

**COMBINED PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENTS / INTEGRATED  
SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET (PID/ISDS)  
CONCEPT STAGE**

**Report No.:** PIDISDSC14061

**Date Prepared/Updated:** 21-Jul-2015

**I. BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

<b>Country:</b>	Sri Lanka	<b>Project ID:</b>	P156021
		<b>Parent Project ID (if any):</b>	
<b>Project Name:</b>	Ecosystems Conservation and Management (P156021)		
<b>Region:</b>	SOUTH ASIA		
<b>Estimated Appraisal Date:</b>	16-Nov-2015	<b>Estimated Board Date:</b>	18-Feb-2016
<b>Practice Area (Lead):</b>	Environment & Natural Resources	<b>Lending Instrument:</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>Sector(s):</b>	General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (100%)		
<b>Theme(s):</b>	Biodiversity (50%), Environmental policies and institutions (25%), Land administration and management (25%)		
<b>Borrower(s):</b>	External Resources Department		
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	Department of Wildlife Conservation, Forest Department, Ministry of Tourism and Sports		
<b>Financing (in USD Million)</b>			
	<b>Financing Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	
	BORROWER/RECIPIENT	0.00	
	International Development Association (IDA)	40.00	
	Total Project Cost	40.00	
<b>Environmental Category:</b>	B - Partial Assessment		
<b>Concept Review Decision:</b>	Track II - The review did authorize the preparation to continue		
<b>Is this a Repeater project?</b>	No		
<b>Other Decision (as needed):</b>			

## **B. Introduction and Context**

### **Country Context**

Sri Lanka is a country long known for its achievements in human development. Its social indicators rank among the highest in South Asia and compare favorably with those in middle-income countries, largely due to the enduring commitment of public policy to investment in the social sectors. Economic growth has averaged 7.5% over the last 5 years since 2010, driven by industry and services, which is reasonably good record, especially when viewed against the backdrop of three decades of civil conflict. Construction has lifted the post-conflict economy, contributing 15% of growth. Tourist arrivals have tripled. Infrastructure development and post-conflict reconstruction has increased the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) share of construction from 7.6% in 2009 to 10.3% in 2013. As a result, the share of industry in GDP expanded from 29.7% to 32.5%, while agriculture dropped its share from 12.7% to 10.8% during the same period. The share of services remained almost the same. Having achieved per capita income of US\$ 3,625 in 2014, Sri Lanka envisages reaching upper middle-income status in a few years' time.

Among the binding constraints to rural growth is the mounting evidence of a rapidly degrading natural resource base with predictable consequences for agriculture and other resource dependent activities. Poorer communities that live in the periphery of forests are most affected by natural resource loss and degradation, since they are most directly reliant on ecosystem services for their well-being. The livelihoods of many of these communities are directly and indirectly depend on the on the health of the natural resources. Damage to the environment, as well as a lack of clean water and land suitable for farming or growing food, leads to more hunger, illness, poverty and reduced opportunities to make a living. Poorer people are also less resilient to natural or man-made disasters, including climate change. There are many examples within the country that demonstrated looking after natural resources makes poorer communities more resilient. Healthy forests, for example, have proven to protect agricultural land and villages from soil erosion and flooding. Therefore, strengthened management of natural resources is especially significant and would yield a double dividend by unleashing incentives for rural growth while enhancing the sustainability of resource-use.

### **Sectoral and Institutional Context**

The value of the nation's biodiversity has not gone unrecognized in recent times as many modern governments enacted laws aimed at the protection of biological resources. With the highest biodiversity per unit area in Asia, Sri Lanka is ranked as a global biodiversity hot spot. Yet the country is confronted with serious degradation of its ecosystems and the biodiversity they host. About 30% of forests in the dry zone are degraded and forests in wet zone are highly fragmented losing contiguous nature required by many species to survive. These trends will continue unless more systematic and stringent corrective measures are taken. Seen from a broader perspective, the primary causes of ecosystem degradation include unplanned development, a growing infrastructure footprint, gaps in legislation, poor law enforcement and lack of and weak implementation of existing Protected Areas (PA) management plans.

Environmental conditions and access to natural resources and other environmental goods and services are closely linked to the livelihoods, health and vulnerability of people, specifically for people living in poverty – particularly women and children. Expanded investment to improve the poor's access to these environmental assets can generate strong returns for poverty reduction and contribute to pro-poor growth. Yet, despite their critical importance, environmental assets

continue to be degraded at an alarming rate. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment found that 60% of ecosystem services are used unsustainably and concluded that “any progress achieved in addressing the goals of poverty and hunger eradication, improved health, and environmental protection is unlikely to be sustained if most of the ecosystem services on which humanity relies continue to be degraded.”

GoSL and the World Bank are aligned toward strengthening environmental protection by enhancing environmental governance, safeguarding natural habitats and biodiversity and restoring critically damaged ecosystems in ways that contribute to conservation, poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability in Sri Lanka’s development process. These objectives are embodied in the proposed Eco-systems Conservation and Management Project. At the heart of the proposed project is the recognition that human beings live within the boundaries of the protected ecosystems and rely on life-supporting ecological services. Hence, the proposed project addresses the need to involve local populations in the development of the specific approaches and strategies in order to ensure long-term sustainability through benefit-sharing with the communities by developing income earning opportunities hand in hand with protecting the ecosystem. Such an approach will minimize not only the human-biodiversity conflict – but also human-human conflict in specific areas and establish the basis for a common culture of environment protection among the local population.

#### **Relationship to CAS/CPS/CPF**

The project has not been identified in the on-going Country Partnership Strategy (2012-2016). However, preserving natural assets and addressing the impacts of climate change have been identified as priorities in the Strategic Country Diagnostic (SCD) to address sustainability challenges. The SCD will inform Sri Lanka’s next Country Partnership Framework that is scheduled to be finalized in Fiscal Year 2016. There is significant government demand for support to address these important environmental sustainability challenges. Within these challenges, the SCD identifies many of the environmental risks identified above and calls for the need to ensure stewardship of Sri Lanka’s natural assets as a basis for lasting prosperity and quality of life as one of the priorities for sustainability. This is in line with country’s own priorities and new development framework. The SCD also emphasizes the important of natural resources for further development of tourism in the country. The proposed Project also directly responds to the World Bank’s goals of eradicating extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. In this context, the Project will support inclusive economic growth among some of country’s poorest communities living in the buffer zones of Protected Areas (PAs) by addressing critical issues such as human-elephant conflict that impacts their lives and livelihood and promote co-management of some of the forest resources aimed at benefit sharing. It would contribute directly to the government policies of increasing forest cover up to 35% of the total land area by 2020 for number of ecosystem benefits, improve and increase the revenue generating capability of the wildlife and forest sectors and addressing human-wildlife conflicts that threatens the wildlife populations and lives and livelihoods of people.

### **C. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

#### **Proposed Development Objective(s) (From PCN)**

The project development objective (PDO) is to improve the management and stewardship of specific Protected Areas and other selected biologically critical locations in the terrestrial, marine and wetland ecosystems of Sri Lanka.

#### **Key Results (From PCN)**

Achievement of the PDO will entail a series of structured and interrelated interventions that would: (i) support decentralized management and decision-making in PA conservation agencies in ways that reward success; (ii) encourage cooperation between Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) and Forest Department (FD) in managing PAs on an ecosystem basis to create incentives to promote landscape management and overcome customary boundaries; (iii) test innovative models for converting human-elephant conflict (HEC) to a situation of human-elephant co-existence (HECOEX) in partnership with the affected local communities; (iv) invest in training and institutional strengthening on ecosystems conservation and management; and (v) improve PA infrastructure facilities and visitor services to raise the quality and revenue potential of nature-based tourism by value addition without exceeding the carrying capacity of PAs.

The following is a list of the key indicators to assess the progress toward achieving the PDO:

- (a) 500,000 ha of landscapes certified by internationally or nationally recognized standards that incorporate conservation and management considerations
- (b) 250,000 ha brought under enhanced biodiversity protection measured through PA area score cards for PAs managed by DWC and FD
- (c) 50% reduction of HEC-induced damages to crops and properties lives in HECOEX project sites
- (d) 75% reduction in the loss of human lives in HECOEX project sites
- (e) 50% increase visitor satisfaction with the interpretation services and facilities in the PAs

#### **D. Concept Description**

The PDO will be achieved through: (i) improved management of natural habitats within selected conservation landscapes; (ii) initiation of innovative programs to reduce human-elephant conflict through co-existence; (iii) enhancement of the revenue earning opportunities of PAs and affected communities through upgraded nature-based tourism and community partnerships to reduce dependence on forest resources; and (iv) strengthening of the institutional capacity and investment capability of PA conservation agencies.

Project's overarching approach: Conservation landscape management. The Project will primarily concentrate its investments and activities in three priority conservation landscapes comprising contiguous areas with unique ecological, cultural and socio-economic characteristics. The selected conservation landscapes are dominated by PAs belonging to both DWC and FD. The three landscapes also contain ecologically sensitive sites and wildlife corridors outside the designated PA network which were identified in a Protected Area Gap Analysis Study as needing strategic conservation interventions. The three landscapes comprise: (i) the biodiversity rich landscape ranging from the Mirissa large marine mammal gathering area in the South to Kanneliya-Dediyagala-Nakiyadeniya forest to Galways Land Sanctuary (SA) in the South West and Central wet zone; (ii) from the South Eastern dry and arid zone, the forest ecosystem ranging from Bundala National Park (NP) to Maduru Oya NP, which is the landscape with the largest PA network in the country; and (iii) from the mixed climatic zone, the landscape ranging from Victoria-Randenigala-Rantambe to the integrated land-seascape of Pigeon Island Marine NP. All project activities will take place within these landscapes and are expected to contribute towards establishing effective ecological networks, securing the integrity of ecosystems and viable populations of species – while promoting green infrastructure development – within the conservation landscapes. The project would be implemented over five years. The project's four

main components are listed below.

#### Component 1: Promoting of Ecosystem Conservation and Management (US\$15 million)

Component 1 funds will be allocated through an annual competitive call for proposals from DWC and FD through their regional network to promote demand-driven and decentralized approaches to conservation and management of natural ecosystems. Proposals will be submitted for funding under three windows, each of which would support specific objectives. Component 1 consists of the following sub-components/activities:

- (a) Preparation of strategic conservation landscape plans including: technical assistance and training to MoTS and MoMDE; organization of workshops to assist in the development of strategic plans; guidelines for the construction and/or utilization of green infrastructure; and determination of environmental service values of different ecosystems, particularly outside the PAs for making informed development planning decisions in selected conservation landscapes;
- (b) Funding Window 1 for carrying out of activities aimed at encouraging coordination of conservation and management activities in the supported landscapes outside the PA network;
- (c) Funding Window 2 for carrying out of activities related to PA conservation and management, including but not limited to: rehabilitation and development of water resources in PAs; habitat management, including control of invasive species and creation of habitats; rehabilitation of existing roads; improvements in existing park infrastructure; species monitoring and implementation of species recovery program; protection of inviolate areas for species conservation; implementation of real-time field based monitoring systems; and strengthening enforcement of laws and regulations aimed at protecting PAs; and
- (d) Funding Window 3 for community participation in reducing deforestation and forest degradation through mobilization of communities whose livelihoods depend on the forests in the supported landscapes and adjacent buffer zones; joint identification by FD and the relevant communities of conservation development priorities; preparation of community action plans; and implementation of those plans.

#### Component 2: Demonstrating Human Elephant Conflict Management through Co-existence (US \$11 million)

HEC mitigation in Sri Lanka and in Asia has been based solely on attempts to restrict elephant movements by limiting them in national parks through ill-conceived elephant drives, translocations and attempts to restrict movement by electric fences located on the boundaries of national parks. They have largely failed because they neglect the root causes of the problem, and do not consider management on a landscape level. With two thirds of Sri Lanka's elephant population having home ranges going beyond DWC PAs and with inadequate carrying capacity for elephants within the PA network to accommodate all elephants in the wild, this component will explore options for Human Elephant Coexistence (HECOEX) on a landscape basis, utilizing FD forest reserves as well DWC protected areas as outlined in the National Policy on Conservation of Wild Elephants. This component consists of the following sub-components/activities:

- (a) Implementation of projects for demonstrating human elephant co-existence within high HEC areas in selected conservation landscapes through: (i) implementation of a landscape conservation strategy aimed at allowing elephants to continue ranging outside PAs based on the use of ongoing shifting agriculture outside PAs to create optimal habitat for elephants and providing benefits to farmers through elephant conservation; (ii) management of elephants in

Elephant Conservation Areas (ECA) and Managed Elephant Ranges (MERs) which are lands outside the PA network without transfer or change in land ownership; (iii) carrying out of studies to identify viable economic incentives for the purposes of management; (iv) development of policies and procedures and a governance mechanism for provision of such economic incentives; provision of viable economic incentives in human elephant co-existence sites including but not limited to: cash transfers to people residing in the human elephant co-existence sites in return for environmental services; establishment of insurance schemes and compensation mechanisms to mitigate the impact of elephant destruction; and promotion of opportunities for community-managed nature-based tourism, such as elephant viewing, in order to demonstrate the economic benefits to communities of coexistence with elephants; and (v) and promotion of alternative livelihood options such as bee keeping that deters elephants from human habitation; and

(b) Development of a national master plan for mitigation of the human elephant conflict and practical models for human elephant coexistence.

#### Component 3: Enhancing the Quality of Nature-based Tourism in support of PA Conservation and Management (US\$8 million)

This component will support responsible nature-based tourism activities for diversifying tourism products and boosting revenues and promote conservation and environmental education. This component consists of the following sub-components/activities:

- (a) Development and implementation of plans for nature-based tourism and visitor services in PAs selected on the basis of needs assessments;
- (b) Carrying out of studies aimed at establishing the optimum number of visitors in selected PAs based on the carrying capacity limits of such PAs to avoid over visitation detrimental to the ecosystem; and preparation of guidelines for sustainable tourism management in PAs; and
- (c) Identification and implementation of visitor services in PAs within Supported Conservation Landscapes including: (i) improvement of visitor facilities through, inter alia, construction of nature trails, wayside interpretation points, observation towers, wildlife hides, and campgrounds; (ii) development of innovative services, such as night safaris, non-motorized boats for wildlife viewing, kayaking or canoeing down rivers flowing through PAs; and (iii) intensive training opportunities in interpretation services and language skills for game and volunteer guides.

#### Component 4: Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Investment Capability for Ecosystem Conservation and Management (US\$6 million)

This component will strengthen the institutional capacity and investment capability for conservation and management and support the project management related activities and consists of the following sub-components/activities:

- (a) Upgrading and strengthening of the capacity of the Wildlife Training Center and Sri Lanka Forestry Institute through: (i) provision of staff training, and enhancement of the quality of the training programs, including curriculum revisions; (ii) carrying out basic improvements to existing infrastructure facilities to the Wildlife Training Centre and Sri Lanka Forestry Institute; (iii) implementation of training evaluation procedures; and (iv) establishing twinning arrangements with training institutions;
- (b) Improving skills and capacity of conservation agencies through: (i) strengthening the strategic management capacity and staff skills of DWC and FD; (ii) provision of equipment and construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure; (iii) development of adaptive field management; (iv) enhancement of the enforcement competence of DWC and FD through staff training and

provision of technical assistance; (v) establishing twinning arrangements with international conservation agencies; (vi) building capacity of FD staff in community approaches; (vii) monitoring and evaluation of community-related activities;

(c) Monitoring and evaluation, targeted studies and technical assistance for: (i) carrying out of project monitoring and evaluation and specific studies aimed at effective project implementation; (ii) assisting MoMDE in natural resource management planning, policy making and environmental performance monitoring; and (iii) monitoring of project performance and evaluation of project outcomes.

(d) Project management including incremental operating costs associated with project management, staff recruitment, consulting services, transportation, equipment and training of administrators covering range of topics such as administration, planning, budgeting, fiduciary activities and monitoring and evaluation related to landscape and PA management.

## II. SAFEGUARDS

### A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The field level activities of the proposed project will focus on ecosystems in priority areas identified in Sri Lanka's Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan the National Conservation Strategy and Protected Area Gap Analysis Study. Priority will be given to three landscapes of contiguous areas covering three broad climatic zones, which include: (1) the southwest and central wet zones; (ii) southeast dry and arid zone; (iii) mixed climatic zone consisting of sections of the dry, intermediate and wet zone. These three landscapes are dominated by Protected Areas (PAs) belonging to Department of Wildlife Conservation and Forest Department and also contain ecologically sensitive sites and wildlife corridors outside the designated PA network. The project will support crucial and high priority interventions to conserve and manage such ecosystems and include, where appropriate, close collaboration with the local population to ensure the long-term sustainability of the efforts. In addition, to reduce further fragmentation of critical forest areas that provide ecosystems goods and services beyond biodiversity conservation, sites will be selected for community forestry initiatives on the basis of conservation issues faced by the respective forest reserves, including an analysis of the vulnerability of forests to deforestation and forest degradation covering mainly dry and arid zones of Sri Lanka.

### B. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The borrower has a reasonably good track record and demonstrated capacity for implementing and monitoring safeguards. Project implementation will entail the creation of a stand-alone project management unit (PMU) at the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MoTS), as it is a new Ministry under the current administration. However, the Project will be primarily implemented by FD (an agency under MoMDE)) and DWC (an agency under MoTS). Policy guidance to the project will be provided by a National Project Steering Committee, which will be reconstituted. With DWC and FD having oversight responsibilities for environmental safeguards in Sri Lanka, there will be no dearth of environment expertise and input to the project. Sri Lanka has a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework for natural resource management and conservation. Most of the conservation ordinances have been reviewed and updated in the last decade or so by the government. Institutionally, the 2 agencies have been recipients of donor funding for capacity building and have undergone institutional reforms with the introduction of decentralization and empowerment of field staff, more accountability and transparency, market based incentives and wider stakeholder participation in the planning and decision making process. Both departments also have divisions responsible for working with buffer zone communities, identifying their needs and concerns and

developing programs that are beneficial for the communities and to conservation. Therefore, the capacity of the implementing agencies and the enabling legal environment are adequate for the purpose of planning and implementing this project.

The borrower has already prepared number of safeguard instruments including Environmental Assessment and Management Framework (EAMF), Social Management Framework (SMF) and Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) as part of the preparation of the project before it was dropped in 2011. Since the scope of the project, especially project components and activities remain the same, these framework will continue to be applicable. However, in order to identify the current country context and priorities, these frameworks will be updated following consultations prior to appraisal, and will be approved again by the Bank and disclosed to public. If site specific activities are identified prior to appraisal, the relevant management plans (EMPs, RAPs and or IPPs) will be prepared for review, clearance and disclosed.

### C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Nadeera Rajapakse (GENDR)

Susrutha Pradeep Goonesekera (GSURR)

### D. POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	Overall, the proposed project will have a positive environmental impact. However, management of PAs may involve affecting ecologically sensitive micro-ecosystems within the PA network such as removal of invasive species, improving park roads, water holes and development of interpretation facilities, etc. Detailed activities are not known yet and will depend on the proposals submitted by the PA managers. The borrower will update the EAMF prepared in lieu of stand-alone Environmental Assessment.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	The project will be implemented almost entirely in ecologically sensitive natural eco-systems. While there shall be no conversion or degradation of natural habitats, this policy has been triggered as a precaution to encourage implementing agencies to be more cautious with the EA process when carrying out activities inside sensitive ecosystems such as construction work, removal of invasive species, etc.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	TBD	Project areas consist of predominantly forested areas, formally protected or not. While the project shall not finance activities that will either degrade or convert forest land, this policy is considered as a precaution to encourage implementing agencies to be more cautious with the EA process when carrying out activities inside sensitive ecosystems. This policy



		will also ensure community co-management activities in forested areas are undertaken based on relevant guidelines.
Pest Management OP 4.09	TBD	The project is not likely to trigger OP 4.09 on Pest Management. The EAMF will include screening procedures for pest management and pesticide use for activities considered under the Human-elephant conflict mitigation strategies may involve cultivation or promotion of production systems. At this stage, information on the likelihood of the project financing pest control in cultivated land in the buffer zones, is not available. A final determination will be made prior to appraisal stage.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	The policy applies given the uncertainty regarding the exact locations of activities to be carried out under the project. Some forests or landscapes concerned by the project might be considered to have historical or cultural significance. The EAMF would include specific provisions to assess the potential impacts considered to have historical or or cultural significance prior to any activities are undertaken and for the treatment of PCRs that may be discovered during project implementation.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	TBD	It is known that indigenous communities are located in the periphery of Gal Oya and Maduru Oya National Parks and may possibly be affected by the proposed interventions. However, the applicability of this policy in Sri Lanka is yet to be determined. If the applicability is confirmed, the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework will be updated consistent with the requirements of this policy.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	Although involuntary land acquisition and resettlement of individuals and/or families will not take place as a result of project activities, ecosystem restoration and conservation planning and the HEC pilot projects are likely to affect land use patterns of the communities. OP 4.12 has been triggered in order to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on livelihoods.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	Not applicable as the project does not involve new construction/rehabilitation of any dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	There will not be any activities in international waterways or land-based activities that could be detrimental to international waterways supported by the project and therefore the policy is not triggered.

Projects in Disputed Areas OP/ BP 7.60	No	There are no disputed areas in the project areas; hence the policy is not triggered.
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### **E. Safeguard Preparation Plan**

#### **1. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS**

12-Oct-2015

#### **2. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS.**

The updated EAMF, SMF and IPPF (if triggered) are planned to be completed by October 9, 2015. Management/action plans (EMPs/RAPs/IPPs) For site-specific interventions identified during project preparation will be undertaken by the borrower as part of the appraisal requirements.

### **III. Contact point**

#### **World Bank**

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**IV. For more information contact:**

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**V. Approval**

Task Team Leader(s):	Name: Darshani De Silva, Abdelaziz Lagnaoui	
<i>Approved By</i>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name: Maged Mahmoud Hamed (SA)	Date: 27-Jul-2015
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Kseniya Lvovsky (PMGR)	Date: 28-Jul-2015
Country Director:	Name: Rolande Simone Pryce (CD)	Date: 30-Jul-2015

1 Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.