



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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List of Abbreviations

EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ESAP	Environmental and Social Action Plan
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessments
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management and Safeguards System
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
PAP	Project Affected Person
PCM	Project Cycle Management
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan

1. Introduction

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation (herein referred to as HELVETAS) implements an Environmental and Social Management and Safeguards System (ESMS) fully integrated into the HELVETAS Project Cycle Management (PCM) system.

The ESMS policy serves to identify and if necessary, address environmental and/or social potential adverse impacts of climate finance projects and programmes supported and/or implemented by HELVETAS.

The ESMS ensures that project and programmes supported and/or implemented by HELVETAS will not cause significant adverse environmental and social impacts, and that any adverse environmental and social impacts generated from the implementation of projects and programmes will be mitigated to acceptable levels. Gender-related issues are considered throughout the project cycle in compliance with the HELVETAS' gender policy.

This policy was approved by the Board of Directors in its session of the 01.12.2018 and enters into force on 01.01.2019. This policy was updated in October 2021 to refer to the HELVETAS Environmental and Social Safeguards Manual that was introduced to ensure the implementation of HELVETAS' Environmental and Social Safeguard Management Policy. The manual describes the governance and procedures, roles and responsibilities within HELVETAS in detail and provides checklists for the implementation of the ESMF.

2. Goal and Objectives

HELVETAS is committed to a just world in which all men and women determine the course of their lives in dignity and security, using environmental resources in a sustainable manner. As a matter of principle, HELVETAS seeks to create beneficial environmental and social impacts through its projects. HELVETAS supported climate finance projects aim to accelerate climate-resilient and low carbon development and to maximize beneficial environmental and social impacts by creating environmentally sustainable, gender-responsive and socially inclusive growth. Any potential environmental and social adverse impacts will be avoided and prevented as far as possible in the project design. In case this is not be possible, efforts will be made to minimize, mitigate, and/or compensate the adverse impacts on the environment and affected people.

The goal of this policy is to promote the environmental and social sustainability of HELVETAS supported climate finance projects by ensuring that

- positive environmental and social impacts are enhanced through properly designed environmental and social management and
- ecosystems including people and their environment are protected from potential adverse impact.

3. Applicability

HELVETAS requires that climate finance projects that are likely to have environmental and social adverse impacts are screened to determine whether the projects require a full scale or limited/focused Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), suitable to the magnitude and impact significance of the proposed activity and that safeguard compliance is ensured during project implementation and closure. The ESIA helps to ensure that environmental and social adverse impacts, including gender related impacts, are properly identified, assessed, and mitigated so that decision

makers can take appropriate decisions on the concerned project and ensure that a project is environmentally sound and sustainable, thereby supporting improved decision making.

Climate finance projects refer to projects co-financed by dedicated climate funds. Therefore, HELKETAS ESMS system is mandatory for all projects financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) or further ultimate financiers that may require ESMS.

HELKETAS has an obligation to comply with relevant national, as well as international laws and conventions of the country or countries in which a project is implemented. The HELKETAS ESMS recognizes the roles and responsibilities of the country or countries in which a project is implemented and demands compliance with the ESMS of the entity(ies) financing a project or programme. It requires that HELKETAS supported climate finance projects comply with the laws and regulations of such country or countries related to environmental and social protection, as well as relevant international laws and conventions to which such country or countries is a signatory. By no means, standards are downscaled as compared to recognized international standards if a country has poor or no legislation in place.

In cases where projects require an ESIA and when issues arise which are not conclusively covered by HELKETAS' ESMS, HELKETAS will apply good international practice as defined by the Green Climate Fund, or, if the Green Climate Fund does not publish such information:

- The International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability, version January 01, 2012 or later, available at the IFC website, ifc.org.
- The International Finance Corporation's Guidance Notes: Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability, version January 01, 2012 or later, available at the IFC website, ifc.org.

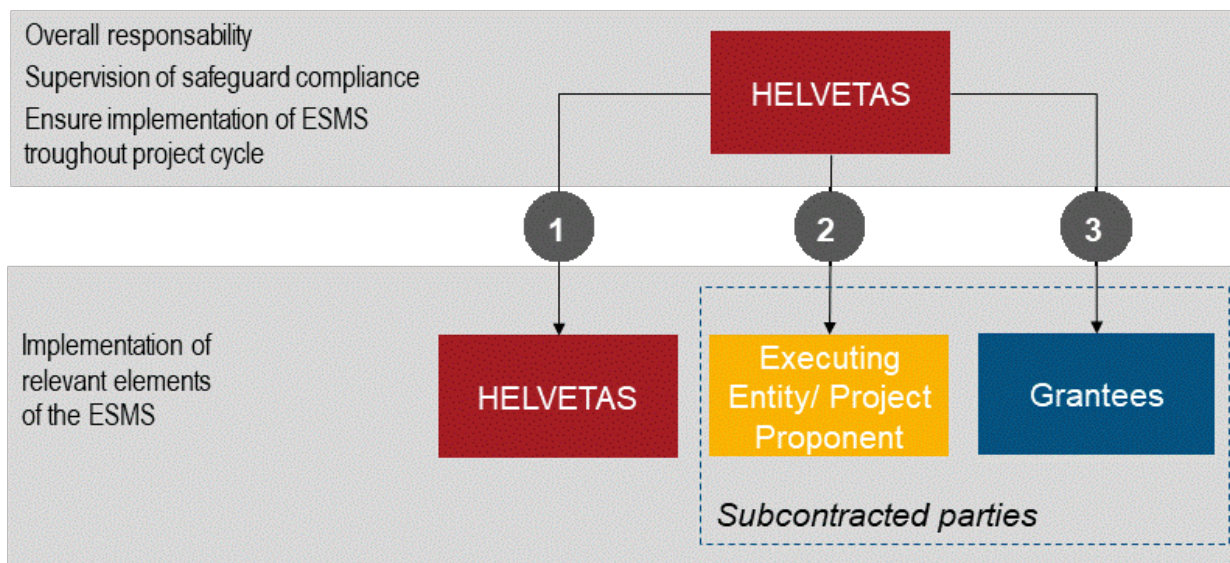
4. Roles and Responsibilities

The distribution of roles and responsibilities to implement the HELKETAS ESMS depends on the project. In general, there are three different cases (see Figure below).

1. Project development and implementation is coordinated by HELKETAS: Responsibility for developing and implementing ESS requirements remains with HELKETAS throughout the entire project cycle.
2. One or several project/program components are subcontracted by HELKETAS to Executing Entities¹, and/or, a project/programme is developed by proponents/developers engaged by HELKETAS.
3. A HELKETAS climate finance project/programme has an on-granting component, where subcontracted grantees² implement one or several project/programme components (procedures defined in the HELKETAS Project Cycle Management Manual for On-Granting in Climate Finance Projects).

¹ Executing entities are in charge of executing eligible activities under the oversight of the HELKETAS (usually 1-3 entities per project)

² Grantees are in charge of executing eligible activities under the oversight of Helvetas in the framework of a Small Grant Program (e.g. installing off-grid rooftop solar panels). Depending on the size and nature of the Grant Programm, there are numerous entities involved in one project.



In case 1, HELVETAS undertakes the ESS appraisal (See HELVETAS Environmental and Social Safeguards Manual) and, if required, conducts an ESIA, carries out consultations with affected people and communities, prepares and implements safeguard plans, monitors the implementation of these plans, and prepares and submits monitoring reports as defined in the present ESMS policy. In the other cases, these tasks are partly or fully taken over by Executing Entities/ projects proponents (case 2) or grantees (case 3), referred to as subcontracted parties in the following.

In the latter two cases, HELVETAS will assist and guide subcontracted parties in meeting the requirements during project preparation, implementation and completion, ensure due diligence and review, and provide monitoring and supervision. Monitoring and supervision of safeguard compliance will continue during project implementation, hence compliance with the safeguard policies is monitored throughout the project cycle. If a project poses risks of non-compliance, actions to ensure compliance will be taken by HELVETAS.

5. Project Cycle Management and related procedures

ESS strategies and requirements are integrated into HELVETAS' PCM operations as follows:

Project Cycle Step	ESMS Intervention		
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Case 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Case 2/3</td> </tr> </table>	Case 1	Case 2/3
Case 1	Case 2/3		
Submission of full project proposals	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>HELVETAS will provide ESS relevant information and conduct the ESIA, if requested.</td> <td> As part of a full project proposal submitted by the proponent/ grantee to HELVETAS, the proponent or grantee will provide ESS relevant information as required by HELVETAS. This will include the ESIA, in case an ESIA was requested by HELVETAS. For project proposals requiring an ESIA, HELVETAS will approve the proponent' or grantee's choice of independent experts to carry out the ESIA. </td> </tr> </table>	HELVETAS will provide ESS relevant information and conduct the ESIA, if requested.	As part of a full project proposal submitted by the proponent/ grantee to HELVETAS, the proponent or grantee will provide ESS relevant information as required by HELVETAS. This will include the ESIA, in case an ESIA was requested by HELVETAS. For project proposals requiring an ESIA, HELVETAS will approve the proponent' or grantee's choice of independent experts to carry out the ESIA.
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		<p>HELVETAS will participate in consultations that are held as part of the ESIA procedure.</p>
Appraisal of project proposals	<p>HELVETAS will complete the full ESS appraisal using the form in HELVETAS Environmental and Social Safeguards Manual.</p>	<p>HELVETAS reviews each project proposal, including the ESS information provided by the proponent or grantee.</p> <p>In cases where ESS information provided is insufficient, HELVETAS may request additional information from the proponent or grantee prior to appraisal or reject the project proposal.</p> <p>For each project appraised and in line with the HELVETAS ESMS, HELVETAS will formulate ESS related conditions and requirements that the proponent or grantee will have to implement in case HELVETAS decides to provide financial support for the project and/or implement the project.</p>
	<p>In case of a project proposal falling into ESS category A, HELVETAS will upload ESIA summary information on the HELVETAS website for no less than 90 days before consideration of financial or implementation support by HELVETAS.</p>	
Project selection	<p>The Project Selection Committee established within HELVETAS will decide which project proposals will be granted financial or implementation support by HELVETAS. As part of that decision, the Project Selection Committee will confirm the ESS related conditions and requirements that the proponent will have to implement, as defined during project appraisal. If the Project Selection Committee decides to modify the proposed conditions and requirements, it will be required to produce a detailed explanation of reasons for such modification and these explanations will be included in the Project Selection Committee's proceedings.</p>	
Project contracting	N/A	<p>HELVETAS will include ESS related conditions and requirements, as well as reference to all relevant aspects of the HELVETAS ESMS Policy, into the contract to be signed by HELVETAS and the subcontracted party.</p> <p>Immediately after a project contract has been signed by both parties, the project may start with physical activities.</p>
Project disclosure	<p>HELVETAS will upload on its website summary information on the project, including a summary of findings of ESIA's in the case of projects that required an ESIA. The full ESIA report will be provided only upon request.</p>	
Project implementation	<p>HELVETAS monitors ESS and risks, implements agreed mitigation measures as reflected in Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) and monitoring plan and reports on ESS measures at regular intervals during project implementation.</p>	<p>Subcontracted parties monitor ESS and risks, implement agreed mitigation measures as reflected in the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) and monitoring plan and report on ESS measures at regular intervals (as agreed in project contract) during project implementation.</p> <p>HELVETAS reviews ESS and risk information as reported by subcontracted parties in project</p>

	<p>progress reports. If necessary, HELVETAS will conduct site/project visits to ensure that agreed ESS and risks management measures are implemented. If necessary, HELVETAS will engage with subcontracted parties to adapt ESS mitigation measures as part of a contract amendment, e.g., if unforeseen significant adverse impacts emerge or if agreed mitigation measures turn out to be insufficient.</p>
<p>Project closure</p>	<p>As part of the project completion report, HELVETAS will report on ESS and risk aspects of the completed project. This will include an ex-ante (expected risks during project design) and ex-post comparison (actual risks encountered and mitigated during project implementation).</p> <p>Based on the ex-ante and ex-post information regarding ESS and project risks, HELVETAS will draw conclusions and communicate internally lessons learned in the spirit of systematic and continuous institutional learning.</p> <p>HELVETAS will publish on its website information on ESS and risk aspects of the completed project.</p> <p>Subcontracted parties will report on ESS and risk aspects of the completed project. This will include an ex-ante (expected risks during project design) and ex-post comparison (actual risks encountered and mitigated during project implementation).</p> <p>HELVETAS will review the ESS information included in the project completion report and verify that all contractually agreed ESS and risk management measures have been properly implemented. In case of projects that required an ESIA, HELVETAS will conduct a final project visit to ensure that environmental and social adverse impacts have been mitigated as agreed and affected communities agree with the implemented mitigation measures.</p> <p>HELVETAS will transfer the final instalment to subcontracted parties only once all agreed ESS requirements have been addressed in a satisfactory manner.</p> <p>Based on the ex-ante and ex-post information regarding ESS and project risks, HELVETAS will draw conclusions and communicate internally lessons learned in the spirit of systematic and continuous institutional learning.</p> <p>HELVETAS will publish on its website information on ESS and risk aspects of the completed project if such disclosure was agreed as part of the project contract with subcontracted parties.</p>
<p>Project evaluation</p>	<p>ESS and risks aspects will be included in project evaluations in the following cases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Particularly complicated project or project that encountered significant problems during implementation ii. Lighthouse/demonstration project iii. If the evaluation offers large potential for institutional learning about risk management and/or ESSM development iv. If evaluation is requested by the ultimate financier (e.g., GCF, bilateral donor, etc.)

6. Standards, Principles, Requirements and Strategies

6.1. Performance Standards

The HELVETAS ESMS consists of eight performance standards, of which the first one is an overarching standard reflecting the principles, strategies and procedures applied by HELVETAS to implement the ESMS. Performance Standards 2 - 8 establish objectives and requirements to avoid and minimize and, where residual adverse impacts remain, compensate/offset the risks and adverse impacts to workers, affected communities and the environment. For further guidance on applying ESS Performance Standards refer to Annex 1.

Performance Standard 1 consists of principles, strategies and procedures applied by HELVETAS to implement the ESMS as further detailed in this chapter.

Performance Standards 2-8 include the following environmental and social safeguards:

Performance Standard 2: Labour and working conditions

- a) Ensure fair treatment, non-discrimination, equal opportunity;
- b) Ensure good worker–management relationship;
- c) Comply with national employment and labor laws;
- d) Protect workers, especially those in vulnerable categories;
- e) Promote safety and health;
- f) Avoid use of forced labor or child labor.

Performance Standard 3: Resource efficiency and pollution prevention

- a) Avoid, minimize or reduce project-related pollution;
- b) Promote more sustainable use of resources, including energy and water;
- c) Reduce project-related greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance Standard 4: Community health, safety and security

- a) Anticipate and avoid adverse impacts on the health and safety of the affected community;
- b) Safeguard personnel and property in accordance with relevant human rights principles.

Performance Standard 5: Land acquisition and involuntary resettlement

- a) Avoid/minimize adverse social and economic impacts from land acquisition or restrictions on land use:
 - Avoid/minimize displacement;
 - Provide alternative project designs;
 - Avoid forced eviction.
- b) Improve or restore livelihoods and standards of living;
- c) Improve living conditions among displaced persons by providing:
 - Adequate housing;
 - Security of tenure.

Performance Standard 6: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources

- a) Protection and conservation of biodiversity;
- b) Maintenance of benefits from ecosystem services;
- c) Promotion of sustainable management of living natural resources;
- d) Integration of conservation needs and development priorities.

Performance Standard 7: Indigenous peoples

- a) Ensure full respect for indigenous peoples
 - Human rights, dignity, aspirations;
 - Livelihoods;
 - Culture, knowledge, practices;
- b) Avoid/minimize adverse impacts;
- c) Sustainable and culturally appropriate development benefits and opportunities;
- d) Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) if indicated (see 6.6.4).

Performance Standard 8: Cultural heritage

- a) Protection and preservation of cultural heritage;
- b) Promotion of equitable sharing of cultural heritage benefits.

6.2. Principles

Environment and Social Safeguard principles emphasizes a “do no harm” outcome for affected communities, the environment, and fiduciary aspects, and therefore it will seek to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse environmental and social adverse impacts, including protecting the rights of those likely to be affected or marginalized by the development process. The key principles of the HELVETAS ESMS are to:

- a) Identify and evaluate environmental and social risks and adverse impacts of the project;
- b) Adopt a mitigation hierarchy to anticipate and avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize, and, where residual adverse impacts remain, compensate/offset for risks and adverse impacts to workers, affected communities, and the environment;
- c) Promote improved environmental and social performance of subcontracted parties;
- d) Ensure that grievances from affected communities and external communications from other stakeholders are responded to and managed appropriately; and
- e) Promote and provide means for adequate engagement with affected communities throughout the project cycle on issues that could potentially affect them and ensure that relevant environmental and social information is disclosed and disseminated.

6.3. Requirements

The level of detail and complexity of the ESMS and the resources devoted to it will depend on the level of adverse impacts and risks of the project to be financed. HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will conduct an ESS appraisal and if required a full-scale or partial ESIA, and establish and maintain an ESMS appropriate with the level of its environmental and social risks and adverse impacts. The ESIA is conducted if required by HELVETAS in coordination with responsible government agencies. The ESMS will include and address the following elements:

1. Policy and regulation;
2. Presentation of baseline condition,
3. Identification of risks and adverse impacts;
4. Impact mitigation, management, and monitoring programmes (e.g. Environmental and Social Action Plan);
5. Institutional capacity building;
6. Establishment of grievance redress mechanism,
7. Emergency preparedness and response;
8. Public consultation and stakeholder engagement; and
9. Review as part of project progress monitoring and/ or evaluation.

In cases where a HELVETAS supported climate finance project will cause undesirable adverse impacts on people, the adversely affected people can express their grievances, seek solutions, and report alleged violations of HELVETAS operational policies and procedures. The accountability mechanism comprises two steps, as follows:

1. Consultation led by special project facilitator organized by HELVETAS to assist people adversely affected by the project to find solutions to their problems; and
2. Assist people affected by projects in filing requests for compliance review.

6.4. ESS Categorization of Projects

Environmental and social potential adverse impacts of projects vary depending on the project size/scale and intensity of the impact generated by the project, and therefore projects will be classified according to the predicted environmental and social adverse impacts and their significance. Proposed projects (i.e., projects in HELVETAS' project pipeline) will be screened for their environmental and social implications considering the type of project, location, design, sensitivity, risk, scale, nature, magnitude of potential adverse impacts, availability of mitigation measures, compensation of adverse impacts, enhancement of positive impacts and availability of alternative project designs; and, classified according to their anticipated environmental and social impacts. Impact mitigation may be straightforward where technology is readily available. In other cases, impact mitigation may require in-depth study. The ESS considerations will be undertaken during different stages of the project cycle, covering project concept, project preparation, project appraisal, contracting, project implementation, and project closure/evaluation.

A proposed project will be classified into one of three categories in conformity with the categorization used by the Green Climate Fund. The ESS classification consists of three categories, i.e.:

Category A: Projects with potential significant adverse environmental and/or social risks and/or impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented. These impacts may affect areas larger than the project site, and the mitigation of impacts will require in-depth study to ensure adequate mitigation strategies. A full scale or limited/focused ESIA study will be mandatory for all category A projects. The assessment will cover direct as well as indirect impacts, adverse as well as positive impacts, and development of mitigation measures to prevent, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for adverse impacts. An ESS management and monitoring plan to address the potential adverse impacts will have to be prepared as part of the ESIA study. The following type of projects will typically be classified as category A:

- a) Large scale coastal defenses;
- b) Large dams and other impoundments designed for the holding back or permanent storage of water;

- c) Major irrigation projects or other projects affecting water supply in a region;
- d) Large groundwater abstraction activities;
- e) Large municipal wastewater treatment plants;
- f) Municipal solid waste processing and disposal facilities;
- g) Large infrastructure projects;
- h) Large-scale tourism and retail development;
- i) Large thermal and hydropower developments;
- j) Construction of high-voltage overhead electrical power;
- k) Large-scale land reclamation;
- l) Large-scale primary agriculture or forestation involving intensification or conversion of natural habitats;
- m) Projects which are planned to be carried out in sensitive locations or are likely to have a perceptible impact on such locations. Such sensitive locations include, inter alia, national parks and other protected areas identified by national or international law, and other sensitive locations of international, national or regional importance, such as wetlands, forests with high biodiversity value, areas of archaeological or cultural significance, and areas of importance for Indigenous Peoples or other vulnerable groups;
- n) Projects which may result in significant adverse social impacts to local communities or other project affected parties;
- o) Projects which may involve significant involuntary resettlement or economic displacement.

Category B: Projects with potential limited adverse environmental and/or social risks and/or few impacts, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and where the adverse impacts can be addressed through readily available mitigation measures. Category B projects will require a full scale or limited/focused ESIA in some cases only, i.e. if called for by HELVETAS. The following type of projects will typically be classified as category B:

- a) Shared waterways such as rivers, canals and streams of riparian communities/ countries;
- b) Small-medium scale energy, energy efficiency, renewables;
- c) Adaptation of crop farming systems;
- d) Energy efficiency of buildings;
- e) Energy efficiency of industrial processes;
- f) Low emission transport;
- g) Small, medium and large scale low emission power generation;
- h) Forest management.

Category C: Projects with minimal or no adverse environmental and/or social risks and/or impacts. No ESIA study will be required for category C projects. The following type of projects will typically be classified as category C:

- a) Development of policies, regulations;
- b) Software development;
- c) Service industries;
- d) Plans and studies;
- e) Capacity building including workshops, trainings & knowledge dissemination;
- f) Monitoring programmes;
- g) Enhancement of existing agriculture or livestock or soil that doesn't involve any new land clearing or expansion;
- h) Small scale water storage/retention;
- i) Small scale reforestation.

6.5. Minimum Requirements for ESIA

Full scale or limited/focused ESIA are required by HELVETAS if:

- i. HELVETAS determines during project development or appraisal that a project proposal is categorized as category A;
- ii. HELVETAS determines during project development or appraisal that a project proposal is categorized as category B and if significant ESS risks have been identified by HELVETAS during project development or appraisal.

In case HELVETAS requires the elaboration of an ESIA, subcontracted parties will be responsible for organizing the completion of an ESIA (HELVETAS itself if the project is developed by HELVETAS). Independent experts need to be approved by HELVETAS and carry the ESIA out in accordance with HELVETAS' requirements and satisfying ESIA requirements determined in national law and policy of those countries where the project is going to be implemented. HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the ESIA and for undertaking monitoring of the likely environmental and social adverse impacts. HELVETAS will review the ESIA to ensure that it meets all HELVETAS requirements. Projects activities may not start before the ESIA is approved by HELVETAS, and if required, by the responsible government agency/agencies. HELVETAS will also monitor the implementation of agreed mitigation measures and monitoring plans by the subcontracted parties and provide information in line with HELVETAS' disclosure requirements (see below).

6.5.1. Full scale Environmental and Social Impact Assessments

The key process elements of an ESIA include as a minimum requirement:

- (i) initial screening of the project and scoping of the assessment process;
- (ii) examination of alternatives;
- (iii) stakeholder identification and consultation (focusing on those directly affected) and gathering of environmental and social baseline data;
- (iv) impact identification, prediction, and analysis;
- (v) generation of mitigation or management measures and actions (Environmental and Social Action Plan);
- (vi) assessment of significance of potential adverse impacts and evaluation of residual impacts;
- (vii) preparation of grievance redress mechanism,
- (viii) preparation of an environmental management and monitoring plan and
- (ix) documentation of the assessment process (i.e., ESIA report).

The ESIA process will predict and assess the project's potential adverse impacts and risks, in quantitative terms to the extent possible. It evaluates environmental and social risks and impacts from associated facilities and other third-party activities. The ESIA identifies and defines a set of environmental and social mitigation and management measures to be taken during the implementation of the project to avoid, minimize, or compensate/offset for risks and adverse environmental and social impacts, in the order of priority, and their timelines; it also identifies any residual negative impacts that cannot be mitigated.

The desired outcomes of the mitigation and management measures should be measurable the extent possible, such as performance indicators, targets or acceptance criteria that can be tracked over defined time periods. The process indicates the responsibilities required for implementation of the mitigation and management programme in form of an Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP). The ESIA also identifies and estimates the extent and quality of available data, key data gaps, and uncertainties associated with predictions, and specifies topics that do not require further attention. For

those projects with potential significant adverse impacts predominantly in the social area (e.g., involuntary resettlement), the process to identify potential adverse impacts and risks should largely focus on generating appropriate social baseline data, impacts analysis, and mitigation measures (e.g., Resettlement Action Plan).

For greenfield developments (development of new systems from the ground up, as opposed to redevelopment), the ESIA includes an examination of technically and financially feasible alternatives to the source of such potential adverse impacts, and documentation of the rationale for selecting the particular course of action proposed. The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to improve decisions on project design, construction, and operation based on feasible alternatives to the proposed project. The alternatives analysis should be conducted as early as possible in the process and examine feasible alternatives; alternative project locations, designs, or operational processes; or alternative ways of dealing with environmental and social adverse impacts.

HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, ensure that appropriate programmes are implemented, verify that the terms and conditions for approvals from relevant government authorities are met and monitoring activities to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures are conducted.

6.5.2. Limited or Focused Environmental and Social Impact Assessments

The projects to be financed or supported may consist of specific activities with potential limited adverse environmental and social risks and/or impacts, for which the development of a full-scale ESIA is not required by HELVETAS. For these projects, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, conduct a limited or focused ESIA that are narrower in scope than a full-scale ESIA, and that are specific to potential environmental and social (including labor, health, safety, and security) risks and/or adverse impacts identified as associated with the project.

The scope of the limited or focused analyses and assessments needed will be defined by HELVETAS during project development and/or appraisal. During a limited/focused ESIA process, HELVETAS, or if applicable, subcontracted parties review in a systematic and documented manner the potential adverse environmental and social risks and impacts of the project to be financed and determine the need to

- (i) eliminate or minimize (mitigate) the identified risks and adverse impacts;
- (ii) modify the project plan; or
- (iii) conduct further focused assessment.

Examples of focused assessments include air pollutant emissions and air quality impact studies, noise and vibration studies, water resources impact studies, contamination investigations and assessments, traffic studies along transport corridors, social baselines, resettlement evaluations and labour audits.

6.6. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is the basis for building strong, constructive and gender-responsive relationships that are essential for the successful management of a project including its potential adverse environmental and social impacts. Stakeholder consultation processes will gather the views, interests and concerns of different stakeholders, particularly of the local communities directly affected by the project, and take these views, interests and concerns into account in project planning and implementation to ensure creation of sustainable development benefits. The purpose of stakeholder engagement is to establish and maintain a constructive relationship with a variety of stakeholders which covers project preparation, implementation and completion.

Stakeholder engagement may involve the following elements: stakeholder analysis and planning, disclosure and dissemination of information, consultation and participation, grievance redress mechanism, and ongoing reporting to affected communities. The nature, frequency, and level of effort of stakeholder engagement may vary and will be commensurate with the project's risks and adverse impacts, and the project's phase of development.

6.6.1. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

As part of an ESIA, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan that is scaled to the project risks and potential adverse impacts and development stage and be tailored to the characteristics and interests of the affected communities. Where applicable, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan will include differentiated measures to allow the effective participation of those identified as disadvantaged or vulnerable.

6.6.2. Disclosure

Disclosure of relevant project information helps affected communities and other stakeholders to understand the risks, impacts and opportunities of the project. In cases of projects that required an ESIA, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will provide affected communities with access to relevant information on:

- (i) the purpose, nature, and scale of the project;
- (ii) the duration of proposed project activities;
- (iii) any risks to and potential adverse impacts on such communities and relevant mitigation measures;
- (iv) the envisaged stakeholder engagement process; and
- (v) the grievance redress mechanism.

6.6.3. Consultation

When affected communities are subject to identified risks and adverse impacts from a project, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will undertake a process of consultation in a manner that provides the affected communities with opportunities to express their views on project risks, adverse impacts and mitigation measures, and allows HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, to consider and respond to them. The extent and degree of engagement required by the consultation process should be commensurate with the project's risks and adverse impacts and with the concerns raised by the affected communities. Effective consultation is a two-way process that should:

- (i) begin early in the process of identification of environmental and social risks and potential adverse impacts and continue on an ongoing basis as risks and adverse impacts arise;
- (ii) be based on the prior disclosure and dissemination of relevant, transparent, objective, meaningful and easily accessible information which is in a culturally appropriate local language(s) and format and is understandable to affected communities;
- (iii) focus inclusive engagement on those directly affected as opposed to those not directly affected;
- (iv) be free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, or intimidation;
- (v) enable meaningful participation, where applicable; and
- (vi) be documented.

HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will tailor its consultation process to the language preferences of the affected communities, their decision-making process, and the needs of

disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. If subcontracted parties have already engaged in such a process, they will provide adequate documented evidence of such engagement.

6.6.4. Indigenous Peoples

For projects with adverse impacts to Indigenous Peoples, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, are required to engage them in a consultation process and if requested by HELVETAS, to obtain their Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). In addition, Indigenous People's policies of the Green Climate Fund will be complied with as regards the requirements related to Indigenous Peoples and the definition of the special circumstances requiring FPIC.

6.6.5. External Communications

In cases where projects require an ESIA, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will implement and maintain a procedure for external communications that includes methods to

- (i) receive and register external communications from the public;
- (ii) screen and assess the issues raised and determine how to address them;
- (iii) provide, track, and document responses, if any; and
- (iv) adjust the management programme, as appropriate.

In addition, subcontracted parties are encouraged to make publicly available periodic reports on their environmental and social sustainability.

6.6.6. Grievance Redress Mechanism for Affected Communities

In cases where projects require an ESIA, and where there are affected communities, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties will establish a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate resolution of affected communities' concerns and grievances about the environmental and social performance of HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties. The grievance redress mechanism should be scaled to the risks and adverse impacts of the project and have affected communities as its primary user. It should seek to resolve concerns promptly, using an understandable and transparent consultative process that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible, and at no cost and without retribution to the party that originated the issue or concern. The mechanism should not impede access to judicial or administrative remedies. HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will inform the affected communities about the mechanism during the stakeholder engagement process.

6.6.7. Ongoing Reporting to Affected Communities

In cases where projects require an ESIA, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will provide periodic reports to the affected communities that describe progress with implementation of the project Action Plans on issues that involve ongoing risk to or adverse impacts on affected communities and on issues that the consultation process or grievance redress mechanism have identified as a concern to those communities. If the management programme results in material changes in or additions to the mitigation measures or actions described in the Action Plans on issues of concern to the affected Communities, the updated relevant mitigation measures or actions will be communicated to them. The frequency of these reports will be proportionate to the concerns of affected communities but not less than annually.

Annex 1: Guidance Notes

This section includes Guidance Notes corresponding to the ESS Performance Standards. These Guidance Notes explain the requirements of the different Performance Standards and offer guidance on applying them.

HELVETAS updates the Guidance Notes periodically to reflect lessons learnt during the implementation of the Performance Standards. HELVETAS also updates referenced materials periodically.

Initially, HELVETAS-specific Guidance Notes apply for the three areas of greatest relevance to the work of HELVETAS, namely:

- a) Environmental safeguards,
- b) Involuntary resettlement safeguards, and
- c) Indigenous Peoples safeguards.

For the time being, the environmental safeguards also cover performance standards on labour and working conditions (Performance Standard 2), resource efficiency and pollution prevention (Performance Standard 3), community health, safety and security (Performance Standard 4), biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources (Performance Standard 6), and cultural heritage (Performance Standard 8). Over time, and in line with developments in international good practices as defined by the Green Climate Fund, HELVETAS further revises and details the Guidance Notes presented below.

Environmental Safeguards

The objective of environment safeguards is to ensure that development projects are environmentally sustainable, provide socially inclusive growth and poverty reduction; and ensure the environmental soundness and sustainability of projects. They also aim to prevent adverse impacts on the environment and affected people; or at least, to minimize, mitigate, and/or compensate the adverse impacts on the environment and affected people.

The scope of environmental safeguards covers project interventions that may cause bio-physical and social impacts on the environment. Hence, the impact and risks assessment covers the physical, biological, social, and cultural environment.

Procedures:

- i. Undertake screening of proposed projects to determine the appropriate type of environmental assessment that will be needed and determine the appropriate studies that would be needed in accordance with the significance of potential adverse impacts and risks.
- ii. Analyze project alternatives for all category A projects to determine the best method of achieving project objectives while minimizing environmental and social adverse impacts. This includes the alternative of with and without the proposed project; alternative locations, designs, technologies, and components; and their potential adverse environmental and social impacts and the reason for selecting the alternative proposed. This analysis will bring environmental and social considerations into early decision making, and provide an opportunity to avoid and, if avoidance is not possible, minimize adverse environmental impacts and risks.
- iii. Conduct an environmental assessment of the proposed project considering the applicable laws and regulations of the country or countries in which project activities will take place as well as applicable HELVETAS operational policies and procedures. The environmental assessment will identify potential adverse impacts, including direct, indirect, cumulative, and induced

- impacts; both adverse and beneficial impacts; and assess project risks to physical, biological, socioeconomic including impacts on livelihood; and physical cultural resources in the project area of influence. Impact analysis should consider the affected features, including physical, biological, socioeconomic, physical cultural resources. Impact analysis should also consider the project's area of influence, including the primary project site and ancillary facility sites, associated facilities, areas and communities potentially affected by cumulative and induced potential adverse impacts.
- iv. In conducting an environmental assessment, the following approach should be applied: avoid, and where avoidance is not possible, minimize, mitigate, and/or offset adverse impacts and enhance positive impacts through properly designed environmental planning and management. Prepare an environmental management plan (EMP) covering mitigation measures, environmental monitoring and reporting requirements, institutional or organizational arrangements for the EMP, capacity development and training measures, implementation schedule, cost estimates, and performance indicators. The principles of environmental mitigation will include consideration on mitigation measures to the level of no significant harm to third parties, and the polluter pays principle.
 - v. Stakeholder consultation should be undertaken with affected people and facilitate their informed participation. Gender issues should be considered, including assurance of women's participation in consultation and assuring compliance with HELVETAS' gender policy. The consultation will involve all stakeholders, including affected people, civil societies, and concerned non-government organizations, early in the project preparation process, and ensure that their views and concerns are considered. Stakeholder consultations will continue throughout project implementation and HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, shall operate a grievance redress mechanism to facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances regarding the project's environmental performance.
 - vi. Disclose relevant information about the proposed project and its potential adverse/ beneficial impacts so that stakeholders will understand the potential adverse impacts, risks and opportunities of the project. Disclose the draft environmental assessment and the final environmental assessment to affected people and other stakeholders in an easily accessible place. This process should commence early in the project cycle and continue throughout the life of the project.
 - vii. Monitor the effectiveness of EMP implementation against desired outcomes related to measures to address the identified potential adverse impacts and risks and to meet applicable requirements. Document monitoring results, including the development and implementation of corrective actions, and disclose monitoring reports.
 - viii. Apply careful measures if a project is located within a critical habitat with conservation value, whether this is a pristine undisturbed natural habitat or modified habitat that still supports valuable biodiversity, including endemic or threatened species; and whether it is legally protected or unprotected. Assurance shall be made that (i) projects will not significantly convert or degrade a natural habitat unless there are no technically and financially feasible alternatives; (ii) any conversion or degradation is appropriately reduced or mitigated; (iii) there are no measurable adverse impacts on the critical habitat that could impair its ability to function, and (iv) there is no reduction in the population of any recognized endangered or critically endangered species. Projects should seek to avoid significant conversion or degradation of a natural habitat, primarily through project or facility location. However, if this is unavoidable and alternatives are not available, projects shall ensure that any conversion or degradation is

- appropriately mitigated; and implement additional measures to promote and enhance the conservation of the protected area.
- ix. Apply pollution prevention and control technologies and practices if a project will potentially generate pollution of the environment. Use international best practices as reflected in internationally recognized standards such as the Green Climate Fund's guidelines, i.e.: Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines which covers environmental, occupational health and safety, community health and safety, and construction and decommissioning; and industry sector Environmental, Health, and Safety Guidelines. Adopt cleaner production processes and good energy efficiency practices, which encompass pollution prevention and abatement, resource conservation, energy efficiency, waste management and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Avoid, or where avoidance is impossible, minimize or control the intensity or load of pollutant emission and discharge, including direct and indirect greenhouse gases emissions, waste generation, and release of hazardous materials from their production, transportation, handling, and storage; and when the project has the potential to create a significant source of emissions in an already degraded area, introduce strategies to help improve ambient conditions.
 - x. The preferred order of waste management practices, from most to least preferred, is: avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, treat, dispose. Therefore, avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, to reduce through control the generation of wastes from project activities. Where waste cannot be recovered, or reused, or recycled, it should be treated, destroyed, and disposed of in an environmentally sound manner. If the generated waste is considered hazardous, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, should explore reasonable alternatives for its environmentally sound disposal.
 - xi. Undertake an analysis of the project's potential adverse impacts and risks on occupational and community health and safety and develop preventive and protective measures. The assessment should consider all stages of the project cycle (design, construction, operation, and decommissioning). Provide workers with safe and healthy working conditions and prevent accidents, injuries, and disease. Establish preventive and emergency preparedness and response measures to avoid, and where avoidance is not possible, to minimize adverse impacts and risks to the health and safety of local communities.
 - xii. Conserve cultural heritage from adverse project impacts and support its preservation. When a likely impact is identified, employ qualified and experienced experts during environmental assessment to undertake field surveys and related research and consultation to assess the potential impact on the resources. Consultation shall be conducted with relevant national and local concerned agencies and affected communities who use or have used these resources. Identify and apply appropriate measures to mitigate these adverse impacts.

Involuntary Resettlement Safeguards

The objective of involuntary resettlement safeguards is primarily to avoid involuntary resettlement wherever possible; if not possible, to minimize it by exploring project alternatives and design options; to enhance, or at least restore, the livelihoods of displaced persons relative to pre-project levels; and to improve the standards of living of the displaced poor and other vulnerable groups.

The scope of involuntary resettlement safeguards covers physical and non-physical displacement due to involuntary restrictions (full or partial, permanent or temporary). Physical displacement includes relocation, loss of residential land, or loss of shelter. Non-physical displacement includes economic displacement, including loss of land, assets, access to assets, income sources, or means of livelihoods.

Involuntary resettlement safeguards will be undertaken because of involuntary acquisition of land, or involuntary restrictions on land use.

Procedures:

- i. Undertake screening of a proposed project to identify past, present, and future involuntary resettlement impacts and risks. Determine the scope of resettlement planning through a survey and/or census of displaced persons, including a gender analysis.
- ii. Collect baseline data to understand the existing socioeconomic profiles (demographic information, social organization, occupational structure, income level and assets, and access to public services) and assess the social impacts of a proposed project due to involuntary resettlement through meaningful consultations with all concerned people, including affected persons, host communities, and concerned nongovernment organizations. Inform all affected persons on the need for land acquisition, and their entitlements and resettlement options. Encourage and ensure stakeholder participation in planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of resettlement programmes. Particular attention should be given to vulnerable groups, especially those below the poverty line, the landless, the elderly, women and children, and indigenous peoples, and those without legal title to land, and ensuring their participation in consultations.
- iii. Establish a grievance redress mechanism involving all concerned parties, including the project implementing/executing agency, local government, and non-government organizations, to receive and record complaints from affected persons and facilitate resolution of the concerns. Where involuntary resettlement impacts and risks are highly complex and sensitive, compensation and resettlement decisions should be preceded by a social preparation phase.
- iv. Formulate a plan to restore and improve the livelihoods including the quality of life of all displaced persons through land-based and non-land-based compensation. The plan will include land-based resettlement strategies when affected livelihoods are land based where possible, or cash compensation at replacement value for land when the loss of land does not undermine livelihoods. Besides, compensation shall also include prompt replacement of assets with access to assets of equal or higher value, prompt compensation at full replacement cost for assets that cannot be restored, and additional revenues and services through benefit sharing schemes where possible.
- v. Provide assistance required by physically and economically displaced persons with relocation, secured tenure to relocation land, better housing with accessibility to employment and production opportunities, transitional integration of resettled persons economically and socially into their host communities, and extension of project benefits to host communities. The assistance will also include transitional support and development assistance, including support for transportation of people, belongings, livestock, equipment, and other movable property to the new settlement site, land development, credit facilities, training, or employment opportunities. Resettlement assistance is broad in scope and may include subsistence allowances of daily subsistence and fuel that may be needed until new production systems are in place.
- vi. Undertake long-term income restoration strategies covering both land-based and non-land economic activities that will lead to an improvement in the standards of living of the displaced poor and other vulnerable groups, including women, to at least national minimum standards. Provide the displaced people with legal and affordable access to land and resources, and in urban areas provide them with appropriate income sources and legal and affordable access to adequate housing.

- vii. Develop procedures in a transparent, consistent, and equitable manner to ensure that land acquisition will be through negotiated settlement and ensure that the affected people can maintain the same or better income and livelihood status. The compensation of land and other assets should be “adequate” and “fair price”. HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, will also ensure that the negotiating process will not adversely affect the marginality and vulnerability of any affected persons.
- viii. Ensure that protection of displaced persons from forced evictions at resettlement sites will include both persons with titled as well as non-titled displaced persons (without titles to land or any recognizable legal rights to land); hence security of tenures applies to both, and they are eligible to receive compensation and assistance.
- ix. For a project with involuntary resettlement impacts, prepare a resettlement action plan (RAP) with time-bound actions and appropriate budget for displaced persons’ entitlements. The RAP should have a clear definition of the project affected persons (PAPs) by socio-economic category; the cut-off dates for eligibility for compensation; the assets to be compensated, and the development projects proposed. Conceive and execute involuntary resettlement as part of a development project or programme, whereas for a project with significant involuntary resettlement impacts, the involuntary resettlement component of the project can be considered as a stand-alone operation. National laws and legislation shall be properly recognized and considered during the preparation of the RAP.
- x. The objective of the resettlement action plan is to provide an agreed plan for the resettlement and compensation of project affected persons (PAPs). The RAP presents an inventory of people likely to be affected by the project, and the proposed compensation and resettlement packages. The plan provides a road map for resolving displacement, resettlement and compensation issues. The RAP will ensure that the livelihoods of all displaced persons are improved or at least restored to the pre-project levels and the standards of living of the displaced poor and other vulnerable groups are improved.
- xi. Disclose the draft resettlement plan to key stakeholders in an easily accessible place and facilitate vulnerable PAPs to access the document and work closely with the grievance redress committee to ensure that all PAP complaints are handled properly and in a timely manner. Disclose the final resettlement plan and its updates to affected persons and other stakeholders.
- xii. Assess resettlement outcomes and their impacts and set up a mechanism for monitoring the performance of involuntary resettlement programmes of the concerned project and corrective measures as they arise to safeguard against poorly implemented resettlement plans. Assess whether the objectives of the resettlement plan have been achieved. Disclose monitoring reports to interested parties.

Indigenous People Safeguards

The objective of Indigenous People safeguards is to design and implement projects in a way that fosters full respect for Indigenous Peoples’ identity, dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, and cultural uniqueness as defined by the Indigenous Peoples themselves so that they (i) receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits, (ii) do not suffer adverse impacts because of projects, and (iii) can participate actively in projects that affect them.

The scope of Indigenous People safeguards include the social impact of a project that directly or indirectly affects the dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, or culture of Indigenous Peoples or affects the territories or natural or cultural resources that Indigenous Peoples own, use, occupy, or claim as an ancestral domain or asset. In considering these characteristics, national legislation,

customary law, and any international conventions to which the project intervention country or countries is a party shall be considered. A group that has lost collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the project area because of forced severance remains eligible for coverage under this policy.

Procedures:

- i. Undertake screening early on to determine the presence of indigenous people and their collective attachment to the project area; and whether project activities are likely to have significant adverse impacts on Indigenous Peoples;
- ii. Undertake participatory social impact assessment, regardless of whether Indigenous Peoples are affected positively or negatively, to assess potential project impacts, both positive and negative, on Indigenous Peoples. The assessment will be gender inclusive and specifically consider women's role in the management and use of these resources. The scope of assessment and mitigation shall include cultural as well as physical impacts.
- iii. Consult the Indigenous People and the concerned Indigenous Peoples organizations and ensure that the project receives the consent of affected Indigenous Peoples communities for commercial development of cultural resources and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, physical displacement from traditional or customary lands, and commercial development of natural resources within customary lands that would impact the livelihoods or the cultural integrity of the Indigenous People.
- iv. Avoid, to the maximum extent possible, any project that can negatively impact Indigenous Peoples' traditional ownership and user rights on lands, territories, resources, livelihoods or cultures. Where avoidance is not possible, ensure that the affected Indigenous Peoples communities provide inputs to the project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Adequate mitigation measures should also be taken, and a suitable plan prepared for the Indigenous People.
- v. Avoid, to the maximum extent possible, any restricted access to and physical displacement from protected areas and natural reserves. Where avoidance is not possible, ensure that the affected Indigenous Peoples communities participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of management arrangements for such areas and natural resources and that their benefits are equitably shared.
- vi. Design and implement the project in a manner that provides affected Indigenous Peoples and concerned Indigenous Peoples organizations with equitable access to project benefits. This will be addressed through meaningful consultation with the Indigenous People in designing, implementing, and monitoring measures to avoid adverse impacts or, when avoidance is not possible, to minimize, mitigate, or compensate for such adverse impacts. Undertake gender inclusive capacity development to enable the Indigenous People to obtain the greatest benefits from the project. Document the consultation results and describe how Indigenous Peoples' issues have been addressed in the project design in a culturally appropriate manner.
- vii. Promote sustainable development benefits and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in a manner that is accessible, culturally appropriate and inclusive. Engage with the relevant Indigenous Peoples to ensure their ownership and participation in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The project should also consult with them as to the cultural appropriateness of proposed services or facilities and should seek to identify and address any economic or social constraints (including those relating to gender) that may limit opportunities to benefit from, or participate in, the project.

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- viii. Prepare an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) for any project that is anticipated to adversely affect Indigenous Peoples based on the social impact assessment. This plan should be prepared at the earliest stages of project development and be integrated into the design of the project. The IPP includes a framework for ensuring free, prior, informed, and continued consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities during project implementation; specifies measures to ensure that Indigenous Peoples receive culturally appropriate benefits; identifies measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for any adverse project impacts; and includes appropriate grievance redress mechanism, monitoring and evaluation, and a cost estimate for implementing the planned measures. When designing the grievance redress procedures, HELVETAS, or if applicable subcontracted parties, should take into account the availability of customary dispute settlement mechanisms among the Indigenous Peoples and judicial recourse. The IPP will also include an action plan for legal recognition of customary rights to lands and territories or ancestral domains to ensure that the Indigenous Peoples receive social and economic benefits that are culturally appropriate.
 - ix. Where other than indigenous people will also be affected by adverse impacts of a project development, a community development plan may be appropriate. The format and title of the plan may be adjusted to suit the project situation. The determination of the appropriate planning scope, as well as determination of appropriate mitigation measures, may require the input of competent social development specialists.
 - x. Disclose a draft IPP or community development plan to the affected Indigenous Peoples communities and other concerned communities at an easily accessible place and in a culturally appropriate form, manner, and language understandable to affected Indigenous Peoples communities and other stakeholders. The IPP will include documentation of the consultation process and the results of the social impact assessment in a timely manner, before project appraisal. The final IPP and its updates will also be disclosed to the affected Indigenous Peoples communities and other stakeholders.
 - xi. Establish mechanisms and benchmarks for project monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on the implementation of the IPP using qualified and experienced experts. The monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should include arrangements for the free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities; and assess whether the IPP's objective and desired outcomes have been achieved, considering the baseline conditions.
 - xii. Disclose monitoring reports.