employment; loss-of-use compensation if use was established
Municipal / communal land (LPA-managed)	LPA	Process Framework	Participatory PoA; alternative land, grazing areas, or livelihood support as agreed
Private agricultural land	Individual owner	ESMP + voluntary agreement (no involuntary restriction)	Market-based compensation if any use restriction agreed voluntarily
Informally used land without formal ownership documentation	No formal jurisdiction	Process Framework with enhanced consultation	Documented mitigation commitments; recognized customary use baseline; no restriction without PoA

Legal and Regulatory Framework

Table 4 below sets out the principal legal instruments governing land use, access to natural resources, and community rights applicable to this Process Framework.

Table 4. National Legal Framework Relevant to the Process Framework

Legal Instrument	Key Provisions	Relevance to PF
Land Code (Law No. 22/2024)	Governs ownership, use, and management of all categories of land in	Provides the legal basis for land use arrangements on communal

Legal Instrument	Key Provisions	Relevance to PF
	Moldova; establishes rights and obligations of communal land users.	and municipal lands subject to restoration activities.
Forest Code (Law No. 69/2024)	Regulates forest management, use rights, and functional zoning; introduces community stewardship provisions; governs management of public welfare forests.	Provides the basis for defining and enforcing restrictions on use of forested and reforested areas; community co-management frameworks.
Water Law (Law No. 272/2011)	Regulates water resource management, riparian buffer zones, and use of water-fund lands; establishes roles of Apele Moldovei.	Applies to riparian buffer and wetland restoration activities; governs access to water-fund lands and aquatic resources.
Law on EIA (Law No. 86/2014, amended 2023)	Transposes EU EIA Directive; requires public consultation during EIA for projects above defined thresholds.	Applies where restoration activities trigger mandatory EIA; public consultation requirements aligned with PF participation procedures.
Law on Transparency in Decision-Making (Law No. 239/2008)	Mandates public consultations for major policy and regulatory decisions.	Supports public disclosure and consultation requirements under this PF.
Law on Access to Information (Law No. 148/2023)	Ensures transparency of public sector activities and access to public interest information.	Supports PF information disclosure and community access to project documentation.
Law on Ensuring Equal Opportunities (Law No. 5-XVI/2006)	Prohibits discrimination in access to public services and participation in public processes.	Ensures inclusive and non-discriminatory engagement with vulnerable groups including Roma, Gagauz, women, and elderly.
Labour Code (Law No. 154-XV/2003)	Governs terms and conditions of employment, workers' rights, and dispute resolution.	Applies to green job creation under Component 3; informs livelihood restoration measures under PoAs.
Law on Complaints (Law No. 190/1994, as amended)	Establishes 30-working-day timeframe for public authority response to complaints.	Informs GRM design and escalation timelines under this PF.

International Designations and Conservation Obligations

Sub-Component 2.2 activities include rehabilitation of wetlands and floodplains in the Prut river catchment, close to Lake Manta, which are located within the Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar Site (Ramsar No. 1316, designated 2003). The Lower Prut system is also an Emerald Network site designated under the Council of Europe's Bern Convention (Resolution No. 6), implementing standards broadly aligned with the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

Moldova is a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (accession 1999). Ramsar obligations relevant to this Process Framework include: (a) the wise use principle, requiring that Ramsar wetlands be maintained in their ecological character while recognizing sustainable use by local communities where consistent with conservation objectives; (b) Article 3.1, requiring Contracting Parties to formulate and implement planning to promote conservation of Ramsar-listed wetlands; and (c) the New Guidelines for Management Planning for Ramsar Sites (Ramsar COP Resolution VII.17), which recognize community engagement and benefit-sharing as components of effective Ramsar site management.

Project activities adjacent to the Ramsar site and Emerald Network areas shall be designed and implemented in a manner that: (i) does not result in a change in the ecological character of the Ramsar site; (ii) respects existing community use rights recognized under Ramsar's wise-use principles; and (iii) where access

restrictions are necessary for restoration objectives, ensures that communities dependent on wetland resources are identified, consulted, and supported through the PF process with documented mitigation measures. The Project's Critical Habitat Assessment (prepared as part of the ESMF under ESS6) addresses biodiversity-related requirements for activities within or adjacent to designated natural habitats.

World Bank ESF Requirements

This Process Framework is prepared and implemented in compliance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5) — Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement. Where the World Bank ESF sets higher standards than Moldovan national law — particularly regarding the Process Framework (ESS5), worker GRM, critical-habitat assessment, and structured stakeholder engagement — ESF requirements prevail.

III. Project Measures to Ensure Mitigation of Negative Impacts

The project will carry out restoration activities on communal, state, and municipal lands where access to natural resources, pastures, and riparian areas is currently exercised — informally or formally — by local communities.

Avoidance and Minimization Hierarchy

The project shall apply the following hierarchy in all restoration planning:

- Avoid restrictions on access wherever feasible;
- Minimize the geographic extent and duration of restrictions;
- Prioritize voluntary and community-supported restoration approaches;
- Restore livelihoods where adverse impacts cannot be avoided; and
- Monitor livelihood outcomes and adapt mitigation measures as necessary.

Restrictions on access to natural resources shall be used only where necessary to achieve restoration objectives and after consideration of technically and socially feasible alternatives that would avoid or reduce impacts on affected communities.

Where restoration activities are implemented in phases, the Project shall maintain safe and practicable community access routes to unaffected grazing areas, water points, riparian corridors, and other livelihood resources wherever technically feasible.

Principles

The following principles guide all measures under this Process Framework:

Avoidance and minimisation of leakage: screening and mitigation design will consider, and where feasible avoid, the risk that measures to mitigate restricted access simply displace pressure or damage onto neighbouring, unrestricted areas.

Meaningful and consultative definition of land use restrictions: access constraints, fencing, and zoning decisions will be based on biophysical assessments and socio-economic consultations with affected communities, documented and agreed in advance of works.

Informed participation: all decisions affecting community access to resources will be made with the active, informed participation of affected persons, through consultations in Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz as appropriate. Outcomes will be formalized in community agreements or Plans of Action.

Verification of voluntary participation: voluntary participation will be verified through independent documentation of the meaningful consultation process, including at least one community consultation held with no LPA official present. Affected households retain the right to decline participation without loss of existing access rights. NGOs are explicitly tasked with independent verification of the voluntary nature of any community agreement, separate from the LPA co-signing role. Refusal to participate in voluntary stewardship arrangements or restoration-related agreements shall not result in retaliation, exclusion from unrelated Project benefits, or loss of existing lawful access rights beyond restrictions formally established through the PF process.

The participatory process established under this PF will enable affected groups to identify and assess proposed interventions and to contribute to the development of measures for sustainable resource use and allocation and, where relevant, alternative livelihood measures, taking into account their interests and circumstances. Where restrictions on access to natural resources are involuntary in nature, the applicable ESS5 provisions on restrictions of access apply; voluntary arrangements shall not be used as a basis for avoiding or limiting the application of ESS5. The participatory process will serve to identify and agree appropriate mitigation measures and, where required, inform the preparation of the relevant Plan of Action.

Anti-coercion safeguard: the PIU recognizes that local mayors may serve simultaneously as LPA partners and community figures with significant informal authority. To address this structural risk, independent verification of voluntary participation by implementing NGOs is mandatory before any community agreement is finalized or access restrictions are imposed.

Livelihood restoration: restrictions that adversely affect livelihoods will be mitigated to ensure that affected people can at least maintain, if not improve, their livelihoods, measured against a documented pre-project baseline established through the household census at each PF-triggered site. No access restrictions will be

imposed without prior commitment of timely and adequate alternative livelihood measures and confirmed budget allocation.

Cultural respect: restoration interventions will respect local cultural values, customs, and community relationships with land and ecosystems. Areas of cultural significance will be managed in consultation with communities.

Eligibility and Cut-Off Date

The cut-off date for eligibility under the PF is defined as the date of completion of the household census at each PF-triggered site.

The PIU shall publicly announce the cut-off date through LPA notice boards and at least one community meeting at the commencement of the household census process, so that affected communities are aware of the eligibility deadline from the outset. Where the census spans multiple community visits, the announced cut-off date shall be the date the census process began at the relevant site. Persons who establish new resource use patterns after the cut-off date are not eligible for livelihood mitigation measures under the PF. The census date and cut-off date will be documented in the relevant Plan of Action.

Eligibility will be based on the criteria set out above regarding land tenure status, vulnerability, and dependence on natural resources, while taking into account the cut-off date, where relevant, in a manner that accommodates customary and seasonal resource use patterns.

Benefit-Sharing Framework

The project provides several categories of benefit that are accessible to communities affected by access restrictions, as part of the broader restoration programme:

- Green employment: priority hiring of affected households and community members in restoration activities under Component 2 and Component 3;
- NTFP access rights post-restoration: communities that participate in stewardship agreements retain defined rights to collect non-timber forest products (NTFPs) from restored areas once ecological establishment is achieved;
- Community stewardship payments under Component 3: payments for ecosystem services (PES) mechanisms and carbon credit revenue sharing mechanisms will be explored and, where viable, implemented in favour of participating communities;
- Direct asset transfer: standardized assets procured and transferred to affected rural households under Component 3.

Targeting of these measures will follow the eligibility and screening criteria set out above (land tenure status, vulnerability, dependence on natural resources), taking into account the nature and extent of Project-induced access restrictions. Dedicated resources are provided through the counterpart budget release procedure and contingency allocation; the PES and carbon-revenue mechanisms referenced above remain under exploration and are not yet a committed funding source.

Eligibility for each benefit category, governance of distribution decisions, and disaggregated reporting on benefit flows to women, Roma, Gagauz, and other vulnerable groups will be specified in the project Operations Manual and documented in PoA monitoring reports.

Known Situations Identified During Preparation

The social assessment conducted during project preparation (2022–2026) identified the following specific situations likely to trigger PF procedures during implementation. These are documented here as baseline cases. Confirmation and full socio-economic assessment will be conducted prior to commencement of works at each site.

(i) **Communal Pastures in Bugeac Steppe** (Sub-Component 2.3 — Silvopastoral Systems): Livestock keepers in Taraclia, Basarabeasca, and Causeni districts currently rely on communal pastures in the Bugeac Steppe for small-flock grazing. Afforestation and silvopastoral system development may result in temporary or longer-term restrictions on existing grazing patterns. PF procedures, including household census, participatory PoA development, and identification of alternative grazing areas or transitional support, shall be initiated prior to works at these sites.

(ii) **Riparian Communities along Lower Prut and Lake Manta / Lake Beleu** (Sub-Component 2.2 — Wetland Rehabilitation): Communities in Cahul, Leova, and Cantemir districts have customary and informal fishing, livestock watering, and seasonal cultivation practices in riparian and wetland areas adjacent to Lake

Manta. Wetland rehabilitation works in proximity to these lakes may restrict access to these resources during and after restoration. **Lake Beleu has been set aside and no physical restoration activities are currently planned there.** PF procedures shall apply at all affected riparian restoration sites, with particular attention to fishing households and elderly or low-income users identified as highly resource-dependent during consultations.

(iii) **Codrii Tigheciului Forest-Adjacent Communities** (Sub-Component 2.1 — Afforestation and ANR): Communities adjacent to the Codrii Tigheciului massif in Leova and Cimislia districts currently collect non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and use degraded forest-adjacent land informally for grazing or small-scale cultivation. Afforestation and ANR activities may impose temporary access restrictions during vegetation establishment (3–5 years). Communities shall be consulted and PoAs prepared prior to works. Alternative NTFP access or compensation arrangements shall be agreed and documented.

Additional situations may be identified during screening and site verification. All will be addressed through the procedures set out in this PF. Annex 4 provides a sub-activity scope table with updated information as sites are confirmed.

Inclusion of Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups

The PIU shall ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are able to meaningfully participate in all PF processes. Particular attention shall be given to: women-headed households; elderly persons; persons with disabilities; low-income livestock keepers; seasonal pasture users; Roma communities; Gagauz communities; youth dependent on communal agricultural livelihoods; and households lacking formal documentation of land or resource use rights.

Consultations shall be conducted in culturally appropriate formats and languages, including Romanian, Russian, and Gagauz where relevant. Where barriers to participation are identified, the project shall implement targeted outreach measures, including separate consultation meetings, simplified information materials, local facilitators or translators, flexible consultation schedules, and direct household-level engagement for vulnerable users unable to attend public meetings.

IV. Social Assessment and Community Profile

The Social Assessment draws on consultations conducted in SDR districts during 2022–2026 as part of project preparation. The following table summarises community feedback and the corresponding PF responses.

Table 5. Community Consultation Feedback and PF Responses

Issue / Concern Raised	Community Group Affected	PF Response
Grazing restrictions on communal pastures where afforestation is planned; requests for advance notice and alternative grazing options.	Pasture users, smallholder livestock keepers	Alternative grazing area identification required in PoA; advance community notification minimum 30 days before works; PoA to confirm seasonal access where feasible.
Strong interest in direct employment in restoration activities as primary form of livelihood restoration.	Rural households, youth	Green employment provisions under Component 3; priority hiring of affected households in restoration works documented in PoAs.
Requests for transparency on benefit-sharing from restored forests, including future NTFP access.	Forest-adjacent communities	Benefit-sharing framework in Section III defines NTFP access rights post-restoration; stewardship agreements under Component 3.
Restrictions on access to riparian areas and water bodies.	Fishing households, riverside communities	PF procedures mandatory for all riparian restriction sites; alternative water access and compensation for fishing households documented in PoAs.
Requests for gender-sensitive consultation scheduling.	Women, women-headed households	Women-specific consultations required; flexible scheduling; simplified information materials.
Concerns from elderly and low-income households about capacity to access alternative land or income without direct support.	Elderly, low-income, vulnerable groups	Enhanced mitigation provisions for vulnerable households; direct household-level engagement for those unable to attend public meetings.

Socially, the project area is predominantly rural and characterized by land-dependent livelihoods with limited adaptive capacity. In communities across the SDR, women, elderly persons, and Roma households are more exposed to access restriction impacts due to lower income diversification and limited mobility. These groups will receive priority targeting in PoA mitigation measures and gender-responsive design of employment and training activities under Component 3.

The ESMF Social Assessment provides more detailed community-level profiles for the affected districts. Key vulnerability patterns by community type are summarised in Annex 4 (Sub-Activity Scope Table), which will be updated as sites are confirmed.

V. Mitigation Measures and Livelihood Restoration

Where feasible, these measures will be designed and sequenced together with Component 3's green job creation and stewardship activities to support restoration of livelihoods for affected persons.

Specific mitigation measures for each site cannot be predetermined, as they depend on the nature and scale of access restrictions identified during screening and participatory planning. Measures will be developed through the PoA process described in Section VII. The following indicative measures apply based on activity type:

Forest Restoration and Afforestation (Sub-Component 2.1)

- Temporary grazing restrictions (3–5 year establishment period): identification of alternative communal grazing areas; transitional supplementary fodder support for highly dependent households (to be maintained for the full duration of the establishment-period restriction unless earlier monitoring confirms livelihood restoration at pre-project baseline levels); phased afforestation sequencing to minimize simultaneous access losses.
- NTFP collection restrictions: designated community collection zones within restored areas post-establishment; documented entitlement to future NTFP access in stewardship agreements.

Riparian Buffer and Wetland Restoration (Sub-Component 2.2)

- Fishing and livestock watering restrictions: alternative water access points documented and agreed before works; compensation for verified livelihood loss for households for whom fishing constitutes a primary income source; defined seasonal access windows where ecologically compatible.

Silvopastoral Systems — Bugeac Steppe (Sub-Component 2.3)

- Grazing pattern modification: rotational grazing management plan developed in coordination with affected livestock keepers; priority green employment in silvopastoral system establishment for affected households.

Shelterbelt Establishment

- Access to agricultural strips: community agreement confirming land use arrangement; compensation for verified crop loss where cropping area is affected; alternative strip access maintained where feasible.

Where feasible, affected persons shall be prioritized for participation in Project-supported livelihood and stewardship activities under Component 3, including community restoration employment, nursery activities, silvopastoral initiatives, community stewardship agreements, ecosystem restoration maintenance activities, and other climate-resilient livelihood support mechanisms supported by the Project.

No restriction without confirmed funding

No access restriction will be imposed on affected communities until the PIU has confirmed budget allocation for all agreed mitigation measures documented in the relevant Plan of Action. Where mitigation measures involve alternative grazing arrangements, livelihood support, compensation, water access, or transitional assistance, such measures shall be implemented prior to, or simultaneously with, the commencement of the corresponding access restrictions. This commitment applies regardless of works scheduling pressures. As a formal livelihood restoration guarantee, the PIU shall ensure that: (a) livelihood restoration measures for each affected household are specified in the relevant Plan of Action with defined timelines and responsible parties before any access restriction is imposed; (b) implementation progress is monitored quarterly and reported against pre-project baseline levels established in the household census; (c) restoration measures shall remain in effect until monitoring confirms that affected households have restored their livelihoods to at least pre-project baseline levels; and (d) where monitoring identifies that restoration targets have not been achieved within the planned timeframe, the PIU shall initiate a corrective action review within 30 days and implement supplementary measures as necessary. These guarantees are binding on NOIEP and shall be reflected in the ESCP.

VI. Public Participation and Consultations

Meaningful, free, prior, and informed consultation with affected communities is a foundational commitment of this Process Framework. “Free” means consultation conducted without coercion, manipulation, or undue incentivization; “prior” means before decisions on access restrictions are finalized; and “informed” means communities receive full, accessible information on proposed activities, potential impacts, and available remedies before consultations are conducted. Consultations shall also be inclusive and continuous throughout the project cycle. It serves to: (a) establish broad community support for the project; (b) disclose potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures; (c) enable communities to shape decisions on restoration site selection and access restriction design; and (d) develop and agree on Plans of Action where adverse impacts are identified.

Consultation Principles

- All consultations will be conducted in Romanian, Russian, or Gagauz as appropriate to the linguistic context of the community.
- Information will be presented in accessible formats, including oral presentations, visual materials, and simple written summaries.
- Separate focus group discussions will be organized for women, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups to ensure their views are captured without inhibition.
- A sufficient time window (minimum 30 days) will be established for each consultation cycle to enable genuine participation.
- All consultation records — including attendance lists, minutes, questions raised, and responses provided — will be documented and made publicly accessible via LPA notice boards and the NOIEP project website.

Consultation Mechanisms During Implementation

During project implementation, the following mechanisms will be maintained:

- Community information sessions: open sessions held at LPA level at least annually and whenever significant changes to site plans or access restrictions are proposed.
- Participatory planning workshops: targeted workshops held with directly affected households and community representatives to develop site-specific Plans of Action.
- Village committee engagement: formal engagement with village committees (primarii) and local councils as key decision-making bodies for communal land management.
- Women-specific consultations: dedicated sessions for women-headed households and women's groups to ensure gender-disaggregated participation in all PoA development processes.
- Census and household surveys: census of directly affected households at each PF-triggered site, to document assets, livelihoods, resource-use patterns, and mitigation preferences.

Documentation and Disclosure

All community agreements and Plans of Action will be documented and signed between the affected community (represented by the village committee or designated community representatives) and the PIU or relevant LPA. Draft PoAs will be disclosed to affected communities at least 14 days before finalization, and final versions will be posted on the NOIEP project website and LPA notice boards. Final approved Plans of Action shall remain publicly accessible throughout implementation of the corresponding restoration activities and for at least one year following completion of mitigation measures. No works may commence on any PF-triggered site until the relevant PoA is finalized, disclosed, and fully funded for implementation.

Minimum Consultation Requirements

At minimum, consultations related to potential access restrictions shall include:

- (a) disclosure of proposed restoration activities and anticipated restrictions in a language and format understandable to affected communities;
- (b) separate engagement, where appropriate, with vulnerable groups, women, elderly persons, seasonal users, and marginalized populations;
- (c) discussion of feasible alternatives to avoid or minimize restrictions;
- (d) participatory identification of mitigation and livelihood restoration measures;
- (e) documentation of concerns, objections, and unresolved issues;
- (f) disclosure of grievance mechanisms and complaint channels.

Where significant concerns or objections remain unresolved, the PIU shall document:

- (a) the nature of the concern;
- (b) measures proposed to address it;

- (c) whether agreement was reached;
- (d) any outstanding issues requiring follow-up; and
- (e) whether redesign, additional consultation, or alternative mitigation measures are necessary.

Such records shall be retained as part of the Project E&S documentation and made available to the World Bank upon request.

Consultation processes shall incorporate gender-responsive engagement measures consistent with the Gender Assessment and Action Plan, including efforts to ensure participation of women, women-headed households, elderly women, and female informal resource users who may otherwise be excluded from community decision-making processes.

Where necessary, consultations shall be organized at times and locations accessible to women and caregivers, and facilitated in culturally appropriate formats that encourage meaningful participation.

Consultations shall be documented through meeting minutes, attendance lists, photographic evidence where appropriate, and records of agreements reached with communities. Records of agreement shall include signed confirmation from affected households or their recognized representatives, or — where individual signature is not feasible — documented endorsement through a community meeting resolution signed by designated community representatives and the relevant LPA Grievance Focal Point. Records shall clearly indicate the identity of the signatory, their representative capacity, the date of signature or endorsement, and the specific mitigation measures or arrangements agreed. Signed records shall be retained by the PIU and made available to affected households upon request.

Affected communities shall be informed of the outcomes of consultations, agreed mitigation measures, implementation schedules, and available grievance channels through accessible disclosure methods consistent with the SEP, including community meetings, public notice boards, local authority communication channels, and simplified information materials where appropriate.

No access restrictions shall be imposed prior to completion of consultations and documentation of agreed mitigation measures.

VII. Implementation Plan

NOIEP (PIU) is responsible for the implementation of this PF. It ensures that PIU staff, contractors, LPAs, implementing NGOs, and affected communities are informed of PF provisions and that implementation is consistent with national law and World Bank ESS5.

Roles and Responsibilities

Table 6 below sets out the roles and responsibilities of all institutions and community actors under this Process Framework. Community actor roles have been expanded to ensure that affected persons are active co-managers of the PF process, not passive recipients.

All contractor bidding documents and contracts for activities implemented under Component 2 shall include obligations requiring compliance with this Process Framework, including restrictions on unauthorized access control measures, obligations to cooperate with community consultations, and immediate reporting of any community access-related incidents or disputes.

Table 6. PF Implementation Roles and Responsibilities

Institution / Actor	Responsibilities under the PF
NOIEP / PIU (Social Specialist)	Lead PF implementation; manage screening, consultation, and PoA preparation; coordinate with LPAs and NGOs; supervise mitigation implementation; manage GRM for PF-related grievances; prepare quarterly PF progress reports.
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Provide strategic oversight; ensure adequate counterpart budget for PoA implementation; coordinate with Moldsilva and Apele Moldovei on land use arrangements.
Agency Moldsilva	Manage afforestation, ANR, and forest rehabilitation activities; provide technical input to PoA preparation on access restriction scope and timing; support community engagement on forest management arrangements.
Apele Moldovei	Manage riparian and water-fund land activities; confirm land use arrangements along Prut river catchment; participate in PoA preparation for affected riparian communities.
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Act as primary community-level PF contact points; facilitate community consultations; co-sign stewardship agreements with NOIEP; manage GRM Level 1; support identification and targeting of vulnerable affected households.
NGOs =	Support community outreach, consultation facilitation, and documentation; ensure gender-responsive participation; assist vulnerable groups in accessing GRM and livelihood restoration measures. Independently verify the voluntary nature of any community agreement, separate from the LPA co-signing role.
Contractors	Comply with access restriction protocols; report any incidents to the PIU within 24 hours. Contractors shall not restrict community access to natural resources beyond the specific restrictions documented in an approved Plan of Action for the relevant site. Any restriction imposed beyond approved PoA provisions constitutes a project incident requiring immediate reporting.
Village Committees / Primarii (community co-managers)	(1) Organize and convene community-level information sessions and participatory consultations, including separate sessions for women and vulnerable groups. (2) Facilitate census and socio-economic assessment activities; assist in identifying affected households, seasonal users, and vulnerable groups. (3) Participate in PoA development and co-sign community agreements with the PIU. (4) Assist in identification of alternative grazing areas, water access points, or alternative livelihood resources. (5) Participate in monitoring PoA mitigation measures and report concerns to the PIU. (6) Receive and triage community grievances at Stage 1 of the GRM.

Institution / Actor	Responsibilities under the PF
Directly Affected Households	(1) Participate in project consultations and provide informed views on proposed access restrictions and preferred mitigation measures. (2) Make independent decisions regarding participation in voluntary stewardship agreements and green employment opportunities. (3) Submit grievances through the GRM at any point during the project cycle. (4) Voluntarily participate in monitoring activities and livelihood assessment surveys.
Community Representatives in PoA Working Groups	(1) Represent the interests of affected households and vulnerable groups during participatory PoA development workshops. (2) Review and provide feedback on draft Plans of Action before finalization. (3) Participate in signing community-level agreements with the PIU or LPA. (4) Act as first-level community monitoring agents during PoA implementation.

PF Implementation Activity Plan

Table 7 below sets out the activity plan for PF implementation, including differentiated timelines based on site complexity classification.

Table 7. PF Implementation Activity Plan

No.	Activity	Main Content	Responsible Parties	Timeline
1	E&S Screening of Restoration Sites	Apply ESMF Screening Form to all Component 2 sites; classify site as low, moderate, or high complexity; consider potential leakage or increase pressure on neighbouring areas, determine whether PF process is triggered.	PIU Environmental and Social Specialist; Moldsilva; Apele Moldovei; LPAs	Before works commence at each site (i.e., once potential sites have been identified through the Activity 1 screening step)
2	Community Notification and Initial Disclosure	Notify affected communities of planned restoration activities; disclose key project information; explain PF process and community rights.	PIU; LPAs; Implementing NGOs	At least 30 days before consultation
3	Census and Socio-Economic Assessment	Conduct household census of directly affected persons; document current resource use, livelihood dependency, and vulnerability; establish cut-off date baseline.	PIU Social Specialist; Implementing NGOs; LPAs	Within 1 month of screening trigger
4	Participatory Planning and PoA Preparation	Conduct community consultations; develop draft Plan of Action. Timeline: within 3 months for low-complexity sites (<20 affected HHs, single resource type); within 5 months for moderate or high-complexity sites.	PIU; LPAs; Village Committees; Implementing NGOs	3–5 months of screening trigger (based on site complexity)
5	PoA Disclosure and Sign-off	Disclose draft PoA to affected community (minimum 14 days); incorporate feedback; finalize and sign PoA; confirm budget allocation. No works commence until complete. All Tier 3 Plans of Action shall be submitted to the World Bank for prior review and no-objection before commencement of the corresponding restoration activities or implementation of associated access restrictions. Tier 2 Plans of Action shall be submitted to the	PIU; Village Committees / LPAs	Before commencement of PF-triggered works

No.	Activity	Main Content	Responsible Parties	Timeline
		World Bank within 5 working days of finalization for informational review; the World Bank may request modifications within 10 working days of receipt, and no Tier 2 access restrictions shall be imposed during this review window without World Bank concurrence. These disclosure and Bank review timelines will be reconfirmed once the tiering and screening criteria discussed above are finalised.		
6	Implementation of Mitigation Measures	Implement livelihood restoration, alternative land access, employment, and other mitigation measures per agreed PoA; monitor and report progress quarterly.	PIU; LPAs; Moldsilva; Apele Moldovei; Implementing NGOs	Throughout PoA implementation period (extending beyond individual site works where livelihood restoration outcomes take longer to materialise, consistent with the adaptive management provisions in the Executive Summary)
7	Monitoring, Reporting, and Review	Quarterly internal monitoring; semi-annual external monitoring; annual cumulative livelihood impact review for communities subject to multi-PoA restrictions; reporting to World Bank.	PIU; Independent Monitoring Agency; World Bank	Quarterly throughout implementation

VIII. Feedback and Grievance Mechanism

A three-level community Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been established for the project, consistent with ESS10 and aligned with the national legal framework (Law No. 190/1994 on Complaints, as amended).

GRM Principles

- **Accessibility:** grievances may be submitted verbally or in writing, in Romanian, Russian, or Gagauz, at no cost to the complainant.
- **Confidentiality:** the identity of complainants will be protected throughout the process. Complaints may be submitted anonymously.
- **Non-retaliation:** no complainant will face any form of retaliation for submitting a grievance in good faith.
- **Timeliness:** all grievances will be acknowledged within 2 working days at Stage 1 (LPA), and within 2 working days at Stages 2 and 3 (PIU and Ministry). Proposed resolution or escalation decisions will be communicated within the timeframes specified for each level in the Three-Level GRM Structure below.
- **Documentation:** all grievances will be registered, tracked, and reported in the GRM log maintained by the PIU.

Three-Level GRM Structure

Stage 1 — Local Level (LPA Grievance Focal Points): Any affected person may submit an oral or written grievance to the designated Grievance Focal Point at the relevant mayoralty (primarie). The Focal Point registers the grievance and acknowledges within 2 working days, attempting resolution within 14 working days. Unresolved issues escalate to Stage 2.

Stage 2 — PIU Level (NOIEP): Acknowledgement within 2 working days. The PIU Social Specialist investigates and provides a written response within 15 working days of receipt for access restriction-related grievances. For complex cases, the PIU may extend the resolution period to 30 working days, provided the complainant is notified in writing within the initial 15 working days with a clear explanation of the extension and an updated timeline.

Stage 3 — Ministry of Environment: Acknowledgement within 2 working days. Written response within 30 working days. The complainant retains the right to pursue legal recourse through Moldovan courts at any stage.

External Recourse: Affected persons may also submit complaints to the World Bank Grievance Redress Service (GRS).

SEA/SH Complaints

Complaints related to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) or sexual harassment (SH) are handled through a separate, highly confidential pathway managed exclusively by the PIU GBV Focal Point. SEA/SH survivors are referred to national GBV support services within 24 hours of report receipt. SEA/SH complaints will never be handled through standard GRM channels.

GRM Contact Information

Table 8. GRM Contact Information

Institution	Contact / Address	Telephone / Email
NOIEP / PIU — Project Grievance Coordinator	Str. Gheorghe Tudor 5, etajul 4, mun. Chișinău, MD-2028, Republic of Moldova	cancelaria@onipm.gov.md petitii@gov.md
Ministry of Environment	Bd. Ștefan Cel Mare Și Sfânt 162, mun. Chișinău, MD-2004, Republic of Moldova	cancelaria@mediu.gov.md
LPA Grievance Focal Points (all SDR mayoralties)	Respective district and village mayoralties across SDR	[Listed in Annex 1 — to be populated before Appraisal]
World Bank GRS	www.worldbank.org/grievance-redress-service	grievances@worldbank.org

Grievance Registration Form

Table 9. Grievance Registration Form Template

Field	Details
Receiving Agency:	
Date of Receipt:	
Complainant Name (optional):	
Contact Information:	
Description of Complaint:	
Requested Resolution:	
Proposed Resolution:	
Actual Resolution:	
Resolution Date:	
Complainant Satisfied (Y/N):	
Notes:	

GRM for Access Restrictions

Affected persons may submit complaints related to: restriction of access to land or natural resources; exclusion from consultations; disagreement regarding eligibility; dissatisfaction with mitigation measures; disputes regarding stewardship arrangements; damage to crops, livestock, or livelihoods; and conduct of workers or implementing partners.

The Project GRM shall include procedures specifically applicable to complaints related to restrictions on access to natural resources, disagreements regarding eligibility, adequacy of mitigation measures, consultation processes, or implementation of Plans of Action.

Affected persons may submit complaints orally, in writing, electronically, or anonymously. Complaints related to access restrictions shall be prioritized and tracked separately by the PIU Social Specialist. The PIU shall maintain a separate registry for PF-related grievances, including grievances related to access restrictions, eligibility disputes, livelihood impacts, consultation concerns, and implementation of mitigation measures. Monitoring data shall include the number of grievances received, resolution timeframes, recurrence patterns, and unresolved cases requiring escalation.

The PIU shall maintain records of:

- (a) complaints received;
- (b) actions taken;
- (c) resolution status; and
- (d) timelines for response and closure.

Unresolved complaints shall be escalated in accordance with the Project GRM procedures and may be referred to judicial or administrative remedies available under national law. Affected persons retain the right to pursue administrative or judicial remedies at any stage of the GRM process, including in cases where their grievance has not yet been submitted to the project GRM or where it remains unresolved after exhausting available GRM stages. Use of the project GRM is voluntary and shall not constitute a precondition for access to administrative or legal recourse. The PIU shall inform affected persons of this right at the time of GRM registration and shall include a statement to this effect in all written GRM acknowledgement communications.

Where grievances involve allegations of SEA/SH, the complaint shall be managed through confidential, survivor-centred procedures consistent with the Project SEP, LMP, and SEA/SH referral protocols. Information regarding available support services and reporting channels shall be disclosed during community consultations where appropriate.

IX. Incident Reporting Mechanism

NOIEP will maintain an incident reporting mechanism and will ensure that all project workers, contractors, LPAs, implementing NGOs, and affected communities are trained on and aware of the mechanism. Contractors will be contractually obligated to report any incidents to the PIU within 24 hours.

NOIEP will notify the World Bank no later than 48 hours after learning of any incident that has, or is likely to have, a significant adverse effect on persons, communities, the environment, or project workers.

Incident Classification Guide

Table 9. Incident Classification Guide

Classification	Description
Indicative	Relatively minor, localized incident with limited immediate impact; failure to implement E&S measures with limited consequences; no significant or irreparable harm.
Serious	Incident that caused or may cause significant harm to workers, communities, or the environment; significant E&S non-compliance; complex or costly to reverse; potential lasting damage; requires urgent response.
Severe	Any fatality; significant harm to communities or environment that cannot be reversed; SEA/SH; forced labour; significant GBV incident; requires immediate response; poses significant reputational risk.

Incident Reporting Template

The following template shall be used for initial 48-hour incident notifications to the World Bank. The Project Operations Manual shall include guidance on root-cause analysis and Corrective Action Plan preparation.

Table 9a. Incident Reporting Template (48-hour notification)

Field	Details
1. Project name and ID	Moldova Green Shield: Enhancing Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (P516908)
2. Reporting officer	
3. Incident classification	☐ Indicative ☐ Serious ☐ Severe
4. Date and time of incident	
5. Date and time NOIEP was notified	
6. Location (district, site, GPS coordinates if available)	
7. Description: what happened, to whom/what, and how	
8. Are the basic facts clear and uncontested? If not, describe conflicting versions.	
9. Circumstances and conditions at time of incident (if known)	
10. Is the incident ongoing or contained?	
11. Is loss of life or severe injury involved?	
12. NOIEP / PIU response to date	
13. Measures being or to be implemented	
14. Does the incident involve SEA/SH or GBV?	☐ Yes (refer to PIU GBV Focal Point immediately) ☐ No

Field	Details
15. World Bank notification sent (Y/N) and date	

X. Monitoring and Reporting

PF monitoring and reporting operates within the three-level E&S monitoring structure established by the ESMF.

Internal Monitoring (NOIEP PIU)

The PIU Social Specialist will conduct quarterly internal monitoring of PF implementation, covering:

- Whether any access restrictions or PF-triggering situations have been identified across active restoration sites;
- Whether required community consultations and participatory planning have been conducted and documented;
- Whether Plans of Action have been prepared, disclosed, signed, and fully funded where required;
- Whether PoA mitigation measures are being implemented as planned and on schedule;
- Tracking and resolution of all PF-related grievances and complaints.

Where significant livelihood impacts are identified, the PIU shall conduct follow-up verification with affected households to assess whether agreed mitigation measures have effectively restored access to livelihood resources or maintained livelihood conditions at pre-project levels.

Cumulative Livelihood Impact Review

Given the project scale (approximately 13,000 hectares), communities in the Bugeac Steppe or Lower Prut area may simultaneously face multiple access restrictions from different sub-activities. The PIU shall conduct an annual cumulative livelihood impact review for any community subject to PF-triggered restrictions under more than one sub-activity. This review shall:

- Combine monitoring data from all relevant PoAs affecting the same community;
- Be shared with affected village committees;
- Be reflected in the semi-annual external monitoring report.

The monitoring indicators table below includes a specific indicator for multi-PoA households.

Monitoring Indicators

Table 11 below provides specific, measurable monitoring indicators with targets and data sources, to allow objective assessment of PF implementation performance for World Bank fiduciary purposes.

Table 11. PF Monitoring Indicators

Indicator	Definition	Target	Frequency	Data Source
% of PF-triggered sites with PoA prepared before works commence	# sites with completed PoA / total PF-triggered sites × 100	100%	Quarterly	PIU PoA registry
# affected households consulted per PoA process	HHs attending at least one consultation / identified affected HHs × 100	>80% per site	Per PoA cycle	Consultation attendance lists
% of women in consultations	Women attendees / total attendees × 100	>40%	Per consultation	Attendance lists
# grievances received, resolved, and pending	Count per GRM level; % resolved within required timeframes; disaggregated by gender (women / men / other) and complainant category (vulnerable group, access restriction-specific, SEA/SH reported separately)	100% acknowledged on time; 90% resolved within 30 days	Monthly	GRM log
# households reporting livelihood maintained or improved	HHs reporting maintained or improved livelihood / total monitored HHs × 100	>75% by Year 3	Annual	Household surveys

Indicator	Definition	Target	Frequency	Data Source
improved (self-assessed)				
# communities subject to multi-PoA restrictions (cumulative impact tracked)	Count of communities with PF-triggered restrictions under more than one sub-activity	0 untreated cases	Annual	PIU cumulative livelihood review

External Monitoring

Independent external monitoring of PF implementation will be conducted by an independent agency — academic institution, NGO, or consulting firm with qualified staff — engaged by NOIEP through competitive procurement. Terms of reference for the external monitor will be accepted by the World Bank. External monitoring will take place semi-annually until project completion. The PIU may require intensified supervision, additional independent monitoring, or targeted third-party verification where: (a) repeated grievances are received from the same community; (b) allegations of coercion or exclusion arise; (c) vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected; or (d) monitoring identifies significant non-compliance with agreed mitigation measures.

Reporting to World Bank

PF monitoring results will be incorporated into the PIU's quarterly E&S monitoring reports and semi-annual safeguards performance reports. Reports will include: (i) a summary of PF implementation progress; (ii) any deviations from PF provisions; (iii) outstanding issues and recommended actions; (iv) a status update on grievances; (v) progress on PoA implementation at each PF-triggered site; and (vi) results of the annual cumulative livelihood impact review where applicable.

XI. Budget

Costs for PF implementation — including community consultations, census surveys, PoA preparation, livelihood restoration measures, monitoring, and reporting — will be covered by the project budget allocated to Component 3 and Component 4, with supplementary financing available from counterpart funding provided by the Republic of Moldova.

Where livelihood restoration costs are identified through the PoA process, the PIU shall activate the counterpart budget release procedure through the Ministry of Finance, providing: (a) the confirmed PoA with documented cost estimates; (b) the PIU Social Specialist's approval; and (c) World Bank no-objection for amounts exceeding the pre-authorized threshold specified in the ESCP. No access restriction will be imposed without confirmed funding for all agreed mitigation measures.

GCF financing covers consultations, assessments, PoA preparation, and external monitoring. IBRD financing contributes proportionally across these categories. Livelihood restoration measures are primarily covered by counterpart financing, with GCF and IBRD contributions where measures are directly linked to restoration activities under Components 2 and 3 respectively. Disaggregated GCF vs IBRD cost reporting will be provided in semi-annual safeguards performance reports.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of LPA Grievance Focal Points

The following table will be populated before project appraisal with the names and contact details of designated Grievance Focal Points at all mayoralities in the SDR districts covered by the project.

Annex 1. LPA Grievance Focal Points — to be populated before Appraisal

District	Mayorality / LPA	Focal Point Name	Address	Contact (Tel/Email)
Cahul	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Cantemir	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Leova	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Cimislia	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Taraclia	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Basarabeasca	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Causeni	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
Stefan Voda	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]
ATUG (Gagauzia)	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]	[To be populated]

Annex 2: Public Consultations on the PF

This annex documents the public consultations conducted during project preparation on the Process Framework. Consultation events held in the SDR districts during 2022–2026 as part of ESMF and SEP preparation are documented in detail in the standalone SEP and ESMF. The key findings and feedback relevant to the PF, and how they shaped this document, are summarised in Table 5 (Section IV). In addition, two appraisal-stage public consultations were held in July 2026 — on 9 July 2026 in Chişinău with scientific and academic institutions, and on 14 July 2026 with civil society and NGOs — at which land-tenure, access-restriction, silvopastoral and biodiversity concerns relevant to this Process Framework were raised and addressed.

These preparation-stage consultations (2022–2026) were initiated and led by the Client (Government of Moldova) and other development partners; the World Bank became engaged in the project only in March 2026. The events below are presented for completeness and continuity of the engagement record and do not imply World Bank involvement prior to that date.

Annex 3: Indicative Structure of a Site-Specific Plan of Action and Community Agreement Template

Each site-specific Plan of Action shall include, at minimum:

- Description of restoration site and proposed intervention
- Screening results and justification for PF applicability
- Site complexity classification (Tier 1/2/3) and applicable timeline
- Description of affected land and resources
- Census and socio-economic assessment findings
- Identification of affected persons and vulnerable groups
- Cut-off date and census date
- Summary of consultations conducted (including attendance by gender)
- Description of anticipated restrictions on access or use
- Agreed mitigation and livelihood restoration measures
- Implementation schedule and sequencing

- Institutional responsibilities
- Budget and confirmed financing sources
- GRM procedures and contact details
- Monitoring indicators and reporting arrangements
- Disclosure records and community validation documentation (including NGO verification of voluntary participation)
- Maps and photographs where relevant

B. Indicative Community Agreement — Minimum Content

For sites where a full PoA is not required (Tier 1 simplified or voluntary stewardship arrangements), the following minimum-content community agreement template shall be used:

Annex 3B. Community Agreement — Minimum Content

Element	Minimum Content
Parties	PIU (NOIEP), LPA, and Village Committee — name and legal status of each
Date and duration	Start date, end date or review triggers
Site description	Location, area (ha), land classification, coordinates / map attachment
Agreed restoration activities	Description of activities and implementation timeline
Access restrictions	Type, geographic scope, duration, and any seasonal exceptions
Mitigation and livelihood support measures	Specific employment commitments, benefit-sharing arrangements, or alternative resource access
Community obligations	Stewardship responsibilities, reporting duties, monitoring participation
PIU obligations	Implementation schedule, monitoring, timely delivery of agreed livelihood support and restoration measures; where compensation becomes applicable as an exceptional last-resort measure, it will be addressed through the applicable ESS5 instrument.
GRM reference	Contact details and procedures for submitting complaints under the project GRM
Modification procedure	How the agreement may be amended by mutual consent
Signatures	Village Committee Chair (with community endorsement), LPA representative, PIU Social Specialist
Annexes	Attendance list from consultation; map of affected area

Annex 4: Scope of Project Activities and Baseline Land-Use Assessment

This annex details the land-use context, baseline resource-use practices, anticipated access restrictions, and proposed mitigation approach for each restoration sub-activity under Component 2. It is prepared based on desk review, satellite analysis, and field consultations conducted during project preparation, and shall be updated upon confirmation of final restoration sites during implementation.

Living Document

This table shall be populated prior to Appraisal for all known sites and updated at project initiation. Where activity locations are not yet finalized, the table includes indicative district-level information based on ESMF screening criteria.

Annex 4. Sub-Activity Land Use and Access Restriction Baseline (indicative — to be updated at project initiation)

Sub-Component	Activity Name	District	Area (ha)	Land Classification / Ownership	Existing Resource Users (est.)	Indicative Estimated Affected Households	Project Impacts on Access	How Restrictions Will Be Enforced	PF Triggered (Y/N)
2.1	Afforestation / ANR (Codrii Tigheciului adjacent areas)	SDR (multiple districts)	8,500 ha (5,000 ha afforestation; 3,500 ha forest rehabilitation)	State forest land / degraded communal land	Forest-adjacent communities; NTFP collectors; informal grazers	20–50 households	Temporary NTFP and grazing restriction (3–5 yrs establishment)	Fencing / community agreement / designated access zones	Y — PoA required
2.2	Riparian buffer and wetland rehabilitation Prut river catchment	SDR (multiple districts)	2,000 ha	State water-fund land (Apele Moldovei)	Fishing households; livestock watering; seasonal cultivators	30–80 households	Restriction on fishing, livestock watering, riparian cultivation during and post-restoration	Designation of buffer zones; alternative water access points	Y — PoA required
2.3	Silvopastoral systems (Bugeac Steppe)	Taraclia, Basarabasca, Causeni	2,000 ha	Communal pastures (LPA-managed)	Small-flock livestock keepers; seasonal pasture users	40–100 households	Modification of grazing patterns; potential	Rotational grazing zones; silvopastoral management plan	Y — PoA required

Sub-Component	Activity Name	District	Area (ha)	Land Classification / Ownership	Existing Resource Users (est.)	Indicative Estimated Affected Households	Project Impacts on Access	How Restrictions Will Be Enforced	PF Triggered (Y/N)
							al seasonal zonal restrictions during establishment		
2.4	Shelter belt establishment (agricultural landscape strips)	SDR (multiple districts)	500 ha	Municipal / communal agricultural land	Smallholder farmers adjacent to shelterbelt corridors	Less than 20 households per site	Localized restriction on narrow strips of agricultural land; potential temporary cropping area loss	Community agreement; compensation for verified crop loss	Y / ESMP (site-specific assessment)
2.5	RFRM Nursery establishment	TBD (state land)	TBD	State land	No informal use anticipated	No affected households anticipated	No access restrictions anticipated	N/A	N — Standard ESMP

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ANNEX 6 INDICATIVE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS) PLAN OUTLINE

Moldova Green Shield Project (P516908)

World Bank Environmental and Social Framework | ESS2 — Labor and Working Conditions

OHS.1 Purpose and Scope

This Annex provides an indicative Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Plan outline for use by contractors, sub-contractors, and the PIU (NOIEP) during the implementation of Moldova Green Shield project activities. It is consistent with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 2 (ESS2) on Labor and Working Conditions, the World Bank Group (WBG) Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) General Guidelines (2007, updated 2019), and the Law on Occupational Safety and Health of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 186-XVI/2008).

This outline constitutes a template to be adapted and completed at the site-specific level prior to commencement of each activity. The site-level OHS Plan is prepared by the contractor, reviewed and approved by the PIU Environmental Specialist, and maintained throughout the duration of works. It does not replace or supersede mandatory requirements under Moldovan occupational safety legislation.

The OHS Plan applies to all categories of project workers as defined in the standalone Labor Management Procedures (LMP), including: direct PIU staff engaged in field activities; contracted workers performing restoration works (afforestation, forest rehabilitation, riparian and wetland restoration, shelterbelt installation); seasonal and community-based workers engaged under Component 3; and RFRMC nursery staff.

OHS.2 Applicable Legal and Policy Framework

Site-level OHS Plans shall be consistent with the following legal and policy framework:

- Law on Occupational Safety and Health (Law No. 186-XVI/2008) and associated Moldovan OHS technical norms;
- Labor Code of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 154-XV/2003);
- Government Decision No. 95/2009 on minimum OHS requirements for workplaces;
- WBG EHS General Guidelines (2007/2019) — Sections 2.1 (OHS), 2.2 (Community Health and Safety), 2.3 (Construction and Decommissioning);
- WBG EHS Guidelines for Forestry (2007) — covering chainsaw operations, manual felling, and fire risk;
- World Bank ESS2 (Labor and Working Conditions) and ESS4 (Community Health and Safety);
- Moldova Green Shield ESMF, Section 9.5 (OHS Management) and standalone LMP.

OHS.3 Key OHS Risks by Activity Type

Project activities under Component 2 present a range of occupational health and safety risks. The table below identifies principal risks by activity type. The site-level OHS Plan shall include a detailed risk assessment specific to the site and activities planned.

Table OHS.1 — Key OHS Risks by Activity Type

Activity / Sub-Component	Principal OHS Risks	Applicable WBG EHS Guideline Reference
Afforestation and ANR (Sub-Component 2.1)	Manual terrain hazards (slopes, uneven terrain, stumps); chainsaw and brushcutter injuries; heat stress (June–August); biological risks (ticks, snakes, bee stings); transportation accidents on rural tracks; pesticide/herbicide exposure during site preparation	EHS General §2.1; EHS Forestry Guidelines
Forest rehabilitation and shelterbelt restoration (Sub-Component 2.1)	Felling and trimming hazards; falling objects; chainsaw operation; flying debris; dust and wood-chip exposure; manual handling injuries	EHS Forestry Guidelines; EHS General §2.1

Riparian buffer and wetland restoration (Sub-Component 2.2)	Drowning/water access risks; unstable riverbank terrain; waterborne disease exposure; machine operation near water; sediment and turbidity management; mosquito-borne disease risk in wetland areas	EHS General §2.1, §2.2; EHS Forestry Guidelines
Nursery operations — Southern RFRMC (Sub-Component 2.1)	Chemical exposure from herbicides/pesticides; manual handling of soil substrates; greenhouse heat exposure; irrigation system operation; machinery maintenance hazards; waste disposal	EHS General §2.1
Infrastructure works (access tracks, drainage) (Component 2 general)	Earthworks and excavation hazards; vehicle and machinery movement; dust; noise; manual handling; utility strikes	EHS General §2.1, Construction and Decommissioning
Community engagement and monitoring activities (Components 3 and 4)	Road traffic incidents during field visits; fatigue; heat stress during site monitoring; limited risk profile	EHS General §2.1

OHS.4 OHS Plan Structure — Required Sections

Each site-level OHS Plan shall include, at minimum, the following sections. Guidance notes are provided in brackets.

OHS.4.1 OHS Policy Statement

The contractor shall include a signed OHS Policy Statement confirming its commitment to: providing a safe and healthy working environment; complying with all applicable Moldovan OHS legislation and WBG EHS Guidelines; preventing occupational accidents, injuries, and work-related illness; and ensuring all workers receive adequate OHS training and information. [Template: one paragraph signed by contractor management representative.]

OHS.4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The OHS Plan shall designate:

- Site OHS Officer — responsible for daily OHS compliance, site inspections, incident reporting, and worker induction training. Required qualification: Moldovan OHS certification consistent with Law No. 186-XVII/2008. [Insert name and contact.]
- Contractor Site Manager — accountable for overall OHS performance and corrective actions. [Insert name and contact.]
- PIU Environmental Specialist — responsible for periodic OHS compliance verification visits (frequency: minimum monthly for high-risk activities; quarterly for lower-risk). [Insert PIU contact.]
- First Aid Officer(s) — minimum one certified first aider per crew of 20 workers; at least one per isolated field crew. [Insert name(s).]

[Guidance: Populate the table below for each site.]

Table OHS.2 — OHS Roles and Contacts

Role	Name	Contact	Qualification
Site OHS Officer			
Site Manager			
First Aid Officer(s)			
PIU Environmental Specialist			

OHS.4.3 Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

The contractor shall prepare a site-specific Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) prior to commencement of each activity phase, covering:

1. Identification of all hazards present at the site and associated with each work task;
2. Assessment of likelihood and severity of harm (using a risk matrix: High / Medium / Low);
3. Control measures for each identified hazard, following the hierarchy of controls: Elimination → Substitution → Engineering controls → Administrative controls → Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
4. Residual risk rating after application of controls.

[Guidance: Use Table OHS.3 below as the standard HIRA format. Complete a separate row for each task/hazard combination.]

Table OHS.3 — Site-Level Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)

Work Task / Activity	Hazard Identified	Likelihood (H/M/L)	Severity (H/M/L)	Control Measures	Residual Risk	Responsible Person
e.g. Manual planting on slopes	e.g. Slips, trips, falls	M	M	Non-slip footwear; slope briefing; buddy system; no solo work on slopes >30°	L	Site OHS Officer

OHS.4.4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The contractor shall provide all required PPE free of charge to workers. PPE shall be maintained in serviceable condition and replaced when worn or damaged. The minimum PPE requirements by task category are set out below.

Table OHS.4 — Minimum PPE Requirements by Task

Task Category	Minimum PPE Required
All field activities	Safety boots (steel-toed), high-visibility vest, sun protection (hat, long sleeves), insect-repellent clothing in tick-endemic areas
Chainsaw and brushcutter operation	Chainsaw-protective trousers (Class 1), chainsaw gloves, chainsaw helmet with face visor and hearing protection, steel-toed boots
Manual planting and terrain work	Gloves, knee protection where kneeling required, safety footwear, eye protection when using tools
Pesticide / herbicide application	Chemical-resistant gloves and boots, full-face shield or goggles, chemical-resistant overalls or apron, respiratory protection (half-mask with OV/P2 filter) as per Safety Data Sheet
Riparian and wetland works	Life jacket (buoyancy aid, EN ISO 12402-5) mandatory when working within 2 m of water edge; wader boots; waterproof gloves
Nursery operations	Gloves, eye protection, chemical-resistant PPE when handling agrochemicals; heat protection in greenhouse environments
Vehicle and machinery operation	Seat belts; operator certification; signaller vest; hearing protection where noise >85 dB(A)

OHS.4.5 Heat Stress Management

Given Moldova's climate and the concentration of field activities during the summer season (May–September), heat stress is a priority OHS risk. The following measures are mandatory:

- Work scheduling: heavy physical work (planting, manual felling, earthworks) shall not commence before 06:00 or continue after 16:00 during heatwave periods (when daily maximum temperatures exceed 35°C);
- Rest periods: minimum 10-minute rest per hour in shaded areas during temperatures above 32°C; extended rest breaks at temperatures above 35°C;
- Hydration: free, cool drinking water available at all times at a maximum distance of 50 m from any work station; minimum 0.5 L per worker per hour during hot conditions;
- Acclimatization: newly assigned workers shall not perform heavy physical work for the full shift during their first five days; workload shall be progressively increased;
- Heat illness recognition and response: Site OHS Officer trained to recognize and respond to heat exhaustion and heat stroke; first aid protocols include transfer to shade, cooling, hydration, and emergency services call for heat stroke cases;
- Moldova National Hydrometeorological Service (SHS) heat alerts: contractor shall monitor SHS alerts and implement heightened controls when yellow or red heat warnings are in force.

OHS.4.6 Tick and Biological Hazard Management

Restoration activities in forest, riparian, and wetland ecosystems in southern Moldova carry a risk of exposure to tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) and Lyme disease, as well as snake encounters and bee/wasp stings. The following measures apply:

- Tick prevention: long-sleeved clothing, long trousers tucked into socks, and tick-repellent sprays during field activities in May–October; daily body tick checks; prompt tick removal protocols;
- TBE vaccination: recommended for all workers deployed in forest and riparian restoration sites; the contractor shall facilitate access to TBE vaccination through Moldova's national vaccination programme;
- Snake and wildlife awareness: worker induction training to cover identification of locally present venomous species (common European adder, *Vipera berus*), avoidance measures, and first aid (immobilization, no incision, immediate transfer to medical facility);
- Emergency medical referral: contractor to confirm availability of nearest medical facility with anti-venom capability for each work site.

OHS.4.7 Emergency Preparedness and Response

The site-level OHS Plan shall include a site-specific Emergency Response Procedure covering:

5. Site emergency contact list (local emergency services 112; nearest hospital/clinic; PIU E&S Specialist; contractor management);
6. Emergency assembly point and evacuation routes — clearly marked at site; briefed to all workers at induction;
7. First aid kit location and contents — minimum: per WBG EHS General Guidelines Table 2.1.1; inspected monthly;
8. Communication protocol for serious incidents: site OHS Officer notifies contractor site manager immediately; contractor notifies PIU E&S Specialist within 24 hours; PIU notifies World Bank Task Team within 48 hours for any serious OHS incident (fatality, serious injury, hospitalization);
9. Fire prevention and response: no open burning at or near restoration sites without prior authorization; extinguisher provision at fuel storage and machinery areas;
10. Spill response procedure for fuel, lubricants, and agrochemicals: spill kits at all fuel storage and pesticide handling areas; containment and clean-up protocols.

Table OHS.5 — Site Emergency Contacts

Contact / Service	Name / Number	Notes
National Emergency Services	112	Police, Ambulance, Fire
Nearest hospital / clinic with emergency capacity		Insert address and distance from site
Contractor Site Manager		
Site OHS Officer		
PIU Environmental Specialist		

PIU Director (NOIEP)		
Raion / District Civil Protection Authority		Insert relevant raion contact

OHS.4.8 Worker OHS Induction Training

All workers shall receive OHS induction training before commencing work at any project site. Training shall be delivered in Romanian and/or Russian as appropriate to the workforce. Induction records shall be signed by each worker and retained in the project safeguards file.

Minimum induction content:

- Site hazards and risk controls;
- PPE use, fitting, and maintenance;
- Heat stress recognition and prevention;
- Biological hazards (ticks, snakes) and response;
- Emergency procedures and assembly points;
- Incident and near-miss reporting procedures;
- Prohibited behaviors (alcohol/drug use, working alone in high-risk areas, open burning);
- Pesticide and fuel handling protocols (where applicable);
- Code of Conduct obligations, including SEA/SH prevention;
- Worker Grievance Redress Mechanism (W-GRM) access.

[Guidance: Use Table OHS.6 to record induction completion. Maintain original signed records at site; copy to PIU safeguards file.]

Table OHS.6 — Worker OHS Induction Register

Worker Name	Date of Induction	Delivered by	Language	Signature

OHS.4.9 OHS Monitoring and Inspection

OHS performance shall be monitored through the following mechanism:

- Daily: Site OHS Officer conducts morning site safety check before work commencement; checks PPE availability and condition, tool and machinery pre-use inspection, and weather conditions;
- Weekly: Contractor site manager conducts formal weekly OHS walkthrough; findings documented in OHS inspection log;
- Monthly: PIU Environmental Specialist conducts verification visit; reviews OHS incident log, HIRA currency, PPE records, and worker induction register;
- After any incident: Site OHS Officer conducts immediate post-incident inspection; root cause analysis documented within 5 working days.

[Guidance: Use Table OHS.7 for monthly OHS inspection records.]

Table OHS.7 — Monthly OHS Site Inspection Checklist

Inspection Item	Compliant	Non-Compliant	Corrective Action Required
OHS Plan displayed / accessible at site			
Current HIRA available and reviewed with workers			
All workers have received induction training (register complete)			

PPE issued, worn correctly, and in good condition			
First aid kit stocked and accessible			
Emergency contacts posted at site			
Chainsaw operators have valid certification			
Heat stress controls in place (water, shade, schedule)			
Pesticide / fuel storage and spill kit in place			
Life jackets available for riparian / wetland works			
Incident log maintained and up to date			
No evidence of child labor (minimum age 18 for hazardous work)			
Worksites accessible to persons with limited mobility where applicable			

OHS.4.10 Incident Recording and Reporting

All OHS incidents, near-misses, and occupational illnesses shall be recorded in the site OHS Incident Register and reported in accordance with the following protocol:

- Near-miss: recorded in incident register within 24 hours; reported to PIU E&S Specialist in monthly contractor safeguards log;
- Minor injury (first aid treatment only): recorded within 24 hours; reported to PIU in monthly log;
- Recordable injury (medical treatment beyond first aid, restricted work, lost time): recorded immediately; reported to PIU E&S Specialist within 24 hours; PIU notifies World Bank Task Team in next quarterly report;
- Serious injury, fatality, or hospitalization: verbal notification to PIU E&S Specialist immediately; written notification to PIU within 24 hours; PIU notifies World Bank Task Team within 48 hours; Moldovan labor inspectorate notified per Law No. 186-XVI/2008 requirements.

[Guidance: Use Table OHS.8 as the site OHS Incident Register.]

Table OHS.8 — OHS Incident Register

Incident No.	Date / Time	Description	Injured Person / Witness	Classification	Immediate Action	Root Cause / Corrective Action

OHS.5 Site-Level OHS Plan Approval and Review

The site-level OHS Plan shall be:

11. Prepared by the contractor's Site OHS Officer prior to mobilization;
12. Submitted to the PIU Environmental Specialist for review and approval before any work commences at the site;
13. Reviewed and updated: at the start of each new activity phase; following any serious incident; and at minimum every six months during project implementation;
14. Maintained in hard copy at the site and electronically in the project safeguards file held by the PIU.

Table OHS.9 — OHS Plan Approval Record

Version	Date	Prepared by	Approved by (PIU)
Initial (pre-mobilization)			
Revision 1			
Revision 2			

This Annex [OHS] is part of the Moldova Green Shield ESMF (P516908) and shall be read in conjunction with the standalone Labor Management Procedures (LMP), ESMF Section 9.5 (OHS Management), and site-specific ESMPs prepared for each restoration activity.

ANNEX 7 CRITICAL HABITAT AND BIODIVERSITY RISK SCREENING GUIDANCE

Including: Critical Habitat Screening Checklist | Critical Habitat Assessment Framework | Biodiversity Management Plan Outline

Moldova Green Shield Project (P516908)

World Bank ESS6 — Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources |

CH.1 Purpose and Scope

This Annex provides guidance, tools, and templates for critical habitat and biodiversity risk screening under the Moldova Green Shield project. It is applicable to all restoration activity under Component 2 (Sub-Components 2.1 and 2.2) and to any Component 3 activities that may interact with ecologically sensitive land. The Annex is structured in three parts:

- Part A (Section CH.2–CH.3): Critical Habitat Screening Checklist — a rapid desktop and field tool used during the ESMF screening stage (Section 5.2) to identify whether a proposed activity site may trigger ESS6 critical habitat provisions;
- Part B (Section CH.4): Critical Habitat Assessment (CHA) Framework — an indicative framework for the site-level CHA required where the screening checklist identifies potential critical habitat triggers;
- Part C (Section CH.5–CH.6): Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) Outline — a template structure for BMPs required for restoration sites in or near critical habitats or ecologically sensitive areas.

The guidance in this Annex is consistent with World Bank ESS6 the WBG Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management Good Practice Note, and applicable Moldovan biodiversity legislation including Law No. 86/2014 (EIA Law, as amended 2023) and the Biodiversity Assessment Guidelines (Order No. 105/2024 of the Minister of Environment).

CH.2 Habitat Classification Framework

All proposed restoration sites shall be classified into one of four habitat categories consistent with ESS6 before any works commence. The habitat category determines the level of biodiversity due diligence required.

Table CH.1 — Habitat Classification and Required Due Diligence

Habitat Category	Definition	Required Due Diligence under ESS6
Modified Habitat	Areas significantly altered by human activity where the original ecosystem has been substantially replaced (e.g., arable fields, degraded shelterbelts, heavily degraded steppe). Native biodiversity substantially reduced.	Standard ESMP mitigation measures apply. No CHA required. BMP not required unless IAS risk is elevated.
Natural Habitat	Areas where the dominant species, ecological functions, and ecological processes are largely of native species. Includes secondary forests, riparian corridors, and semi-natural steppe retaining significant native composition.	Enhanced ESMP mitigation. IAS screening required. BMP recommended. CHA screening required.
Critical Habitat	Natural habitats meeting one or more of the ESS6 criteria (see Section CH.3). Includes Ramsar sites, Emerald Network areas, habitats of IUCN Red List Critically Endangered / Endangered species, Key Biodiversity Areas.	Full CHA required (see Section CH.4). BMP required (see Section CH.5). No net loss of biodiversity; net gain strongly preferred. World Bank Task Team notification required before works.
Legally Protected Area	Areas designated under national law (Law No. 1538/1998) or international instruments (Ramsar Convention, Bern Convention / Emerald Network). May overlap with Critical Habitat.	Activities only permitted if explicitly aligned with area management objectives and authorized by the competent authority (Agency for Environment / Ministry of

		Environment). CHA and BMP required. Activity may be subject to Biodiversity Assessment under Law No. 86/2014.
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CH.3 Critical Habitat Screening Checklist (Part A)

The Critical Habitat Screening Checklist is completed by the PIU Environmental Specialist (with input from a biodiversity specialist where available) during the ESMF screening stage for each proposed restoration site. The checklist draws on available GIS data, national databases, satellite imagery, and a rapid site inspection. Where desktop screening is inconclusive, a field verification visit by a qualified biodiversity specialist is required before any works commence.

Table CH.2 — Critical Habitat Screening Checklist

Screening Criterion	Yes	No	Notes / Data Source
CRITERION 1: Ramsar Wetlands			Lower Prut Lakes Ramsar site (1,691 ha, designated 2003). Source: Ramsar Information Service; national GIS layer.
Site falls within the boundary of a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance			
Site falls within the buffer zone (2 km) of a Ramsar site			
CRITERION 2: Emerald Network / Protected Areas			Source: Agency for Environment GIS; national protected area database (Law No. 1538/1998).
Site falls within or adjacent to an Emerald Network site (within 1 km)			
Site falls within a nationally designated protected area (nature reserve, natural monument, landscape reserve)			
Site falls within the buffer zone of a nationally designated protected area			
CRITERION 3: Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Important Bird Areas (IBAs)			Source: IUCN KBA database; BirdLife IBA Moldova dataset.
Site falls within or adjacent to a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)			
Site falls within or adjacent to an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA)			
CRITERION 4: IUCN Red List Species			Source: IUCN Red List; Moldova Red Book (2015 edition); Agency for Environment records.
Known or likely presence of IUCN Critically Endangered (CR) species within or adjacent to the site			

Known or likely presence of IUCN Endangered (EN) species within or adjacent to the site			
Site lies within recorded or potential habitat of Moldova Red Book species			
CRITERION 5: Habitats of Significant Ecological Value			Source: Satellite imagery; expert judgment; national ecological network layer (Law No. 94/2007).
Site contains or is adjacent to remnant native steppe or forest-steppe communities (Bugeac steppe or equivalent)			
Site is a riverine / riparian corridor with intact or partially intact native riparian vegetation			
Site contains or is adjacent to natural or semi-natural wetlands outside Ramsar designation			
Site is identified as a priority habitat in the national ecological network (Law No. 94/2007)			
CRITERION 6: Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Risk			Source: ESMF Exclusion List (Section 4.2); IAS watch-list in BMP Section CH.5.
Proposed species list includes any species on the ESMF IAS watch-list or EU IAS Regulation list (EU 1143/2014)			
Site is adjacent to a natural or semi-natural habitat where IAS introduction could cause irreversible damage			

Table CH.3 — Critical Habitat Screening Outcome

Screening Outcome	Required Action
No criteria triggered (all “No”)	Classify as Modified or Natural Habitat. Standard ESMP measures apply. Proceed with site-specific ESMP preparation.
One or more criteria triggered	Full Critical Habitat Assessment (CHA) required before activity design is finalized (see Section CH.4). World Bank Task Team notified. Activity design adapted to avoid or minimize impacts.
Criterion triggering Legally Protected Area designation	In addition to CHA, national Biodiversity Assessment under Law No. 86/2014 / Order No. 105/2024 may be required. Activity may only proceed with authorization from Agency for Environment / Ministry of Environment.
IAS risk identified (Criterion 6)	Species selection reviewed and corrected before any procurement or planting. IAS exclusion documented in site-level BMP and ESMP.

[Guidance: Complete one checklist per restoration site. Retain in project safeguards file. Attach satellite imagery and GIS buffer outputs.]

CH.4 Critical Habitat Assessment (CHA) Framework (Part B)

A Critical Habitat Assessment (CHA) is required for any site where the Critical Habitat Screening Checklist (Table CH.2) identifies one or more triggered criteria. The CHA is prepared by a qualified biodiversity specialist and reviewed by the PIU Environmental Specialist and the World Bank Task Team before site-level activity design is finalized.

CH.4.1 CHA Scope and Objectives

The CHA shall:

1. Confirm habitat classification (Modified / Natural / Critical / Legally Protected) based on field verification;
2. Document the ecological values of the site and adjacent areas relevant to the ESS6 critical habitat criteria triggered in the screening;
3. Assess the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed restoration activities on identified critical habitat values;
4. Determine whether the no net loss (NNL) standard (for critical habitat) or net gain standard (preferred) can be achieved;
5. Identify the mitigation hierarchy required: Avoid → Minimize → Restore → Offset;
6. Provide recommendations for activity design, species selection, and BMP preparation.

CH.4.2 CHA Structure — Required Sections

Each CHA report shall include the following sections:

Table CH.4 — CHA Report Structure

CHA Section	Required Content
1. Executive Summary	Habitat classification confirmed; key ecological values; impact assessment summary; recommended mitigation hierarchy; BMP requirement.
2. Site Description	Location, coordinates, area (ha), land ownership/use status, adjacent land uses. Satellite imagery and GIS maps (1:25,000 minimum scale). Photographs with GPS coordinates.
3. Regulatory and International Designation Review	Confirmation of Ramsar, Emerald Network, nationally protected area, or KBA designations applicable to the site. Summary of applicable management objectives and relevant restrictions.
4. Habitat and Vegetation Survey	Description of existing vegetation communities using EUNIS habitat classification (where applicable) or national classification. Estimate of habitat extent and condition. Comparison with baseline (pre-degradation) reference vegetation. Identification of any remnant native communities.
5. Fauna Survey	Rapid fauna assessment covering: birds (breeding, migratory), herpetofauna (IUCN-listed species as ecological restoration indicators), mammals, and invertebrates (pollinators, saproxylic beetles). Include seasonal constraints (breeding seasons) for field surveys. Record presence of IUCN Red List and Moldova Red Book species.
6. Critical Habitat Criterion Verification	Explicit assessment of each triggered screening criterion against ESS6 definitions. Confirm whether the site meets the critical habitat threshold. Document evidence for each criterion.
7. Impact Assessment	Assessment of potential impacts of proposed restoration activities on identified habitat values and species. Cover: direct impacts (vegetation clearance, soil disturbance, hydrological change); indirect impacts (edge effects, noise, light); and cumulative impacts (interaction with other Component 2 activities across the landscape).

8. No Net Loss / Net Gain Analysis	Assessment of whether NNL/net gain can be achieved through avoidance, minimization, and restoration measures intrinsic to the project design. Where residual impacts remain after mitigation, identify offset requirements.
9. Mitigation Recommendations	Site-specific mitigation measures following the hierarchy: Avoid → Minimize → Restore → Offset. Recommendations for activity design changes, species selection adjustments, and buffer zone definition.
10. BMP Requirement and Key Parameters	Confirmation that a BMP is required; key parameters to be addressed (see Section CH.5). Recommended biodiversity monitoring indicators and baseline survey approach.
11. References and Qualifications	Species lists; references; names and qualifications of biodiversity specialist(s) conducting the CHA.

CH.4.3 Seasonal Survey Requirements

Field surveys for the CHA shall take account of the following seasonal windows for key taxa in southern Moldova:

Table CH.5 — Recommended Survey Seasons for Key Taxa

Taxa	Recommended Survey Window	Rationale
Breeding birds	April – June	Peak breeding activity; territory establishment and song surveys most effective.
Migratory birds (waterbirds, raptors)	March – April; September – October	Spring and autumn migration corridors; Lower Prut floodplain importance.
Amphibians (indicator species)	March – May (breeding); August – September (post-breeding)	Amphibians are key ecological restoration indicators; spawn and calling surveys most effective in spring.
Reptiles (including protected species)	April – June; August – September	Peak activity periods; basking surveys effective in warm morning conditions.
Pollinators (bees, butterflies)	May – August	Peak flowering season; steppe and meadow habitats particularly important.
Vegetation / habitat mapping	May – July	Full herbaceous layer development; maximum species detectability.
IAS field check	May – August	Maximum growth of invasive species (Ailanthus, Robinia, Reynoutria, Amorpha) enables identification.

CH.5 Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) Outline (Part C)

A Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) is required for all restoration sites classified as Critical Habitat or Legally Protected Area, and recommended for sites classified as Natural Habitat with elevated biodiversity sensitivity. The BMP is prepared by the contractor with input from a biodiversity specialist, reviewed by the PIU Environmental Specialist, and approved by the World Bank Task Team before works commence.

CH.5.1 BMP Cover Information

[Complete one BMP per site or cluster of sites with homogeneous ecological characteristics.]

Table CH.6 — BMP Cover Sheet

Field	Information
Project Name	Moldova Green Shield (P516908)
Sub-Component	
Site Name / ID	
District / Raion	
GPS Coordinates (centroid)	
Site Area (ha)	
Habitat Classification	
Restoration Intervention Type	
Biodiversity Specialist (name, qualifications)	
BMP Preparation Date	
PIU Approval Date	
World Bank Clearance Date	

CH.5.2 Required BMP Sections

Table CH.7 — BMP Required Sections and Content

BMP Section	Required Content
1. Site Ecological Description	Summary of CHA findings: habitat classification; key species and communities; critical habitat criteria met. Maps and photos.
2. Biodiversity-Sensitive Activity Design	Activity layout adjusted to avoid core habitat values. Buffer zones defined (minimum widths by habitat type, see Table CH.8). Phasing and no-go zones described.
3. Species Selection and Provenance	Confirmed species list: all species native and of local / regional provenance. Source nursery (RFRMC or approved equivalent). IAS exclusion confirmed. Climate-resilient species selection criteria documented.
4. IAS Prevention and Response	IAS watch-list for the site (from Table CH.9). Pre-planting IAS clearance protocol. In-season IAS monitoring frequency. Response protocol if IAS detected (identification, containment, removal, disposal). IAS-free certification requirement for planting material.
5. Habitat Connectivity Measures	Description of measures to maintain or enhance habitat connectivity within and beyond the site: wildlife crossing points, hedgerow retention, stepping-stone habitat creation, riparian corridor continuity. Coordination with adjacent landowners / LPAs where relevant.
6. Sensitive Species Protection Measures	Site-specific measures for IUCN Red List / Moldova Red Book species confirmed by CHA: seasonal work restrictions (see Table CH.5); nest / den protection exclusion zones; supervision protocol for chance encounters. Notification procedure to PIU and Agency for Environment.
7. Hydrological Management (riparian / wetland sites)	For Sub-Component 2.2 sites: measures to maintain natural hydrological regime. Restriction on drainage or channel

	modification without hydrological assessment. Sediment and turbidity control during works.
8. Biodiversity Monitoring Plan	Monitoring indicators (see Table CH.10). Baseline survey completed before works. Monitoring frequency and methodology. Responsible party. Reporting pathway to PIU and World Bank.
9. Roles and Responsibilities	Biodiversity specialist responsibilities during implementation; contractor obligations; PIU oversight; Agency for Environment notification requirements.
10. No Net Loss / Net Gain Tracking	Method for tracking NNL/net gain achievement. Vegetation survival targets by year. Species composition targets at Year 3 and Year 5. Corrective action triggers.

CH.5.3 Minimum Buffer Zones

Table CH.8 — Indicative Minimum Buffer Zones for Sensitive Features

Sensitive Feature	Minimum Buffer from Works	Notes
Ramsar site boundary	200 m	Subject to site-specific hydrological assessment; World Bank Task Team confirmation required.
Emerald Network site boundary	100 m	Biodiversity Assessment may be required under Law No. 86/2014 even within buffer.
Nationally designated protected area boundary	50 m minimum; defer to management plan	Works within protected area require Agency for Environment authorization.
Active nest of raptor or colonially nesting bird (IUCN / Moldova Red Book)	200 m exclusion zone (breeding season)	No works within exclusion zone April–July inclusive.
Water course / riverbank edge	10 m from bankfull edge	Heavier machinery: 25 m minimum.
Permanent wetland / lake edge	25 m from water edge	Riparian planting within buffer permitted if designed for habitat restoration.
Remnant native steppe community	No encroachment	Native steppe treated as no-go zone for afforestation; document and report to PIU.

CH.5.4 IAS Watch-List for Moldova Green Shield

The following species are on the IAS watch-list for Moldova Green Shield project activities. None of these species shall be included in planting plans or seed mixes. Presence at or adjacent to restoration sites shall be assessed during the Critical Habitat Screening and documented in the BMP.

Table CH.9 — IAS Watch-List: Species Excluded from Planting and Flagged for Monitoring

Species (common name)	Species (Latin name)	Habitat Risk and Notes
Tree of Heaven	Ailanthus altissima	Highly invasive in steppe, forest edge, and riparian habitats. Listed on EU IAS Regulation (EU 1143/2014) since 2019. Excluded from all planting. If present: management plan required.

Black Locust / Robinia	Robinia pseudoacacia	Widely naturalized in Moldova; risk in steppe-interface areas. Not excluded from all activities but use restricted to RFRMC-approved provenances in designated areas only; avoid planting adjacent to native steppe.
Japanese Knotweed	Reynoutria japonica	Listed on EU IAS Regulation. Highly invasive in riparian corridors. Excluded from all planting. If found during works: halt works, notify PIU, implement containment protocol.
Indigo Bush	Amorpha fruticosa	Invasive in riparian and floodplain habitats in Moldova. Excluded from all planting under Sub-Component 2.2. Monitor and report if found.
Giant Goldenrod	Solidago gigantea / canadensis	Invasive in riparian and wetland margins. Excluded from all planting. Monitor at Sub-Component 2.2 sites.
Common Ragweed	Ambrosia artemisiifolia	Listed on EU IAS Regulation. Present across agricultural interfaces in southern Moldova. Monitor and report; do not use topsoil from infested areas without treatment.
Autumn Olive	Elaeagnus umbellata	Potential invasive in steppe and forest-edge habitats. Excluded from planting in or adjacent to semi-natural habitats.

CH.6 Biodiversity Monitoring Framework

Biodiversity monitoring under BMPs follows a standardized indicator framework to enable comparability across sites and to support assessment of ESS6 no net loss / net gain achievement at the project level.

Table CH.10 — Standard Biodiversity Monitoring Indicators for Moldova Green Shield BMPs

Indicator	Measurement Method	Baseline (Year 0)	Target (Year 3 / Year 5)	Frequency
Native tree / shrub species richness at site	Plot-based vegetation surveys (10x10 m plots; minimum 5 per 100 ha)	Establish at Year 0	Year 3: ≥10 native species per ha; Year 5: ≥15 native species per ha	Annual
Vegetation survival rate (%)	Standardized plot counts; comparison with planting records	N/A	Year 1: ≥60%; Year 3: ≥70%	Annual
IAS presence (number of species detected)	Systematic transect walks; IAS watch-list species	Establish at Year 0	Target: zero new IAS establishment	Twice-annual
Amphibian species richness (indicator)	Call survey / torchlight transect (March–May)	Establish at Year 0 (if site type applicable)	Year 3: stable or improved vs. baseline	Annual (spring)
Breeding bird species richness	Point count surveys (April–June; minimum 3 visits)	Establish at Year 0	Year 5: ≥20% increase vs. baseline	Annual
Pollinator diversity index (steppe / meadow sites)	Transect walk pollinator counts (May–July; 50m transects)	Establish at Year 0 (steppe-	Year 5: stable or improved vs. baseline	Annual

		interface sites only)		
Habitat connectivity index	GIS-based landscape connectivity analysis (patch size, distance to nearest habitat patch)	Establish at Year 0 (GIS analysis)	Year 5: measurable improvement in landscape connectivity score	Every 2 years

[Guidance: Baseline surveys shall be completed before any physical works commence at the site. Monitoring results shall be reported annually to the PIU Environmental Specialist and included in the Annual Biodiversity Management Plan Progress Report (see ESMF Table 8.6).]

This Annex [CH] is part of the Moldova Green Shield ESMF (P516908) and shall be read in conjunction with ESMF Section 5.2 (Screening), Section 5.3 (Planning), Section 6.2 (Biodiversity Management Plans), and the site-specific ESMPs prepared for each restoration activity.

ANNEX 8 LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION PLAN (LRP) OUTLINE

For Use at Activity Level Where ESS5 Access Restrictions Are Confirmed

Moldova Green Shield Project (P516908)

World Bank ESS5 — Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement | Process Framework

LRP.1 Purpose and Trigger Conditions

This Annex provides a Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) outline template for use at the activity level under the Moldova Green Shield project. It is applicable where the ESS5 site screening (ESMF Section 5.2 and ESS5 Screening in the Screening Form, Annex 1) confirms that a proposed restoration activity will result in restrictions on access to communal lands, natural resources, or livelihood assets that affect the incomes or living standards of project-affected persons (PAPs).

The LRP is consistent with World Bank ESS5 and the project's Process Framework (Annex [PF] of this ESMF). It operationalizes the Process Framework's commitments at the individual activity level, providing a structured approach to documenting affected persons, assessing livelihood impacts, and designing and monitoring restoration measures.

LRP.1.1 When Is an LRP Required?

Table LRP.1 — LRP Trigger Conditions

Condition	LRP Required?
Afforestation or ANR on communal or LPA-managed degraded land currently used for grazing by smallholders or livestock keepers	YES — if restriction confirmed by site screening. Scope proportionate to number of affected households and duration/severity of restriction.
Riparian buffer restoration along riverbanks informally used for livestock watering, fishing, or small-scale crop production	YES — if access restriction confirmed. May be simplified LRP if impacts are minor and temporary.
Wetland rehabilitation restricting informal access to wetland resources (reeds, fishing, livestock watering)	YES — if restriction confirmed. Assess whether restriction is temporary or permanent.
Shelterbelt or silvopastoral system installation on communal pasture land with documented grazing use	YES — if confirmed by site screening and community consultation. Simplified LRP may suffice for minor temporary restrictions.
Restoration on state forest land or land without documented current use or access restriction	NO — standard ESMP applies. Document absence of restrictions in screening form.
Voluntary land donation or formal land agreement with LPA / individual landowner (no restriction)	NO — but voluntary donation must be documented per Process Framework voluntary land protocol.

[Guidance: The PIU Social Specialist makes the LRP trigger determination on the basis of the ESS5 screening output and the community consultation records. The determination is documented in the site safeguards file and shared with the World Bank Task Team.]

LRP.1.2 LRP Proportionality

The scope and detail of the LRP shall be proportionate to the scale and severity of the access restrictions:

- Minor, temporary restriction (fewer than 20 affected households; restriction duration less than one growing season; affected livelihood asset not primary income source): Simplified LRP — Sections LRP.2, LRP.3, LRP.4, LRP.7, and LRP.8 are mandatory; Sections LRP.5 and LRP.6 may be abbreviated.
- Moderate restriction (20–100 affected households; restriction duration one to three seasons; affected livelihood asset is significant but not sole income source): Standard LRP — all sections mandatory.
- Significant restriction (more than 100 affected households; restriction duration exceeds three seasons; affected livelihood asset is primary income source for a significant proportion of PAPs): Full LRP with independent review — all sections mandatory; LRP reviewed by World Bank Social Specialist before approval.

LRP.2 Activity and Site Description

Table LRP.2 — LRP Cover Sheet

Field	Information
Project Name	Moldova Green Shield (P516908)
Sub-Component / Activity Type	
Site Name / ID	
District (Raion) and Village (Sat)	
Site Area (ha)	
Land Ownership / Management Status	
Nature of Access Restriction	
Duration of Restriction (estimated)	
LRP Proportionality Category	☐ Minor ☐ Moderate ☐ Significant
LRP Prepared by (name, role)	
LRP Preparation Date	
PIU Social Specialist Review Date	
World Bank Clearance Date	
Commencement of Works (not before)	NOT BEFORE LRP APPROVED AND BASELINE COMPLETED

LRP.3 Legal and Policy Framework

The LRP shall confirm the applicable legal and policy framework for access restrictions and livelihood restoration at the site. The following framework applies to all Moldova Green Shield LRPs:

- World Bank ESS5 (Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement) — governing standard;
- Moldova Green Shield Process Framework (Annex [PF] of this ESMF) — project-level procedural framework governing ESS5 implementation;
- Land Code of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 22/2024) — governing communal and agricultural land use;
- Law on Local Public Administration (Law No. 436/2006) — governing LPA land management responsibilities;
- Forest Code (Law No. 69/2024) — governing forest fund and degraded land management;
- Civil Code provisions on servitudes and temporary land use agreements;
- Any applicable LPA decision or communal land management agreement governing access to the specific site.

[Guidance: Insert the specific legal basis for the land use arrangement at the site — e.g., LPA council decision authorizing afforestation; government designation of land as eligible for restoration under NFERP 2023–2032.]

LRP.4 Census and Socioeconomic Survey of Project-Affected Persons (PAPs)

LRP.4.1 Census of PAPs

A census of all persons whose access to the affected land or resource will be restricted shall be conducted before the LRP is finalized. The census shall cover the cut-off date (the date of the census survey), after which new users of the affected resource are not eligible for livelihood restoration measures.

The census shall document:

- Name, age, gender, and household size of each PAP;
- Legal or customary basis for land/resource access (title, LPA pasture permit, customary use, informal access);
- Type and area of land affected (grazing land, riparian strip, wetland resource area, agricultural plot);

- Duration of current use and period affected by the restriction;
- Vulnerability status: women-headed household, elderly (65+), person with disability, Roma, Gagauz, youth (under 30), household below subsistence income threshold.

Table LRP.3 — PAP Census Register

PAP Name	Age / Gender	HH Size	Access Basis	Land/Resource Type and Area	Duration of Restriction	Vulnerability Status	Contact

LRP.4.2 Socioeconomic Survey

For moderate and significant LRPs, a targeted socioeconomic survey shall be conducted with a representative sample of PAPs (minimum 30% of census households; 100% for significant LRPs). The survey shall document:

- Main and secondary income sources and estimated annual household income;
- Contribution of affected land/resource to household income and food security (estimated % of total income and % of household food supply);
- Number and type of livestock dependent on affected grazing land;
- Alternative land or resources currently available to the household;
- PAP's preferred livelihood restoration options (open-ended question and ranked-choice from options identified in LRP.5);
- Special needs or constraints affecting ability to take up restoration measures (e.g., age, disability, language, mobility).

[Guidance: Survey instrument shall be translated into Romanian and Russian; Gagauz translation where relevant. Women shall be interviewed independently where culturally appropriate. Survey results shall be disaggregated by gender, age group, and vulnerability category.]

LRP.5 Livelihood Impact Assessment

The livelihood impact assessment documents the nature, scale, and duration of the livelihood impacts on each PAP, based on the census and socioeconomic survey data. The assessment shall:

1. Quantify the affected livelihood asset for each PAP (hectares of grazing land; volume of riparian resources; area of informal crop production; fishing access area);
2. Estimate the monetary value of the affected livelihood asset where possible, using local market prices (cost of replacement fodder per livestock unit; average fish catch value; crop value per ha);
3. Assess whether the impact constitutes: (a) loss of primary livelihood; (b) reduction in supplementary income; (c) temporary inconvenience with readily available substitutes;
4. Identify PAPs at heightened risk of impoverishment: households where affected resource contributes more than 20% of annual income; households below subsistence threshold; female-headed households with no alternative income; elderly households with limited mobility to access alternative resources;
5. Document cumulative impacts where the same PAP is affected by multiple project sites.

Table LRP.4 — Livelihood Impact Summary by PAP

PAP Name / ID	Affected Asset and Area	Estimated Annual Income Loss (MDL)	% of Total HH Income	Impact Severity (High / Medium / Low)	Heightened Risk? (Y/N — reason)

LRP.6 Livelihood Restoration Measures

LRP.6.1 Restoration Standard

Livelihood restoration measures shall aim to improve, or at minimum restore, the livelihoods and living standards of all PAPs to pre-project levels in real terms. Measures shall be:

- Identified through a participatory process with PAPs (see LRP.4.2 survey);
- Designed to address both the monetary loss and the non-monetary dimensions of the livelihood impact (food security, cultural practices, access to common resources);
- Proportionate to the severity of impact as assessed in LRP.5;
- Delivered before or concurrent with the onset of the access restriction;
- Adapted for vulnerable groups with tailored support measures.

LRP.6.2 Menu of Restoration Measures

The following measures are available under the Moldova Green Shield project and shall be selected and combined based on PAP preferences, impact severity, and feasibility. The LRP shall specify which measures apply to which PAPs and document PAP consent.

Table LRP.5 — Menu of Livelihood Restoration Measures

Measure Category	Description	Applicable PAP Profile
Alternative grazing access	Identification and formalization of alternative communal grazing areas through LPA coordination; support for issuance of grazing permits on alternative plots. NOIEP / PIU facilitates LPA-level coordination.	Smallholder livestock keepers affected by grazing land restriction
Replacement fodder support	Cash-equivalent payment covering estimated cost of replacement fodder for the duration of the access restriction, calculated at local market price per livestock unit. Delivered as direct transfer to PAP before restriction commences.	Livestock keepers where alternative grazing is not available; heightened-risk households
Priority access to project green jobs	PAPs have priority access to paid community labor opportunities under Components 2 and 3 (planting, maintenance, nursery work, biodiversity monitoring). PIU Social Specialist maintains a PAP priority list for labor contractor selection.	Working-age PAPs; women-headed households; youth PAPs
Livelihood diversification support	Access to Component 3 livelihood diversification activities: beekeeping starter kits; non-timber forest product processing training; medicinal plant cultivation; agroforestry advisory support; climate-smart agriculture training. Prioritized for PAPs with high-severity impacts.	PAPs with medium-high severity impact; women-headed households; smallholders
Riparian and wetland access restoration	Where riparian buffer restoration restricts customary access for livestock watering or fishing: design of designated access points; installation of managed crossing points or watering facilities where technically feasible.	PAPs with customary riparian access; livestock keepers dependent on river watering
Community stewardship incentive payments	Where PAPs agree to participate in community co-management of restored areas: performance-based	PAPs willing to transition to stewardship role;

	payments or conditional livelihood support linked to stewardship outcomes (per Component 3 stewardship arrangements).	Community Forest User Groups
Tailored support for vulnerable PAPs	Enhanced measures for women-headed households, elderly, Roma, and Gagauz PAPs: in-language communication; outreach by implementing NGOs; home visits for mobility-constrained PAPs; direct registration support for cash transfers.	All vulnerability-flagged PAPs

LRP.6.3 Restoration Measure Assignment

[Complete one row per PAP or PAP household. Attach signed consent record for each restoration package.]

Table LRP.6 — PAP Restoration Measure Assignment

PAP Name / ID	Measure(s) Selected	Delivery Timeline	Responsible Party	PAP Consent Recorded (Y/N; date)

LRP.7 Grievance and Dispute Resolution

PAPs have the right to raise grievances about the LRP process, the census, the impact assessment, the restoration measures offered, or their implementation. Grievances may be raised through:

- The project community GRM (GRM register at PIU and LPA focal point; see ESMF Section 7.2.2 and Process Framework Annex [PF]);
- Direct communication with the PIU Social Specialist (in-person, by telephone, or in writing);
- Through implementing NGOs or community stewardship group representatives;
- In-language channels (Romanian, Russian, Gagauz) as applicable.

The PIU Social Specialist shall acknowledge all LRP-related grievances within 5 working days and resolve within 30 calendar days. PAPs who are not satisfied with the resolution at project level may escalate to the World Bank Grievance Redress Service (GRS) as noted in ESMF Table 7.2.2.

[Guidance: Maintain a separate LRP Grievance Log as part of the site safeguards file. Report LRP grievance statistics in the quarterly PIU Safeguards Monitoring Summary.]

Table LRP.7 — LRP Grievance Log

No.	PAP Name	Date Received	Nature of Grievance	Response Provided	Date Resolved	Outcome / Escalated?

LRP.8 LRP Budget

The LRP budget shall be prepared by the PIU Social Specialist and included in the activity budget. All livelihood restoration costs are funded from the project budget (Component 4 — Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation; or Component 3 — Community Engagement and Livelihoods, as applicable). No costs shall be passed to PAPs.

Table LRP.8 — Indicative LRP Budget

Budget Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost (MDL)	Total (MDL)
Census and socioeconomic survey (staff time)				

Replacement fodder payments (per livestock unit per month)				
Alternative grazing facilitation (staff time, permit costs)				
Livelihood diversification support (inputs, training)				
Riparian access infrastructure (watering points, crossings)				
Community outreach and vulnerable PAP support				
LRP monitoring (survey administration, reporting)				
TOTAL				

LRP.9 LRP Monitoring and Completion

LRP.9.1 Monitoring Framework

The PIU Social Specialist shall monitor LRP implementation throughout the period of access restriction and until livelihood restoration is confirmed. Monitoring shall be conducted at the following intervals:

- Before works commence: baseline livelihood survey complete; all restoration measures assigned and consented; budget confirmed.
- At 3 months: verify delivery of all immediate measures (replacement fodder payments; alternative grazing access confirmed; green-job assignments initiated); document through PAP interviews.
- At 6 months and annually thereafter: assess PAP livelihood status against baseline; document restoration progress; identify PAPs requiring additional support; adjust measures if needed.
- At LRP Completion: confirm that all PAPs have reached at minimum pre-project livelihood level in real terms; prepare LRP Completion Report.

Table LRP.9 — LRP Monitoring Indicators

Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Monitoring Frequency
% of PAPs who have received their assigned restoration measure	0%	100% before works commence	Monthly until target met
% of PAPs whose income has been restored to at least baseline level (real terms)		100% by end of restriction period	6-monthly; annually
% of vulnerable PAPs (women-headed HH, elderly, Roma, Gagauz) who have received tailored support	0%	100%	At 3 months
Number of LRP-related grievances received and resolved within 30 days	0	All resolved within 30 days	Monthly

Number of PAPs who participated in green-job or livelihood diversification activities		Target set per site, based on eligible PAPs	6-monthly
Overall PAP satisfaction with LRP (% satisfied or very satisfied)		≥80% at LRP Completion	At LRP Completion

LRP.9.2 LRP Completion Criteria

The LRP is considered complete and may be formally closed when:

6. All PAPs have received their assigned restoration measures;
7. All PAPs have been confirmed (through monitoring survey) to have reached at minimum pre-project livelihood levels in real terms;
8. All LRP-related grievances have been resolved;
9. A LRP Completion Report has been prepared by the PIU Social Specialist, reviewed by the World Bank Social Specialist, and disclosed to PAPs and on the project's public disclosure channels.

[Guidance: The LRP Completion Report shall include: summary of census and impact assessment; restoration measures delivered; monitoring results; grievance summary; and confirmation of livelihood restoration standard achieved.]

LRP.10 Roles and Responsibilities

Table LRP.10 — LRP Roles and Responsibilities

Actor	Key Responsibilities
PIU Social Specialist (NOIEP)	LRP trigger determination; census and survey design and supervision; restoration measure design (in consultation with PAPs); LRP preparation, monitoring, and completion report; GRM management; reporting to World Bank.
Implementing NGOs	Community outreach to PAPs; in-language survey administration; facilitation of consultations with vulnerable groups; support for restoration measure delivery at community level.
Local Public Authorities (LPAs)	Facilitate identification of alternative grazing land; issue alternative grazing permits; participate in community consultations; maintain LRP grievance access point.
Contractors	Implement access restriction only after LRP is approved by PIU Social Specialist and communicated to PAPs. Report any access restriction disputes to PIU immediately.
World Bank Social Specialist	Review and clear LRP for significant-category cases; review LRP Completion Report; provide technical support during supervision missions.

This Annex [LRP] is part of the Moldova Green Shield ESMF (P516908) and shall be read in conjunction with the Process Framework (Annex [PF]), ESMF Section 7.4 (GRM and Process Framework), and the standalone Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). No physical works involving confirmed access restrictions may commence until the applicable LRP has been approved by the PIU Social Specialist and communicated to all affected PAPs.

ANNEX 9 : ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (ESMP) TEMPLATE

This template must be completed for each subproject/intervention site prior to commencement of physical works under Component 2. It shall be prepared by the PIU (NOIEP), consulted with affected communities, and disclosed in line with ESS10 and the project SEP.

Part A: Subproject identification

Field	Details
Subproject / Site Title	
Component / Sub-Component	☐ 2.1 Forest Restoration ☐ 2.2 Watershed/Floodplain Restoration ☐ 2.3 Shelterbelts/Silvopastoral
District (Raion) / Village	
Site Area (ha)	
Land Ownership	☐ State (Moldsilva/SFE) ☐ Communal (LPA) ☐ Mixed
Implementing Entity	
Planned Start / End Date	
ESMP Prepared by (Name, Date)	
PIU E&S Specialist Approval	
World Bank No-Objection Date	

Site Description: (Briefly describe location, vegetation type, proximity to water bodies or protected areas, current land use, and any known customary uses — grazing, fuelwood, NTFP collection.)

Part B: Activities and screening

B.1 Summary of Planned Activities

Phase	Key Activities
Preparatory	Site demarcation, ecological and social screening, tenure verification, community consultations
Implementation	Soil preparation, planting/ANR, earthworks (wetland/pond), fencing, infrastructure works
Maintenance	Watering, replanting, invasive species control, stewardship patrol, fire prevention

B.2 Applicable Environmental and Social Standards

ESS	Applicable?	Key Issue for this Site
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ESS1: Assessment and Management of E&S Risks	☐ Yes ☐ No	Overall risk management
ESS2: Labor and Working Conditions	☐ Yes ☐ No	OHS, SEAH, worker rights
ESS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention	☐ Yes ☐ No	Water use, fuel/chemical management
ESS4: Community Health and Safety	☐ Yes ☐ No	Site safety, road/water hazards
ESS5: Land Acquisition and Restrictions on Land Use	☐ Yes ☐ No	Customary access, tenure confirmation
ESS6: Biodiversity Conservation	☐ Yes ☐ No	Habitat exclusions, invasive species
ESS8: Cultural Heritage	☐ Yes ☐ No	Chance finds during earthworks
ESS10: Stakeholder Engagement	☐ Yes ☐ No	Community consultation, GRM

Site-Specific E&S Risk Rating: ☐ Low ☐ Moderate ☐ Substantial ☐ High

Additional instruments required: ☐ RAP/ARAP ☐ Resource Access Assessment ☐ Biodiversity Management Plan ☐ Pest Management Plan ☐ Community Stewardship Plan ☐ Silvopastoral Management Plan

Part C: Mitigation and monitoring matrix

Apply only rows relevant to this subproject. Add site-specific rows as needed.

No	ESS	Risk / Impact	Mitigation Measure	Phase	Responsible	Monitoring Indicator	Frequency
1	ESS1/ ESS6	Planting on ecologically sensitive areas (steppe, wetlands, natural grasslands)	Apply ESMF eligibility criteria; exclude Bugeac Steppe and Critical Natural Habitats; confirm through ecological screening	Pre-construction	PIU E&S Specialist	Screening checklist signed off; no planting on excluded habitats	Before site approval
2	ESS1/ ESS5	Inadequate tenure verification or failure to identify customary users	Verify land tenure via cadastral records; map and document customary users through community consultation; prepare resource-access assessment where restrictions occur	Pre-construction	PIU Social Specialist, LPA	Tenure documentation on file; customary users engaged; mitigation agreed	Before site approval
3	ESS1	Soil erosion and sedimentation during earthworks	Erosion/sediment controls (silt fences, brush barriers); immediate revegetation of disturbed areas; no works during heavy rainfall	Implementation	Contractor/SFE	Controls installed; no visible sedimentation into watercourses	Monthly during earthworks
4	ESS1	Disturbance to watercourses during riparian works	10 m no-work buffer from water edges; restrict in-stream works to dry season; no chemical use near water	Implementation	Contractor/N AAM	Buffer maintained; works within approved	Weekly during riparian works

						seasonal window	
5	ESS1	Introduction or spread of invasive alien species	Use only approved native/non-invasive species from certified sources (RFRMC); inspect planting material; include invasive species monitoring in maintenance	Implementation / Maintenance	PIU, SFE	Species certification on file; invasive species inspections conducted	At planting; quarterly
6	ESS2	OHS risks (machinery, chainsaw, heat stress)	Provide PPE to all workers; OHS site induction before works commence; first aid kit on site; incident reporting within 24 hours	Implementation	Contractor/SFE	PPE provision records; OHS induction records; zero lost-time accidents	Monthly
7	ESS2	SEAH risks (labour influx, rural community context)	Mandatory SEAH Code of Conduct for all workers; confidential reporting channel operational from Year 1; SEAH awareness training; referral pathways in place	Before and during implementation	PIU Gender Specialist	Code of Conduct signed; training records; confidential channel operational	Monthly
8	ESS2	Child labour in community planting activities	Age verification of all workers; prohibition of under-18s in hazardous tasks; awareness sessions with community leaders	Implementation	PIU, LPA	Age verification records; zero incidents	Monthly
9	ESS3	Fuel spills or chemical pollution near watercourses	Designated refueling areas ≥ 50 m from water; spill kits on machinery; no pesticide application near water; licensed disposal of hazardous waste	Implementation	Contractor	Designated areas established; spill kits present; no pollution incidents	Weekly
10	ESS4	Community safety risks from open sites, machinery, and rehabilitated water bodies	Fence and sign active work sites; post warnings in Romanian/Russian; install safety fencing near new water bodies in community-accessible areas	Implementation	Contractor/PIU	Fencing and signs in place; no access incidents	Weekly during works
11	ESS5	Restrictions on customary access (grazing, fuelwood, NTFPs) from fencing or planting	Document all customary uses; where restrictions unavoidable, agree mitigation (alternative sites, livelihood support under Component 3) through consultation; record agreements in CSP/SPMP	Pre-construction	PIU Social Specialist, LPA	Resource access assessment completed; mitigation measures agreed and documented	Before site approval; quarterly
12	ESS6	Loss of biodiversity features (veteran trees, deadwood)	Retain veteran trees, deadwood, and hollow trees per FMP retention	Implementation	SFE/ICAS	Retention features	Per silvicultural operation

		during silvicultural works	prescriptions; train SFE staff on retention marking			marked and preserved	
13	ESS6	Wildlife disturbance (nesting birds, pollinators)	Schedule clearing outside key breeding season (avoid April–July); pre-clearance biodiversity check; retain shrub patches and grass buffer strips	Implementation	Contractor/SFE	Seasonal schedule observed; pre-clearance check conducted	Before and during clearance
14	ESS8	Chance finds of cultural heritage during earthworks	Apply Chance Find Procedures (ESMF Annex [X]); stop-work clause in all contracts; notify PIU and National Heritage Agency on discovery	Implementation	Contractor/PIU	Worker training records; chance find register maintained	Per earthworks event
15	ESS1	Poor seedling survival undermining restoration outcomes	Site-specific maintenance plan with clear responsibilities; annual survival rate monitoring ($\geq 70\%$ Year 1, $\geq 60\%$ Year 3); replanting where gap filling required	Maintenance (Years 1–5)	SFE/LPA/Community Stewards	Annual survival rate targets met; replanting completed as needed	Annually (May–June)
16	ESS1	Fire risk to newly established stands	Fire prevention protocol and firebreaks per site; coordination with Civil Protection; community steward fire patrol training before each dry season	Maintenance	SFE/LPA/PIU	Protocol in place; stewards trained; no uncontrolled fire incidents	Annually
17	ESS10	Inadequate community consultation or GRM access	Conduct site-level consultations before works; disclose ESMP locally in Romanian/Russian; ensure GRM is publicized with multiple channels; acknowledge complaints within 5 working days	Pre-construction and ongoing	PIU Social Specialist, LPA	Consultation records on file; GRM operational; complaints acknowledged and resolved per timeframe	Before implementation; quarterly

Part D: Institutional responsibilities

Role	Entity	Key Responsibility
Overall E&S oversight	PIU (NOIEP) — E&S Specialist	Prepare/approve ESMPs; supervise compliance; report to World Bank
Field supervision	SFE / LPA Site Supervisor	Day-to-day mitigation implementation; maintain site records; report incidents
Contractor/Service Provider	As contracted	Implement ESMP measures; maintain OHS and SEAH standards; report incidents within 24 hours

Gender and social compliance	PIU — Gender Specialist	Monitor gender-disaggregated participation; oversee SEAH channel
Biodiversity oversight	PIU Specialist / ICAS	Validate species selection; habitat exclusion verification; biodiversity monitoring
Community Stewards	LPA / Community groups	Post-implementation monitoring, maintenance, fire and encroachment patrol
World Bank	Task Team	Review first five ESMPs; periodic supervision; review semi-annual progress reports

Part E: Grievance redress and reporting

Site GRM Focal Point: Name: _ Contact: _

PIU GRM Focal Point: Name: _ Contact: _

Submission channels: ☐ In-person (LPA office) ☐ Written (complaint box) ☐ Phone/SMS ☐ Email: ____

Confidential SEAH channel: Contact: ____

Response commitment: Acknowledgment within 5 working days; resolution within 30 working days.

Reporting: Site E&S monitoring forms submitted monthly to PIU; consolidated into semi-annual E&S progress reports to the World Bank; significant incidents (OHS accidents, SEAH, environmental incidents) reported to PIU and World Bank within 24 hours.

Annexes to attach: ☐ Site location map ☐ Land tenure documentation ☐ Ecological screening results ☐ Community consultation records ☐ Species/provenance list ☐ Resource access assessment (if applicable) ☐ Pest Management Plan (if applicable) ☐ Community Stewardship Plan ☐ SEAH Code of Conduct (signed copies) ☐ Baseline photographs

This ESMP template is to be read in conjunction with the project ESMF, SEP, LMP, and ESCP for Moldova Green Shield (P516908), and prepared in accordance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4, ESS5, ESS6, ESS8, ESS10).

ANNEX 10 - SUGGESTED STRUCTURE FOR PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

After reviewing the environmental checklist, the environmental and social specialist of the PIU will determine whether the Client should prepare a Pesticide Management Plan (PMP) for that site or tree nursery. This determination will be based on the used pesticides toxicity and the environmental risks associated with these activities. When it is decided that the PMP should be prepared for a sub-project, a two-step process will be applied to prepare PMP.

Phase A: Additional information

The Client must provide the following information:

1. Types and usage of pesticides

- (i) Which pesticides should be purchased, including product name, type of preparation, active ingredient concentrations?
- (ii) Where to buy pesticides, including store name and location?
- (iii) How many pesticides do I need to buy, as well as the size and number of packages in each package?
- (iv) What type of equipment should be used for the application of pesticides?
- (v) Are applicators trained to correct and safe use of pesticides?

2. The purpose and appropriateness of pesticides

- (i) What crops do you plan to use as a pesticide?
- (ii) Which pests and/or diseases should be controlled by the pesticide?
- (iii) What non-chemical pest control measures have been used in the past to control pests and/or diseases mentioned in (ii) above?
- (iv) How often and in what quantities in each specific application should pesticides be used?
- (v) How will the decision be made on the timing of the use of the pesticide?
- (vi) Have you been trained or received recommendations on non-chemical pest control or integrated pest management (IPM)?
- (vii) If you are not trained, how do you plan to get help, advice or training on the quantities and methods of applying pesticides; calibration of spray equipment; use of protective equipment; storage and disposal methods, etc.

3. Treatment, storage and disposal of pesticides

- (i) How will pesticides be transported to the project site?
- (ii) Where will pesticides be stored on the farm?
- (iii) Will the pesticide storage site be protected/closed and who will have access to these storage facilities?
- (iv) Both animals, children and strangers will be excluded from access to storage facilities?
- (v) Where will the pesticides be mixed and what precautions will be taken to ensure that the pesticide storage and mixing areas are removed from grain storage and production areas?
- (vi) How will excess unused and mixed pesticide products be disposed of?
- (vii) How will empty containers with pesticides be disposed of?
- (viii) How will pesticide records be maintained in terms of purchase, use, and disposal?

4. Environmental aspects

- (i) Are the areas where pesticides are used close to reservoirs, wetlands, or areas of known natural habitats?
- (ii) Are there natural pollinators near the application areas? If so, what precautions will be used to ensure that non-target useful species are not affected?

Phase B: Preparation of the Pest Management Plan

Based on the information provided on the sub-project, the environmental and social affairs specialist of the PIU will determine the risks due to pesticide use; the most important and most practical mitigation measures to be taken, including any additional measures using non-chemical control measures. As a rule, the PMP plan will be as follows:

- (a) The purpose of the activity provides information about the extent and severity of pests and diseases in the crops to be grown.

(b) General information about the Area, which should contain data on land use and soil, water resources, site layout, and etc.

(c) An overview of existing pest control practices and capacities which should provide data on current practices (chemical and non-chemical) in the control of specific pests and diseases, restrictions, the history and extent of pest and disease control of fruit and agricultural crops have been managed and controlled; as well the reasons for expanding the use of pesticides under the proposed sub-project loan.

(d) Types, quantity, and usage of pesticides provides information about the types, quantities, and nature of pesticides to be purchased and used, as well as current and suggested methods for treating, applying, storing, and disposing of pesticides.

(e) Capacity, training and knowledge on the safe application and use of pesticides provides information on the existing knowledge and potential of staff and staff in the safe application and use of pesticides, as well as identifying gaps in training and knowledge to improve potential.

(f) Potential risks and hazards due to the application and use of pesticides in the sub-project. Provide information on the environmental and human health impacts associated with the treatment, use, storage and disposal of pesticides under the sub-project, including potential impacts on non-target useful species, soil, water and natural habitats.

(g) Mitigation measures, to avoid and manage potential pesticide impacts that would provide information about the following:

- Mechanical and physical control, cultural and biological control measures, which can be used in combination with or without the use of pesticides to suppress or reduce the target pest or disease severity that needs to be controlled;
- Chemicals substances and chemical procedures which to be used to control pests and diseases, the conditions in which chemicals will be used, including climatic conditions, vegetation conditions, periods of use, to increase the effectiveness of the pesticide and reduce its environmental impact, as well as specific measures to protect sensitive ecosystems, aquatic systems and groundwaters;
- Managing health and safety aspects that determine measures to ensure the safe treatment, transportation, use, storage and disposal of pesticides in order to reduce environmental and health risks;
 - measures to be taken to ensure public safety and protection when using pesticides;
- measures to track and monitor the pesticide use and the effectiveness of pest control;
- measures to be taken to raise awareness, improve information flow and capacity building for agricultural workers in relation to hazards due to unsafe use, treatment and storage of pesticides, and measures to reduce such risks, as well as options for integrated pest management;
 - measures to be taken in order to obtain technical support to control pests and their safe use;
- use of pesticides when necessary; and
- budget estimates for implementing the PMP.