



## Terms of Reference for IUCN Consultancy

**Title: Implementation of the gender and environmental and social management system (GESS) for the TWENDE project: Towards Ending Drought Emergencies: Ecosystem Based Adaptation in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Rangelands.**

**LOCATION: Office of TWENDE PMU located in Nairobi, Kenya, with frequent travel to project sites**

### **Objective of the Consultancy**

This consultancy has the following objectives:

1. Ensure that environmental and social risks of TWENDE sub-projects/site-level activities are proactively identified, assessed, mitigated, and reported in accordance with IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Environmental and Social Safeguards policy (ESS), and national safeguard policies and legislative frameworks.
2. Support the systematic application of the ESMS procedures which are established in the project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) throughout the project lifecycle.
3. In case adjustments to the ESMF procedures are required (e.g. due to changing context, national policies etc.), ensure timely update and approval by GCF.
4. Integrate risk management strategies into project implementation, supervision, monitoring, and reporting. This includes overseeing compliance with ESMS requirements, supporting the preparation and implementation of safeguard instruments for each sub-project (e.g., ESMPs, GRM, SEP, Gender and Youth Action Plan), and ensuring that these tools are effectively embedded in field operations.
5. Deliver technical support, coaching, and training to enhance safeguard understanding and compliance across all actors involved in project implementation to ensure consistent and high-quality application of safeguard standards.

### **Background**

IUCN Project Reference: P02886

Donor reference: [FP113](#)

The International Union of Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) mission is "to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable." IUCN projects aim to achieve positive conservation and social outcomes, including benefits for communities that depend on natural resources. However, unintended negative environmental and social impacts may occur when projects are implemented. Within the context of its mission, IUCN intends to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to avoid or minimize negative environmental and social impacts while stimulating positive impacts.

To put this intention into practice, IUCN has established an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) as an intrinsic part of IUCN's project cycle. It provides systematic steps and operational tools for managing the environmental and social performance of projects implemented or supported by IUCN. The system allows IUCN to screen potential projects for negative environmental or social impacts and develop suitable measures to avoid, minimise, or compensate for these impacts.

It also ensures that the implementation and effectiveness of mitigation measures are monitored and that any impacts arising during execution of the project are addressed. The ESMS requirements are documented in the form of a management manual (referred to as the ESMS Manual) that, together with the ESMS Standards, establishes IUCN's ESMS Policy Framework.

The IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) operates in twenty-four countries in the Horn of Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. The current ESARO programming is composed of a suite of mutually interrelated programs and projects designed to address some of the most profound challenges affecting people and nature in the region. Among the projects implemented by IUCN's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office is the GCF-funded **TWENDE** Project - Towards Ending Drought Emergencies: Ecosystem Based Adaptation in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Rangelands. IUCN is recruiting a consultant to support the ESMS implementation of the TWENDE project.

## **About IUCN**

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and around 15,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being.

[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)  
<https://twitter.com/IUCN/>

## **About the Project**

### ***TWENDE - Towards Ending Drought Emergencies: Ecosystem Based Adaptation in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Rangelands (TWENDE)***

IUCN Project Reference: P02886

Donor reference: [FP113](#)

The objective of the TWENDE project is to reduce the cost of climate change-induced drought on Kenya's national economy by increasing resilience of the livestock and other land use sectors in restored and effectively governed rangeland ecosystems. The project will contribute to improved adaptation to climate change of Kenya's national policy of "Ending Drought Emergencies", as outlined in "Kenya Vision 2030".

The Project addresses the overarching climate change challenges through three components, and their relevant outputs and activities:

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**Component 1:** Climate change adapted planning for drought resilience.

**Component 2:** Restoration of rangeland landscapes for ecosystem-based adaptation.

**Component 3:** Climate change resilient ecosystem management for investments.

The project will strengthen climate change adaptation in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs). The project will be implemented in 2 landscapes encompassing 11 counties, which have devolved powers under Kenya's new constitution. The project will benefit 620,000 people in 104,000 households and will protect or restore 500,000 hectares of rangelands in a landscape of 2.5 million hectares. The target landscapes are dry season grazing areas: critical resource zones that provide refuge during periods of drought.

The TWENDE Project is implemented by IUCN (accredited entity) together with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) of Kenya, State Department of Livestock Development (SDL) Kenya, and Conservation International as executing entities in partnership with ICRAF, IUCN Kenya, Just Dig It and WRA.

IUCN's role of the Accredited Entity to Green Climate Fund (GCF) is to coordinate all activities implemented by implementing partners for TWENDE (NDMA, SDL, CI, IUCN Kenya, JDI, and ICRAF) through relevant Project Management Units (PMU) under strategic guidance of the National Project Steering Committee chaired by the State Department for Livestock Development in Kenya. The PMU also coordinates the work of Partner Coordination Teams, efficiency of landscape coordination hubs, and effectiveness of partners' Environmental and Gender Action Task Groups.

The project has been screened on social and environmental risks in accordance with the requirements of IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS). Generally, the project is anticipated to lead to positive environmental and social impacts as it aims to increase the resilience of the livestock and other land-use sectors through restored and effectively governed rangeland ecosystems in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands. However, the ESMS Screening identified potential environmental and social risks including the risk of inadvertently impacting vulnerable or marginalized groups, risk of inter- or inner-community tensions due to project impacts or benefits, social risks from water abstraction for irrigation purposes, occupational health and safety risks when carrying out physical works (such as restoration measures, water infrastructure), etc. Environmental risks include impacts on water bodies, use of species with risk of developing invasive characteristics, and others.

The ESMS Standard on Indigenous Peoples was triggered because of the presence of indigenous groups. However, as these groups are considered the main beneficiaries of the project, no stand-alone Indigenous Peoples Plan was required, and the project's participatory planning approach is considered to meet the Standard's requirement in terms of meaningful and effective consultation with these groups. The Cultural Heritage Standard was triggered but risks were considered minor. The Biodiversity Standard was triggered, some of the risk issues required further assessment and mitigation measures, minor issues were expected to be appropriately addressed by good practices guidance. While the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions was not triggered due to the voluntary nature of the restrictions that might be put in place, precaution will need to be exercised to ensure that the decision making process is considered adequate and reflects voluntary, informed consensus among the community / all users of the resources who have legitimate rights.

Because of the identified impacts and the fact that site-level activities / subprojects would need to be developed with further details the project has been classified as moderate risk, and an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) was prepared as the overarching safeguard document for the project. The ESMF was part of the project submission package and has undergone review from GCF and a final version has been approved. The ESMF is part of GCF's funding agreement.

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## **INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

In line with IUCN ESMS policy, projects categorized moderate risk or higher require a dedicated safeguard specialist, either as staff member or in form of a consultancy, to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of ESMS requirements and to handle emerging risks, address grievance and serious incidents. For TWENDE it has been decided that a combined ESMS and gender consultancy (GESS) was the most conducive option.

The GESS consultant will be hosted in the TWENDE PMU (Project Management Unit) based at the IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office and will support the PMU and its implementing partners in the systematic application of Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) procedures which are established in the projects' Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) throughout the project lifecycle.

The assignment is supervised by the IUCN Regional Program Delivery Manager, Multilateral Finance and technically the assignment is guided by the IUCN regional ESMS Specialist, based at IUCN ESARO. The Consultant is expected to have monthly review meetings on ESMS implementation status with the Regional ESMS Specialist.

An ESMS refresher training and review workshop will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, at the beginning of December 2025 for the PMU and project staff of implementing partners of the project - jointly with staff from the GCF funded project "Transforming Eastern Province of Rwanda through Adaptation" (TREPA). The objectives of the workshop are to review past safeguard implementation, develop or update site-specific safeguard and gender plans and instruments, and integrate their implementation into the projects' workplans. It further aims at strengthening partners' understanding on specific safeguard topics and to reactivate the GYAP (Gender and Youth Action Plan) and ESMP Task Groups and set up their roadmap. The training will be organized by IUCN with the support of an international safeguard consultant, but the GESS consultant for TWENDE hired under this ToR is expected to participate and actively engage in the review, update and revision of instruments and plans as they will be responsible for coordinating their future implementation.

### **Description of the Assignment**

The main tasks required to be completed as part of this assignment are listed below, and for each task the expected level of effort (LoE) has been estimated which includes travel to project sites. However, in a field-based project setting, tasks and timelines may be dynamic. For example, field-based assessments may take longer than planned; there may be changes in project sites requiring renewed ESMS screening; multiple rounds of feedback may be expected on donor reports; the number of grievances and serious incidents cannot be known upfront, tasks such as responding to serious incidents or dealing with grievances reported may take longer than estimated; or other matters may come up based on emerging needs.

The consultant is expected to show flexibility in adapting to the needs of the project and in managing priorities and may also be required to perform other relevant duties as may be required from time to time. The LoE estimated below is therefore indicative only. The consultant is expected to maintain a time protocol for all effort expended and discuss upcoming work and priorities with the regional ESMS specialist and the Regional Program Delivery Manager on a monthly basis and when the need arises.

The assignment will comprise the following tasks:

#### **1. Familiarize with existing documentation and reporting**

Review project documents prepared at submission and any updates hereafter, including (but not limited to):

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- Funding proposal, stakeholder analysis, theory of change.
- ESMS Screening and Clearance Report.
- Reports of relevant studies carried out during project preparation and implementation phase.
- Safeguard instruments: ESMF, ESMPs produced for sub-projects / site-level activities, Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and any updates, project-level grievance mechanism (including grievance register and log), as well as others where relevant.
- Reports on ESMS trainings and stakeholder meetings carried out thus far.
- Preliminary gender assessment, and gender and youth action plan (GYAP).
- Annual Project Reports (APR) submitted to GCF, review comments from GCF, and response from IUCN – focusing on the safeguards, stakeholder engagement and Gender sections.
- Terms of Reference for the GYAP and ESMP Task Groups established for TWENDE.

The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 4 days**.

## 2. Coordinate implementation of safeguard instruments

- Engage actively in the ESMS refresher training and review workshop to be held with the PMU and staff of other implementing partners in Kigali in December 2025. Being actively engaged and contributing to the review, update and revision of safeguard instruments and plans will be crucial as the GESS consultant will be responsible for finalizing any open topics and coordinating their future implementation.
- Develop a road map for ESMS tasks in collaboration with the international safeguard's consultant based on the outcomes from the review workshop in agreement with the PMU and implementing partners; including specifying required actions to finalize specific safeguard instruments at site-level and ensure that these tools are effectively embedded in field operations.
- Coordinate the implementation of the road map ensuring environmental and social due diligence for all TWENDE site-level activities; this may include the following tasks; however, the final approach depends on the road map agreed during the training and review workshop:
  - Review and where necessary update existing screening reports of sub-projects / site-level activities and screen all new activities on environmental and social impacts, define risk categories, identify necessary assessments and safeguard instruments, and produce ESMS Screening Reports.
  - Support the PMU, implementing partners and service providers in carrying out assessments and preparing safeguards instruments for their sub-projects / site-level activities (ESMP and plans according to standards triggered); ensure their quality, appropriate budget and compliance with ESMS policy and guide pro-active integration into project activity design and workplans.
  - Lead the ESMP Task Groups to smoothly coordinate the implementation of site-level ESMPs.

The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 20 days**. As mentioned above, this is an indicative figure only, with the final effort expended dependent on the number of sub-projects to be screened, number and depth of assessments required, the suite of safeguard tools to be prepared, etc.

## 3. Gender mainstreaming and stakeholder engagement

- Identify any updates required and carry out such updates to the existing Gender and Youth action plan (GYAP); this may include the following but will ultimately depend on the road map defined during the training and review workshop:

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- Prepare a gender integration guide for site-level activities and support implementation ensuring the integration of a gender lens in the approaches and/or respond to identified gender gaps in target implementation areas.
  - Considering project expected impact indicators, develop gender specific indicators and tools for tracking progress on integration and handling of gender issues in all project activities (site-level and project-wide).
  - Develop gender facilitation guides in Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) interventions.
  - Lead the GYAP Task Groups to smoothly coordinate the implementation of the GYAPs.
- The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 10 days**. Please note that engagement activities with gender groups are also covered in the task below. Update the project's overall stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) and coordinate its implementation. This may include the following tasks, but the final approach depends on the road map agreed during the training and review workshop:
    - Guide the field coordinator and the 3 landscape coordinators to carry out stakeholder engagement and consultation workshops in each of the 11 counties and in accordance with the project's SEP. Advise them on stakeholder engagement during the actual design and implementation of (new) site-level activities.
    - This task involves travelling at least once during the assignment to each of the project sites in the 11 counties (but a combination with the supervision mission is possible). This is to ensure that the GRM is appropriately set-up and communicated, that engagement strategies are gender-sensitive and that discussions focus on E&S risks and give particular emphasis on any vulnerable groups listed in the SEP.
    - Document the stakeholder engagement interventions including recording gender-disaggregated data.

The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 15 days**.

#### **4. Monitor implementation of safeguard instruments and gender plans**

- Prepare monitoring tools and guide the PMU and implementing partners in monitoring progress on the implementation of safeguard instruments, the gender action plan (or actions) and the stakeholder engagement plan (or individual measures).
- Carry out field-based monitoring missions to review progress of implementation of safeguard instruments, gender and stakeholder actions.
- Provide ESMS and gender-related refresher training and capacity building support for all project staff and other relevant stakeholders as required.
- Support the PMU in drafting the annual progress report (APR) for GCF, working with all implementing partners, with a focus on reporting progress of implementing the safeguards instruments, the gender action plan and the projects' stakeholder engagement plan.
- Participate in annual supervision mission and present progress on the implementation of safeguard instruments, the gender action plan and the projects' stakeholder engagement plan.
- Monitor and address emerging risks.
- Record ESMS data of the project and assure maintenance of ESMS records.

The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 48 days**.

#### **5. Grievance management and serious incident reporting**

- Implement the project-level grievance mechanism in accordance with the IUCN ESMS Grievance Mechanism, ensure appropriate communication among stakeholders and ensure the mechanism's maintenance. Ensure channels for grievance reporting at all project sites are also set up and functional.

- Receive, record and process grievances, identify whether escalation to the next level is required in line with IUCN's three-staged grievance process.
- Work with the PMU to solve grievances, track cases until closure and maintain a register of grievances and report on progress in solving grievances.
- For gender-based violence ensure a survivor-centered approach; if necessary, identify and engage with gender experts, specialists and groups that are knowledgeable about GBV risks.
- Identify and report serious incidents; support the root cause analysis and identification of corrective actions and ensure implementation. Maintain a lot of serious incidents reported and their resolution.

The level of effort foreseen for this task is **approximately 10 days** but would depend on the type and number of grievances or serious incidents reported

### Duration of the Assignment

Approximately 12 months, starting on 1 December 2025

### Deliverables and Activities

The consultant will provide the following deliverables and carry out the following activities:

#	Deliverables
1	Final versions of the updated project-level safeguard instruments: ESMF, GYAP, SEP, GRM
2	Final versions of all ESMS screening reports for sub-projects/at site level.
3	Final versions of requisite safeguard instruments at sub-project / site level.
4	Reports of monitoring missions across project sites and annual monitoring tables/reports for each safeguard instrument, GYAP and SEP (including documentation of stakeholder engagement meetings conducted at each sub-project site)
5	Final versions of the ESMS, stakeholder engagement and gender sections of the APR, including responses to comments and feedback from GCF
6.	Grievance and serious incident registers and log documenting the actions for addressing the issues.
7.	Gender facilitation guides in FLR interventions
8.	Minutes of monthly meetings with IUCN Regional ESMS Specialist and the Regional Program Delivery Manager.

### Payment Schedule

The Timetable below summarises the chronological order of deliverables and indicates milestones at which IUCN will pay the Consultant.

Deliverable/Activity	Milestone payment
Deliverable 1-2	30%
Deliverable 3-5	40%
Deliverable 6-8	30%

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**Skills and Experience**

The consultant must have the following skills, education and experience as a minimum:

- List the required skills, education, experience and other pre-requisites here.

**Supervision and coordination**

The consultant will report to and work under the supervision of Regional Programme Delivery Manager, Multilateral Finance.