

# BIOPAMA

From Knowledge to Action for a Protected Planet



[www.biopama.org](http://www.biopama.org)

The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA) is an initiative of the ACP Group of States funded by the European Union's 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund.

## ESMS Manual for applicants

### **Note:**

*The BIOPAMA Action Component reviews projects not only on the technical merit of the activities, but also on the potential of the project to cause unwanted negative environmental and social impacts. This is to ensure that all projects meet the IUCN overarching safeguard policy, which is operationalised via the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS).*

*The ESMS risk identification and management procedure has been adapted to the needs and specificities of the BIOPAMA Action Component, and has been made an intrinsic part of the BIOPAMA project cycle management process.*

*This manual will guide applicants, regional teams and the Secretariat under the BIOPAMA Program through the ESMS review and risk management procedure, to **ensure that environmental and social risks are effectively addressed in the design and implementation of grant-projects funded by the BIOPAMA Action Component.***

*This Manual should act as a guidance tool to be used to supplement IUCN's safeguard policy articulated in the IUCN Environmental and Social Management System ([ESMS](#)).*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Definition:

The ESMS offers a step by step approach and set of tools for **identifying and managing** environmental and social risks of projects implemented or supported by IUCN. The system ensures that:

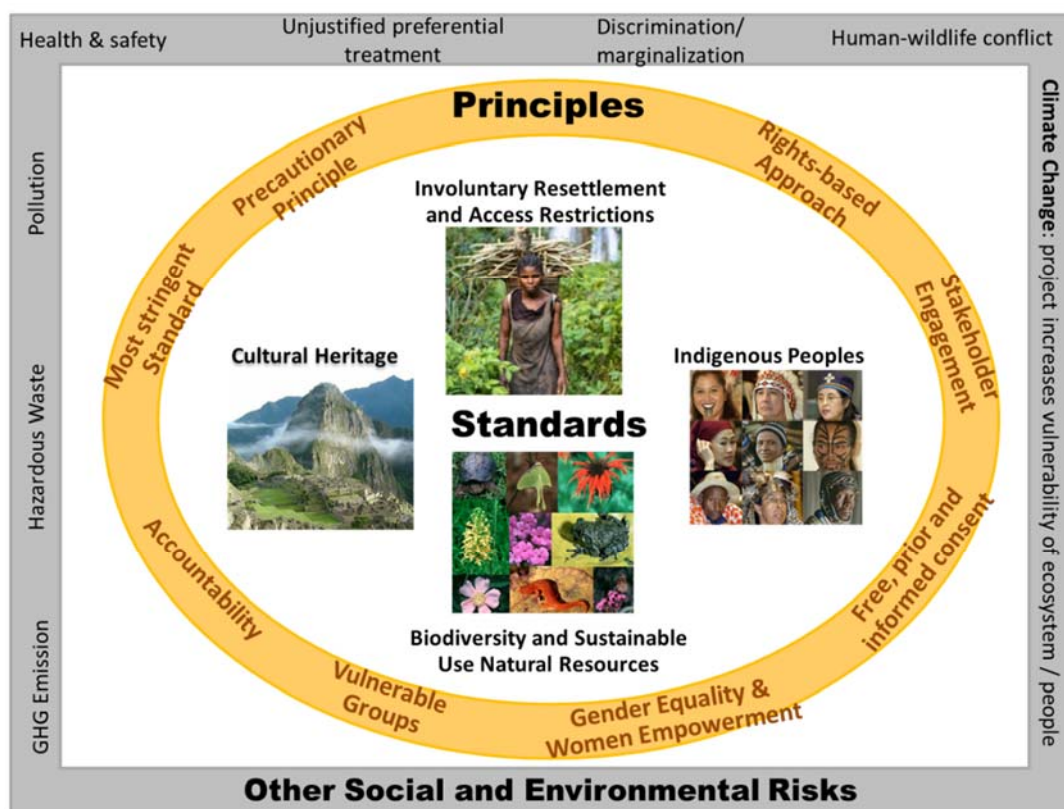
- all IUCN projects are screened for negative environmental or social impacts,
- and that suitable measures are developed to avoid, minimise, or compensate for these impacts.
- It also ensures that the implementation of mitigation measures and their effectiveness are monitored, and that any new impacts emerging during project implementation are addressed.

### 1.2 ESMS Policy Framework:

The ESMS is guided by **eight overarching principles** and **four standards** that reflect key environmental and social areas that are at the heart of IUCN's conservation approach – see figure 1 illustrating IUCN's ESMS Policy Framework.

Thematic coverage of the ESMS, however, is wider than the issues covered in the principles and standards and also requires taking other negative environmental and social impact and risk issues into consideration as indicated in the grey outer frame (by examples). The policy further requires as well climate proofing of projects.

Figure 1: ESMS Policy Framework



### 1.3 ESMS Steps for BIOPAMA AC Medium Grants

The application of ESMS review and risk management procedures for BIOPAMA AC Medium Grant (MG) includes the following main steps and considerations:

- Providing clear guidance about safeguard requirements in the **Call for Proposals** including emphasising the applicant's responsibility to identify risks and develop appropriate mitigation measures;
- **A project template and a dedicated ESMS Screening questionnaire** which makes reference to the ESMS and requires grantees to provide ESMS-relevant context information;
- Providing support on **risk identification and development of mitigation measures** during the design of the project proposal;
- **Screening the project proposal on potential risks**, deciding about the risk category (low, moderate or high) and deciding whether the project can be cleared, only cleared under conditions or not recommended for funding;
- **Updating the project proposal** to meet the specified conditions - e.g. adding ESMS review steps to the project such as conducting a risk assessment, the identification of mitigation measures or the development other ESMS tools;
- Implementing the **ESMS actions** and the monitoring the Environmental and Social Management Plan (**ESMP**)
- Supervision of ESMP implementation.

The diagram below visualizes how these ESMS steps are integrated into the different decision points of the BIOPAMA MG project cycle.

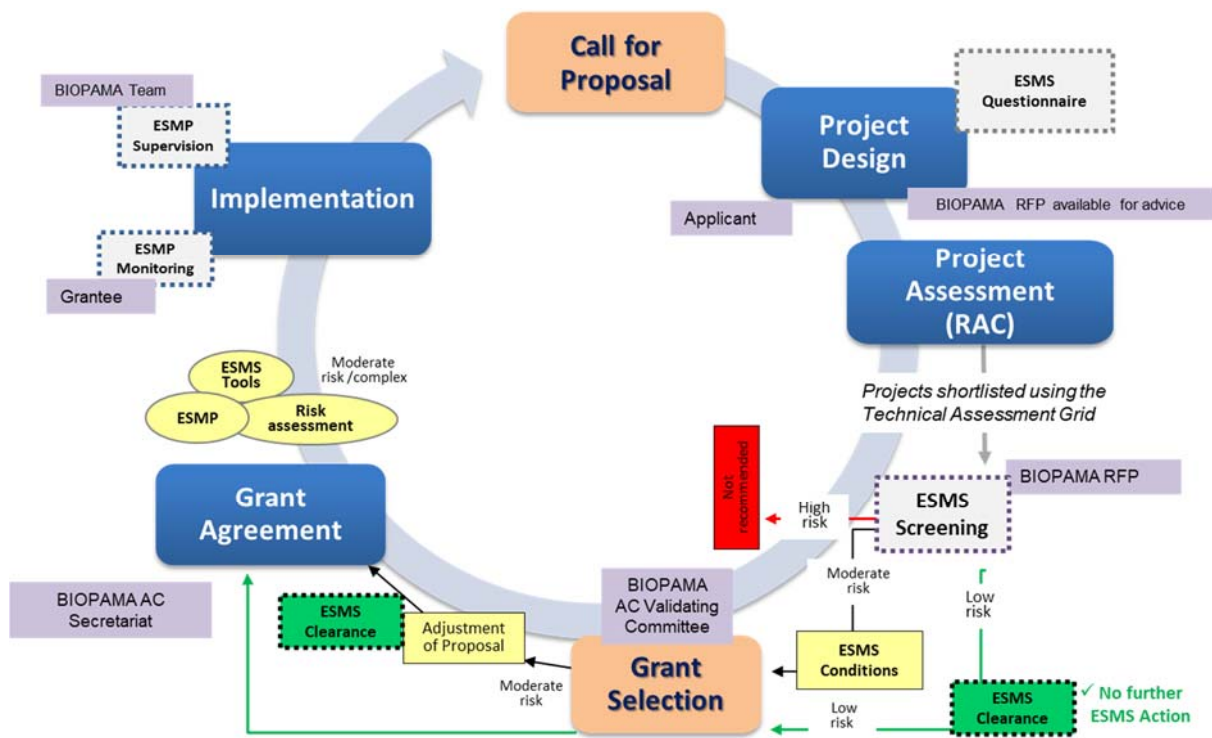


Figure 2: ESMS Review Steps for Medium Grants (MG)

### 1.4 Roles and responsibilities

The different steps of ESMS application and roles and responsibilities are further summarized in table 1 below. Each step is then explained in full detail and with methodological guidance in the chapters that follow.

Table 1: ESMS Review Steps, Roles and Guidance

ESMS steps within BIOPAMA Cycle	Project category	Responsible Party	Supporting Party	Guidance/templates
<b>Project Design</b>				
1. Familiarize with IUCN Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) as explained in Call for Proposal and on BIOPAMA website	all projects	BIOPAMA AC Applicant		ESMS Guidance
2. Complete ESMS Screening Questionnaire that is part of the BIOPAMA AC Application Form	all projects	BIOPAMA AC Applicant		BIOPAMA Screening Questionnaire
3. Assess risks, prepare risk mitigation measures and relevant ESMS tools and consult with communities/ affected peoples – seek support from BIOPAMA Focal Point on any questions	all projects	BIOPAMA AC Applicant	BIOPAMA AC Regional Focal Point (RFP)	ESMS Guidance
<b>Project Assessment</b>				
4. Perform an ESMS scan on the basis of the information provided by the applicants to inform the completion of the technical assessment grid during the RAC meeting	all projects	BIOPAMA AC RFP		
5. Screen on environmental and social risks, assign risk category and analyse applied ESMS tools and level of consultation with affected peoples; <b>ESMS Screening</b> applies a tiered approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no further steps for projects considered <i>low risks</i>,</li> <li>• <i>moderate risk</i> projects require adjustment of proposal</li> <li>• <i>high risk</i> projects are not recommended for selection</li> </ul>	projects shortlisted using the technical assessment grid	BIOPAMA AC RFP	BIOPAMA AC Global Team, ESMS / Safeguard Experts	Template ESMS Screening Report
6. Integrate Screening results into the evaluation of MGs proposals	projects shortlisted/techn. assessment grid	BIOPAMA AC RFP	BIOPAMA AC Global Team	
<b>Grant Selection</b>				
7. Decide selection of the proposal on the basis of the RAC Report and the ESMS Screening Report which might imply that selection is conditional on completing required ESMS actions	low and moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Validating Committee		
<b>Gap Closure prior to Grant Agreement</b>				
8. Adjust project proposal to reflect the ESMS Screening conditions; depending on the significance of risks this requires to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Undertake an E&amp;S assessment or community consultations, develop an ESMP with mitigation measures (appropriately budgeted for)<sup>1</sup> or</li> <li>(b) Include E&amp;S assessments or the development of other ESMS tools</li> </ul>	moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Applicant		

<sup>1</sup> Option (a) is selected for projects with few potential adverse social and environmental risks that require limited social and environmental assessment to determine how the identified potential impacts will be avoided or when avoidance is not possible, minimized, mitigated and managed, typically through application of good practice, mitigation measures and stakeholder engagement during project implementation.

as project activity (appropriately budgeted for) <sup>2</sup>				
9. Review whether all conditions from the ESMS Screening were incorporated into the Proposal and issue ESMS Clearance to enable Grant Agreement	moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Global Team	BIOPAMA AC RFP, ESMS / Safeguard Experts	
<b>Implementation: Monitoring and Supervision</b>				
10. Implement ESMP as specified under 8 (a) or develop and implement E&S assessments and other ESMS tools specified under 8 (b) and document mitigation measures in form of an ESMP <sup>3</sup>	moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Grantee	BIOPAMA AC RFP, ESMS / Safeguard Experts	ESMP template
11. Report on ESMP implementation - as part of project reporting	moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Grantee		ESMP template
12. Supervise implementation of ESMP and, if needed, update risk category and/or mitigation measures	low and moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC RFP	ESMS / Safeguard Experts	
13. Inclusion of ESMS implementation in interim and final BIOPAMA AC project reporting as well as any lessons learned and emerging risks	moderate risk projects	BIOPAMA AC Global Team	BIOPAMA AC RFP, ESMS / Safeguard Experts	
14. Inform the EC DEVCO and ACP Secretariat about project implementation and ESMS issues (including cases of Grievance)		BIOPAMA AC Global Team	BIOPAMA RFP, ESMS / Safeguard Experts	

## 2. ESMS and BIOPAMA AC Project Design

### 2.1 Call for Proposal - ESMS Guidance

The instructions included in the Call for Proposal will give basic information about the need to comply with the requirements of the ESMS. It will further refer the applicant to the BIOPAMA AC ESMS Manual where further guidance on the ESMS can be found.

This guidance explains the objectives and requirements of the ESMS Standards and clarifies under what **conditions the Standards are triggered**. This information is important as this will determine whether they need to follow the requirements laid out in the Standard including the need to develop specific tools such as an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) or a Action Plan to Mitigate Impacts from Access Restrictions.

The guidance will further explain the need to adhere to the ESMS principles in particular ensuring meaningful stakeholder consultation, give particular attention to vulnerable groups within the project site, and to seek opportunities for improving gender equality and empower women.

The main point is that the applicant understands that his/her project proposal will **not only be judged on the technical quality but also on the ability to identify and manage environmental and social risks and to fully comply with requirements of the Standards that have been triggered.**

<sup>2</sup> Option (b) is selected for more complex projects with numerous and/or varied potential adverse social and environmental risks; in particular if the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions or the Standard on Indigenous Peoples is triggered and the development of respective ESMS tools is required;

<sup>3</sup> Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

## 2.2 ESMS Screening Questionnaire of the MG Application Form

All BIOPAMA AC MG applicants have to answer a series of questions in the dedicated ESMS Screening Questionnaire that are **compulsory and key for the completion of the application**.

**!** All BIOPAMA AC applicants have to pay a special attention to the ESMS dimension of their projects, as it constitutes a critical dimension of the quality dimension of their project. Projects overlooking the ESMS dimension and presenting high risks due to the lack of preparatory assessments, absence or poor consultation, insufficient measures for mitigating risks won't be cleared nor suggested for a BIOPAMA AC Award.

The purpose of the ESMS Screening Questionnaire is to check for ESMS-relevant information which would support the ESMS screening. As such, the applicants are asked, among others, about the presence of indigenous peoples in the project area, whether the project supports enforcement of protected area regulations, about gender-related risks and whether the project includes any form of construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure that might affect biodiversity or cultural resources, the use of pesticides or risks related to invasive species.

The formal risk assessment and risk classification is undertaken by the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points during the ESMS Screening (see chapter below).

**!** However, before this, **during the project design phase, the BIOPAMA MG applicants should assess any likely environmental and social risks of their projects and come up with appropriate ways to avoid or manage risks and to meet the requirements of relevant ESMS Standards.**

**!** More importantly, **stakeholder consultation and engagement should be an integral part of the project design and implementation**, in order to ensure that communities have provided broad support to project activities and have been able to raise any concerns. Having effectively integrated the above will significantly increase the chance of a proposal being considered for funding.

The ESMS Questionnaire helps to check the following areas:

- Stakeholder engagement: Have stakeholders been engaged during project design (in particular women)? Have they been able to raise any concerns?
- Identification of potential adverse social and environmental impacts
- ESMS Standards: Are any of the four standards triggered by the project activities? What are the respective risk issues?
- Climate Change: does the project fail to take effects of climate change appropriately into considerations and as such might increase vulnerability of ecosystems or of communities or jeopardizing the effectiveness of project activities or sustainability of intended changes?

The BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points will be available to answer any general query about the ESMS Standards, ESMS principles and ESMS procedures along the project cycle. They will also be able to provide targeted support on the proposal under development and can help grantees with the identification of risks, the development of mitigation measures, the determination whether a Standard is triggered and whether this would require the development of specific ESMS tools.

### 3 ESMS and BIOPAMA AC Project Assessment

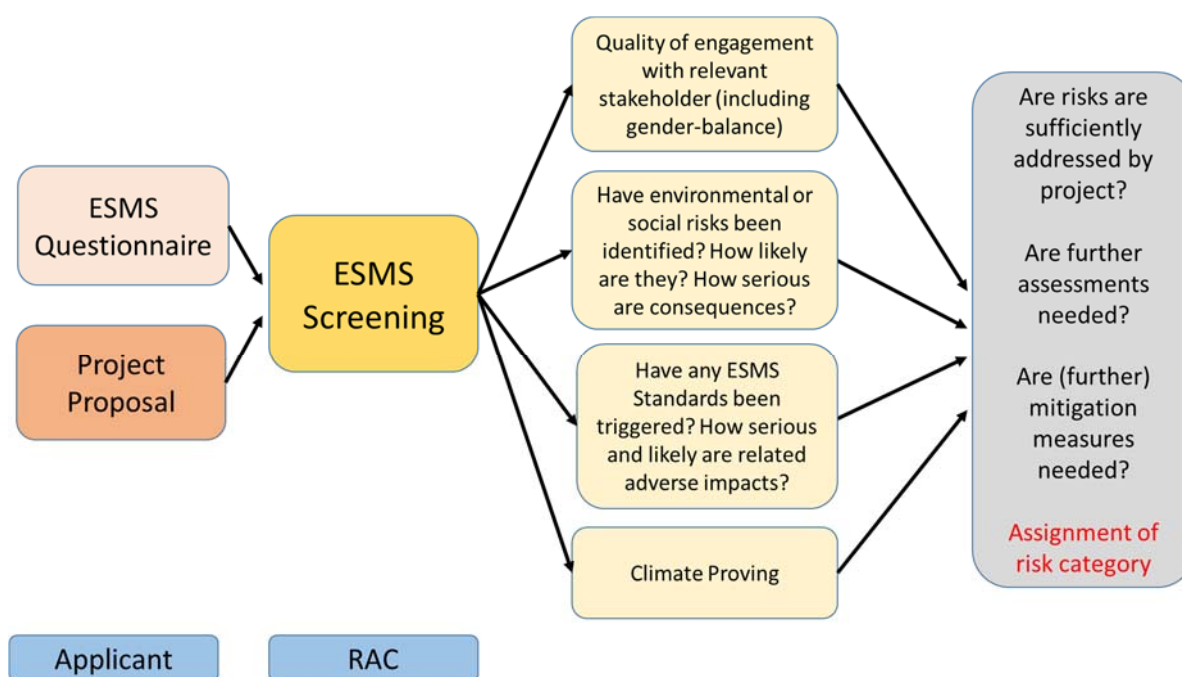
#### 3.1 ESMS Screening and risk categories

As part of the project appraisal procedure, BIOPAMA MG proposals will be screened by the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points on environmental and social risks. This will happen on the basis of the Project Proposal and the information provided by the BIOPAMA applicants in the ESMS Screening Questionnaire.

As illustrated in figure 3 the Screening concludes in the **assignment of a risk category** and in the **judgment whether project risks are already sufficiently addressed by the proposed project design or whether assessments are needed to better understand the risks** (or further consultations with affected groups).

! It also determines whether the additional measures are needed to further mitigate identified risks.

Figure 3: ESMS Screening





### 3.2 Risk Categories

An important element of the screening is assigning an appropriate risk category to the project as this will guide the steps that the applicant and BIOPAMA Secretariat will take in response.

! The **two main questions** that guide the risk categorization and the determination of significance are:

- What are all the **potential (plausible) negative impacts** that may arise as a result of project implementation and what is the **likelihood** of these impacts arising?
- How serious would the **consequence** or **magnitude** of each impact be? This should consider the expected duration and scale of the impact, whether it is reversible or not, whether cumulative negative impacts are expected, and the sensitivity of the receptor. The latter require answering the following questions:
  - What is the “receptor” for each of these impacts? i.e. who or what would be negatively affected? Possible receptors could be communities or individuals, biodiversity, cultural resources etc.
  - How sensitive is each of these receptors? i.e. how easily can they be significantly affected by project activities?

**Figure 4: Matrix for establishing significance of risk factors**

Likelihood	Consequence / Magnitude		
	Minor	Medium	Major
Very Likely	Moderate	High	High
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High
Possible	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate

The likelihood of the risk is considered in parallel with the severity of its magnitude, see figure 4. The exercise is done for each of the identified risk factors. The highest rating would generally guide the risk classification of the project as a whole. For example, if a project has five risk factors, three of which are considered of low significance and two of which are considered moderately significant, the project will be classified as a moderate risk project.

! Aside of the judgment of the significance of the impact the final decision about a project’s risk category also takes into consideration:

- + the potential for posing a reputational risk for BIOPAMA AC and/or for the grantee,
- + the experience and capacities of the grantee in managing social and environmental risks and implementing ESMS tools.

The three risk categories are generally defined as:

- **High risk** are those projects with the potential to cause significant adverse environmental and/or social impacts. These can be related to several aspects: they may involve sensitive receptors

(humans, biodiversity, etc.), and/or severe health implications for them; they may be of a lengthy duration, be diverse (several receptors with reinforcing effects), or reach beyond the project site; they may be unprecedented, irreversible, and/or controversial amongst stakeholders.

- **Moderate risk** projects have the potential to cause only medium adverse environmental and/or social impacts. These impacts may be few in number, or be very site-specific. Their extent can be determined with a reasonable degree of certainty. Few if any of them are irreversible, and mitigation measures can be easily designed. A rating of moderate risk, however, should only be used if the grantee is expected to be capable to conduct or commission a risk assessment and to subsequently manage the identified risks diligently through a suite of appropriate mitigation measures.
- Projects considered to be of **low risk** generally have no or only minimal negative environmental or social impacts. The risks remain low because the impact issues are well known and are already adequately mitigated by project activities as part of the project design. These mitigation strategies are based on established and readily available good practices. A rating of low risk, however, should only be used if the grantee has a good track record in applying these practices, and can demonstrate a good knowledge about the project site(s) and local socio-economic conditions.

### 3.3 ESMS Clearance

The Screening decision and risk classification guides the steps that the applicant and BIOPAMA Secretariat will take in response. Generally, it is good practice to have the project proponent complete the required ESMS actions and only then proceed with the ESMS clearance. The specificity of the BIOPAMA AC project cycle, however, required merging the screening and the clearance steps and shifting the completion of the ESMS action (where required) into project implementation. The Clearance decision applies the following three-tiered approach:

- **Low Risk:** Projects considered to be of low risk **do not require any further actions** to be taken prior to the signing of the grant contract.
  - Therefore, the Screening Report acts as an **ESMS Clearance**. From the ESMS perspective, the project can proceed straight to contracting, and implementation can commence. Potential minor impacts identified during the ESMS Screening that are already being mitigated by project activities should be monitored, though, during project implementation in order to determine if existing project activities are sufficient to address them. Monitoring should also check if any unexpected impacts have occurred.
- **Moderate Risk:** Projects considered to be of moderate risk will **require action in response**. Usually it implies the need to undertake a dedicated assessment of the identified environmental or social risk issue(s) and to develop appropriate mitigation measures. The scope and depth of such assignment will depend on the nature and scale of the identified risks and be determined by the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Point as part of the ESMS Screening. As this step will require time and funding, it is not likely that the grantee will be able to complete these steps prior to the grant agreement. For the BIOPAMA AC there are two scenarios:
  - (a) Projects with few potential adverse social and environmental risks that require only limited social and/or environmental assessment to determine how the identified potential impacts will be avoided or when avoidance is not possible, minimized, mitigated and

managed,: The Screening will instruct the applicant on necessary steps to adjust the project proposal such as undertaking a targeted environmental and/or social assessment or conducting further community consultations in order to develop adequate mitigation measures to be documented in form of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and appropriately budgeted for in the project proposal. The adjusted proposal is reviewed and if all conditions of the Screening are addressed the **ESMS Clearance** is issued.

(b) More complex projects with numerous and/or varied potential adverse social and environmental risks: these projects will require a more comprehensive assessment process, in particular if the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions or the Standard on Indigenous Peoples is triggered and the development of respective ESMS tools is required. As this will require time and funding, it is not likely that the grantee will be able to complete these steps prior to the award of the grant. The applicant needs to include the required environmental and/or social assessments and/or the development of other ESMS tools as project activity into the proposal and its budget. A **Conditional ESMS Clearance** will be issued and the grantee is contractually obliged to complete the required ESMS actions during the project implementation

- **High Risk**: Projects considered to be of high risk would require carrying out a full environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA).
  - They are **unlikely to be recommended for funding**, especially for small and medium grants, as time and resources required to conduct a full ESIA may be prohibitive. However, if the BIOPAMA Validating Committee decides that their conservation objectives outweigh the risks, are a priority for funding, and should proceed, applicants would first have to undertake a full ESIA. The project would only be awarded after the applicant having completed the ESIA and the BIOPAMA AC Global Team having rated the ESIA and respective mitigation measures as adequate.

The results of the ESMS Screening and the Clearance Conditions (where applicable) are recorded in the same file as the ESMS questionnaire in the dedicated section of the MG proposal assessment grid filled by the Regional BIOPAMA Focal Point.

**!** For the ESMS Screening to be effective, **it is essential that sufficient information is included** in the project proposal (socio-economic profile of the project site, indigenous peoples present, local peoples' dependency on natural resources, etc.). The lack of information might result in the project being assigned a higher risk category.

### 3.4 Gap Closure: Modifying the project proposal to integrate required ESMS actions

#### 3.4.1 Risk Assessment and Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)

**!** All projects assessed as **moderate** or **high risk** must undertake some form of environmental and/or social risk assessment, and produce an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

- **High risk** projects (if the BIOPAMA AC Validating Committee decides they are to proceed to contracting) must carry out a full Environmental and Social Impacts Assessment (ESIA). For transparency and clarification, detailed instruction for the full ESIA is available on the BIOPAMA AC portal.
- For **moderate risk** projects it will be likely be sufficient to conduct only a targeted assessment of the specific social and/or environmental risks issues that have been identified in the Screening. The scope and depth of such assignment will be determined by the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Point as part of the ESMS Screening. Such an assignment should achieve the following:
  - Identify and analyse the risks and verify their significance;
  - Discuss ways to avoid risks (e.g. by changes of project design);
  - Where avoidance is not (fully) possible, come up with measures for minimizing or compensating for these impacts;
  - Develop ESMS tools required by the Standard(s) triggered, as applicable.

The results of the risk assessment and consultations should be described in a brief and succinct assessment report and the mitigation measures documented in form of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

**!** All of the above steps need to be carried out with **meaningful and culturally appropriate consultation of relevant stakeholders and in particular with affected groups**. Further guidance on stakeholder engagement is provided in chapter 5.3.

The ESMP specifies the mitigation measures, their respective implementation schedule and arrangements, required resources (budget), responsibilities as well as provisions for monitoring. Where relevant, capacity building measures might need to be considered. Detailed guidance for developing the ESMP including templates for the ESMP itself and for monitoring implementation of the ESMP is provided in the ESMP Guidance Note available on the IUCN website [here](#).

For some moderate risk projects, grantees might be able to conduct the risk assessment themselves, without external input. However, it will often be necessary for the grantee to hire a specialist consultant. This may particularly be the case for social elements, as biodiversity conservation organizations often do not include staff members with specialist skills and experience in this topic. Consultants should have a background in social sciences, on-the-ground experience in the country where the project is to be implemented including fluency in the vernacular language(s) (and ideally at the target site(s)), and relevant experience in safeguard application, stakeholder consultation, gender-analysis, and gender-responsive project design.

### 3.4.2 Other ESMS Tools required when Standards are triggered

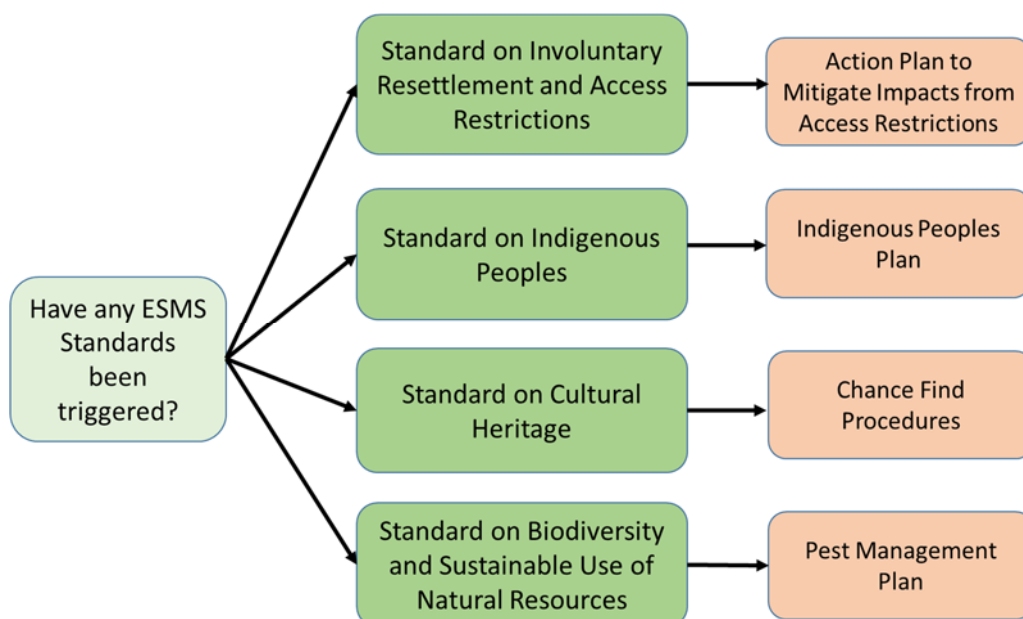
While a targeted risk assessment and corresponding ESMP is necessary for all moderate risk projects (and an ESIA for high risk projects), other ESMS tools are **only required if specific standards are triggered as concluded by the Screening**. The tools are depicted in figure 5 below.

! Applicants are strongly advised to visit the IUCN ESMS webpage and consult the relevant and useful documents available [here](#).

The ESMS Screening will have also appraised the expected significance of risks and determined whether a full-fledged tool is needed or whether an abbreviated form of the respective tool is sufficient.

! Where the project proposal does not contain sufficient context information, the risk will be assumed higher for precautionary reasons.

**Figure 5: ESMS Tools in Response of Standards Being Triggered**



! BIOPAMA AC applicants are strongly advised to **be proactive and to include already** in their proposal responses regarding the ESMS standards when the proposed activities present the risk to trigger one or several of these standards. More detailed guidance for the steps taken in response in relation to each standard is given in the below sections.

#### ❖ *Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions*

If the ESMS Screening determines that the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions has been triggered by the project (due to the potential for restrictions on access to natural resources)<sup>4</sup> without the provision of sufficient response and mitigation measures, the BIOPAMA

<sup>4</sup> It is unlikely that any project funded by BIOPAMA will involve resettlement of communities.

Regional Focal Points and BIOPAMA Secretariat can request the grantee to produce an **Action Plan to Mitigate Impacts from Access Restrictions**.

- This document describes the expected restrictions, the negative impacts that are likely to result (disaggregated by affected groups) and the measures that will be put in place in order to avoid, mitigate or compensate for these impacts. It establishes the basis for an agreement with the affected parties on these measures to be provided. A detailed Guidance Note on the Action Plan is available on the IUCN website [here](#).

#### ❖ *Standard on Indigenous Peoples*

If the ESMS Screening determines that the Standard on Indigenous Peoples has been triggered and that negative impacts are likely, the project being without the provision of sufficient response and mitigation measures, the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Point should request the applicant to produce an **Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP)**.

If the standard has been triggered but negative impacts are likely to be minimal, a stand-alone IPP is not needed and mitigation measures can instead be included in the ESMP. An exception to this is a situation where project sites are home to a variety of different ethnic groups, and there is a risk that one or more of these groups may be disadvantaged or discriminated against. In this situation, even if negative impacts are expected to be minimal, it is good practice to still produce an IPP. A detailed Guidance Note on Indigenous Peoples Plan is on the IUCN website [here](#).

#### ❖ *Standard on Cultural Heritage*

If the ESMS Screening identifies that risks of damages to cultural resources are likely and the Standard on Cultural Heritage has been triggered, the project being without the provision of sufficient response and mitigation measures, the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and the Secretariat will request a **targeted impact study**.

- Such a study should involve competent professionals with expertise on these resources, relevant project-affected groups, government authorities, and traditional knowledge holders, and should document the cultural resources, provide a comprehensive understanding of their significance, assess potential impacts on them, and suggest strategies for mitigating these impacts.

If the project involves small-scale civil works, such as construction or improvement of small infrastructure (watch towers, visitor centres, access roads, etc.), and the impact study has confirmed that the impacts are of moderate or high significance, suitable mitigation measures (identified by the impact study) should be included in the ESMP.

In addition, the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and Secretariat will request the applicant to prepare **Chance Find Procedures (CFP)** that describe what the grantee or agencies executing the works should do if they unexpectedly encounter cultural resources as a result of their work. The latter will also be applicable as precautionary measure in situations where risks are possible but not necessarily likely and no impact study is conducted. A Guidance Note is available on the IUCN website [here](#).

#### ❖ *Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources*

If the ESMS Screening identifies that the project triggers the Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources due to risks of negative impacts, the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and Secretariat will request a targeted risk assessment.

If the project involves actions to control or eradicate biological pests (including physical control, the use of bait, biological control, or the use of pesticides), then the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points must evaluate the level of risk, and ensure that the management technique is appropriate to the level of risk. All projects that include some kind of pest management must include a description of the proposed management technique in the project document. If there is a risk that the management technique could potentially cause more than very minor and temporary impacts, then a Technique Risk Assessment (TRA) should be undertaken.

If the TRA concludes that the planned pest management techniques potentially have significant impacts, including beyond the immediate site of application, then a **Pest Management Plan (PMP)** is required. A detailed Guidance Note on PMP can be available to the applicant on the IUCN [here](#).

#### 4. Grant Agreement

As explained earlier, the IUCN will via the ESMS Screening Report and associated Clearance Decision, make a recommendation to the BIOPAMA Action Component Validating Committee whether a project should be:

- cleared on safeguard issues (**low risk** projects),
- cleared after having closed gaps through targeted risk assessments and ESMP (**moderate risk** with only **few** potential adverse social and environmental risks)
- conditionally cleared after having incorporated the required ESMS actions as project activities into the proposal (**more complex moderate risk** projects with numerous and/or varied potential adverse social and environmental risks) or
- or whether clearance is rejected and the project is not recommended for funding (**high risk**).

For projects that have been assessed as being **moderate** risk projects with only a few risks the grant agreement will not be signed until the BIOPAMA AC Regional Focal Points and Global Team have verified that the applicant has undertaken required assessments and established an ESMP with mitigation measures appropriately budgeted for.

For projects that have been assessed as being of **moderate** risk with more complex risk issues, it is generally **necessary for the applicant to produce and implement one or more ESMS tools** (e.g. risk assessment, development of ESMP or other ESMS tools as demanded by the respective Standards).

- The **required ESMS actions is formulated as a condition in the ESMS Clearance**. In this case, the grant contract should not be signed until the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and Global Team have verified that the applicant has incorporated the implementation of ESMS tools as activities into project proposal and the budget. The verification should also take the **grantee's capacity** to implement or commission the prescribed risk assessment and mitigate the risks appropriately into account.

#### 5. Implementation: Monitoring and Supervision

There are two key mechanisms by which BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and/or BIOPAMA AC Global Team supervises grantees' compliance with ESMS processes – by reviewing monitoring reports prepared by the grantee and through supervision missions.

## 5.1 Grantee Monitoring and Reporting

Grantees are required to submit periodic progress and financial reports according to the schedule specified in their grant agreement. These reports must be submitted using a prescribed reporting format, which includes reporting about ESMS issues. The details of what information is reported depends depending on the risk category as described below:

- **Low risk** projects, generally, **do not need to report on ESMS issues other than explaining what they have undertaken to spot any unexpected impacts** that might have emerged since the project start. For projects where minor risks had been identified during the ESMS Screening the grantee should provide a brief explanation whether they are effectively addressed by project activities.
- **Complex moderate risk** projects, will first need to finalize the required ESMS actions such as a dedicated risk assessment and the identification of mitigation measures (to be documented in an ESMP) or the development of specific tools to meet requirements of the Standards triggered. The progress of implementing these needs to be described in the first periodic report; the respective results (e.g. risk assessment report) and tools (ESMP, Indigenous Peoples Plan etc.) should be annexed to the report. The ESMP and other ESMS tools, where required, need to be approved and agreed by with the BIOPAMA AC Regional Focal Points and BIOPAMA AC Global Team in order to continue project implementation
- All moderate risk projects need to describe the progress of implementing ESMP and other ESMS tools (where required)

Detailed guidance for developing the ESMP including templates for the ESMP itself and for monitoring implementation of the ESMP is provided in the ESMP Guidance Note available on the IUCN website [here](#). Reporting will include:

- Progress of implementing mitigation measures, including providing evidence, where relevant;
- Indication of effectiveness of mitigation measures<sup>5</sup>;
- Updates on implementation of any other ESMS tools;
- Changes to the project context since the ESMS Screening (including emerging risks),
- Any grievances that have been raised and how these grievances were handled by the project team.

## 5.2 Supervision and Field Missions

All BIOPAMA funded projects should be subject to periodic check-ins, whether by telephone and/or via field missions. These missions will be prioritized based on ESMS risk categories, and on other risks such as technical/operational risks, and financial risks. Grantees are contractually obliged to cooperate with the supervision mission team, and provide access to the project sites, and other relevant information, as requested. In most cases, supervision missions will be conducted by the BIOPAMA Regional Team and Secretariat.

<sup>5</sup> Mitigation measure often require time to become effective. In the first year(s) of implementation it will often not be possible to provide more than a first indications of effectiveness. Nevertheless, it is important to monitor this in order to be able to make adjustments if there are any doubts about the effectiveness of the measures.



In addition to assessing technical performance and financial management, checking ESMS compliance will form a key element of all field missions. For projects that have been assessed as low risk, this may simply be confirming that the project continues to adhere to the ESMS principles, assessing whether any minor negative impacts are sufficiently addressed through project activities, and that no other risks have emerged.

For projects that have been assessed as **moderate** or **high risk**, this element of the field mission should be more comprehensive, and include an assessment of the grantee's progress with implementation of the ESMP and other required ESMS tools, consultation with affected groups, and an assessment of the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

**!** If IUCN believes that a project is causing unexpected, significant negative risks for local communities or the environment, the organization is entitled to plan and conduct a safeguards' supervision mission. If the mission findings confirm such negative impacts are occurring and are being generated by the BIOPAMA activity, IUCN will propose corrective measures, including adjustments in project design and/or mitigation measures. If the grantee does not manage to mitigate severe negative impacts, IUCN will recommend project suspension to prevent further irreversible damage.

## 6. Grievance Mechanism

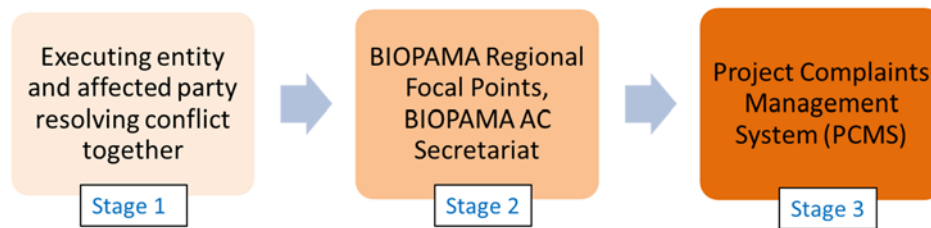
In order to ensure that projects are not only screened on environmental and social risks but also that risk management is actually effective, IUCN requires projects to put a grievance mechanism in place.

A grievance mechanism is a system by which local stakeholders (such as local communities, individual members of the community or civil society organizations) are given the **opportunity to raise concerns and submit complaints** if they are suffering or fearing adverse impacts as a result of the project failing to respect ESMS principles, standards, and procedures. The mechanism will give them assurance that the causes of these concerns will be analysed and appropriate steps taken to mitigate them or provide for redress.

The BIOPAMA Action Component will use the IUCN Project Complaints Management System (PCMS) which is described in a Guidance Note available on the IUCN [website](#) as an institution-wide ESMS complaint management mechanism – with one light adjustment. The system suggests that resolution of complaints should be sought at the lowest possible level following a three-stage process.

- First, complainants should bring up the issue with the project management of the executing agency (grantee) to try to resolve the issue together (stage 1).
- If this is not effective, the concern should be escalated to the nearest IUCN office (stage 2). For the BIOPAMA Action Component an adjustment is made at this stage as illustrated in figure 6 below – instead of the IUCN office the grievance should be escalated to the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points or the BIOPAMA AC Secretariat, who can act as a neutral party mediating between the complainant and the grantee.
- If neither of the two stages have been successful, a formal complaint can be escalated to the IUCN Project Complaints Management System.
- If the concern is highly sensitive or the complainant needs confidentiality or fears retaliation, the first two stages can be skipped and the complaint can be submitted directly to the Project Complaints Management System.

**Figure 6: Stages of the ESMS Grievance Mechanism (adapted to BIOPAMA AC)**



Complaints submitted to the PCMS can be sent by post, email or telephone<sup>6</sup>, and should include:

- the name and contact details of the complainant;
- a description of the project concerned;
- the harm that is resulting (or is likely to result);
- the ESMS principle, standard, or process that is alleged to have been breached (if known);
- any actions that have been taken to attempt to resolve the issue; and
- relevant supporting documents.

While anonymous complaints are not accepted, PCMS provides for confidential and discreet submission of complaints if the concern is highly sensitive, including situations where the complaint concerns the conduct of local project staff or management staff of the grantee.

All grievances received will be registered in form of a complaint log by the grantee (stage 1), BIOPAMA Regional Focal Point (Stage 2) or through the PCMS (stage 3). The register also documents the response actions and status of the complaints (solved/not solved). The grantee is mandated to attach a copy of the complaint register to the annual technical report by the Grantee to enable supervision of the complaint processes by the BIOPAMA Regional Focal Points and BIOPAMA AC Secretariat.

For the grievance mechanism to be effective and accessible, the grantees must inform all relevant project stakeholders of the existence of mechanism. This should ideally be done during the project design phase but no later than within the first quarter of project implementation. Stakeholders need to know the issues eligible for the grievance mechanism, the three-stage process, contact information and the mechanism for complaint submission. The information should be delivered in a culturally appropriate form assuring that all relevant groups are reached, including women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups. It can be communicated verbally (in consultation meetings or through media) or in writing. Evidence of having provided adequate information to all relevant stakeholders about the existence of the Grievance Mechanism needs to be included in the first progress report.

Grantees are further encouraged to add project-level structures or mechanisms to tailor it more effectively to the local customs and conditions, and to proactively prevent grievances. Stakeholder engagement during the design phase is critical as well as regular stakeholder contact and consultation during the implementation. Maintaining a constructive relationship with stakeholders helps the project managers to identify and anticipate potential issues early. Grantees should also consider asking a local, respected individual to assume the role of an ombudsperson. Involving a person who is respected and trusted by the affected parties can be an effective and unthreatening way for communities and project management to resolve differences. This and any other measures aimed at

<sup>6</sup> Contact details are provided in the ESMS Grievance Mechanism [Guidance Note](#).

tailoring the grievance mechanism to the socio-cultural specificities of the project context should be described in the project's ESMP.

## 7. Stakeholder Engagement

BIOPAMA will follow the ESMS Principle of Stakeholder Engagement by ensuring that individuals and communities who might be affected (positively or negatively) by BIOPAMA projects are provided with the opportunity to participate in a genuine and meaningful way in the formulation and implementation of the projects. To this end, stakeholder engagement processes put in place during the design of funded projects should ensure that stakeholders are informed, that concerns are captured, and that potential risks are identified and adequately addressed through avoidance, minimization, or compensation.

The intensity of stakeholder engagement should be proportional to the concerns expressed or expected from stakeholders, and the consequence of potential risks (level of impacts):

- All stakeholders at a project site should be provided general relevant information about the project;
- Stakeholders who could potentially be affected by project activities must be consulted during project design to verify and assess the significance of adverse impacts;
- If risks and negative impacts are confirmed and judged as significant, affected stakeholders should not only be consulted, but be thoroughly involved in project design, including in the development of mitigation measures, and later in monitoring their implementation;
- If project activities affect indigenous people (positively or negatively) or lead to restrict access to the natural resources of local communities with customary or formal natural resources or tenure rights, a process for achieving FPIC is needed.

The quality of stakeholder consultation during project design and the engagement strategy planned for the implementation phase will be evaluated by the Regional Assessment Committee (RAC) using the technical assessment grid.