

PRF's ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICIES



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PRF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies

1. Introduction

Consistent with PEMSEA’s vision “Healthy Oceans, People and Economies”, the PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF) is committed to promoting sustainable development in the Seas of East Asia region. The PRF is committed to implementing and supporting environmentally sound and sustainable development operations, projects and activities.

With PEMSEA’s mission: “To foster and sustain healthy and resilient oceans, coasts, communities and economies across the Seas of East Asia through integrated management solutions and partnerships”, the PRF recognizes that environmental and social sustainability and gender equality are fundamental components of achieving its mandate as the lead organization for sustainable development of coasts and oceans in the East Asian Seas region.

Environmental and social safeguards and gender mainstreaming have become standard practices in development cooperation, programmes and projects. In order to meet the goals of its mandate, the PRF adopts the Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies. These policies strengthen PRF’s accountability to PEMSEA’s Country and Non-Country Partners as well as its other stakeholders in the development processes (e.g. donors and international organizations).

The PRF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies define the safeguards requirements and policies that will apply in the PRF’s operations, programmes, and projects.

2. Objective of the PRF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies

The objective of the PRF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies is to provide the policy direction and process to ensure that the related adverse environmental and social impacts of the PRF’s operations and the projects that it supports and implements are avoided, minimized and appropriately mitigated.

The PRF aims to achieve: “*avoid, minimize, mitigate or offset*” harm to the environment and to men and women by incorporating environmental, social and gender concerns as an integral part of its operations, and supported, and implemented projects. The identified adverse environmental and social impacts will be addressed in the PRF’s operations and all stages of the project cycle to ensure

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that PRF operational activities and supported and implemented project activities comply with the requirements laid out in these policies.

The PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies are communicated to all levels of PEMSEA organization through the distribution of copies of the policies and availability in the management system document portal. The PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies will also be communicated to PEMSEA project partners as an enclosed document to the project agreements. The PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies will also be available and communicated publicly online in the "pemsea.org" website.

3. Principles Guiding the PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Policies

The PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguard and Gender Mainstreaming Policies are consistent with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguards Standards and Gender Mainstreaming; the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Social and Environmental Standards; The World Bank Environmental and Social Framework; The Environmental and Social Safeguards at the Green Climate Fund; The Green Climate Fund Gender Policy and Action Plan and other standards on environmental and social safeguards, and gender policies and standards set by international organizations. PRF applies national environmental social safeguards regulations in general in its implementation of the PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguard and Gender Mainstreaming Policies.

4. The PRF's Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Policies

The policies cover the following safeguards:

I. Environmental and Social Safeguards Policies

- Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)
- Biodiversity Conservation, Natural Habitats and Sustainable Management of Living Resources
- Resource Efficiency, Pollution Prevention and Management of Chemicals and Wastes
- Involuntary Resettlement
- Indigenous Peoples
- Physical Cultural Resources
- Labor and Working Conditions Management

II Gender Mainstreaming Policy

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Environmental and Social Safeguards Policies:

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)

To ensure that all PRF implemented projects are environmentally and socially sound and sustainable the PRF shall ensure that a “safeguard screening process” to categorize projects according to their potential environmental and social impacts is implemented as early as possible. The safeguard screening process shall determine the need to conduct an ESIA (environmental and social impacts that are sensitive, diverse or unprecedented) or not to conduct an ESIA (minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts).

PRF will not support or implement projects that propose to create significant destruction or degradation of critical natural habitats or have significant negative socioeconomic and cultural impacts that cannot be cost-effectively avoided, minimized, mitigated and/or offset.

Biodiversity Conservation, Natural Habitats and Sustainable Management of Living Resources

To avoid or facilitate any significant loss or degradation and to support the sustainable management, protection, conservation, maintenance and rehabilitation of natural habitats and their associated biodiversity and ecosystem functions, the PRF shall encourage and apply the use of a “*precautionary approach*” (Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development) for its projects and programmes. The PRF shall ensure that project activities are consistent with existing protected area management plans or other resource management strategies that are applicable to national or local situations.

The PRF shall determine the need to develop an *Environmental Management Plan* (EMP). The EMP is a document that identifies a set of mitigations, management, monitoring and institutional actions to be implemented. The EMP includes safeguard standards related to the Protection of Natural Habitats and Physical Cultural Resources.

To ensure proper implementation of this policy the PRF will not support or implement projects that will create or facilitate significant degradation and/or conversion of natural habitats including those that are legally protected, officially proposed for protection, identified by authoritative sources for their high conservation value or recognized as protected by traditional local communities. The PRF will not support or implement projects that will contravene major international and regional conventions on environmental issues.

Resource Efficiency, Pollution Prevention and Management of Chemicals and Wastes

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To promote more sustainable uses of resources, including energy and water; to reduce project-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment originating from project activities through the use or management of hazardous chemicals and waste materials, including pesticides, PRF supported or implemented projects shall:

- a) explore technically and financially feasible approaches for the efficient use of energy, water and other resources and materials;
- b) consider alternatives and implement technically and financially feasible options to reduce project-related GHG emissions;
- c) promote the use of ecologically based biological or environmental pest management practices.

Involuntary Resettlement

To minimize, mitigate and/or compensate the potential adverse socioeconomic and cultural impacts of resettlement processes and restrictions of access to natural resources that any PRF supported or implemented projects might create the PRF may support project-initiated *voluntary resettlement* as an exceptional measure only if consent of affected communities has been obtained and documented. For projects in which the best alternative sustainable development involves *voluntary resettlement*, a participatory process for preparing an *Action Plan for Voluntary Resettlement* shall be designed, documented and disclosed before project implementation begins.

The PRF may support projects involving *voluntary restrictions* of access to and use of natural resources if a documented consent from affected communities is available.

PRF supported or implemented projects shall follow national legislation or international norm on resettlement and access and use of natural resources which ever is more restrictive.

Indigenous Peoples

The PRF shall ensure that safeguard screening for Indigenous Peoples are conducted. The PRF shall also ensure that effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the preparation of environmental and social impact assessments to assess risks and opportunities and to improve the understanding of the local context and affected communities, to ensure that the projects respect Indigenous Peoples' rights and potential adverse impacts are avoided or adequately addressed through a participatory and consultative approach are implemented.

Physical Cultural Resources

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To ensure that physical cultural resources are appropriately preserved and their destruction or damage is appropriately avoided, PRF shall ensure that the analysis of project components are conducted including site selection and project design in order to identify cultural resources.

The PRF shall not support or implement any project or activity that involves the removal, alteration or disturbance of any physical cultural resources.

Labor and Working Conditions Management

The PRF commits to implementing and supporting projects that meet international and national best practice and laws in the countries in which it is being implemented. The PRF shall ensure that all projects and operational activities it implements meet all of the legislation and best practices regarding labor and employment in the countries where the projects and operations are implemented. The PRF shall also verify the projects it supports for compliance with legislation and best practices regarding labor and employment.

PEMSEA supports the norms and standards in labor and working conditions per international best practices (e.g. International Labour Organization (ILO)) and the legislation of countries where it operates. In cases where local legal requirements on labor and related issues are not provided, international best practice (i.e. ILO) be used are reference.

Gender Mainstreaming Policy:

This policy outlines the requirements to mainstream gender equality and equity into PRF operations and supported and implemented project activities. This policy is consistent with the GEF's Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards and Gender Mainstreaming and the policies and standards set by international organizations.

PRF shall consider the respective roles of men and women in all aspects of the project activities, project design and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation, in order to promote and achieve gender equality and equity. The PRF shall ensure that institutional capacity and institutional framework are established for gender mainstreaming. The PRF shall ensure that gender equality and equity are mainstreamed in its operations and its projects through designing, implementing and monitoring of operations and projects in such a way that both women and men:

- a) receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits;
- b) do not suffer adverse effects during the development process; and
- c) receive full respect for their dignity and human rights.

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The PRF shall be responsible for mainstreaming gender throughout its operations and the projects its supports and implements, as appropriate, using qualified professionals, studies and meetings. The PRF shall ensure that this policy and its implementation mitigates potentially adverse effects on men and women, and promotes equality in participation and decision-making in consultative processes, access to natural resources and services and project benefits.

To ensure the implementation of this policy, the PRF shall ensure that a Gender Analysis is conducted and a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan is developed for new and ongoing projects. The PRF shall validate if the plan covers gender-sensitive activities while recognizing and respecting the different roles that women and men play in resource management and in society, along with a monitoring and evaluation plan using sex-disaggregated indicators.

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan shall include an assessment of gender roles, responsibilities, uses and needs relating to the environment/natural resources on which the project will be based (e.g. use patterns, participation in management, etc.) and both short-term and long-term costs and benefits of the project on men and women. The assessment should include potential roles, benefits, impacts and risks for women and men of different ages, ethnicities and social structure and status.

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan shall identify specific action and activities to ensure that gender-related adverse impacts of the project are avoided, minimized and/or mitigated appropriately. The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan shall also identify specific indicators (using a results based framework, outputs, outcomes and goals) for monitoring and evaluating progress towards gender equality within PRF operations and the projects being supported or implemented by the PRF.

The PRF shall ensure that gender considerations that are outlined in the developed Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan are also fully embedded and mainstreamed throughout the documents of the PRF operations and projects as appropriate.

The PRF shall establish and implement a system for monitoring and evaluating progress on gender mainstreaming.

5. Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Policies Responsibility

The PRF Management Committee has the overall responsibility for ensuring that environmental, social and gender issues are adequately addressed within the PRF organization, its projects and operation. The PRF Management Committee is responsible for the review and supervision of the implementation of safeguards. The PRF Management Committee is also responsible for ensuring that the design and execution of its projects and operations are consistent with the requirements of the

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minimum standards of donor agencies and international organizations and its social safeguards and gender policies.

The PRF Management Committee shall monitor implementation of this policy. PRF Management Committee shall review and approve key safeguard strategies and action plans developed.

The PRF Management Committee will also be responsible for overseeing the gender mainstreaming component of its projects and operations the review and approval of the Gender Mainstreaming Policies and adequate gender inclusion throughout its projects, operations and documentation. The PRF Management Committee shall be responsible for identifying and promoting measures to support the equal treatment of women and men, including equal access to resources and services.

6. Reference:

SOP-PRF-014 PRF Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines and Procedures.