Enhancing the functionality of the transboundary Kamdi-Suhelwa complex for the management of dispersing tiger populations, through a community-centered conservation approach

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)

Zoological Society of London (ZSL) Nepal Office

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BaNP	*Banke National Park, Nepal*
BCT	*Brahmin, Chhetri, Thakuri*
CBOs	*Community based Organizations*
CEPF	*Community Engagement and Planning Framework*
CFUG	*Community Forest User Group*
DFO	*Division Forest Office*
E&S	*Environmental and Social*
ESCOP	*Environmental and Social Code of Practice*
ESMP	*Environmental and Social Management Plan*
ESMS	*Environmental and Social Management System*
ESS	*Environmental and Social Standard*
FPIC	*Free, Prior and Informed Consent*
GRM	*Grievance Redressal Mechanism*
HCC	*Human Carnivore Conflict*
HCCx	*Human Carnivore co-existence*
HWC	*Human wildlife Conflict*
HR	*Human Resource*
IPs	*Indigenous Peoples*
IPLCs	*Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities*
IPP	*Indigenous Peoples Plan*
ITHCP	*Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme*
IUCN	*International Union for the Conservation of Nature*
KPI	*Key Project Indicators*
LTC	*Local Tiger Champion*
M&E	*Monitoring and Evaluation*
MRE	*Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation*
NBS	*Nature Based Solution*
NGO	*Non-Governmental Organisation*
NTFPs	*Non-Timber Forest Products*
NTNC	*National Trust for Nature Conservation*
PAPs	*Project Affected People*
PF	*Process Framework*
SAWEN	*South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network*
SOPs	*Standard Operating Procedures*
SWLS	*Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary, India*
TAL	*Terai Arc Landscape*
VAP	*Village Activity Plan*
WCCB	*Wildlife Crime Control Bureau*
WB ESF	*World Bank Environmental and Social Framework*

1. Introduction

This document is the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for the Project "Enhancing the functionality of the transboundary Kamdi Suhelwa Complex for the management of dispersing tiger populations through a community-centred conservation approach" (hereafter referred to as "the Project") and outlines the environmental and social management commitments that Zoological Society of London (ZSL) will implement to manage potential negative impacts on the social and environmental components and enhance potential positive impacts of the Project. The ESMP will also introduce the other Safeguard Instruments to be applied in this Project (including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), Process Framework (PF), Indigenous Peoples' Plan (IPP), Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) Action Plan, and the Environmental and Social Code of Practice (ESCOP), which are included as Annexes to this document. As such, this introductory section as well as the project description (Section 2) and legal framework (Section 3) serve as a background for all of the Safeguard Instruments.

Projects funded under the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) are required to have established a provisional ESMP upon submission of a full proposal and a final ESMP within the end of the first year of implementation of each phase. The scope and scale of the ESMP will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the potential risks and impacts of the Project. This ESMP is final for Phase IV of the ITHCP project, as illustrated in Table 1. The current project represents Phase IV of a broader programme that builds on Phases I - III previously supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) under ITHCP. At this stage, the ESMP provides a preliminary framework based on the proposed project activities. As the project implementation progresses, the ESMP will be further refined and updated based on detailed site-level assessments, stakeholder and community consultations, and the finalisation of specific interventions. Importantly, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in relation to this ESMP and other project Safeguard Instruments will be done via the project's bi-annual and annual report to the IUCN. There will also be annual IUCN monitoring and supervision missions which include monitoring of ESMS related issues.

Table 1*:* ITHCP ESMP requirements through the Project design and implementation process

ITHCP requirements	Project design		Project implementation		
	Concept note stage	Full Proposal note stage	Inception phase (9 months)	Annually (or end of Year 1)	Project phase
Final ESMP, including Law Enforcement and Patrolling SOPs and ESCOP as required	Na.	Required	Na.	Required	Required

1.1 Purpose of the ESMP

This ESMP has been developed to outline the Project's overall environmental and social risk management strategy specific to Nepal (a separate ESMP has been prepared for India). It is intended as a 'living document' that will be regularly reviewed and updated by ZSL in response to changes to the project description, changes in the ZSL organisational structure, changes in legislation and any other guidelines and practices subscribed to, as well as changes in project design and local context.

The ESMP and appended Safeguard Instruments will be publicly disclosed documents and demonstrate ZSL's commitment to being transparent, accountable and accepting responsibility for the potential project impacts (both positive and negative). No personal information/ data[1] will be included in these publicly disclosed documents, and any personal data collected for the purpose of the Project,

[1] Personal data includes any identifier such as name of individuals, identification numbers, location data (e.g. home address or mobile phone GPS data), or online identifiers such as IP or email addresses.

this ESMP and appended Safeguard Instruments, and maintained by ZSL, will be done so in a secure manner.

The objectives of the ESMP are to:

- Ensure that the Project under Nepal's side operates in compliance with Nepal's legal requirements, IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW's Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and international good practice, notably the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (WB ESF 2017), including the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) 1-10[2].
- Ensure that the potential negative Environmental and Social (E&S) risks and impacts of the Project are managed appropriately, for example:
    - Favouring avoidance and prevention over minimisation, mitigation or compensation when dealing with negative impacts; and
    - Where avoidance is not possible, reducing, restoring, compensating/ mitigating the negative impact.
- Ensure that the potential positive environmental and social impacts of the Project are enhanced.
- Ensure that the principles of environmental and social sustainability are taken into account; and
- Provide a reference against which future monitoring and evaluation can be undertaken.

The ESMP serves as an umbrella Safeguard Instrument covering all of the identified E&S risks and impacts and allowing for the management and monitoring of these and any new risks adaptively. The ESMP therefore integrates the findings of:

- All E&S screening and assessment carried out during the design phase of the Project; and
- The Safeguard Instruments (and specific mitigation measures) and other provisions identified for complying with the requirements of national legislation, IUCN's ESMS policy framework, KfW Sustainability Guidelines (2021), and international good practice as well as site-specific information relevant for the Project's risk management strategy. The Safeguard Instruments appended to this ESMP can include the frameworks, plans and protocols to be used in the Project, and include:
    - Process Framework (PF), including FPIC Guideline
    - Environmental and Social Code of Practice (ESCOP)
    - Indigenous People's Plan
    - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
    - Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan
    - Village Action Plan
    - Livelihood Improvement Plan

2. Project Background and Social Context

2.1 Brief project description

The Kamdi forest corridor is an important wildlife corridor in the transboundary Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), connecting Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary (SWLS) in India and Banke National Park (NP) in Nepal. The Kamdi is the largest corridor in the TAL, home to approximately 17,622 households comprising of multiple social groups (Brahmin, Chhetri, and Thakuri castes, indigenous people, Dalit), which plays a vital role in wildlife conservation by facilitating the passage of animals such as tigers, leopards and elephants between habitats within Nepal. The corridor is pivotal for tiger population recovery within the TAL, serving as a dispersal pathway for spillover tiger populations from the Bardia-Banke complex in Nepal to Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary in India along three major physiographic zones- Chure, Bhabar, and Terai floodplains. Although the importance of the corridor for the conservation of species within the TAL is not disputed, communities within the Suhelwa-Kamdi complex face an array of challenges from wildlife. The dispersal of tigers along the corridor may be contributing to the movement of other competing carnivore species such as leopards, outside the core areas of PAs such as Suhelwa, Bardia and Banke, into human settlements within wildlife corridors, resulting in human-wildlife conflict (HWC). In addition, pressure from cattle grazing and unsustainable or illegal natural resource (e.g., sand and

[2] Note that references to 'borrower' in the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework refer in this case to the Project Proponent.

gravel extraction, timbers, etc.) extraction has served to degrade the condition of the corridor habitats, therefore pushing wildlife outside of forest areas into spaces typically dominated by people, thus increasing human-wildlife interactions and consequently HWC. These issues highlight the need for interventions focused on the restoration of corridor habitats, alleviating poverty, providing sustainable livelihood options, and mitigating HWC for local communities, to ensure that coexistence with carnivore species is enhanced in the corridor. To reduce conflict with wildlife, ZSL has co-developed a participatory natural resource management framework based on local indigenous knowledge. This framework will be implemented by communities in Nepal, focused on the improvement and maintenance of the corridor habitat between protected areas. The project will restore forest habitat and expand a tiger recovery site within the Suhelwa WLS, thus creating more space for dispersing tigers and leopards and reducing interactions with people. The proposed project represents a holistic approach for conserving tigers and other carnivore species, which integrates coexistence between wildlife and humans, scientific best practice, and the knowledge of local communities, to ensure that people, species, and habitats benefit from the project's interventions. The project will be working to reduce human pressures and restore habitats in the Kamdi corridor and SWLS, to help to recover tiger and prey populations in the area, while reducing HWC incidents among local communities by supporting them with the implementation of HWC mitigation structures. The habitat management interventions and ecological monitoring implemented under the project is expected to increase prey densities and thereby encouraging transient tigers and leopards to settle within SWLS and easily pass through forested areas within the Kamdi corridor. The project will also target to reduce local communities' dependency on forest resources through diversifying sustainable livelihood. These interventions are expected to reduce the time spent by people in forest and thereby lowering the risk of interaction with wildlife. By reducing HWC, the project expects to increase the tolerance level of local people towards carnivores. The project will also complement these activities with awareness raising campaigns and educational programs on coexistence with carnivores. The project will also prioritize transboundary collaboration through institutional capacity building and coordination programs.

The project will be implemented in TAL across both side of the borders in Nepal, in the transboundary Kamdi wildlife corridor. Interventions in Nepal will be focussed in the Kamdi corridor area, while interventions in India will focus in and around Suhelwa WLS. The project will be implemented in 6 communities in total; three communities bordering Suhelwa WLS in India and three communities located in the Kamdi corridor in Nepal. The Kamdi corridor has significant conservation value due to its status as an important passage for wildlife, enabling the dispersal of fauna such as tigers, elephants, and carnivore prey bases, to new habitats and populations throughout the TAL, which helps to stabilise population spill over and safeguard the genetic health of species within the landscape.

2.1.1 Project location

The Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) is the first conservation landscape in Nepal, supporting one of the most spectacular assemblages of large mammals in Asia such as the Bengal tiger, the Asian Elephant and the Greater one-horned rhinoceros extending from Nepal's Bagmati River in the east to India's Yamuna River in the west. A key characteristic of TAL is the presence of seven corridors and three bottlenecks; together, these were conceptualized to facilitate connectivity for wildlife between protected areas on either side of this transboundary landscape while engaging local communities in forest restoration and management programs with the aim of protecting biodiversity. Out of seven corridors in TAL, this project is designated to work in the Kamdi wildlife corridor, the largest corridor linking Banke National Park in Nepal and Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary in India (Figure 1, 2 and 3).

The region is a priority complex for tiger recovery and spillover tiger populations from the high-density tiger site of Bardia National Park. Initially known as the Mahadevpuri Bottleneck Area, the area was renamed Kamdi after the establishment of Banke National Park. The Kamdi Corridor represents a mosaic of three major physiographic zones of Nepal—Chure, Bhabar and Terai flood plains—facilitating north-south linkage for wildlife dispersal. The Corridor is internationally recognized for its rich biodiversity, supporting over 35 plant species, more than 20 mammal species, and a wide variety of important birds, reptiles, amphibians, and butterflies. The corridor features natural forests dominated by Sal (Shorea robusta), alongside diverse plant species such as Sissoo (Dalbergia sissoo), Khair (Acacia catechu), Bamboo (Bambusa sp.), Simul (Bombax ceiba), Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus sp.), Sandan (Desmodium oojeinensis), and Saj (Terminalia alata). Sissoo-mixed forests are particularly prevalent near riverbanks. Additionally, the corridor hosts a range of non-timber forest plants, including Piper (Piper longum), Haluwaved (Diospyros tomentosa), Amla (Phyllanthus emblica), Harro (Terminalia

chebula), Barro (Terminalia bellirica), Arjun (Terminalia arjuna), Karauli (Asparagus racemosus), Bel (Aegle marmelos), and Bayar (Zizyphus mauritiana). Moreover, the floodplains of the Rapti river, which passes through the corridor, are also prime habitats for the critically endangered gharial. Some regions within the corridor such as Chure and Bhabar are however considered highly climate sensitive zones characterized by dry lands facing extreme weather events. Prone to prolonged droughts, forest fires, and flooding from the Rapti River, the region's poor water retention capacity further exacerbates flash floods during the monsoon, posing significant risks to local communities that rely heavily on forest products and agriculture. With Kohalpur in the north and Nepalgunj in the south of the corridor—both cities facing rapidly increasing population and mass urbanization, the subsequent increase in consumptive demands resulted in increased pressures on the forests in the region disrupting the connectivity between critical forested areas. Forest loss and fragmentation are further exacerbated by large infrastructure development such as construction of irrigation canals and postal highways running through the corridor as well as expansion of the East-West Mahendra Highway.

While the corridor faces diverse social, ecological, and infrastructural challenges, it holds considerable conservation significance as a dispersal pathway and as a provider of ecological services through regulation of water availability in the landscape.
Within the corridor, the project will be implemented in three community forests, i) Ashok Community Forest (Figure 4), Hariyali Community Forest (Figure 5) and Rapti Pidit Community Forest (Figure 6).

Users of Ashok CFUG are residents of Madui Village in Ward 2 of Rapti Sonari Rural Municipality. A majority of the 132 HHs of the CFUG are indigenous 'Tharu'. A highway separates the community forest from Banke NP. The community forest is separated from Banke National Park by a highway, placing the forest at the interface between human settlement and protected wildlife areas. The area is situated in the foothills of the Chure Range, with mixed terrain that includes riverbanks and forested areas, which are prime habitats for the large carnivores. The community frequently reports incidences of loss of livestock to leopard attacks. There have also been incidences of tiger attacks in the community.

The users of Hariyali CFUG are a mixed group comprising of Dalits, BCT (Brahmin, Chhetri, Thakuri), and Tharu ethnicities. This CFUG lies along a critical bottleneck of the Kamdi Corridor that connects with forests across the Rapti River. The landscape is characterized by floodplains near the river, forested areas, and semi-arid land, creating a diverse yet precarious environment for both wildlife and human habitation.

Rapti Pidit CFUG in Ward 6 of Rapti Sonari Rural Municipality is the largest of the three selected CFUGs, with 711 HHs. The Tharu represent the largest ethnic group in the CFUG followed by BCT (Brahmin, Chhetri, and Thakuri), and other indigenous groups. The Dalit and Madhesi communities are also represented in the CFUG. The CFUG is situated along another crucial bottleneck of the Kamdi Corridor, adding to the complexity of human-wildlife interactions in the area. The geographical features of this CFUG include riverine ecosystems, forested hills, and open agricultural lands, creating a diverse but vulnerable setting for the community.

Figure 1**: Map of the project area (Kamdi Corridor**

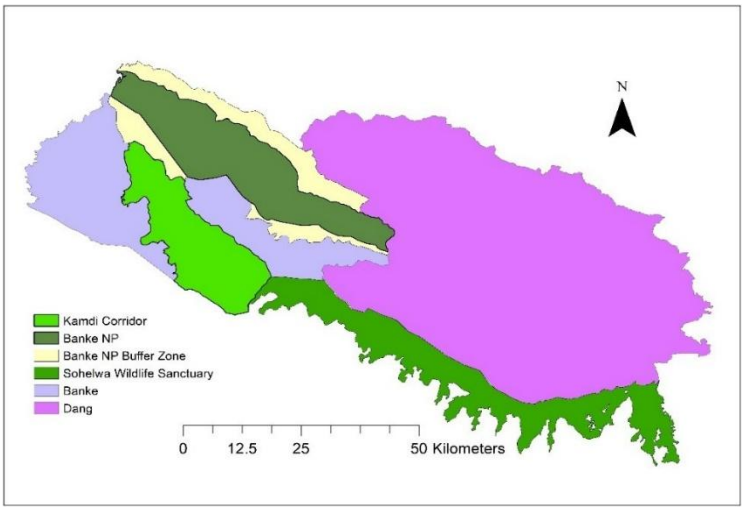


Figure 2: Location of selected CFUGs/ land cover along the Kamdi Wildlife Corridor

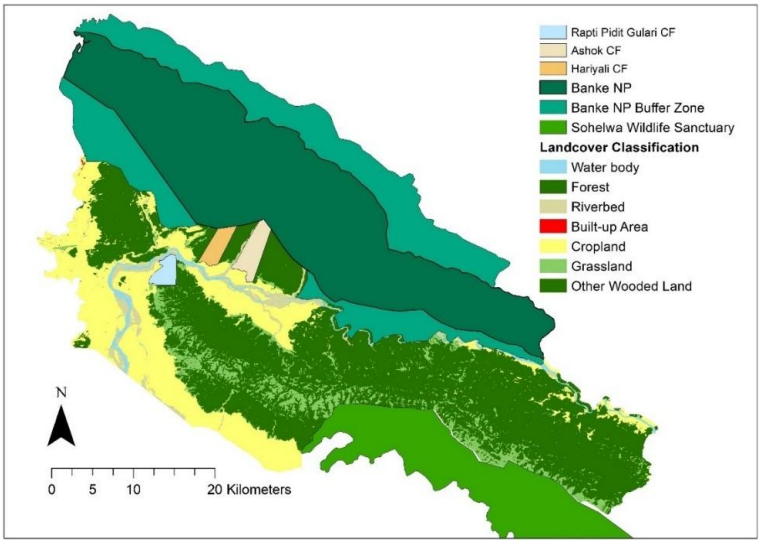


Figure 3: Map showing the location of the Project

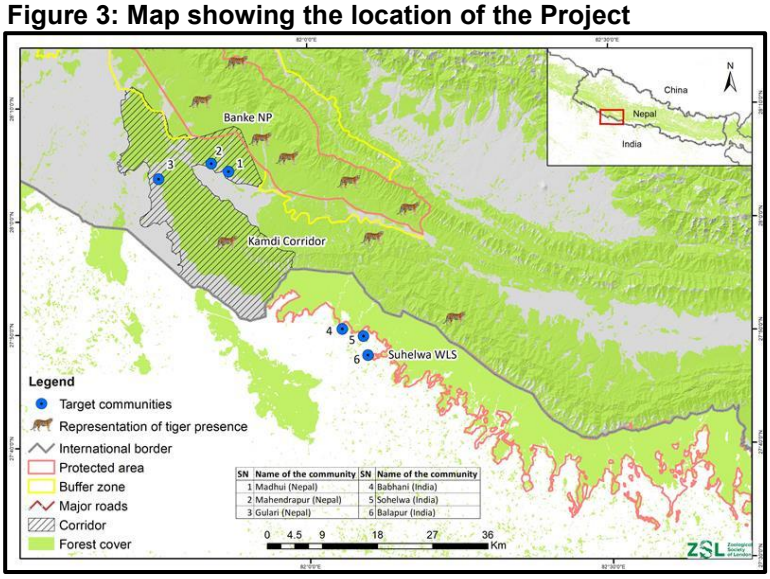


Figure 4: Map showing community in Ashok CFUG

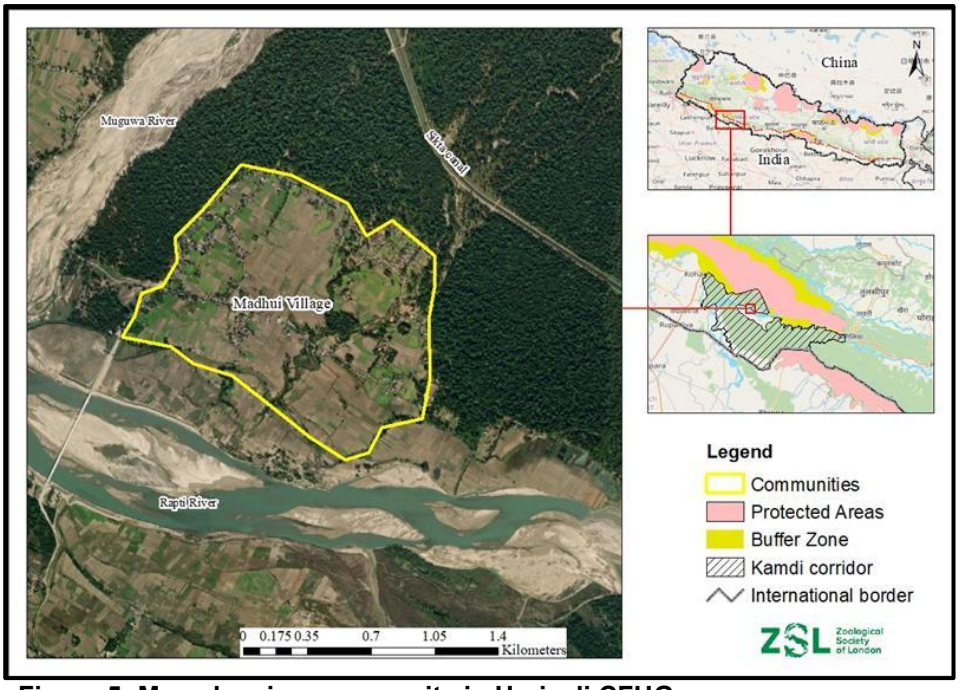


Figure 5: Map showing community in Hariyali CFUG

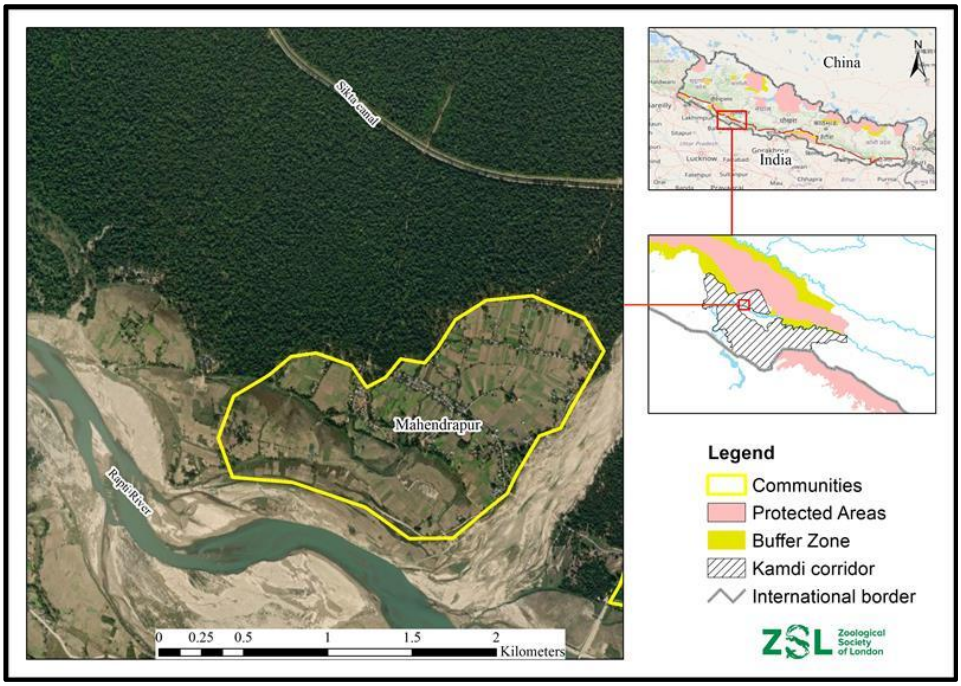
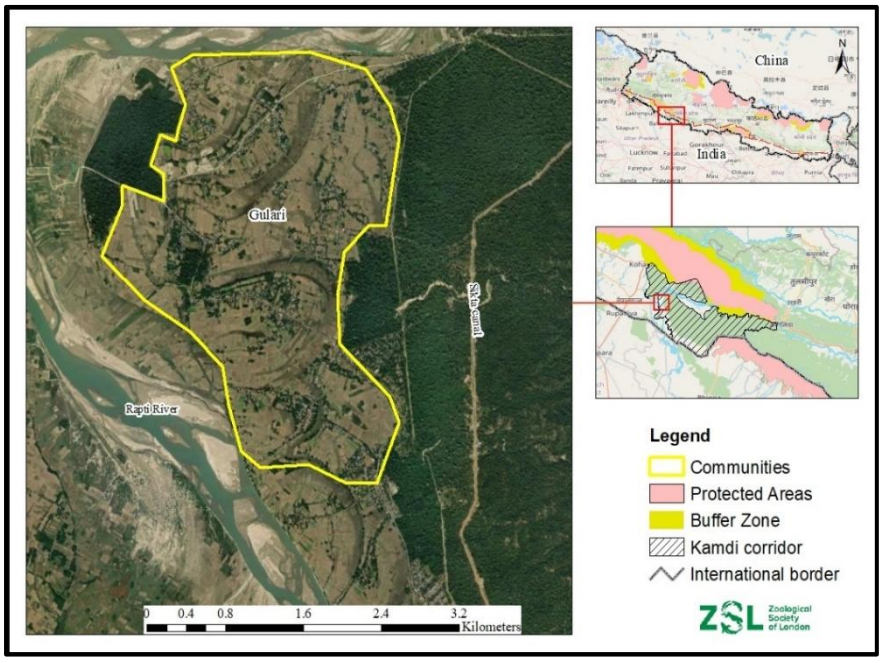


Figure 6: Map showing community in Rapti Pidit CFUG



2.1.2 Project objective, proposed outcomes and key components

The overall objective for the Project is to enhance the co-existence between large carnivores and people in the transboundary Banke-Suhelwa complex of Nepal.

To achieve this objective, the proposed outcomes will focus on four main components, namely HWC mitigation, livelihoods and enterprise support, habitat management and ecological monitoring, underpinned by transboundary cooperation and inclusive, participatory approaches to community engagement. The Project includes the following outputs and activities in Nepal:

Project Overall Objective: to enhance the co-existence between large carnivores and people in the transboundary Banke-Suhelwa complex of Nepal.		
Results	**Outputs**	**Activities**
R.1 **Local communities living in Kamdi-Suhelwa landscape have greater capacity to co-exist with carnivores, through increased awareness and implementation of HCC (Human Carnivore Conflict) mitigation interventions, alongside**	O.1.1 Human-carnivore conflict from leopards and tigers in participating villages is mapped via participatory approaches, ensuring targeted delivery of HCC mitigation methods (e.g., endorsement of a HCC mitigation manual, Quick relief fund, livelihood interventions) O.1.2 Local communities in the Kamdi-Suhelwa Complex have increased awareness and knowledge about tiger and leopard conservation and HCC mitigation measures	A.1.1.1 Through a participatory and scientific approach prepare a robust Human Carnivore Coexistence plan of Kamdi corridor, integrating local and scientific knowledge and adopted by relevant authority (DFO/ local governments) **(Nepal)** A.1.1.2 Implement pre-emptive HTC mitigation measures (PPC, mesh-wire, biological fencing, early warning system) in target sites/hotspots promoting coexistence **(Nepal)** A1.1.3 In coordination with relevant Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs/CFGs) setup a revolving HCC quick relief fund for target communities **(Nepal)** A1.1.4 Support and facilitate Protected Area managers, DFOs and Sub-DFOs officials in the project area to enhance their capacity on handling problematic carnivores through the provision of training and equipment support (rescue tools, rescue ambulance, mobile cages, monitoring) **(Nepal)**

increased awareness, and knowledge of wider carnivore behaviour		A.1.2.1 Develop and conduct awareness activities based on HCCx in the Kamdi-Suhelwa complex, via participatory approaches integrating scientific, indigenous and local knowledge **(Nepal)** A1.2.2 Led by capacitated Local Tiger Champions (LTC) initiate a behavioural change campaign to mitigate conflict and promote human carnivore coexistence. **(Nepal)** A1.2.3 Conduct mass awareness campaign to raise awareness on carnivore conservation and HCC mitigation measures **(Nepal)**
R.2 **Local communities in Kamdi-Suhelwa complex have decreased dependence on natural resources for their livelihoods and are better able to use and manage resources sustainably, and actively promote the sustainable use of natural resources and important wildlife species within the landscape**	O.2.1 Local communities in the Kamdi-Suhelwa Complex have increased alternative income generating opportunities, reducing livelihood dependencies upon natural resources. O.2.2 Effective natural resource management and human wildlife coexistence is promoted through the sustainable use of natural resources and strengthened community resource governance institutions, to increase ownership of local biodiversity and encourage its sustainable use.	A.2.1.1 Establish three livelihood support groups and provide seed funds (Community banking) to support target community to upgrade their existing income generating activities or set up new ventures to strengthen alternative livelihood schemes in the community. **(Nepal)** A.2.1.2 Provide skill-based trainings (off season vegetable farming, livestock and poultry farming, drip irrigation) through experts on sustainable livelihood diversification options equipping community members with technical capacity while reducing dependence on natural resources **(Nepal)** A.2.1.3 Facilitate and support the establishment of micro enterprises: (Leaf Plate, Rattan Bamboo, Tharu Handicraft and Turmeric with 15 direct beneficiaries for each enterprise (**Nepal)** A2.1.4 Conduct technical skill development trainings identified for community members from the project sites (driving, plumbing, electrician etc). (**Nepal)** A2.2.1 Capacitate key community members on mandates, existing laws and regulations in resource use of community forests, incorporating the benefits of sustainable resource use and the correlation between HCC and forest resources use through training and promotion of agro-forestry practices. A2.2.2 Conduct afforestation and restoration initiatives by planting native and climate-resilient tree species, maintain critical habitats on degraded forest land to enhance biodiversity, improve soil stability, and support ecosystem regeneration. A2.2.3 Overall Forest health of CFs in Kamdi is improved through silviculture operation activity and scientific management of forests. A.2.2.4 Strengthen local CBOs through capacity building and equipment support along with sustainable use of natural resources focusing on the importance of coexistence in the Suhelwa-Kamdi landscape (incl. CFUGs, cooperatives, mothers groups, JFMs) to ensure effective facilitation and ownership on coexistence for each group at a community level. (**Nepal)**
R.3 **The functionality of tiger and leopard habitats in Suhelwa WLS**	0.3.1 Enhanced capacity of officials in the Kamdi-Suhelwa complex to effectively map and manage habitats and monitor large	A 3.1.1 Strengthen institutional capacity of management authority and CFUGs (including basics of habitat/ restoration and management, monitoring of species, poaching risks and human rights) in the Kamdi- Suhelwa corridor. (**Nepal)**

and the adjoining Kamdi corridor is enhanced through effective habitat interventions, regular monitoring of carnivore and prey species, underpinned by cross-country collaboration and cooperation delivered at a transboundary landscape level	carnivore and prey species populations. 0.3.2 Effective and evidence-based habitat management practices and key wildlife friendly infrastructure is implemented in key areas of the Kamdi-Suhelwa Complex, to support the conservation of tiger, common leopard and prey species, and their habitats. 0.3.3 Strengthened transboundary collaboration and cooperation between protected area staff, corridor area management staff, and local communities helps promote human-wildlife coexistence at transboundary landscape level. 0.3.4 Community forests within Kamdi-Suhelwa corridor forest adopt biodiversity management practices and integrate them in operational plans for the sustainable management of community forests.	A3.1.2 Conduct participatory habitat mapping and wildlife distribution in the Kamdi corridor producing a comprehensive map of Kamdi corridor (**Nepal)** A 3.1.3 Provide training to relevant park/forest officials and other front-line staff in Kamdi-Suhelwa Complex at a transboundary level on tiger, leopard and prey base monitoring techniques with adoption of best practices from previous ITHCP projects. **(Nepal)** A3.1.4 Capacitate DFO/Sub-DFO on forest fire management of this dry vulnerable landscape with trainings and equipment support. (**Nepal)** A3.2.1 Generate evidence-based understanding of carnivore presence in the corridor **(Nepal)** A3.2.2 Facilitate and support regular coordination and sharing meeting among key stakeholders including representatives of DFOs, Province and local government officials, and representatives of CBOs to coordinate and jointly work towards maintaining the wildlife friendly habitat and integrity of Kamdi corridor **(Nepal)** A3.2.3 Informed through A3.1.2 and A3.2.1 identify and conduct habitat management activities (grassland management, wetland management, bio engineering in flood vulnerable riverbanks) within the corridor **(Nepal)** A3.2.4 Review, assess and update the biodiversity priority sites along the Kamdi corridor informing long-term conservation direction. **(Nepal)** A3.3.1 Conduct annual joint transboundary meetings for district forest officials from Nepal and Suhelwa WLS officials from India for sharing meeting on results from tiger, leopards and prey base monitoring. (**Nepal)** A3.3.2 Support a transboundary exchange visit for forest managers of India and Nepal for learning and sharing best practice on transboundary conservation issues and habitat management techniques **(Nepal)** A3.3.3 Conduct exposure visits to community members from both India and Nepal to share experience and adapt to techniques promoting human wildlife coexistence **(Nepal)** A3.3.4 Conduct a national level workshop with key tiger conservation stakeholders (e.g.PA managers of all tiger-bearing PAs in Nepal) to share best practice and lessons learned from tiger conservation approaches across Nepalese PAs, while highlighting the importance of corridors and transboundary collaboration in future tiger management strategies and plans. **(Nepal)** A3.4.1 Review management plans of CFs and SWLS in consultation with key stakeholders identify the gaps and produce recommendations especially in relation to biodiversity management and human wildlife coexistence **(Nepal)** A3.4.2 Drawing on the recommendations, provide technical support inclusive of meeting facilitation for CFs within Kamdi Corridor to facilitate the effective implementation of and

		revision or update of forest management/operational plan **(Nepal)**

2.1.3 Project timeframe and budget

The timeframe for the Project is 2 years and 6 months (30 months), with a proposed start date on 1 December 2025 and end date on 31 May 2028 7. The proposed budget total for the Project is 1.94M Euro.

Project Phase	***Start Date***	***End Date***	***Total Budget***
Phase IV	*1 December 2025*	*31 May 2028*	*€,1.94 million*

2.1.4 Project partners and responsibilities

Zoological Society of London (ZSL) is the lead implementing partner for this project in Nepal, and will report directly to IUCN, the funding agency.

ZSL has extensive experience managing large integrated field-based projects effectively to achieve landscape-wide conservation outcomes. ZSL has an excellent track record in implementing strategic tiger recovery projects in Asia, with experience ranging from the Russian Far East, Thailand, Indonesia, India and Nepal.

ZSL has long term MoUs and successful working relationships with all the proposed project partners in Nepal. ZSL has a permanent country office in Nepal under an MoU with the Government of Nepal. ZSL's donors include private donors, multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies including funding from the US and UK Government sources.

ZSL will be responsible for the overall delivery and administration of this project. It will provide coordination, technical and logistical support, and implementation of key project activities. ZSL has committed significant matched funding.

Other implementing partners[3] for this project include:

Department of Forests and Soil Conservation, Government of Nepal
The Department of Forests and Soil Conservation (DoFSC) plays a crucial role in managing transboundary conservation projects in Nepal by coordinating with neighbouring countries, enforcing policies, and promoting sustainable forest management. The department works to combat illegal wildlife trade, poaching, and deforestation by strengthening cross-border enforcement and intelligence-sharing mechanisms. It also supports community-based forest management, engaging local populations in conservation efforts and sustainable livelihoods. Through joint research and data-sharing initiatives, DoFSC monitors forest health, wildlife migration, and climate impacts using tools like GIS and remote sensing. Overall, DoFSC plays a vital role in policy enforcement, conservation, community engagement, and climate resilience, ensuring the sustainable management of Nepal's transboundary landscapes. This department is responsible for managing the forests outside the protected areas and is currently managing the selected project site through its structure in the district level.

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), Government of Nepal
DNPWC is the government body responsible for managing Nepal's protected areas and wildlife conservation initiatives. It provides national oversight of conservation activities, facilitates technical expertise, offers logistical support, and is responsible for the primary implementation of conservation initiatives at the national level. DNPWC's activities are supported by the Government of Nepal.

DNWPC will provide logistical support and permits to work in the protected areas (PAs) of Nepal. They will support and facilitate trans-boundary cooperation between Government of India, Government of Uttar Pradesh and government stakeholders within Nepal, including law enforcement agencies such as the Nepal Army wildlife protection units, South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). ZSL signed an MoU with the DNWPC in 2014 (and with the

[3] Implementing partners include organisations such as non-government agencies or community-based organisations who have a distinct role in the implementation of the project and who receive funds for delivering outputs as identified in the project document.

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation in July 2015 – this Ministry is responsible for forests outside protected areas).

Divisional Forest Office – Banke
The Divisional Forest Office (DFO) Banke is a key governmental body under the Lumbini Province Ministry of Forests and Environment, responsible for managing forest resources, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land use in Banke district. The DFO Banke manages and controls the community forest user groups in Banke and provides them proper guidance and support for the activities of the livelihood improvement, habitat management and conservation activities.

Sub divisional Forest Office (SDFO) Shamshergunj

SDFO is body under DFO typically focusing on a smaller geographic area within the district covering several CFUGs, with a more specific mandate for local-level forest management. The SDFO oversees the management of forest resources, including timber, fuelwood, fodder, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and medicinal plants and ensuring sustainable forest management practices. It also functions to provide technical support to the CFUGs.

Sub divisional Forest Office (SDFO) Rapti

SDFO is body under DFO typically focusing on a smaller geographic area within the district covering several CFUGs, with a more specific mandate for local-level forest management. The SDFO oversees the management of forest resources, including timber, fuelwood, fodder, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and medicinal plants and ensure sustainable forest management practices. It also functions to provide technical support to the CFUGs.

Provincial Government – Ministry of Forests and Environment
The Lumbini Province Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) will play an important role in managing transboundary conservation projects by coordinating with Indian authorities, national agencies, and local communities. The ministry supports community forestry and buffer zone programs to promote sustainable forest management and reduce human-wildlife conflict. By implementing Nepal's Forest Act and National Biodiversity Strategy, MoFE strengthens wildlife crime control, climate resilience, and sustainable land-use planning. It promotes nature-based solutions (NbS) and cross-border collaborations to ensure biodiversity protection. Overall, the Lumbini Province MoFE plays a key role in policy enforcement, conservation, and climate adaptation for effective transboundary ecosystem management and is an important stakeholder in the project.

National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)
NTNC was established in 1982 by a Legislative Act as an autonomous not-for-profit organisation, mandated to work in the field of nature conservation in Nepal. They have a permanent presence in three of the four target PAs in Nepal and have managed tiger conservation projects funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, World Bank and other donors. ZSL has a long-standing relationship with NTNC spanning over two decades, and a current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). NTNC will provide technical staff and will assist in implementing field activities for tiger and prey monitoring in Nepal as well as community conservation initiatives such as Human Tiger Conflict (HTC) mitigation and strengthening community-based anti-poaching units.

Environmental and Rural Development Center (ENRUDEC)
ENRUDEC (Environment and Rural Development Center) is a non-profit making, non-governmental organization based in Kohalpur, Banke. This organization is registered in district administration office Banke. It is affiliated with the social Welfare Council, Kathmandu and NGO federation, NGO Coordination Committee and Human Rights Alliance. The organization was established in 1997 and will be functioning as one of the local partners for the project as per the mandate given by the Social Welfare Council.

Community Forest Coordination Committee, Mahadevpuri (CFCC)
The Community Forest Coordination Committee (CFCC) is a key institutional body that facilitates community-based forest management in Nepal. It serves as a coordinating platform between Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), government agencies, and stakeholders to promote sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, and local livelihoods. The CFCC in the Kamdi corridor in Banke will also act as the local partner for the project.

Collaborating partners[4] include the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation Nepal (DNPWC), Lumbini Province Government, Ministry of Forest and Environment; Department of Forest and Soil Conservation, and Division Forest Office, Banke.

2.1.4.1 ESMS responsibilities

ZSL is the lead implementing partner for this project, and will report directly to IUCN, the funding agency, and is therefore responsible for the project's ESMS activities.

The IUCN Secretariat has overall responsibility for operationalising the ESMS. In that role, the Secretariat guides the ESMS review procedures along the project cycle and identifies the need for undertaking an assessment of E&S issues. Operationalisation of the ESMS is ensured by the ESMS Coordinator who is part of the IUCN – GEF Coordination Unit and who is supported by a global team of IUCN experts.

As IUCN's executing partner for ITHCP project, ZSL has the overall responsibility for E&S assessment and the management during the preparation and implementation phase of the ITHCP IV project. Internal monitoring will be carried out by Zoological Society of London on a bi-annual and annual basis donor reports.

2.2 Social context

All project villages are majority Tharu communities (≥50% of all village population), with the remaining population being made up from Brahmin/Chhetri, Janajati (Indigenous Peoples) or Dalit groups to differing extents in each village. Tharu people represent an indigenous ethnic group in Nepal, as recognized by the Government of Nepal, while Dalits are defined as Scheduled Castes. Chhetri and Brahmin groups are defined as high caste groups.

The government of Nepal recognizes two types of land tenure in Nepal, Ownership and Leasehold, which is the case in the project site as well. Livelihood activities in target communities typically centre around daily wage labour, foreign employment, chicken, goat or buffalo rearing and agriculture (subsistence farming). Communities experience dependency on community forests for fodder, grass, firewood, and timber as provisioned by the Operation Plan of the Community Forest. Sand, gravel and boulder extraction from rivers also plays a small role in local livelihood activities. A small but significant proportion of HHs in these communities do not have any land tenure rights (neither ownership nor leasehold). Both women and men in these communities have the same access rights to natural resources within the Community Forest User Groups (CFUG), as defined in the Forest Act 2019.

Some of the main risks facing these communities are high dependency upon CF resources, illiteracy, mixed participation in conservation activities. The communities are also impacted by the Shikta Irrigation canal, a development also impacting the movement of wildlife demonstrating the negative impact linear infrastructure in the landscape has upon wildlife and people. CF areas have also shrunk in size due to embankment erosion and encroachment by people, threatening the long-term sustainability of wildlife and existing natural resource use regimes. HWC also affects local communities in the landscape; Tiger and Leopard are major problematic animals for domestic animals and have caused several human fatalities since 2022, while communities are also impacted by crop raiding from herbivores such as wild boar, spotted deer and blue bull.

0.1.1 Project Affected People (PAPs)

The list below indicates the principle Affected Communities identified in the PF.

For this project, determining PAPs is crucial due to the need for the project to support the most affected communities in the corridor which are subjected to greater HWC and low socio-economic status. Clear eligibility criteria will need to be developed during the course of the project which will benefit from site-by-site assessments where impacts are identified in the participating communities. Determining both eligible groups, and the entitlements (entitlement to livelihood restoration or human wildlife conflict

[4] Collaborating partners include organisations or individuals with whom the project is collaborating with and who might contribute to a project's outputs but without receiving funds.

measures) is essential to ensure that the entitlements of affected individuals and households can be delivered equitably and monitored during the project implementation.

Determination of eligibility criteria will consider national legislation, and the three general categories of affected persons eligible for receiving livelihood restoration under the requirements of World Bank ESS 5. These categories include:

- **Category (a)**: Affected persons who have formal legal rights to land or assets are those who have formal documentation under national law to prove their rights or are specifically recognised in national law as not requiring documentation. In other cases, persons may have a lease on the land and therefore have legal rights.
- **Category (b)**: Affected persons who do not have formal rights to land or assets, but who have a recognised or recognisable claim under national law or international regulations (such and UNDRIP or ILO 169) can fall into a number of groups. They may have been using the land for generations without formal documentation under customary or traditional tenure arrangements that are accepted by the community and recognised by national law. In other cases, they may have never been provided formal title or their documents may be incomplete or lost. They may have a claim for adverse possession if they have occupied land for a certain period of time as defined by national law, without the formal owner contesting the occupation. In such cases, national law often has legal procedures by which such claims can become recognised.
- **Category (c)**: Affected persons who have no recognisable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use. If not covered by a) and b) these can be seasonal resource users, such as firewood collectors, herders, pastoralists, fishermen, beekeepers, or hunters that claim customary rights or other forms of informal and undocumented tenure or could be tenants and lessees but without formal recognition of rights under national law or international conventions.

Note that eligibility does not mean there would be a corresponding entitlement, as the entitlement is informed by national legislation, international standards and consultation with affected groups.

The settlements in the project area are listed in Table 2 and shown in Figure 3. Those communities affected by the Project (Affected Communities), totalling three communities and 1104 households are also illustrated on the map (Figure 3 to 6). Table 2 provides a breakdown of the affected villages.

Table 2: Villages affected by the Project (demographic profile of selected settlements)

CFUG	Ethnicity	Well-being category (Source: Respective CF OP and constitution)												Total			
		A			B			C			D						
		HH	M	F	HH	M	F	HH	M	F	HH	M	F	HH	M	F	
Ashok CF	BCT	5	10	12	18	40	44	7	20	21	2	4	3	32	74	80	24%
	Janajati	0	0	0	28	88	82	35	104	116	32	85	81	95	277	279	72%
	Dalit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	7	4	9	7	3%
	Muslim	0	0	0	1	20	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	27	1%
	Total	5	10	12	47	148	153	42	124	137	38	98	91	**132**	380	393	773
		4%			36%			32%			29%				49%	51%	
Rapti Pidit CF	BCT	22	61	59	52	128	129	79	170	185	0	0	0	153	359	373	22%
	Janajati	124	416	401	164	465	426	212	486	475	0	0	0	500	1367	1302	70%
	Dalit	3	11	9	13	36	33	26	51	65	0	0	0	42	98	107	6%
	Madhesi	2	9	11	4	13	8	10	29	25	0	0	0	16	51	44	2%
	Total	151	497	480	233	642	596	327	736	750	0	0	0	**711**	1875	1826	3701
		21%			33%			46%							51%	49%	
Hariyali CF	BCT	10	31	24	35	81	80	32	73	62	4	11	6	81	196	172	31%
	Janajati	15	50	37	103	262	267	16	39	33	1	5	4	135	356	341	52%
	Dalit	1	5	4	9	20	25	26	60	54	7	8	12	43	93	95	16%
	Muslim							2	2	3				2	2	3	1%
	Total	26	86	65	147	363	372	76	174	152	12	24	22	**261**	647	611	1258
		10%			56%			29%			5%				51%	49%	100%
	Total HH	182	593	557	427	1153	1121	445	1034	1039	50	122	113	1104	2902	2830	

Note: A, B, C, and D represent participatory social well-being ranking status of household carried out by CFUG. The C category is considered as poor and D as very poor. The C and D category will be the direct beneficiaries or project affected household of the project. Out of 1104 households, 445 households fall under C category and 50 HHs falls under D category. Baseline survey indicated that 43% of the HHs (n = 294 belonging to C and D category from the selected CFs) have 0.033 to 0.13

ha of land. Only 4% of the respondents claimed that they do not own their own private land. Thus, these 4% (12 households) falls under 'Category c', while all other falls under 'Category a' as per World Bank ESS 5.

3. Institutional and Legal Framework

ZSL is committed to full compliance with Nepali legal requirements, IUCN's ESMS policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW's Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and international good practice, notably the WB ESF (2017) and ESS1-10.

3.1 Project's host country requirements

Indigenous communities are recognised by the Governments of Nepal and have policies safeguarding the rights of communities listed under the respective Acts.

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) guarantees the right to equality to all citizens, without discrimination in applications of general laws on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, physical condition, marital status, economic condition, language and ideology.

Further, the Constitution of Nepal provides for the rights to the indigenous people of Nepal to participate in the state bodies based on inclusive principles. Also, indigenous citizens and the smallest groupings (communities at risk of extinction as a distinct group) have the right to opportunities and benefits in education, health, housing, employment, food and social security for their protection, empowerment and development. Farmers have the right to access to lands for agri-activities, and to select and protect local seeds and traditional agri-species.

The National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act (2002) has a view to developing social, economic and cultural aspects of indigenous peoples, and to enhance their equal participation in the mainstream of national development. Other important acts relating to indigenous communities are those that establish commissions for indigenous people, as required by the constitution, including the Tharu Commission Act, 2074 (2017) which is focused on equality of opportunity and treatment, and the Indigenous Nationalities Commission Act, 2074 which ensures protection of indigenous rights.

In addition, the following Nepali policies, protocols and legislations are also relevant to the project:

- The Forest Policy, 2018
- The Forest Act, 2019
- Forest Regulation, 2020
- Operational plan of Ashok, Hariyali and Rapti Pidit CFUG
- Tiger Conservation Action Plan 2023-2032
- TAL Strategy 2015-2025
- Community Forestry Management Guideline
- Right to Housing Act, 2018
- The Land Acquisition Act 1977
- The Water Resources Act, 1992
- The Aquatic Animal Protection Act, 1960
- The Land Revenue Act 1978

3.2 International requirements

The IUCN and KfW require all projects to be compliant with IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) policy framework (principles and standards) and procedures, KfW's Sustainability Guidelines (2021) and international good practice, notably IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System standards and Environmental and Social Risk Areas. Refer to Annex 1 for a list of international good practice standards and guidelines that apply to this project.

IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System standards and Environmental and Social Risk Areas *applicable to this project include:*
Environmental and Social Management System standards

- Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions

- Indigenous Peoples
- Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources
- Cultural Heritage

Environmental and Social Risk Areas

- Risk of Undermining Human Rights
- Community Health and Safety
- Pollution, wastes, chemicals and GHG emissions
- Adverse gender impacts
- Risk Affecting Vulnerable Groups
- Labour and Working Conditions

0.1.2 Human Rights

- This project will work to align with international human rights standards including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and will work to ensure that project activities do not cause, or contribute to, or exacerbate harm to communities or vulnerable groups. As such it commits to the following principles.
- Respect for Human Rights: Ensuring all project activities uphold internationally recognised human rights norms.
- Non-discrimination: Provide equitable access to opportunities, resources, grievance processes, and consultations.
- Do No Harm: Avoid causing or contributing to human rights abuses by project staff, partners, or contractors. Meaningful Participation: Ensure inclusive and accessible stakeholder engagement.
- Transparency: Provide timely, accurate, and culturally appropriate information.
- Accountability: Maintain effective mechanisms for reporting concerns and addressing grievances.
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups: Design measures to identify and mitigate disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups.

The identification of human rights risks and mitigation measures are considered through our risk screening in section 4 and are embedded and documented throughout various key risk areas, recognising that human rights risks can be cross cutting and exist across a diversity of project areas. Where risks were identified, mitigation measures have been integrated into the relevant ESMP management plan areas. The main risk areas identified are related to i) potential short term and temporary access restrictions ii) labour laws for temporary workers iii) environmental risks from construction that could impact local environments; iv) risks of not engaging Indigenous Peoples equitably v) risks from sexual exploitation abuse and harassment (SEAH). Please see table 4 for more information.

0.1.3 Grantees E&S management capacities

ZSL demonstrates strong organizational capacity to manage environmental and social risks through its established FPIC protocols and comprehensive stakeholder engagement framework. The organization maintains a qualified internal team with critical competencies including multilingual communications staff proficient in both national and local languages, enabling effective community engagement; transparent information sharing policies that ensure project documents are accessible and properly translated for local communities; and dedicated HR support providing adaptive management training to all project staff. ZSL's risk management capabilities are further evidenced by their track record in recognizing diverse local rights and entitlements, conducting good faith negotiations with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), and demonstrating sophisticated understanding of local power dynamics and stakeholder relationships. The organization employs a systematic approach to capacity assessment and enhancement, conducting biannual reviews to identify gaps and implementing targeted solutions through staff training and strategic outsourcing where needed. Additionally, ZSL possesses the analytical capabilities and resources to assess local development needs, enabling them

to anticipate and address potential social impacts. To ensure sustained effectiveness in managing E&S risks, ZSL maintains detailed documentation of all consultations and makes these records available to all rightsholders and relevant stakeholders, promoting transparency and accountability throughout the project lifecycle.

3.2.1 Other actors/ third party entities operating in the Project landscape

ITHCP financed projects are often located landscapes and co-management settings where the project proponent may have limited control and influence over either their co-management partner (e.g., national government) or other third parties operating in the area (e.g., military forces or private entities). While the E&S risks and impacts that are directly caused by the ITHCP funded project are required to adhere to national requirements (Section 3.1) and international good practice (Section 3.2), risks that the project proponent may be contributing to or are directly linked to owing to mutually beneficial relationships with other agencies and third parties, are often beyond the spere of influence to align them completely with these requirements. Nevertheless, these risks and impacts, including associated activities and/or facilities, often pose substantial reputational risks to the project proponent.

Such risks will be identified and assessed during the detailed ESMP development stage through stakeholder and community consultations, and review of project activities. The assessment will be periodically updated during project implementation as part of the environmental and social monitoring process. Where relevant risks are identified, they will be assessed and addressed in accordance with ESS 1, in a manner that is proportionate to their severity, the project proponents' contribution, and the leverage that the project proponent has over the causing entity.

The stakeholders and the third-party entities operating in the Project Landscape are mentioned in the Process Framework document submitted along with the full proposal. In general, third party for this project would be Electricity Office, Drinking water Supply Office, Irrigation Office, District Road Office, Police Office, religious places (temples, etc.), crusher company, etc.

3.3 Gap analysis

Table 3: Gap Analysis

IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System standards and Environmental and Social Risk Areas	**National Legislative Requirements**	**Gap**	**Mitigation Strategy**
Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions	1. **National Forest Policy (2018),** The policy expresses the overall approach to forest development in the country (outside of PAs). 2. **The Forest Act (2019):** This act empowers the government to designate areas as national forestland and to confer the ownership of 'national forestland' outside national parks and wildlife reserves on the Nepal Government.	The gaps in the National Forest Policy 2018 are: i. The policy does not adequately address evolving concerns of local communities, such as equitable benefit-sharing and their changing roles in forest management. ii. The policy does not fully integrate climate resilience strategies, particularly regarding	• ESMP developed, will be strictly implemented and monitored throughout the project cycle. • The project has prepared the separate Climate Change Impact Assessment Report and the Disaster Risk Reduction Plan. • As the project activities do not trigger the risk of the involuntary resettlement, there has not any specific strategy been made. • The project's HWC mitigation measures (mesh-wire fencing, bio-fence), may result in

	3. **Forest Encroachment Control and Managements Strategy (2011)** This sets the government policy and procedures for evacuating illegal settlements. 4. **Environment Protection Act (2019) revised, Environmental Protection Rule (2020)** This Act provides for the protection of the environment with the proper use and management of natural resources, so as to protect the fundamental right of each citizen to live in a clean and healthy environment, provide the victim with compensation by the polluter for any damage resulting from environmental pollution or degradation, maintain a proper balance between environment and development, mitigate adverse environmental impacts on environment and biodiversity and face the challenges posed by climate change	adaptation and mitigation efforts in forest-dependent communities. The gaps in the Forest Act 2019 are: i. There is no provision to protect indigenous land or landless people. ii. Use of the forest land requires permits and permissions. iii. There are no exemptions for collecting traditional medicines. The gaps in the forest Encroachment Control and Management Strategy are: i. The strategy does not sufficiently address the socio-economic needs of landless and marginalized communities, leading to continued encroachment pressure. The gaps in the Environmental Protection Act are that the guideline for the social and environmental impact assessment is quite vague.	temporary or localised limited movement to specific areas or resources. Consultations with beneficiaries throughout implementation will identify any potential restrictions on resource or access, and mitigation measures discussed and identified at community level and addressed through community decision. All risks and mitigation measures will be documented and periodically updated in the ESMP. • Inclusive engagement process and responsive feedback mechanisms that allow for timely redressal of concerns and grievances will be embedded across all the project activities.
Indigenous People	1. **National Forest Policy (2018):** It acknowledges the rights, roles, and contributions of indigenous people and local communities in forest conservation and management. **2. The Forest Act 2019:** This act empowers the government to designate	The Forest Policy and the Forest Act has limited recognition of the customary practices. The Constitution gives authority to local governments to manage forests but does not explicitly ensure Indigenous	The project will ensure the stronger implementation of the FPIC process through strict adherence to the FPIC protocol which will also be updated based on the regular FPIC Consultations at the community level. A dedicated Indigenous Peoples Plan has been prepared in order to ensure the inclusion and the meaningful participation of

	areas as national forestland and to confer the ownership of 'national forestland' outside national parks and wildlife reserves on the Nepal Government. 3. **Constitution of Nepal (2015)** Article 18 (Right to Equality): Recognizes indigenous peoples as a distinct group and ensures their right to equal treatment without discrimination. Article 42 (Right to Social Justice): Guarantees special rights and representation for indigenous peoples in state mechanisms, decision-making, and development programs. Article 37: No citizen shall be evicted from the housing owned by him/her, encroached on the housing, except in accordance with law; Article 40; The State shall, according to law, provide land to landless Dalits for one time; Article 51: Maintaining rule of law by protecting and practicing human rights.	self-governance in forest areas.	the Indigenous People over the decision making in the project activities. The integration of the Indigenous knowledge and the customary practices will be done while conducting the activities of the livelihood promotion in the project sites. The GRM of the project has also integrated the traditional system of conflict resolution through 'Badhar'. Regular community consultations, particularly with IPs, will inform the development and periodic updating of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to ensure that channels, referral pathways, processing modalities, timelines, and feedback mechanisms remain context-appropriate and culturally responsive. This will help ensure that IPs and other community members can easily access GRM and communicate their concerns, grievances, and feedback in a timely, safe, and effective manner.
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources	1. **National Forest Policy 2018:** The policy expresses the overall approach to forest development in the country (outside of PAs). 2. **Forest Act 2019:** It prohibits illegal activities like poaching, deforestation, and the exploitation of endangered species. The act allows for the establishment of protected areas, biological corridors, and botanical gardens to enhance conservation efforts. It encourages community participation	The Forest Act and the Forest Policy and the Community Forestry Management Guideline does not comprehensively integrate an **ecosystem-based approach** that considers landscape-level conservation beyond forest boundaries. They lack the conservation principles and practices in the transboundary level.	The project has been planned for the transboundary level activities along with the livelihood activities that foster the value addition and market linkages of the forest-based products through the establishment of the enterprises in consultation with the IPLCs. Moreover, the community forest-level Livelihood Improvement Plans (LIPs) have been prepared which will support livelihood improvement through the sustainable use of natural resources and will be updated as needed based

	and public-private partnerships in biodiversity protection. 3. **Community Forestry Management Guideline 1995:** It encourages the protection of endangered species, habitat restoration, and ecosystem balance while allowing controlled use of forest resources. The guideline ensures the sustainable harvesting of timber, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and medicinal plants to benefit both conservation and livelihoods. Additionally, it supports forest-based enterprises and eco-tourism while ensuring conservation goals are met.		on community needs and context.
Cultural Heritage	**1. Forest Act, 2019** Acknowledges the spiritual connection of indigenous peoples to forests. **2. Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1956** Requires the identification and documentation of monuments and reporting of new discoveries to the Department of Archaeology (DoA). **3. Environment Protection Act, 2019 & Environment Protection Rules, 2020** require EIAs and IEEs to assess cultural heritage impacts. **4. National Cultural Policy, 2067 (2010)** promotes intangible heritage.	• No systematic cultural mapping for non-registered sites. • Lacks clear mechanism for benefit-sharing agreements with indigenous communities when their heritage is used for commercial purposes.	The project has identified the cultural attributes in the project area. Some of the existing cultural heritages in the project sites are the graveyard in the community forest, temples, the place of worship by the indigenous people in the forest. The IPP has been prepared and will be implemented during the conduction of the project activities. There are no such project activities associated with or linked with cultural heritage in the project area.
Risk of Undermining Human Rights	**Constitution of Nepal (2015)** Article 27: Every citizen shall have the right to seek information on any matters of concern to her/him or the public; Article 37: No citizen shall be evicted from the housing owned by him/her, encroached on the	The Constitution of Nepal (2015) guarantees various human rights but has some gaps and challenges in implementation. Citizenship rights remain restrictive, particularly affecting	We consider there to be minimal risks relating to human rights during project implementation (for example, if we failed to retain FPIC that would be a violation of human rights), but by ensuring we have a robust

	housing, except in accordance with law; Article 40; The State shall, according to law, provide land to landless Dalits for one time; Article 51: Maintaining rule of law by protecting and practicing human rights.	women's ability to pass citizenship to their children independently. Additionally, freedom of expression and press freedom face constraints, with laws that can limit dissent and digital rights.	FPIC protocol in place, we will mitigate such risk of human rights. Other potential risks to human rights which have been considered include risks to worker health and safety and fair working conditions, SEAH based risks and potential environmental risks from construction activities and short-term temporary access restrictions. Any potential risks to human rights will be prevented and managed via implementation of ZSL policies and execution and regular monitoring of our specific safeguarding instruments (e.g. ZSL code of conduct, safeguarding policy, IPP, GRM, and FPIC plans – Protocol and Tracker). Relevant potential risks and their mitigation measures will also be discussed with the IPLCs through regular and dedicated community consultations and ESMP will be updated accordingly.
Community Health and Safety	1.**The Forest Policy 2018** **2. The Forest Act 2019** **3. Community Forestry Management Guideline**	The National Forest Policy 2018, the Forest Act 2019 and the Community Forestry Management Guideline lack the components of the community health and safety during the conduction of the forest management activities or during the conduction of any project activities.	Built in with the activities, the project will be carrying out various awareness activities to create awareness among the community member on avoidance with larger carnivore, behaviour change. Further the project will be provisioning the quick relief fund in which the victim *(any injuries, death from wildlife attack)* can access the fund quickly and with ease. The fund will be built in aligning with the third amendment guideline on Wildlife damage relief guideline, 2080 endorsed by the MoFE and DNPWC. In addition to make community safe from wild animal's attack, the project will be installing early warning

			system that allows community to be informed about the presence of wild animals in the community so the members can remain alert minimizing possible encountering with wild animals.
Labour and Working Conditions	**The Labour Act (2017),** The New Labor Act has been passed for provisions for the rights, interest, facilities and safety of workers and employees working in enterprises of various sectors.	The Labour Act lacks the strong protection for the informal sector employees.	The Labor Act strictly reinforces transparent as well as safe employment and recruitment but there are gaps in protection for informal sector employees which represents a risk to their human rights. To address this, the project will adhere to ZSL's Global Safeguarding Policy and its recruitment policy as part of any recruitment (formal or informal). The short term and informal workers and labourers will therefore also be protected as per the policy. New contractors/ employers are also oriented about required safeguard instruments including ESCOP. The ZSL's policies have the strong protection of the short-term workers regarding their health and safety and other required protocols, ensuring their human rights are respected and protected
Pollution, wastes, chemicals and GHG emissions	1. **National Forest Policy (2018)**: It promotes pollution control, waste management, and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through sustainable forest management, afforestation, and eco-friendly practices. It encourages alternative energy use, low-emission forestry enterprises, and climate adaptation strategies to minimize environmental impacts.	Despite growing air, water, and industrial pollution, the rules lack strong mandates for pollution prevention and management. Moreover, the compliances regarding the pollution, wastes, chemicals and GHG emissions are unclear and difficult to meet.	The project activities will not trigger any risk associated with the pollution, wastes, chemicals and the GHG emissions. However, the construction activities and other project activities will be made cautiously following the ESCOP mandates ensuring that there will be no pollution, wastes, chemicals and GHG emissions.

	2. **Environment Protection Act (2019) revised, Environmental Protection Rule (2020)** This Act provides for the protection of the environment with the proper use and management of natural resources, so as to protect the fundamental right of each citizen to live in a clean and healthy environment, provide the victim with compensation by the polluter for any damage resulting from environmental pollution or degradation, maintain a proper balance between environment and development, mitigate adverse environmental impacts on environment and biodiversity and face the challenges posed by climate change.		
Adverse gender impacts	1. **Forest Regulation, 2023:** The Forest Regulation 2023 in Nepal emphasizes gender equality and social inclusion by mandating that 50% of executive committee members in Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) be women, with women holding at least two key leadership positions. This regulation aims to empower women and marginalized groups, ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes and equitable access to forest resources.	The policies do not recognize the different needs, roles, and challenges faced by men and women in forestry. Though women are disproportionately affected by forest degradation, floods, and landslides, but there is no dedicated strategy to build gender-responsive resilience in forest-dependent communities.	The GESI-responsive recommendations from the GESI Assessment conducted during the PPG phase will be strictly implemented during the project implementation. Additionally, existing project data will be reviewed through a GESI lens, integrating targeted GESI questions into routine consultations and field activities, validating key findings with underrepresented groups and local partners, and using disaggregated monitoring data and stakeholder feedback to refine GESI actions throughout implementation. Moreover, the Global Safeguarding Policy of the ZSL and the FAIRER principles of safeguarding will be adhered to in addition to the project's environmental and social

	2. **Forest Sector Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy, 2007:** It emphasizes equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing for women, Dalits, and marginalized communities in forest management. It promotes capacity-building, policy reforms, and decision-making roles to ensure inclusive and sustainable forestry practices.		safeguarding documents. This focused approach will mitigate the adverse gender impacts in the project.
Risk Affecting Vulnerable Groups	**1. Forest Regulation, 2023:** The Forest Regulation 2023 in Nepal emphasizes gender equality and social inclusion by mandating that 50% of executive committee members in Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) be women, with women holding at least two key leadership positions. This regulation aims to empower women and marginalized groups, ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes and equitable access to forest resources. **2. Forest Sector Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy, 2007:** It emphasizes equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing for women, Dalits, and marginalized communities in forest management. It promotes capacity-building, policy reforms, and decision-making roles to ensure inclusive and sustainable forestry practices.	Though the provisions in the policy are strong regarding the protection of the vulnerable groups and communities, there can be gaps in the implementation of the policy which is affected by the issues like the elite capture.	The baseline survey has been carried out to identify vulnerable groups who will be impacted by the Project as well as the most natural resource dependent communities and indigenous peoples. The information was delivered in a culturally appropriate format in both Nepali and Tharu language so that all relevant groups were reached, including women, Indigenous Peoples and other vulnerable groups. Proportional representation from different social groups, gender-based groups, community leaders, Indigenous leaders and persons with disability along with the executives of the Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) were involved in the consultations, through a series of participatory techniques such as focus group discussions, semi-structured questionnaires and meetings. Women, IPs, vulnerable groups and youths were consulted separately to ensure specific concerns and recommendations are captured. The resource mapping and HWC assessment was also carried out with local

			communities and marginalized people with involvement of women, Indigenous Peoples. The ESMP, SEP and other safeguarding documents will be abided during the conduction of each project activity and updated as needed to mitigate the risks for the vulnerable people in the project area. Community sensitization on community-preferred GRM channels and their utility will be conducted during all community consultations, meetings and relevant project activities besides establishing GRM and project information boards at appropriate community-sites and GRM brochures. This will further help in identifying and addressing risks affecting vulnerable groups in a timely manner.

4. Risk Management Strategy

The plan will be further updated within the first six months of project implementation in line with an update of the other Safeguard Instruments. Further major updates to the ESMP will be made on an annual basis, in parallel with project annual reporting described in Section 5 below.

Table 4: Key environmental and social risk and impacts		
IUCN Environmental and Social Standards	**Applicable to project?**	**Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including whether any Safeguard Instruments are required (e.g., CEPF, ESCOP, Process Framework)**
Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions	☐ yes ☒ no ☐ TBD	The project activities do not have any issue of involuntary resettlement and permanent access restrictions as all the activities will be conducted in community forest areas outside protected areas, where access to natural resources is decided by community members themselves. The proposed activities of the project viz. HWC mitigation measures (mesh-wire fencing, bio-fence) may result in temporary or localised limited movement to specific areas or resources. The project during implementation phase, ensures to identify any potential restrictions on resource access or area due to implementation of project activities are identified early, mitigation measures discussed and identified at community level and addressed through community decision. The project also includes livelihood improvement activities aimed at reducing dependency on forest resources. Any potential negative impacts on livelihoods arising from project activities will be assessed and mitigated in consultation with affected communities. Besides these, embedding inclusive engagement process and responsive feedback mechanisms will allow for timely redressal of concerns and grievances across all the project activities. All risks and mitigation measures are documented and will be periodically updated in the ESMP.
Indigenous Peoples	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	The project site has more than 50% of the population who belongs to the indigenous community (most communities present are from Tharu and Magar groups). The integration of ideas and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples in the project activities will be assured through stringent implementation and monitoring of the FPIC activities outlined in the FPIC Protocol as well as tracked through FPIC tracker which would be updated regularly based on community feedback. Moreover, a separate IPP has been prepared in order to strengthen the process of integrating Indigenous Peoples and their perspectives. Community voices, opinions, and grievances will also be identified through the community-preferred GRM channels and targeted consultations with IPs to inform project implementation adaptations based on their feedback.
Cultural Heritage	☐ yes ☒ no ☐ TBD	The project activities will not harm and disturb the cultural heritages present in the project site. There are some traditional practices like using the farmland as graveyard, indigenous temple and community buildings in the project villages. The project has no such activities associated with the existing cultural heritages.

Table 4: Key environmental and social risk and impacts		
IUCN Environmental and Social Standards	**Applicable to project?**	**Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including whether any Safeguard Instruments are required (e.g., CEPF, ESCOP, Process Framework)**
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Natural Resources	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	The project activities will not harm and cause negative impact on the biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The project will promote the biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the project location. The community forest level livelihood improvement plans (LIPs) have been prepared which will support livelihood improvement through the sustainable use of the natural resources which will be updated as needed based on community needs and context.
Risk of Undermining Human Rights	☐ yes ☐ no ☒ TBD	There is a minimal risk of violations to human rights during project implementation (for example, FPIC is not retained, constituting a violation of human rights). By ensuring the presence of a robust FPIC protocol, these risks of human rights violations can be mitigated. Other potential risks to human rights which have been considered include risks to worker health and safety and fair working conditions, SEAH based risks and potential environmental risks from construction activities and short-term temporary access restrictions. Any potential risks to human rights will be captured and mitigated via implementation of ZSL policies and execution and regular monitoring of safeguard instruments (e.g. ESMP, GESI-responsive recommendations and action plan, IPP, GRM, and FPIC plans – Protocol and Tracker). ZSL policies (e.g. ZSL code of conduct, safeguarding policy) also work to embed a zero-tolerance to SEAH. Through our inclusive engagement processes, we aim to take a rights-based approach to engagement to ensure that consultations are inclusive, accessible and culturally appropriate, and that information will be provided to account for diverse literacy levels and local languages. The SEP will outline the detailed procedure for this. Relevant potential risks and their mitigation measures will also be discussed with the IPLCs through regular and dedicated community consultations and ESMP will be updated accordingly.
Labour and Working Conditions	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	The occupational health and safety risks are mostly linked to HWC for both project employees and community members/ other stakeholders who participate in the surveys and monitoring programmes. In addition, the occupational health and safety risk will be relatively high for project workers/staff and other stakeholders participating in surveys and monitoring as they will be working in remote conditions, challenging terrain and difficult environments with dangerous animals (e.g. tigers). They will need to travel dense through the corridor forest and times will be on foot and in some areas and at times there may be no communications (no mobile telephone

Table 4: Key environmental and social risk and impacts		
IUCN Environmental and Social Standards	**Applicable to project?**	**Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including whether any Safeguard Instruments are required (e.g., CEPF, ESCOP, Process Framework)**
		coverage). There are also occupational health and safety risks associated with small scale construction and renovation activities. These are outlined and managed through the ESCOP.
Pollution, Wastes, Chemicals and GHG Emission	☐ yes ☐ no ☒ TBD	The project has not identified risks and impacts related to pollution, wastes, chemicals and GHG emission. All the construction and management beyond small scale risks identified in the ESCOP. Please refer to the ESCOP attached in the separate file. The livelihood plans have been prepared and will be a part of the village activity plans which will be included in the PF will be continually reviewed to identify if any livelihood activities pose resource efficiency and pollution risks.
Community Health and Safety	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	HWC remains relevant and continues to persist, thus the project through the PF will identify and engage with project affected people (including vulnerable groups). ZSL will gather more up to date socioeconomic baseline data on the project villages during baseline survey, assess the key risks and impacts by stakeholder groups (especially those pertaining to HWC) and will develop and implement avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures. These measures will be documented and integrated into ESMP. Apart, the small-scale construction and renovation activities will be reviewed frequently and documented and managed using the ESCOP. To make community safe from wild animal's attack, the project will be installing early warning system that allows community to be informed about the presence of wild animals in the community so the members can remain alert minimizing possible encountering with wild animals. As part of any project, we need to be aware of and work to prevent the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of community members is upheld and their human rights protected. All staff will be required to follow ZSL's code of conduct and safeguarding policy that take a zero-tolerance approach to SEAH and ZSL will follow safe recruitment practices when hiring contractors. The safety of the community members against any form of GBV/SEAH, child labour, spread of any pandemic and epidemic due to the project activities would be ensured. The project partners, community members, staffs and stakeholders would be provided orientation regarding PSEAH, community health and safety risk mitigation measures. Moreover, the GRM would also have an expeditated way of handling SEAH. ZSL's health and safety protocol would be followed during the implementation of project activities like trainings, workshops, construction and restoration related activities, and travel. Grievance mechanisms will also work to ensure that project affected peoples have safe and accessible ways to report concerns or health and safety risks.

Table 4: Key environmental and social risk and impacts		
IUCN Environmental and Social Standards	**Applicable to project?**	**Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including whether any Safeguard Instruments are required (e.g., CEPF, ESCOP, Process Framework)**
Adverse Gender Related Impacts	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	Though the community forest user groups are progressive in terms of gender integration, there lies few risks associated with the exclusion of women and marginalised people in the decision-making process. The GESI-responsive recommendations from the GESI Assessment conducted during the PPG phase will be strictly implemented during the project implementation. Additionally, existing project data will be reviewed through a GESI lens, integrating targeted GESI questions into routine consultations and field activities, validating key findings with underrepresented groups and local partners, and using disaggregated monitoring data and stakeholder feedback to refine GESI actions throughout implementation. Moreover, the Global Safeguarding Policy of the ZSL and the FAIRER principles of safeguarding will be adhered to in addition to the project's environmental and social safeguarding documents. This focused approach will mitigate the adverse gender impacts in the project.
Risk Affecting Vulnerable Groups	☒ yes ☐ no ☐ TBD	The Vulnerable Groups are the most affected communities due to the human wildlife conflict and disasters in the area. In order to mitigate the risks and negative impacts in the vulnerable groups, they have been identified through the detailed baseline survey and based on the social well-being ranking of CFOP. The selected CFUGs have classified member households as per social wellbeing ranking (A, B, C, and D). The project will target HHs under C and D category as they fall under poor and vulnerable category. Moreover, the project activities like the Quick Relief Fund, tuk-tuk for the school students, PPCs has been planned in order to reduce the impact of HWC on them. Moreover, the livelihood improvement plans have accounted the capacity and needs of the vulnerable communities for livelihood enhancement. Additionally, climate change impact assessment and the disaster risk reduction (DRR) plan have also been made in order to identify and mitigate the climate and disaster associated risks in the vulnerable communities. The DRR plan will be implemented by the community forestry user groups and the local government while they will be considered while implementing the project activities as well. A tuk-tuk will be provided to the CFUG to transport school children safely along forest roads, reducing exposure to HWC. Child protection measures will include trained drivers, and adherence to safe seating and capacity limits. Vehicle safety will be ensured through regular maintenance and periodic servicing, and tuk-tuk will undergo insurance for driver, passengers, and road users in case of any accident. Use and compliance will be monitored regularly by the CFUG and project staff. The ESMP, SEP and other safeguarding documents will be abided during the conduction of each project activity and updated as needed to mitigate the risks for the vulnerable people in the project area.

Table 4: Key environmental and social risk and impacts		
IUCN Environmental and Social Standards	**Applicable to project?**	**Main risks and impacts and how they will be addressed, including whether any Safeguard Instruments are required (e.g., CEPF, ESCOP, Process Framework)**
		Besides above, community sensitization on community-preferred GRM channels and their utility will be conducted during all community consultations, meetings and relevant project activities besides establishing GRM and project information boards at appropriate community-sites and GRM brochures. This will further help in identifying and addressing risks affecting vulnerable groups in a timely manner.

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
Community Health and Safety HWC remains relevant and continues to persist with risk to life and livelihood	The project is contributing to the prevention or mitigation of impacts. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen collaboration and increase leverage with key stakeholders, including government agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities, to enhance collective efforts in preventing or mitigating risks. The project is committed to support for addressing any negative impacts it has helped cause but only to the extent of its engagement.	Steps to identify HWC in affected communities and process toward selection and agreement of mitigation measures are included in Process Framework (PF). Through the PF and the Project fosters preventative measures through supporting CFUGs, infrastructure provision and awareness raising. Mitigation measures for the identified HWC risks are as well incorporated in the project log frame and activities. • Activity A 1.1.1 will identify the conflict hotspots in the project villages which will guide project team to implement the mitigation measures sequentially complimenting one other measures.	**Feasibility:** The proposed mitigation measures are feasible as they are adopted from the learnings from past ITHCP Phase I-III, as well as consultation with the community member and the relevant stakeholders in the Kamdi Corridor and thus reflected project activities, including construction of predator proof corrals, early warning system. **Effectiveness:** Mitigation measures will not fully mitigate HWC impacts in the project areas but will benefit vulnerable groups in the selected project sites.	Project villages: Madhui, Mahendrapur, Gulari	Budgeted within activities	ZSL and project partners	Year 1, 2 and 3

[5] Each row has a different E&S risk and impact (e.g., one row includes potential social impacts due to access restrictions, while another row could include risks to project staff due to boat operations in hazardous conditions. If management measures are not to be included in a stand-alone plan (e.g. a Process Framework, ESCOP, CEPF), the management measures need to be described in this table. If a stand-alone plan is to be used, this can simply be referred to.

[6] Management measures should be conceptualised as project activities: this needs to be specified and cross referenced to the Log frame (e.g. “see Activity 1.2.3”) to ensure that the Project has included and budgeted these activities.

[7] The ESMP must confirm that proposed management measures are feasible, that they are effective in providing management/ mitigation for all affected groups and that they are sustainable. In cases where this is not the case (e.g. when a management measure is being trialled), this should be noted.

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
		• Site level HWC mitigation plan will be developed to act locally against the HWC issues. • ESCOP will be prepared for the activities that require small-scale construction. • Activity in Result 2, 2.1 will provide livelihood improvement opportunities for the project affected people. • Activity 1.1.2 will support implementation of the structural mitigation measures such as PPC, Fencing-Mesh/Bio and early warning system. • Activity 1.1.3c will support to provide quick relief to victims of HWC by establishing quick relief fund at village level which will eliminate the long government procedural hassle and provide quick support to the victim to get instant medical services as evident by ZSL through its other ongoing projects.	**Sustainability:** The project will involve all identified vulnerable communities and mitigation measures including the development and capacity building of community-led cooperatives. Community led HWC mitigation plan will be supported by providing trainings and funds to carry out the planned activities. The learnings will be documented and disseminated to communities and stakeholders for further inclusion in their organisation's management and funding for sustainability beyond the project period, and scale-up by other communities and stakeholders. In addition, access mechanisms for landless and other marginalized				

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
		This series of sequential activity ensures these protective measures are put in place to enhance safety and resilience.	group with legitimate claims will be able to access a quick-relief mechanism beyond the lifespan of this project.				
Labour and Working Conditions The occupational health and safety risks are mostly linked to HWC for both project employees and community members/ other stakeholders who participate in the surveys and monitoring programmes.	The project is directly linked to the identified risk of occupational health and safety risks associated with human-wildlife conflict (HWC) for both project employees and community members or other stakeholders involved in surveys and monitoring programs. As the project is involved in these activities, it has a responsibility to use its influence to encourage all relevant parties to take appropriate measures to prevent or mitigate the risks.	This is being addressed through measures specified in the ESCOP as well as through effective communication techniques including satellite phones, using well equipped vehicle (4-wheel vehicle) and following proper safety orientation for project staff/partner staff/community members.	**Feasibility:** The proposed mitigation measures are feasible as they are adopted from the learnings from earlier ITHCP Phases. **Effectiveness:** When implemented appropriately, health and safety protocol would be effective to avoid the occupational health and safety risks. **Sustainability:** These measures are in line with the DFOs five-year forestry sector plan.	Project villages: Madhui, Mahendrapur, Gulari	Budgeted within activities	ZSL and Project Partners	Year 1 and 2
Indigenous peoples Potential for indigenous peoples not to be involved	The project has the risk of decisions being influenced by the elite	Indigenous people plan (IPP) has been developed for the project to ensure their inclusivity of the	**Feasibility:** The Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), the Free, Prior and	Project villages: Madhui,	Budgeted within	ZSL and Project Partners	Year 1, 2 and 3

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
in the identification of impacts, decision-making regarding mitigation measures. Some examples of potential impacts on customary practices.	community, which may unintentionally neglect indigenous people' opinions and needs. It is important that the project takes responsibility for this by making sure that indigenous peoples are genuinely involved in identifying impacts and in decisions about how to address them. This necessitates communicating with them in a way that respects their viewpoints and rights. The project must also work with others to ensure that indigenous groups' perspectives are included and that sufficient safeguards are put in place to maintain their traditional practices.	indigenous people (IP) of the project community from the beginning of the project to the phase out and beyond. To further enabling the participation of IP, FPIC protocol has been developed to ensure that their voice is and will be heard by the implementers during the project cycle. The pre- FPIC and FPIC consultations conducted in the PPG phase had both Nepali and Tharu language as the mode of communication to ensure that every single in the person gets the message properly. Grievance redressal mechanism (GRM) established by the project will further also allow them to raise their voice against the decisions that does not meet their requirements. This will help project through the meaningful consultation with the PAPs to incorporate their concerns and perspective in the decision-making process.	Informed Consent (FPIC) Protocol as well as Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) have been established to ensure that Indigenous Peoples (IP) are actively part in the project activities that affect them directly. **Effectiveness:** When implemented appropriately, steps in the Process Framework and mitigation measures would be effective to close the gaps. However, their successful execution will depend on adequate resource allocation, capacity-building efforts, and sustained stakeholder engagement. **Sustainability:** The mitigation measures is strengthened and sustained by national and international policy	Mahendra pur, Gulari	activities		

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
			recognition, government support, and structured implementation frameworks set up by the ZSL. In addition, ZSL will make provision for all its project partners to follow the same process and comply with the standards set in the PF.				
Risk affecting Vulnerable groups Vulnerable groups include (but are not limited to) certain castes, women, people with disabilities, people prone to HWC and people without land certificates within the CFUGs and People without legal land holdings who are not eligible for certain types of compensation or benefits from the project as well as DFO. Additional risks for vulnerable groups include preferential treatment	The project is directly linked to the identified risks concerning vulnerable groups, as it may inadvertently exclude or disadvantage certain individuals or communities. The project responsibility is to ensure that vulnerable groups are actively engaged in planning and implementation process. The project must avoid any preferential treatment during participant selection and ensure all	ZSL prioritises the identification of vulnerable, indigenous and project affected people before implementation of projects outlined in PF to identify any risks and impacts to the groups associated with any project activities. Project activities will be conducted with consent and through a participatory approach and strong grievance mechanism in place to resolve any issues that might arise. The mitigation measures for the identified risk are incorporated throughout the project, livelihood opportunities targeted to vulnerable members of the community in Result 2.	**Feasibility:** ZSL has conducted a participatory process and activities in ITHCP Phase I to III. Mitigation measures are feasible, because similar activities have been done in Phase I to III. **Effectiveness:** Mitigation measures are effective to protect the needs of vulnerable groups. **Sustainability:** ZSL will recommend the process of identifying vulnerable groups and encourage their integration of	Project villages: Madhui, Mahendrapur, Gulari	Budgeted within activities	ZSL, project partners and CFUGs	Year 1, 2 and 3

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
during the selection process of project participants or certain groups not being identified and consequently being overlooked as participants.	vulnerable groups are appropriately identified and included as participants.	Furthermore, the PF has a section in the entitlement matrix to compensate for the impacts of HWC, including livestock loss and injury (or death) to individuals. Through the PF and the entitlement matrix, the Project fosters preventative measures through supporting CFUGs, infrastructure provision and awareness raising. Where preventative measures are not feasible, the project provides relief support to affected communities and support to vulnerable groups are prioritised.	mitigation measures activities to DFOs, CFUGs and implementing partners.				
Adverse Gender related Impact Though the community forest user groups are progressive in terms of gender integration, there lies few risks associated with the exclusion of women and marginalised people in the decision-making process. Women often juggle in multiple responsibilities	The project is contributing to the identified risks regarding the participation of women and marginalised groups from decision-making processes and the disproportionate burden placed on women in terms of time and responsibilities. As part of its responsibility, the project must	The project has developed the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Plan and assimilated the ZSL FAIRER approach which will be strictly adhered during the project implementation to ensure the inclusivity of such vulnerable group. The targeted beneficiary for the project mainly comprises of the women and vulnerable communities. Community banks will be led by the women group	**Feasibility:** By avoiding the peak hours, the project can ensure the meaning full participation of the women and marginalized group. However, the feasibility depends on the availability of resources and requires the logistical planning beforehand the event.	Project Villages: Madhuwi, Gulari and Mahendra pur	Budgeted within activities	ZSL and project partners	Year 1, 2 and 3

Table 5: Environmental and social risk and impact management measures							
Environmental and social risks and impacts[5]	**E&S responsibilities**	**Management measures[6]**	**Feasibility, effectiveness and sustainability[7]**	**Location**	**Costs**	**Implementation responsibility**	**Schedule**
including, household chores, subsistence farming and caregiving, participating in project-related training, meetings, or conservation activities may result in longer work hours and fatigue. In addition, this in turn could increase the risk of domestic violence if they are unable to fulfil the household duties as expected. Besides, there is a risk of missing out lactating in the trainings and livelihood opportunities which hinders such group in learning new skills or upgrading the existing skills for income generating activities and conservation.	contribute to the prevention and mitigation of these risks by ensuring that all groups, including women and marginalized individuals, are actively involved in the decision-making process. The project should also work with relevant stakeholders to design gender-sensitive interventions that reduce the burden on women, such as providing flexible participation options in training and activities to accommodate their responsibilities at home.	means occupying the vital position in the group. Meetings, training, and project activities will be scheduled at times that accommodate women's availability, avoiding peak household work hours. The project will ensure the participation of lactating mother in the training or livelihoods events, by allowing the provision of caretaker in the event and manage the friendly environment for breast feeding and childcare.	**Effectiveness:** The effectiveness of the mitigation measures directly addresses the key barrier to women's participation which will highly result in the engagement and the participation of women, empowering them to access the capacity building opportunities and enhance their income streams for their households. **Sustainability:** Sustainability largely depends on the integration of these practices into the broader community and project framework. Further it requires the regular monitoring and the feedback from the women participants that the measures continue to meet their needs.				

Table 6: Activity Level Risks, Impact and Mitigation Measure for the Risk.

Activity	**Main risks and impacts**	**Mitigation measures (how addressed, inc. Safeguard Instruments required (e.g., ESCOP, PF)**
A.1.1.1 Through a participatory and scientific approach prepare a robust Human Carnivore Coexistence plan of Kamdi corridor, integrating local and scientific knowledge and adopted by relevant authority (DFO/EDC/local governments) **(Nepal and India)**	Risk of excluding the voices and perspectives of marginalised and Indigenous groups; potential conflict between local practices and scientific recommendations; limited transboundary coordination; low adoption by authorities.	Ensure inclusive consultations with IPLCs, women and vulnerable groups that are carried out separately as part of disaggregated data collection to ensure all voices and perspectives are able to be captured; apply FPIC; integrate indigenous and scientific knowledge; obtain endorsement from authorities; establish grievance redress mechanism. Update risk register if any new risk identified during implementation.
A.1.1.2 Implement pre-emptive HTC mitigation measures (PPC, mesh-wire, electric fencing, buffer crops, biological fencing, early warning system) in target sites/hotspots promoting coexistence. **(Nepal and India)**	Elite capture in distribution of mitigation measures; safety risks during installation; possible environmental disturbance; ineffective measures increasing community dissatisfaction. Limited and temporary mobility of people in the construction site for the proper installation of the fences. Risk of some measures becoming unsustainable to maintain beyond the life of the project (e.g. electric fences) or not being maintained (e.g. wire fencing or biological fencing)	Transparent beneficiary selection: informing all the community members about the activity, follow ESCOP for site-specific risk assessment before any construction, provide occupational safety orientation to contractors, labourers and community members, monitoring of mitigation infrastructure. The alternative route for movement and passage gates would be incorporated while designing and constructing fences. provided for the community members during the construction period. The post project repairing and maintenance of the constructed structures would be managed by the community forest user groups who have their own autonomous funds and decision-making structure.

		Sustainability of solar fencing by EDC after the project period
A1.1.3 In coordination with relevant Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs/CFGs) setup an HCC quick relief fund for target communities. **(Nepal)**	Exclusion of vulnerable households due to the lack of information about the fund and the process to access it.	Develop clear fund mobilisation guidelines endorsed by CFUGs and DFO, financial audits, awareness regarding the fund and grievance mechanism. ZSL staff and CFUG executives will reach out to the family and victims in case of any incident.
A1.1.4 Support and facilitate Protected Area managers, DFOs and Sub-DFOs officials in the project area to enhance their capacity on handling problematic carnivores through the provision of training and equipment support (rescue tools, rescue ambulance, mobile cages, monitoring. Wildlife holding cage) **(Nepal and India)**	Occupational health and safety risks when handling wildlife; injuries during rescue operations; improper equipment use. Community health and safety risk related to HWC Risk of human catch in camera traps deployed for wildlife monitoring in the fringe areas.	Provide wildlife handling training; PPE and SOPs; emergency response and insurance; supervision of equipment use. Movement of the project staff in vehicles to the forest and movement in groups. Maintain the first aid kit during the capture of the animals. ESCOP would be followed during constructing the wildlife holding cage.
A.1.2.1 Develop and conduct awareness activities based on HCCx in the Kamdi-Suhelwa complex, via participatory approaches integrating scientific, indigenous and local knowledge **(Nepal and India)**	Low participation; misleading information regarding species behaviour and conservation; language barriers affecting communication.	Culturally appropriate awareness materials in the local language. The awareness programme would be designed in such a way that the young children and community members would be able to relate to their traditional practices, participatory approaches; engage local, traditional leaders and conservation clubs, maintaining inclusion of the marginalised and IPLCs in the campaigns.
A1.2.2 Led by capacitated Local Tiger Champions, behavioural change campaigns are initiated to mitigate conflict and promote human carnivore coexistence **(Nepal and India)**	Resistance to behavior change; social tensions; safety and safeguarding risks for Local Tiger Champions. Risk of inappropriate or culturally insensitive messaging. Lack of long-term engagement of the HTC champions.	Select LTC through community consultation. Train and support Local Tiger Champions; ensure community endorsement; safety protocols, facilitate easy and quick communication, prepare an awareness manual in order to guide LTC for their awareness activities.

A1.2.3 Conduct mass awareness campaign to raise awareness on carnivore conservation and HCC mitigation measures **(Nepal and India)**	Limited reach to remote communities; misinformation regarding species and conservation; low engagement of people, Inappropriate or culturally insensitive messaging.	Use multiple communication channels; local language materials; inclusive outreach; evaluate effectiveness. prepare an awareness manual in order to guide LTC for their awareness activities in order to avoid the risk of misinformation of the species.
A.2.1.1 Establish three livelihood support groups and provide seed funds (Community banking) to support target community to upgrade their existing income generating activities or set up new ventures to strengthen alternative livelihood schemes in the community **(Nepal)**	Elite capture in the benefits; financial mismanagement by the committee, environmentally harmful and unsustainable livelihood activities.	Transparent group formation; financial management training; environmental screening. Preparation of the community fund mobilisation guideline and promotion of environmentally friendly of ventures, regular monitoring.
A.2.1.2 Provide skill-based trainings (off season vegetable farming, livestock and poultry farming, drip irrigation) through experts on sustainable livelihood diversification options equipping community members with technical capacity while reducing dependence on natural resources **Nepal and India)**	Lack of market linkage of the produced agricultural/livestock products, low gendered and social inclusion in the training,	Market assessment; assessment of different livelihood options to assess risk and their suitability/ sustainability; safety measures during training; inclusive participation; link trainees to markets.
A.2.1.3 Facilitate and support the establishment of micro enterprises: (Leaf Plate/Rattan Bamboo/Tharu Handicraft/Turmeric with 15 direct beneficiaries for each enterprise (**Nepal and India)**	Overharvesting of natural resources; business failure; inequitable benefit sharing: risks associated market availability, sustainability risk of the enterprise post project duration.	Risk A assess different enterprise options, prepare business and sustainability plan; Promote sustainable resource use; business mentorship, transparent beneficiary selection process that is co-designed alongside the communities; provide training related to the production and operation of the enterprise, monitor and enterprises. Link the enterprise with business holder groups and local government for sustainability.
A2.1.4 Conduct technical skill development trainings identified for community members from the project sites (driving, plumbing, electrician etc) (**Nepal and India)**	Safety risks during technical trainings; limited employment outcomes, project activities not being able to address the training demand of the communities Unequal access to training.	Certified trainers; safety standards; provide safety materials during the training; transparent beneficiary selection for trainin g opportunities; job linkage support. Support from the project for self-employment opportunities.
A2.2.1 Capacitate key community members on mandates, existing laws and regulations in resource use of community forests, incorporating	Poor gender inclusion in the training activity, lack of integration of the traditional practices in the agroforestry training and sustainable use of	Inclusive participation; promote native species; integrate training with the local

the benefits of sustainable resource use and the correlation between HCC and forest resources use through training and promotion of agro-forestry practices (**Nepal and India)**	resources. Low adoption of the knowledge and skills acquired from the training.	and indigenous knowledge, align with forest regulations; monitor impacts.
A2.2.2 Conduct afforestation and restoration initiatives by planting native and climate-resilient tree species, maintain critical habitats on degraded forest land to enhance biodiversity, improve soil stability, and support ecosystem regeneration (**Nepal)**	Planting of non-native species; worker safety risks; wildlife encounters. Low rate of survival of the afforested saplings.	Align with the CF Operation Plan. Use native species; apply ESCOP; worker safety orientation; coordination with forest authorities. Emergency response preparedness plan like the availability of the first aid kit, working in groups, working in day light hours etc. Conduct afforestation activity during favourable weather conditions to ensure the high survival chances.
A2.2.3 Improve the overall Forest health of CFs in Kamdi through silviculture operation activity and scientific management of forests (**Nepal**	Habitat disturbance; worker safety risks; unsustainable forest operations; violation of human rights if setting up camera traps in areas used by local people (e.g. human by-catch; changes to how local people use the forest due to a feeling of loss of privacy)	Follow approved forest operational plans; environmental safeguards; worker safety orientation, Emergency response plan; camera trapping follows strict ethical guidance related to human bycatch and ensuring FPIC when establishing camera trap surveys on land used by community members. Emergency response preparedness like the availability of the first aid kit, working in groups, working in day light hours etc. Conduct afforestation activity during favourable weather conditions to ensure the high survival chances.
A.2.2.4 Strengthen local CBOs through capacity building and equipment support along with sustainable use of natural resources focusing on the importance of coexistence in the Suhelwa-Kamdi landscape (incl. CFUGs, cooperatives, mothers' groups, EDCs, JFMs) to ensure effective facilitation and ownership on coexistence for each group at a community level (**Nepal and India)**	Weak institutional capacity; exclusion of marginalised groups.	Inclusive governance and participation; social inclusion training; strengthen transparency and accountability. Sharing of the project success stories and research findings to enhance their knowledge related to conservation in their area. Strengthening of existing institutions (EDC)
A 3.1.1 Strengthen institutional capacity of management authority and CFUGs (including basics of habitat/ restoration and	Poor gendered and social inclusion in the training activities,	Human rights and safeguard training; safe monitoring protocols; community engagement.

management, monitoring of species, poaching risks and human rights) in the Kamdi- Suhelwa corridor. (**Nepal and India)**	Low adoption of the knowledge acquired.	
A3.1.2 Conduct participatory habitat mapping and wildlife distribution in the Kamdi corridor producing a comprehensive map of Kamdi corridor facilitating to delineate the area of Kamdi corridor (**Nepal and India)**	Exclusion of community knowledge or local knowledge not acknowledged.	Protect sensitive biodiversity data; inclusive participatory mapping; informed consent; acknowledgement of local knowledge collected through dedicated FGDs as part of communications. Validation of the map produced by CFUG and its users through community meetings.
A 3.1.3 Provide training to relevant park/forest officials and other front-line staff in Kamdi-Suhelwa Complex at a transboundary level on tiger, leopard and prey base monitoring techniques with adoption of best practices from previous ITHCP projects. **(Nepal and India)**	N/A	N/A
A3.1.4 Capacitate DFO/Sub-DFO/ SWLS officials on forest fire management of dry vulnerable landscapes with trainings and equipment support (**Nepal and India)**	Injury during fire management training activities; inadequate preparedness.	Fire safety training; equipment provision; coordination with authorities. Emergency response preparedness. plan.
A3.2.1 Generate evidence-based understanding of carnivore and prey base presence in the corridor/ Suhelwa WLS, including occupancy surveys on target and prey species adhering to ITHCP guidelines **(Nepal and India)**	Human–wildlife encounters; disturbance to wildlife habitats.	Safe survey techniques; wildlife safety training; adhere to ITHCP guidelines. Emergency response preparedness plan.
A3.2.2 Facilitate and support regular coordination and sharing meeting among key stakeholders including representatives of DFOs, Province and local government officials, and representatives of CBOs to coordinate and jointly work towards maintaining the wildlife friendly habitat and integrity of Kamdi corridor **(Nepal and India)**	Unequal participation between government authorities and CBOs.	Inclusive stakeholder representation: meeting facilitation methods are carefully planned to enable the participation of all groups; transparent dialogue; documentation.
A3.2.3 Informed through A3.1.2 and A3.2.1 identify and conduct habitat restoration activities (grassland restoration/management, wetland	Increase in human–wildlife encounters; safety risks during restoration, environmental impacts associated with pollution and introduction of invasive species, risks to livelihoods?	Environmental and social risk assessment for each proposed activity; community consultation to identify sites, site planning, conduction of ESCOP. Information on the wildlife

management, bio engineering in flood vulnerable riverbanks) within the corridor **(Nepal)**		behaviour and orientation on occupational health and safety.
A3.2.4 Review, assess and update the biodiversity priority sites along the Kamdi corridor informing long-term conservation direction **(Nepal)**	lack of stakeholder consensus.	Multi-stakeholder consultations; evidence-based assessment; transparent documentation supported by studies and customary knowledge.
A3.3.1 Conduct annual joint transboundary meetings for district forest officials from Nepal and Suhelwa WLS officials from India for sharing meeting on results from tiger, leopards and prey base monitoring. (**Nepal and India)**	Limited participation; weak follow-up of decisions. Safety of meeting locations and transport to and from meetings.	Balanced representation; documentation of outcomes; follow-up actions. Travel insurance for the participants.
A3.3.2 Support a transboundary exchange visit for forest managers of India and Nepal for learning and sharing best practice on transboundary conservation issues and habitat management techniques **(Nepal and India)**	Knowledge exchange not translated into action.	Structured learning exchange; documentation; implementation follow-up. Policy guidelines
A3.3.3 Conduct exposure visits to community members from both India and Nepal to share experience and adapt to techniques promoting human wildlife coexistence **(Nepal and India)**	Safety risks during visits; unequal participation.	Community selection transparency ensuring inclusive representation. health and safety and safeguarding risks identified and guidelines foll owed provided, learning dissemination. Travel insurance for the participants. Policy framework
A3.3.4 Conduct a national level workshop with key tiger conservation stakeholders (e.g.PA managers of all tiger-bearing PAs in Nepal) to share best practice and lessons learned from tiger conservation approaches across Nepalese PAs, while highlighting the importance of corridors and transboundary collaboration in future tiger management strategies and plans **(Nepal and India)**		Inclusive workshop participation; policy dialogue; action plan follow-up; meeting code of conduct.
A3.4.1 Review 10 Forest management plans of CFs in Kamdi and 1 management plan of SWLS in consultation with key stakeholders to identify the gaps and produce recommendations to update operation plans integrating biodiversity	Recommendations from the meeting being more focused to the production and income-oriented approach.	Social impact assessment; consultation with CFUGs; integrate biodiversity and livelihoods.

management and human wildlife coexistence **(Nepal and India)**	Willingness of the community to provide more focus on the conservation.	
A3.4.2 Drawing on the recommendations, provide technical support inclusive of meeting facilitation for CFs within Kamdi Corridor to facilitate the effective implementation of and revision or update of forest management/operational plan **(Nepal)**	Capacity gaps in CFUGs. EDCs	Technical support to CFUGs; facilitation of plan implementation; monitoring and adaptive management.

5. ESMP Monitoring and Supervision

5.1 Monitoring, reporting and evaluation (MRE)

To determine the effectiveness of the ESMP and to ensure that the management measures contained therein are being implemented, internal (project proponent) and external (IUCN) monitoring and evaluation exercises will be carried out. Internal monitoring will be carried out by ZSL on an annual basis in order to populate the ESMS section of ITHCP annual report. The Annual ITHCP Report Template contains a section specifically for this purpose. In addition to annual reporting, the ESMS will be reviewed on a regular basis as part of ongoing project management activities (for example, having ESMS and safeguarding as standing agenda items as part of project management meetings) to ensure that we are regularly reflecting on the situation across our project sites and updating the ESMS with any changes (and corresponding mitigation measures if needed) that could occur during project implementation when required.

In addition to the annual reporting to IUCN, the IUCN will conduct annual monitoring and supervision missions to the field sites, in which there will be ESMS checks and monitoring.

5.1.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

This subsection will describe the input, activities, output/outcomes, and results associated KPIs to monitor mitigation measures performance.

Thematic area	KPI	Relevant inputs and processes working to achieve the KPIs and ways to measure KPIs (shown in italics)	Activities	Output/Outcomes	Results
Community Engagement	% of meetings held where separate sessions were held for vulnerable groups % of community engagement events held with gender sensitive or culturally appropriate facilitation % of staff trained in inclusive engagement practices % of women and Indigenous Peoples reporting that they feel their voices were heard as part of decision making % of respondents reporting that beneficiary selection processes were fair	*Stakeholder engagement plan; community consultation* records. *Endline survey. Focus group surveys, grievance log*	Inclusive project inception meetings, ensuring FPIC for all project activities to be held across all levels of implementation at all sites, to finalise degrees of stakeholder participation. Establish and strengthen Grievance Redress mechanism for the project implemented and operational throughout the project at all project intervention locations Annual Review of ESMS implementation, orient communities and partners for project implemented and operational throughout the project lifespan supporting inclusion of national and site level stakeholders in project management.	Community Forest Executive Committee Members, Community Forest Users, project beneficiaries, women and mother groups as well as the project area will be involved in the FPIC, GRM and the review and orientation for the ESMS implementation. The entire section of the PAP will be reached through the consultations, meetings and ESMS measures. There would be access to the GRM to the indigenous people, vulnerable groups and others.	Effective and equitable stakeholder engagement and participation in governance leading to improved conflict resolution.

	Number of grievances submitted via the project GRM % of complainants satisfied with grievance resolution -				
Sustainable Livelihoods for Local People	% of participants reporting they felt able to influence decisions related to livelihoods % of livelihood options co-designed with affected people (not just proposed by project) % of beneficiaries who report satisfaction with livelihood support received	Value chain analysis, livelihood training, market linkage facilitation; *endline survey; focus groups*	A.2.1.1 Establish three livelihood support groups and provide seed funds (Community banking) to support target community to upgrade their existing income generating activities or set up new ventures to strengthen alternative livelihood schemes in the community. A.2.1.2 Provide skill-based trainings (off season vegetable farming, livestock and poultry farming, drip irrigation) through experts on sustainable livelihood diversification options equipping community members with technical capacity while reducing dependence on natural resources A.2.1.3 Facilitate and support the establishment of micro enterprises: (Leaf Plate, Rattan Bamboo, Tharu Handicraft and Turmeric with 15 direct beneficiaries for each enterprise A2.1.4 Conduct technical skill development trainings identified for community members from the project sites (driving, plumbing, electrician etc)	Increased income generation opportunities through alternative livelihoods and sustainable management of the natural resources.	Diversified income sources reduce reliance on natural resources and enhance economic resilience

Reduction in Human wildlife conflict incidents	% of people reporting satisfaction with how the Human Carnivore Coexistence plan was developed % of beneficiaries reporting reduced fear and stress following introduction of HTC mitigation measures % of people reporting that they know how to access the quick relief fund % of beneficiaries satisfied with support received (training, mitigation measures)	Human-wildlife coexistence strategies, community-based mitigation approaches *Endline survey; focus groups*	A.1.1.1 Through a participatory and scientific approach prepare a robust Human Carnivore Coexistence plan of Kamdi corridor, integrating local and scientific knowledge and adopted by relevant authority (DFO/local governments) A.1.1.2 Implement pre-emptive HTC mitigation measures (PPC, mesh-wire, biological fencing, early warning system) in target sites/hotspots promoting coexistence. A1.1.3 In coordination with relevant Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs/CFGs) setup a revolving HCC quick relief fund for target communities A1.2.2 Led by capacitated Local Tiger Champions (LTC) initiate a behavioural change campaign to mitigate conflict and promote human carnivore coexistence.	Reduction in the number of attacks by tigers and leopards per year, from 9 at baseline to 5 at endline.	Reduction in crop and livestock loss due to wildlife encounters.
Habitat Management	% of people taking part in habitat mapping from vulnerable groups	Restoration plans, afforestation initiatives, wildlife-friendly land use practices	A2.2.2 Conduct afforestation and restoration initiatives by planting native and climate-resilient tree species, maintain critical habitats on degraded forest land to enhance biodiversity, improve soil stability, and support ecosystem regeneration. A3.1.2 Conduct participatory habitat mapping and wildlife distribution in the Kamdi corridor producing a comprehensive map of Kamdi corridor. A3.2.3 Informed through A3.1.2 and A3.2.1 identify and conduct habitat management activities (grassland	• Improved connectivity of wildlife corridors, enhanced biodiversity, and increased habitat quality. • Area of degraded habitat restored	• Strengthened ecological integrity of the Kamdi Corridor, facilitating safe wildlife movement and reducing habitat fragmentation

			management, wetland management, bio engineering in flood vulnerable riverbanks) within the corridor. A3.2.4 Review, assess and update the biodiversity priority sites along the Kamdi corridor informing long-term conservation direction.		
ESMS capacity	% of staff completing required E&S training modules % of staff trained on GBV/SEAH mitigation measures % of staff demonstrating competency improvements related to ESMS and safeguarding (pre/post assessment) Number of ESMS updates/revisions made per year % of staff aware of key ESMS procedures (tested through surveys or spot checks)	ESMP; staff training records and surveys	Staff training and capacity building	• All community facing and project management staff are trained in ESMS, and GBV/SEAH prevention • Staff knowledge of key ESMS procedures improved by end of year 1	Staff have increased knowledge and confidence in applying ESMS and safeguarding tools

5.1.2 Monitoring Frequency

This subsection will describe the monitoring frequency assigned to measure changes over time. Complex projects will need to have more recurrent monitoring and evaluation processes.

The project will implement a multi-tiered monitoring system to ensure comprehensive oversight, effective risk management, and adaptive learning throughout its implementation. The monitoring of the Environmental and Social Risks impacts as well as the mitigation measures will be conducted on the quarterly and annual basis throughout the project duration.

Occupational Health and Safety Monitoring
Occupational health and safety (OH) will be systematically monitored by the project team through regular assessments conducted at predefined intervals to track changes over time. Scheduled safety audits and risk assessments will be carried out to identify potential hazards and implement preventive measures, ensuring compliance with workplace safety standards. Additionally, ongoing training and capacity-building sessions will be provided to stakeholders on safety protocols, emergency preparedness, and risk mitigation strategies. Hazards related to small-scale construction will be documented in the ESCOP and monitored throughout the duration of the activity, with periodic reviews to ensure compliance and effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Early Warning System for Risk Reduction
The project's early warning system will undergo regular monitoring and evaluation to maintain its reliability and effectiveness. This system will serve as a critical tool for providing timely alerts to communities, enabling them to take proactive measures in response to potential threats. Whether related to flooding events, human-wildlife conflict, or other environmental risks, the early warning mechanism will be designed to provide sufficient lead time for communities to implement safety measures, thereby minimizing risks and safeguarding both human lives and livelihoods. Data from the system will be continuously reviewed to enhance response protocols and improve community preparedness.

Grievance Redress Mechanism
To promote transparency and accountability, all grievances raised by stakeholders will be systematically documented and addressed within a mutually agreed timeframe. A structured grievance redress mechanism will be in place to facilitate timely responses and resolutions. This mechanism will ensure that community concerns and feedback are acknowledged and integrated into project decision-making, fostering trust and engagement among beneficiaries.

Stakeholder Engagement and Participatory Monitoring
Quarterly stakeholder engagement meetings will be conducted in alignment with the project's stakeholder engagement plan. These forums will serve as a platform to track the progress of livelihood activities, assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures, and gather valuable feedback from stakeholders. Such participatory approach, will encourage the project for adaptive management practices, ensuring that implementation remains responsive to community needs and evolving challenges.

Project Coordination Committee Oversight
The Project Coordination Committee (PCC) will conduct biannual monitoring visits to evaluate project progress and impact. These visits will provide critical insights into the effectiveness of interventions and help refine implementation strategies to align with project objectives. The committee's findings and recommendations will be systematically documented and integrated into ongoing project planning and decision-making processes, ensuring continuous learning and improvement.

Tracking Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups
The inclusion of vulnerable groups will be systematically tracked using an activity monitoring template, developed as part of the project's robust monitoring framework. This template will capture disaggregated data on beneficiary participation, ensuring that marginalized and at-risk communities are effectively reached and supported. Regular data collection and analysis will help identify any gaps or challenges in participation, allowing for timely corrective actions to enhance equitable access to project benefits. Additionally, stakeholder consultations and periodic reviews will be conducted to validate the effectiveness of inclusion measures and adjust strategies accordingly. Our endline surveys and periodic reviews will also track how local people feel their voices are being heard as part of decision making and will track how fair local people perceive our processes to be.

Measurement of Project Achievements
Project performance will be assessed using key indicators tracked through a baseline survey conducted at the project's inception and an endline survey upon its completion. This comparative analysis will provide valuable insights into progress over time, enabling the project team to measure the overall effectiveness and impact of interventions. By leveraging this data-driven approach, the project will ensure evidence-based decision-making and continuous refinement of strategies to achieve its intended outcomes.

5.1.3 Participatory Monitoring

This subsection will include the following:

The participatory monitoring and evaluation activities carried out by throughout the project (e.g., community representatives overseeing baseline surveys).

Community members eligible for livelihood improvement activities will play an active role in monitoring their implementation. Organized into structured livelihood groups, these community members will conduct regular assessments to track the progress, effectiveness, and compliance of activities with environmental and social safeguards. This participatory monitoring approach ensures that beneficiaries remain engaged and accountable for the sustainable management of resources and equitable distribution of benefits. Additionally, joint monitoring efforts will be conducted, bringing together multiple stakeholders, including community representatives, project facilitators, and relevant local authorities. This collaborative framework fosters transparency, enhances adaptive management, and ensures that livelihood interventions align with environmental and social performance standards while addressing any emerging risks or grievances. By integrating stakeholder perspectives and fostering community ownership, the ESMS framework strengthens the long-term sustainability and resilience of livelihood initiatives.

Monitoring of biodiversity hotspots along the corridor at the initial stage of the project will produce a hotspots map that enables the project team to align activities sequentially to take future participatory actions for the remedy of the issues pertaining to the human wildlife conflict.

M&E framework has been developed for this project which also sets out the frequency of monitoring of the indicators and the activities associated with the achievement of the indicators. This M&E framework will be consulted with district level and community level stakeholders during the project inception. The goal is to finalize the framework based on their inputs, ensuring that they agree with the monitoring plan, its objectives, and the indicators proposed which also will align with the local priorities and ensure community buy-in.

Preliminary outcomes
Final PFs will describe any preliminary outcomes resulting from project implementation, if any.

6. Adaptive management

The project's adaptive management strategy is designed to be flexible and responsive to dynamic circumstances while ensuring that core principles are respected throughout. This strategy includes capacity building for all project staff to enhance their ability to adapt to challenges while implementing the ESMP. Staff will be trained in conflict resolution, communication strategies, and cultural sensitivity to ensure that they are equipped to address changing circumstances such as shifts in political landscapes, natural disasters, or evolving demands from donors and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs). To manage the risks of unforeseen events like staff turnover or changing political climates, the project will establish clear protocols for consistent communication with IPLCs and other stakeholders. This will involve regular engagement and feedback loops with the communities to ensure their perspectives are continuously integrated into decision-making. The FPIC process will remain a cornerstone, with steps taken to ensure that even under shifting circumstances, communities are fully informed, their consent is obtained in an ongoing manner, and their rights are prioritized. Moreover, an adaptive management framework will allow for periodic reviews and adjustments to the project plan, incorporating input from IPLCs and other stakeholders in real time. The project will set up a responsive mechanism to identify when adjustments are needed due to unforeseen circumstances and ensure that any modifications to the project are made with the full participation of affected communities, safeguarding their rights and interests throughout the project's life cycle. Further, as part of this adaptive management framework, community voices, opinions, and grievances identified through the

community-preferred GRM channels and community consultations will also inform adaptations to the project based on community feedback.

The ESMP will be routinely updated as the project progresses, including an annual review of progress and reporting to IUCN. In the case of any unforeseen circumstances or planned changes to the scope, design, implementation or operation of the project that are likely to cause an adverse change in the environmental or social risks or impacts of the project, the ESMP will be put under immediate review. This can include in the case of changes in project partners, activities, scope and context.

The review and process will include the following steps:

- ZSL Equity, Rights and Social Safeguards Technical Specialist raises the changes in ESMS risks and impacts with IUCN.
- ZSL Equity, Rights and Social Safeguards Technical Specialist reviews possible implications of the changes, including consulting with Project Affected People and any other relevant stakeholders.
- Conduct any necessary additional E&S assessment(s) and stakeholder engagement and update on the risk management strategy above.
- Update/ changes to any other relevant Safeguard Instruments associated with this ESMP.
- Internal review and approval.
- Submission to IUCN for approval; and
- Upon approval, disclose, implement and monitor the revised ESMP.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: International standards and guidelines that apply to this Project

ID	Title	Date	Source	Standard/ Guideline
1	World Bank Environmental and Social Framework. Including the ILO Core Labour Standards (the core labour standards consist of five standards, laid out in eight conventions)	2017	KfW 2019	Guidelines
2	IUCN ESMS Standards on: Indigenous People, Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage and Involuntary resettlement access restrictions, including the associated guidance notes.	2016	IUCN 2016	Guidelines
3	KfW Sustainability Guideline - Assessment and management of Environmental, Social, and Climate Aspects: Principles and Procedures	2021	KfW 2019	Guideline
4	The World Bank Group's General Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines, including General EHS Guidelines and Industry Specific Guidelines, as applicable	2007	KfW 2019	Guidelines
5	BMZ's Guidelines on Incorporating Human Rights Standards and Principles, Including Gender, in Programme Proposals for Bilateral German Technical and Financial Cooperation	2013	KfW 2019	Guidelines
6	UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-based Evictions and Displacement (namely §§ 42, 49, 52, 54 and 60)	2007	KfW 2019	Guidelines
8	FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)	2012	KfW 2019	Guidelines
11	UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials	1979	KfW 2019	Guidelines
12	Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials	1990	KfW 2019	Guidelines
13	Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights	2019		Guidelines
14	Use of Security Forces: Assessing and Managing Risks and Impacts	2017		Guidelines