

CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY SCREENING RESULTS AND SAFEGUARD ANALYSIS

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Profile

Countries: Global	GEF Project ID: 10375
Project Title: Blue Nature Alliance to expand and improve conservation of 1.25 billion hectares of ocean ecosystems	
Executing Agency: Blue Nature Alliance	
GEF Focal Area: International Waters (IW)	
GEF Project Amount: USD\$24,673,000	
CI-GEF Project Manager: Free DeKoning	
Safeguard Analysis Performed and Approved by: Ian Kissoon	
Date of Review: January 27, 2020	

B. Summary of Project Risk Categorization, Safeguards Triggered and Mitigation Plans Required

Project Category:	Category A	Category B	Category C
		X	
The proposed project activities are likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.			
Safeguards Triggered (during Screening process; subject to change when ESIA's are completed):			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental and Social Assessment, Management and Monitoring		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Grievance and Conflict Resolution	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples		<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage	
<input type="checkbox"/> Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement		<input type="checkbox"/> Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention	
<input type="checkbox"/> Labour and Working Conditions		<input type="checkbox"/> Community Health, Safety and Security	
<input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity Conservation and the Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources			
Mitigation Measures Required:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability and Grievance Mechanism		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment & Social Impact Assessment	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement Plan		<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Management Plan	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Mainstreaming Plan		<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage Management Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples Plan		<input type="checkbox"/> Process Framework for NR Restrictions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Labour and Working Condition Procedures		<input type="checkbox"/> Res. Efficiency Pollution & Prevention Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Health, Safety and Security Plan		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESF for grant-making mechanism	

C. Project Objective:

To catalyze the effective conservation of at least 1.25 billion hectares of ocean in order to safeguard global ocean biodiversity, build resilience to climate change, promote human wellbeing, and enhance ecosystem connectivity and function

D. Project Description:

Conservation International (CI), the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), two private foundations, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), have joined together to form the Blue Nature Alliance (the Alliance). The Alliance aims to raise and deploy at least \$125 million into ocean conservation worldwide. Current partners, CI, Pew, the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation, and the Mindaroo Foundation have each committed USD \$25 million to the Alliance. Through a USD \$25 million investment in this project, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) has become the fifth core partner in the Alliance.

With this investment secured, the objective of the Blue Nature Alliance is to catalyze the conservation of 1.25 billion hectares of ocean. This will include:

- 1) 750 million hectares of new or expanded ocean conservation areas legally recognized
- 2) 500 million hectares of previously established ocean conservation areas with upgraded protections and/or improved management made up of:
 - a. 100 million hectares of upgraded protection: the portion of a site that is legally upgraded (i.e. designated) to a higher level of protection will be counted; and
 - b. 400 million hectares of existing conservation areas under improved management: the site must have improved MPA management effectiveness score to be counted

The general approach/main activities of the Alliance are to:

- Invest resources (grant-funding and technical support) to catalyze the establishment of at least 750 million hectares of new or expanded ocean conservation areas, as measured by legal recognition;
- Invest resources (grant-funding and technical support) to support the strengthening of at least 500 million hectares of previously established ocean conservation areas through upgraded protection level as measured by legal recognition and/or through measurable improvement to management effectiveness, as measured by a change in management effectiveness score;
- Invest resources (grant-funding and technical support) in new science, tools, capacity, and innovations directly related to the fields of large-scale and transboundary ocean conservation in order to establish the global enabling conditions necessary to reach the global goal of protecting 30 percent of the world's oceans.

In addition to directly investing in new and existing ocean conservation areas, the Alliance will invest a small portion of the project capital to cultivate the global enabling conditions that are needed to reach the ambitious goal of protecting 30 percent of the ocean. This investment will include scientific research (funded with co-financing), and knowledge management and learning initiatives to advance the fields of large-scale and transboundary ocean conservation.

E. Project location and biophysical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis:

The Alliance will invest in at least 20 sites (upwards of 50 sites is possible) around the world. The Alliance will use the following six criteria to evaluate potential sites:

- Significance – The site has local, regional and global significance for nature (i.e. global biodiversity significance, including concentrations of endemic or threatened species as well as

particularly healthy, productive, connected, and representatives' ecosystems vital for ocean health and food security). Significance, for people (i.e. economically, socially, culturally), either locally or globally, will be additionally factored in, although investment will not be restricted to places with human populations.

- **Political Will** – There is a stated interest, ideally a written commitment, by decision-making authority of a national, sub-national, or indigenous community leadership. In addition, we will look for an expressed commitment to match or co-support the project – this can be achieved through government revenues, tourism fees, landing fees, local staffing, etc.
- **Leverage** – Investment by the Alliance incentivizes additional resources targeted at >2x the Alliance investment. Based upon past experience (i.e. the Global Conservation Fund) and receptivity from governments, the Alliance is confident that it can achieve this target.
- **Local Engagement** – This is a local champion to drive the process forward in a participatory way, and community organizations, local leaders and/or coalitions are engaged in conservation and have requested support. In the case of indigenous-led initiatives, this particular criterion will be more important than explicit government support. And, in the case of the high seas, the Alliance anticipates engaging with Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and other regional bodies, as applicable.
- **Achievable** – The intended project outcome has a high probability of success not only for the immediate policy or management action, but for that action to lead to sustainable protection including the resources (human and financial) needed to achieve the conservation goal(s) for the long-term.
- **Catalytic** – Outcomes catalyze momentum for durable protections, innovative approaches or unprecedented new scales of conservation in that region.

The Alliance aims to deploy the vast majority of project capital directly into the creation, expansion, or improved management of ocean conservation areas, inclusive of key biodiversity hotspots, coastal habitats, such as coral reefs, mangroves, and kelp forests, and open ocean ecosystems, including highly productive seamounts and essential fish habitat for ocean health and food security.

As mentioned above, the biological significance of a site will be a prime factor in the identification of sites that will be supported by the Alliance. Global biodiversity significance, including concentrations of endemic or threatened species as well as particularly healthy, productive, connected, and representatives' ecosystems vital for ocean health and food security are some of the factors that will be considered and evaluated along with the other criteria listed above.

F. Executing Agency (EA)'s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies:

The EA indicated capability and experience in implementing the safeguard requirements, including administering two conservation funding programs at CI: the Critical Ecosystem Partnership (CEPF) and the Global Conservation Fund (GCF) which have deployed a combined total of at least \$350 million to more than 2,300 grantees in nearly 100 countries. The project will also support key staff positions specifically to oversee and provide technical guidance to implementing partners as well as to monitor the implementation of safeguard requirements within the grant-making process.

II. SAFEGUARDS TRIGGERED BY THE PROJECT

Based on the information provided by the EA in the Screening Form, the following safeguards were triggered:

Safeguard Triggered	Yes	No	TBD	Justification
1. Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)	X			<i>The project proposes to create or expand 750 million hectares of ocean conservation areas and improve the management of 500 million hectares. In keeping with the CI-GEF ESMF Policy (Para 38 (a)), the project is required to prepare ESIA's for these areas.</i>
2. Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	X			<i>The EA outlined an existing grievance mechanism platform and experience complying with grievance mechanism requirements. The EA also indicated plans to develop a Grievance Mechanism for the project</i>
3. Biodiversity Conservation and the Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources		X		<i>The project is not proposing activities that would have adverse impacts on natural or critical natural habitats, contravene applicable international environmental treaties or agreements or introduce or use potentially invasive, non-indigenous species.</i>
4. Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement			X	<i>The project may restrict the use of and access to natural resources. The ESIA must address this issue and develop a Process Framework for each site where restriction occurs.</i>
5. Indigenous Peoples			X	<i>The project may work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples. The ESIA must address this issue and develop an Indigenous Peoples Plan for each site where this safeguard is triggered.</i>
6. Cultural Heritage			X	<i>The project may work in areas where cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, exists. The ESIA must address this issue and develop a Cultural heritage Plan for each site where this safeguard is triggered.</i>
7. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention		X		<i>There are no proposed activities related to the use of banned, restricted or prohibited substances, chemicals or hazardous materials.</i>
8. Labor and Working Conditions			X	<i>The EA has in place the necessary policies, procedures, systems and capabilities that meets the requirements set out in the GEF Minimum Standard 8 and plans to develop an Operations Manual consistent with these policies, procedures and system for the Alliance. The Manual must be in place for each site, particularly where infrastructure works will occur.</i>
9. Community Health, Safety and Security			X	<i>The project may expose communities to Health, Safety and Security risks depending on the nature of activities (e.g. patrolling to improve management of conservation areas). The ESIA must address this issue and develop a Community Health, Safety and Security Plan for each site where this safeguard is triggered.</i>

III. PROJECT CATEGORIZATION

Based on the information provided by the EA in the Screening Form, the project is categorized as follows:

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
		X	
<i>Justification: The proposed project has the potential to cause adverse environmental and social impacts on human populations or environmentally or socially important areas. However, these impacts are site-specific; few if any of them are irreversible; and in most cases mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects.</i>			

IV. MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDS TRIGGERED

The EA is required to undertake the following measures:

I. Limited ESIAs (During the Implementation Phase)

From the CI-GEF ESMF:

“38. CI has preliminarily identified five types of project activities that may result in adverse environmental and social impacts that may be associated with CI-GEF projects, arising from:

- a) **Protected area creation, expansion or management improvement:** although desirable and often necessary for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, creation or expansion of protected areas carries the possibility of limiting access to natural resources and thus impacting livelihoods of local communities”*

From the GEF’s updated ESS Policy:

*“Restrictions on Land Use means limitations or prohibitions on the use of agricultural, residential, commercial or other land that are directly introduced and put into effect as part of a project or program, **including but not limited to restrictions on access to legally designated parks and protected areas**, restrictions on access to other common property resources, and restrictions on land use within utility easements or safety zones*

*Where a project may restrict the access of Indigenous Peoples to parks and protected areas, at a minimum, **the project involves the affected Indigenous Peoples in the planning and management of the park or protected area, and key species”***

Projects involving protected areas must therefore address IP and Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement safeguards.

These above requirements by CI and GEF can be addressed through a limited ESIA. The content for the Limited ESIA must include, but not limited to the following:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction, particularly on how the project is set up and managed; and key stakeholders and their involvement (past and planned) in the creation and improved management of the protected areas

- Location and extent of the geography, including legible map; and the institutional, historical, legal and political context
- Biological context of the geography, particularly species and ecosystems of global importance, the state of the biological systems and predicted climate change impacts
- Socio-economic context of the geography, including economic activities, income and poverty situation; how men, women and vulnerable groups use and depend on the areas; extent of gender-based violence and existing response systems; and the presence of Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage Sites;
- The proposed intervention in the geography and expected outcomes; and alternatives
- The impacts (both positive and negative) of the proposed intervention on
 - Biodiversity
 - Climate change
 - Men, women and vulnerable groups (both social and economic)
 - Gender-based violence
 - Indigenous Peoples
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Labor and working conditions
 - Community Health, Safety and Security
- Mitigation measures/plans to prevent any undesirable impacts described above
- Monitoring framework, including indicators and metrics for measuring impacts

The ESIA is to be carried out for each selected geography where the Alliance will invest GEF funding. Given that the geographies may not be selected during the PPG Phase, the ESIA's can take place at the beginning of the Implementation Phase which will avail more resources and time. The limited ESIA may not require extensive on the ground consultation as with a full ESIA.

The project itself has outlined the following:

“As a first step towards selecting sites, the Alliance has conducted a desktop scoping of global EEZs, from which it has identified an initial list of sites, each with a specific and tangible opportunity, that could potentially benefit from Alliance investment (see figure below). This list will continue to be revisited and strengthened over the course of the project. The Alliance will engage in advance scoping, including participatory and gender-sensitive diagnostic assessment, and coalition building for sites with promising opportunities (more details on this process is described in component 1 and 2). Based on the advanced scoping and stakeholder consultation process, the Alliance will develop a proposed engagement framework for the site. Through a two-step process, sites may be recommended and approved for investment by a representative Steering Council consisting of primary donors.”

As such, the limited ESIA is an expansion and more streamlined approach of the advanced scoping and engagement framework the project proposes to do. The limited ESIA will address all the safeguards questions and provide the project with pertinent information for site selection.

During the PPG Phase

II. ESF for the Grant-making mechanism

Since the project may not be able to define specific sub-projects that will receive grant funding at this stage, the EA is required to develop an Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) that the grant-making mechanism will put in place to ensure that all grantees comply with the CI-GEF Environmental and Social Safeguard requirements. The ESF can be folded into the proposed Operational Manual or the design of the granting mechanism and should include how the mechanism will screen and hold grantees accountable to the CI-GEF ESMF requirements.

III. Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

To ensure that the project complies with the GEF's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism Standard, the EA is required to develop an Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (CI-GEF template provided) that will ensure people affected by the project are able to bring their grievances to the EA for consideration and redress. The mechanism must be in place before the start of project activities, and also disclosed to all stakeholders in a language, manner and means that best suits the local context.

In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum accountability and grievance indicators:

1. *Number of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism; and*
2. *Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.*

IV. Gender Mainstreaming

To ensure that the project complies with the GEF's Gender Policy, the EA is required to prepare a Gender Mainstreaming Plan.

In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum gender indicators:

1. *Number of men and women that participated in project activities (e.g. meetings, workshops, consultations);*
2. *Number of men and women that received benefits (e.g. employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment, leadership roles) from the project; and if relevant*
3. *Number of strategies, plans (e.g. management plans and land use plans) and policies derived from the project that include gender considerations.*

V. Stakeholder Engagement

To ensure that the project complies with the GEF's Stakeholders' Engagement Policy, the EA is required to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum stakeholder engagement indicators:

1. *Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project*

- implementation phase on an annual basis;*
2. *Number persons (sex disaggregated) that have been involved in project implementation phase (on an annual basis); and*
 3. *Number of engagement (e.g. meeting, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase (on an annual basis)*

V. EXPECTED DISCLOSURE DATES

All plans must be submitted to the CI-GEF Project Agency for review and approval during the PPG Phase according to the PPG workplan. The limited ESIA's must also be submitted for review and approval by the CI-GEF Project Agency and these can be developed and submitted during the Implementation Phase (unless they are done during the PPG Phase). Following approval, the plans must be disclosed as follows:

Plan	CI Disclosure Date	EA Disclosure Date
Environmental & Social Framework for the grant-making mechanism	<i>Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval</i>	<i>Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval</i>
Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	<i>Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval</i>	<i>Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval</i>
Limited Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)	<i>Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval</i>	<i>Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval</i>
Voluntary Resettlement Action Plan (V- RAP)/ Process Framework	NA	NA
Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP)	NA	NA
Cultural Heritage Management Plan	NA	NA
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention	NA	NA
Labor and Working Conditions Procedures	NA	NA
Community Health, Safety and Security Plan	NA	NA
Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)	<i>Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval</i>	<i>Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval</i>
Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP)	<i>Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval</i>	<i>Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval</i>