

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared in support of a project proposal entitled “*Coastal Resilience Project – Tonga*” (the project) by the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). As this project is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its role as a GCF Accredited Entity, the project has been screened against the UNDP’s Social and Environmental Standards Procedure and deemed a Moderate Risk (World Bank/International Finance Corporation Category B) project. As such, an ESMF has been prepared for the project.

The Ministry for Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications is the National Designated Authority and executing agency, in partnership with Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources; Ministry of Fisheries; Ministry of Internal Affairs. A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established for the implementation of the project and compliance with this ESMF.

The project will target 39,427 direct and 100,651 indirect people in Tonga. The proposed project will include the construction of 4km of physical protection of vulnerable coastlines to reduce the impact of wave energy and/or soil erosion. Northeastern Tongatapu (Hahake) will be equipped with rock revetments preventing erosion, wave overtopping and/or subsequent coastal flooding.

The project will also undertake activities that will strengthen national and local capacities for effective monitoring, maintenance and community adaptation actions with respect to monitoring and the status of ecosystem functions; mapping and modelling coastal scenarios; and monitoring of coastal/marine ecosystems.

The proposed project will have the following activities:

Outcome 1: Strengthened knowledge, capacity and engagement for incorporating climate risks into long-term adaptation planning supported through multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder engagement and dialogue platform.

- Output 1.1 Establish a national multi-stakeholder engagement platform for dialogue on co-creating long-term climate change adaptation strategies and solutions including voluntary retreat
- Output 1.2 Develop village and district level participatory climate risk informed plans
- Output 1.3 Build the capacity of local government, village committees and NGOs to integrate climate risks and adaptation needs into community level planning, and inform future Community Development Plans (CDP)

Outcome 2: Strengthened national and local capacities for effective monitoring and assessment of climate risks

- Output 2.1 Strengthened mechanism for collecting and analysing data and information for better-informed climate risk monitoring and coastal adaptation planning.
- Output 2.2 Improve the knowledge base of multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholders on adaptation planning strategies for long-term resilient planning and transformative adaptation for Tonga based on climate risks and projections.

Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerabilities of coastal communities in Hahake to climate hazards through coastal protection measures

- Output 3.1. Build coastal protection measures along 4km of coastline in Hahake
- Output 3.2 Sharing of lessons learned and best practices in climate resilient coastal protection measures for scale-up at the national and regional level

The project does not require any land acquisition and/or resettlement. Importantly, under section 109 of the *Constitution of Tonga 1990*, all land which is 50 feet (15.24 metres) above the high-water mark as belonging to the Crown. Such beach frontage land can only be leased by the Minister of Lands with the consent of Cabinet for the construction of a store, jetty or wharf. Therefore, the land where the project activities will be undertaken is owned by the Crown.

The environmental and social objectives of the projects are to:

- improve coastal protection measures in the targeted areas

- encourage good management practices through planning, commitment and continuous improvement of environmental practices
- minimise or prevent the pollution of land, air and water pollution
- improve wetland ecosystem
- build climate resilient coastal protection and drainage infrastructure that reduces their environmental and social impacts during storm events
- undertake sediment retention works that reduce land-based sources of marine pollution
- protect native flora, fauna and important ecosystems
- comply with applicable laws, regulations and standards for the protection of the environment
- adopt the best practicable means available to prevent or minimise environmental impact
- describe monitoring procedures required to identify impacts on the environment
- provide an overview of the obligations of MEIDECC and UNDP staff and contractors regarding environmental obligations

An ESMF has been prepared that ESMF sets out the principles, rules, guidelines, and procedures for screening, assessing, and managing the potential social and environmental impacts of forthcoming interventions of the project. It aims to effectively address risks through thorough application of the environmental and social measures, including time-bound action plans for avoiding, and where avoidance is not possible, reducing, mitigating, and managing adverse impacts related to the future activities or policies/regulations. It specifies the most likely applicable social and environmental policies and requirements, as well as how those requirements will be met through procedures for the screening, assessment, approval, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting of social and environmental risks and impacts associated with the activities to be supported. It ensures that the activities are screened and assessed, and that appropriate management measures are in place prior to implementation.

The procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with relevant social and environmental policy frameworks, including the Tonga's legal, policy, and institutional framework, UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, and GEF safeguards. A summary of the UNDP SES Principles and Standards triggered by the project is provided in Table 1.

The project has developed a Grievance Redress Mechanism to deal with any complaints and/or grievances and issues that may arise as a result of the project. This Grievance Redress Mechanism complies with Tongan and UNDP Safeguard procedures.

Budgeting for environmental interventions and the application of mitigation measures to enhance positive impacts in Tonga is an investment in the future as it will reduce the environmental and social liability at local, island and national levels. The result of this budget will be that there will be clean water, more productive soils with less chemicals, more resilient crops to the impacts of climate change, healthy ecosystems, knowledgeable communities, and overall improvement in the quality of life of the population.

Table 1 Summary of UNDP's Social and Environmental Safeguards triggered by the project

Principles and Standards	Rating	Justification
Principle 1: Human rights	Substantial	Better coastal governance and management, as a result of both activity 1.2 (land use policy) and 1.3 (construction of infrastructures) and could lead to an increase in the demand for agricultural lands, in an area where communities depend on these lands for their livelihoods and where many are dependent on leases. This could in particular affect indigenous peoples and women's rights: it could 1) change Tongans' relationship to their landscape, hence affecting their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge on coastal land management ; 2) lead to the economic displacement of livelihood activities, including women's and indigenous peoples' ; 3) restrict fishermen's access to fishing grounds and other livelihood activities,

		including women's and indigenous peoples' ; 4) exacerbate existing discriminations against women and youth, as they do not participate effectively in decision-making arena at the national nor local level, leading to maladapted governance decisions, especially in regards to land-use planning
Principle 2: Gender equality and women's empowerment	Moderate	<p>Outcome 1 may exacerbate existing discriminations against women and youth, and potentially other minority groups such as LGBTI as they do not participate effectively in decision-making arena at the national nor local level, leading to maladapted governance decisions, especially regarding land-use planning</p> <p>Rural women, whose access to land is generally more difficult than men's, could particularly be affected by the project.</p> <p>In addition, the rather small-scale influx of workers (30-40 persons max) into the area generated by the project to work on the coastal protection infrastructure has raised concerns regarding gender-based violence and the safety of young women.</p>
Principle 3: Sustainability and Resilience / Standard 1: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management	Substantial	The installation of coastal protection infrastructure could lead to sediment movement, loss of habitat, changes in hydrodynamic processes, potential increases in erosion, Entrainment, impingement and or entrainment of marine organisms including in or around protected areas,
Principle 4: Accountability	Moderate	The duty bearers of this project, in particular the contractors, may have low capacities through consultations with the general communities with specific understanding on the different risks that may be imposed with regards to gender, women, indigenous, people living with disabilities, elderly, youth and the community at large
Standard 2: Climate change and Disaster risks	Substantial	The coastal constructions, though aiming at protecting the coast from the effects of climate change, are themselves inherently vulnerable to Climate Change and could be destroyed by natural disasters.
Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security	Moderate	Terrestrial and Marine Noise could happen for a short period because of the use of construction equipment and rock dumping. The project activities could lead to work-related accidents involving local workers during the construction of coastal infrastructures; if the infrastructures are damaged, they could also affect the safety of local communities.
Standard 4: Cultural heritage	Moderate	By affecting the Tongan landscape, offering climate smart solution to adapt to climate change, and by supporting the national land use policy, the project is likely to change Tongans' relationship to their landscape, hence affecting their cultural heritage and traditional

		knowledge on coastal land management.
Standard 5: Displacement and resettlement	Substantial	The national land use policy could lead, in the long-term, physical and/or economic displacement of people and their livelihood activities. Historic land-use practices may need to change in response to climate threatens and to enable resilient communities to continue. The proposed coastal infrastructure could access to shorelines, including for fishing and other livelihood activities.
Standard 6: Indigenous peoples	Moderate	Though there is no specific indigenous peoples status in Tongan national political and legal framework, Tongans are considered under UNDP standards as an “indigenous people”, in the sense of a distinct collective which has pursued its own concept and way of human development in a given socio-economic, political and historical context; has tried to maintain its distinct group identity, languages, traditional beliefs, customs, laws and institutions, worldviews and ways of life; has exercised control and management of the lands, territories and natural resources that it has historically used and occupied, with which it has a special connection, and upon which its physical and cultural survival as indigenous peoples typically depends; and pre-dates those who colonized the lands in Oceania – though Tonga itself was never colonized. The indigenous peoples of Oceania indeed include Pacific Islanders, among which Polynesians (one-sixth), of which Tongans are part ¹ . The special relationship that Tongans ² have with their lands, territories, resources means that their landscape and land management practices are embedded within their Cultural Heritage. Although Western influence has somewhat altered traditions and culture in Tonga, certain Tongan rituals and art forms survive ³ .
Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions	Moderate	Risks related to the safety of workers could be associated with the quarries from where the stones will be sourced. The project activities could also lead to work-related accidents involving local workers during the construction of coastal infrastructures.
Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	Moderate	Damages to the environment (deforestation due to the exploitation of the quarries, creation of waste and pollution from the quarry) could be associated with the quarries from where the stones will be sourced. Terrestrial and Marine Noise could happen as a result of the use of construction equipment and rock dumping.

The application of UNDP’s Social and Environmental Safeguard Policy and of the above-mentioned triggered standards will lead to a series of procedures and measures described in Table 2 Summary of the required environmental and social elements.

¹ SEARAC, Southeast Asian American Statistical Profile, 2004; <https://www.empoweredpi.org/>; <https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/census-data-api-identities/>

² <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/pacific-islanders/>

³ *American Indian Quarterly*

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Table 2 Summary of the required environmental and social elements

Environmental and social elements	Description	Activities to be addressed
Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA)	<p>SESA refers to a range of analytical and participatory approaches that aim to integrate social and environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) and evaluate their interlinkages with economic considerations. Potential adverse risks and impacts associated with such activities are systematically examined. SESA evaluates the effect of policy changes on a broad, cross-sectoral basis with the aim of making “upstream” development decision-making more sustainable. SESAs typically look at wider sustainability issues than project-level assessments, however, there needs to be linkages between the two: information and strategies determined in a SESA should cascade down through tiers of decision-making. It will be conducted together with the ESIA.</p>	<p>Community dialogue platform established for a long-term adaptation strategy including voluntary retreat.</p> <p>Develop a long-term climate resilient land use plan for Tonga based on climate risks and projections.</p>
Process Framework	<p>A Process Framework will be designed if any unavoidable risk remains after the SESA, particularly in terms of access to resources or the need for large scale relocation.</p> <p>The Process Framework supplements the project’s environmental and social assessment with a participatory framework focused on the potential impacts of access restrictions.</p> <p>The purpose of the Process Framework is to establish a process by which members of potentially affected communities participate in the design of project components, determination of measures necessary to address the requirements of SES Standard 5, and implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities.</p>	<p>1.1 Community dialogue platform established for a long-term adaptation strategy, including voluntary retreat.</p> <p>1.2. Develop a long-term resilient land use plan for Tonga based on risks and projections</p>
Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)	<p>In accordance with UNDP’s SES policy, substantial-risk projects require comprehensive forms of assessment. An ESIA assesses the full range of social and environmental impacts, including alternatives analysis. It will be developed and carried out by independent experts in a participatory manner with stakeholders during the inception phase. The ESIA will further identify and assess social and environmental impacts of the project and its area of influence; evaluate alternatives; and design appropriate avoidance, mitigation, management, and monitoring measures. It will address all relevant issues related to the SES Overarching</p>	<p>3.1. Building coastal protection measures along 4 km of coastline in Hahake</p>

	Principles and Project-level Standards. It will be conducted during the first six months of project implementation and fully address the risks and activities.	
Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP) and associated Management Plans	A key output of the ESIA is an ESMP, prepared within the first six months of project implementation, to further refine risk identification and mitigation strategies, as well as to establish a system for monitoring these risks. Based on the findings, required management plans will be developed and implemented as appropriate. These plans will be an integral part of the ESMP and provide more detailed background and measures for the most substantial risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Livelihood Action Plan (LAP) ○ Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 	Activities assessed through SESA and ESIA
Technical and feasibility studies	Coastal protection constructions to be built and associated mixed measures to be defined have been subject to technical and feasibility studies, which will be completed according to UNDP SES requirements and guidelines to be appropriately screened and managed.	3.1. Building coastal protection measures along 4 km of coastline in Hahake.
Operationalization of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	The full details of the GRM will be agreed upon during the ESIA phase and the project will establish a project-level GRM at the start of implementation. Interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time with the Project Management Office, the Responsible Parties, UNDP, or the GEF.	All activities
Operationalization of the Gender Action Plan	A Gender Action Plan has been developed during the project's design phase. It will guide all actions pertaining to SES implementation and gender-mainstreaming. It offers specific activities, from capacity-building to specific consultation activities, allowing all women to fully engage with the project and decision-making processes from the outset.	All activities
Operationalization and update of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and development of an associated FPIC protocol	A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed during the project's design phase. It will guide all actions pertaining to SES implementation. It will be completed by an FPIC protocol, to be developed together with local communities and indigenous peoples (and integrated in the IPP) to enable communities to get extensive information about the project and associated possible positive and negative consequences. They will be encouraged and given the time to explicitly reflect on this information to be able to give their free prior informed consent (FPIC). The FPIC protocol will then be applied to each activity of the project, as communities will be allowed to provide their consent to part of them, ask for modifications, or withdraw their consent.	SEP applies to all activities. FPIC required for activities under Outcomes 1 and 3

Environmental and social risk management of the project will be provided at three levels:

- preparatory phase in the first six months of the project, while the PMU is building trust relationships with project stakeholders and further defining field interventions (before any activities that may cause adverse social or environmental impacts start, through SESA/ESIA/ESMP measures);
- implementation (when putting in place the said activities), through the implementation of the ESMP and associated plans measures; the management plans are here conceived as sections of the ESMP which provide detailed background and operationalisation steps to the measures addressing the most substantial risks;
- operating stages (through ESMF monitoring when selecting the green entrepreneurship activities for instance, as well as mitigation measures M&E according to ESMP and associated management plans).

To ensure that appropriate safeguards measures are in place, a Strategic Environmental & Social Assessment (SESA) and an Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) will be undertaken and an Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) prepared within the first six months of project implementation, to further refine risk identification and mitigation strategies, as well as to establish a system for monitoring these risks. Based on the ESIA findings and as part of the ESMP (as appropriate), the embedded specific management plans (Biodiversity Action Plan, Livelihood Action Plan) will be developed and implemented. The project will ensure that FPIC is adhered to and will not initiate any activities that may cause adverse social or environmental impacts until SESA, ESIA and ESMP have been completed, disclosed and discussed with stakeholders, and then put in place.

The implementation of project activities will be done under the supervision of a Project Board. The Project Management Unit (PMU) will plan and oversee the execution of project activities and evaluate and report on their progress to the Board and other stakeholders. TORs of both the Board and the PMU will include specific responsibilities related to safeguards, including ensuring a functioning GRM, as well as the development, implementation, and monitoring of the ESMP and any associated stand-alone plans. The project will enhance the capacities of all relevant actors for the implementation and monitoring of safeguards plans and measures.

The estimated total costs for implementing the environmental and social safeguards measures recommended in this ESMF amount to USD 1,202,0577.