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| **G.1 – Original Conditions in Project Area** | | | |
| The original conditions at the project area and the surrounding project zone before the project commences must be described. This description, along with baseline projections (G2), will help to determine the likely impacts of the project. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| General Information | 1. The location of the project and basic physical parameters (e.g., soil, geology, climate).  2. The types and condition of vegetation within the project area.  3. The boundaries of the project area and the project zone. | |  |
| Biodiversity Information | 7. A description of current biodiversity within the project zone (diversity of species and ecosystems) and threats to that biodiversity, using appropriate methodologies, substantiated where possible with appropriate reference material.  8. An evaluation of whether the project zone includes any of the following High Conservation Values (HCVs) and a description of the qualifying attributes:  8.1. Globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values;  a. protected areas  b. threatened species  c. endemic species  d. areas that support significant concentrations of a species during any time in their lifecycle (e.g. migrations, feeding grounds, breeding areas).  8.2. Globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape-level areas where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance;  8.3. Threatened or rare ecosystems;  8.4. Areas that provide critical ecosystem services (e.g., hydrological services, erosion control, fire control);  8.5. Areas that are fundamental for meeting the basic needs of local communities (e.g., for essential food, fuel, fodder, medicines or building materials without readily available alternatives); and  8.6. Areas that are critical for the traditional cultural identity of communities (e.g., areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in collaboration with the communities). | |  |

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| **G.2 – Baseline Projections** | | | | | | |
| A baseline projection is a description of expected conditions in the project zone in the absence of project activities. The project impacts will be measured against this ‘without-project’ reference scenario. | | | | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | | Reference | | Requirement for Verification | |
| Biodiversity | 5. Describe how the ‘without project’ reference scenario would affect biodiversity in the project zone (e.g., habitat availability, landscape connectivity and threatened species). | | | |  | |
| **G.3 – Project Design Goals** | | | | | | |
| The project must be described in sufficient detail so that a third-party can adequately evaluate it. | | | | | | |
| Projects must be designed to minimize risks to the expected climate, community and biodiversity benefits and to maintain those benefits beyond the life of the project. Effective local participation in project design and implementation is key to optimizing multiple benefits, equitably and sustainably. Projects that operate in a transparent manner build confidence with stakeholders and outside parties and enable them to contribute more effectively to the project. | | | | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | | | | |
| Theme | | Indicator | | Reference | | Requirement for Verification |
| Summary of Objectives | | 1. Provide a summary of the project’s major climate, community and biodiversity objectives. | | | |  |
| Impacts and Objectives By Project Activity | | 2. Describe each project activity with expected climate, community and biodiversity impacts and its relevance to achieving the project’s objectives. | | | |  |
| Project Boundaries | | 3. Provide a map identifying the project location and boundaries of the project area(s), where the project activities will occur, of the project zone and of additional surrounding locations that are predicted to be impacted by project activities (e.g. through leakage). | | | |  |
| Project Risks | | 5. Identify likely natural and human-induced risks to the expected climate, community and biodiversity benefits during the project lifetime and outline measures adopted to mitigate these risks. | | | |  |
| Maintenance/ Enhancement of HCVs | | 6. Demonstrate that the project design includes specific measures to ensure the maintenance or enhancement of the high conservation value attributes identified in G1 consistent with the precautionary principle. | | | |  |
| Maintenance of Benefits beyond Project Lifetime | | 7. Describe the measures that will be taken to maintain and enhance the climate, community and biodiversity benefits beyond the project lifetime. | | | |  |
| Ongoing Participation and Consultation | | 8. Document and defend how communities and other stakeholders potentially affected by the project activities have been identified and have been involved in project design through effective consultation, particularly with a view to optimizing community and stakeholder benefits, respecting local customs and values and maintaining high conservation values. Project developers must document stakeholder dialogues and indicate if and how the project proposal was revised based on such input. A plan must be developed to continue communication and consultation between project managers and all community groups about the project and its impacts to facilitate adaptive management throughout the life of the project. | | | |  |
| Publication of Project Documents and Process for Public Comments | | 9. Describe what specific steps have been taken, and communications methods used, to publicize the CCBA public comment period to communities and other stakeholders and to facilitate their submission of comments to CCBA. Project proponents must play an active role in distributing key project documents to affected communities and stakeholders and hold widely publicized information meetings in relevant local or regional languages. | | | |  |
| Process for Unresolved Conflicts and Stakeholder Grievances | | 10. Formalize a clear process for handling unresolved conflicts and grievances that arise during project planning and implementation. The project design must include a process for hearing, responding to and resolving community and other stakeholder grievances within a reasonable time period. This grievance process must be publicized to communities and other stakeholders and must be managed by a third party or mediator to prevent any conflict of interest. Project management must attempt to resolve all reasonable grievances raised, and provide a written response to grievances within 30 days. Grievances and project responses must be documented. | | | |  |
| Adequate Flow of Funds | | 11. Demonstrate that financial mechanisms adopted, including projected revenues from emissions reductions and other sources, are likely to provide an adequate flow of funds for project implementation and to achieve the anticipated climate, community and biodiversity benefits. | | | |  |

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| **G.4 – Management Capacity and Best Practices** | | | |
| The success of a project depends upon the competence of the implementing management team. Projects that include a significant capacity-building (training, skill building, etc.) component are more likely to sustain the positive outcomes generated by the project and have them replicated elsewhere. | | | |
| Best practices for project management include: local stakeholder employment, worker rights, worker safety and a clear process for handling grievances. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| Clear Roles and Responsibilities | 1. Identify a single project proponent which is responsible for the project’s design and implementation. If multiple organizations or individuals are involved in the project’s development and implementation the governance structure, roles and responsibilities of each of the organizations or individuals involved must also be described. | |  |
| Management Expertise | 2. Document key technical skills that will be required to implement the project successfully, including community engagement, biodiversity assessment and carbon measurement and monitoring skills. Document the management team’s expertise and prior experience implementing land management projects at the scale of this project. If relevant experience is lacking, the proponents must either demonstrate how other organizations will be partnered with to support the project or have a recruitment strategy to fill the gaps. | |  |
| Financial Resources | 7. Document the financial health of the implementing organization(s) to demonstrate that financial resources budgeted will be adequate to implement the project. | |  |

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| **G.5 – Legal Status and Property Rights** | | | |
| The project must be based on a solid legal framework (e.g., appropriate contracts are in place) and the project must satisfy applicable planning and regulatory requirements. | | | |
| During the project design phase, the project proponents should communicate early on with relevant local, regional and national authorities in order to allow adequate time to earn necessary approvals. The project design should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate potential modifications that may arise as a result of this process. | | | |
| In the event of unresolved disputes over tenure or use rights to land or resources in the project zone, the project should demonstrate how it will help to bring them to resolution so that there are no unresolved disputes by the start of the project. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| Compliance with National and Local Laws | 1. Submit a list of all relevant national and local laws and regulations in the host country and all applicable international treaties and agreements. Provide assurance that the project will comply with these and, where relevant, demonstrate how compliance is achieved. | |  |
| Approval from Appropriate Authorities | 2. Document that the project has approval from the appropriate authorities, including the established formal and/or traditional authorities customarily required by the communities. | |  |
| Free and Informed Consent from Affected Rights Holders | 3. Demonstrate with documented consultations and agreements that the project will not encroach uninvited on private property, community property, or government property and has obtained the free, prior, and informed consent of those whose rights will be affected by the project. | |  |
| Illegal Activities | 5. Identify any illegal activities that could affect the project’s climate, community or biodiversity impacts (e.g., logging) taking place in the project zone and describe how the project will help to reduce these activities so that project benefits are not derived from illegal activities. | |  |

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| **B1 – Net Positive Biodiversity Impacts** | | | |
| The project must generate net positive impacts on biodiversity within the project zone and within the project lifetime, measured against the baseline conditions. | | | |
| The project should maintain or enhance any High Conservation Values (identified in G1) present in the project zone that are of importance in conserving globally, regionally or nationally significant biodiversity. | | | |
| Invasive species populations45 must not increase as a result of the project, either through direct use or indirectly as a result of project activities. | | | |
| Projects may not use genetically modified organisms (GMOs)46 to generate GHG emissions reductions or removals. GMOs raise unresolved ethical, scientific and socio-economic issues. For example, some GMO attributes may result in invasive genes or species. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| Appropriate Methodology | Use appropriate methodologies to estimate changes in biodiversity as a result of the project in the project zone and in the project lifetime. This estimate must be based on clearly defined and defendable assumptions. The ‘with project’ scenario should then be compared with the baseline ‘without project’ biodiversity scenario completed in G2. The difference (i.e., the net biodiversity benefit) must be positive. | |  |
| Maintenance of HCVs | 2. Demonstrate that no High Conservation Values identified in G1.8.1-3 will be negatively affected by the project. | |  |
| Invasive Species | 3. Identify all species to be used by the project and show that no known invasive species will be introduced into any area affected by the project and that the population of any invasive species will not increase as a result of the project. | |  |
| Non-native Species | 4. Describe possible adverse effects of non-native species used by the project on the region’s environment, including impacts on native species and disease introduction or facilitation. Project proponents must justify any use of non-native species over native species. | |  |
| GMOs | 5. Guarantee that no GMOs will be used to generate GHG emissions reductions or removals. | |  |

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| **B2 – Offsite Biodiversity Impacts** | | | |
| The project proponents must evaluate and mitigate likely negative impacts on biodiversity outside the project zone resulting from project activities. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| ID Impacts | 1. Identify potential negative offsite biodiversity impacts that the project is likely to cause. | |  |
| Document Mitigation | 2. Document how the project plans to mitigate these negative offsite biodiversity impacts. | |  |
| Net Effects on Biodiversity | 3. Evaluate likely unmitigated negative offsite biodiversity impacts against the biodiversity benefits of the project within the project boundaries. Justify and demonstrate that the net effect of the project on biodiversity is positive. | |  |

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| **B3 – Biodiversity Impact Monitoring** | | | |
| The project proponents must have an initial monitoring plan to quantify and document the changes in biodiversity resulting from the project activities (within and outside the project boundaries). The monitoring plan must identify the types of measurements, the sampling method, and the frequency of measurement. | | | |
| Since developing a full biodiversity-monitoring plan can be costly, it is accepted that some of the plan details may not be fully defined at the design stage, when projects are being validated against the Standards. This is acceptable as long as there is an explicit commitment to develop and implement a monitoring plan. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| Variable selection | 1. Develop an initial plan for selecting biodiversity variables to be monitored and the frequency of monitoring and reporting to ensure that monitoring variables are directly linked to the project’s biodiversity objectives and to anticipated impacts (positive and negative). | |  |
| Variable assessment | 2. Develop an initial plan for assessing the effectiveness of measures used to maintain or enhance High Conservation Values related to globally, regionally or nationally significant biodiversity (G1.8.1-3) present in the project zone. | |  |
| Monitoring commitment | 3. Commit to developing a full monitoring plan within six months of the project start date or within twelve months of validation against the Standards and to disseminate this plan and the results of monitoring, ensuring that they are made publicly available on the internet and are communicated to the communities and other stakeholders. | |  |

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| **GL3. Exceptional Biodiversity Benefits** | | | |
| All projects conforming to the Standards must demonstrate net positive impacts on biodiversity within their project zone. This Gold Level Exceptional Biodiversity Benefits criterion identifies projects that conserve biodiversity at sites of global significance for biodiversity conservation. Sites meeting this optional criterion must be based on the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) framework of vulnerability and irreplaceability.56 These criteria are defined in terms of species and population threat levels, since these are the most clearly defined elements of biodiversity. These scientifically based criteria are drawn from existing best practices that have been used, to date, to identify important sites for biodiversity in over 173 countries. | | | |
| **Project Indicators to Ensure Compliance to Principle** | | | |
| Theme | Indicator | Reference | Requirement for Verification |
| Location Site | Project proponents must demonstrate that the project zone includes a site of high biodiversity conservation priority by meeting either the vulnerability or irreplaceability criteria defined below: | |  |
|  | 1. Vulnerability  Regular occurrence of a globally threatened species (according to the IUCN Red List) at the site:  1.1. Critically Endangered (CR) and Endangered (EN) species - presence of at least a single individual; or  1.2. Vulnerable species (VU) - presence of at least 30 individuals or 10 pairs. | |  |
|  | 2. Irreplaceability  A minimum proportion of a species’ global population present at the site at any stage of the species’ lifecycle according to the following thresholds:  2.1. Restricted-range species - species with a global range less than 50,000 km2 and 5% of global population at the site; or  2.2. Species with large but clumped distributions - 5% of the global population at the site; or  2.3. Globally significant congregations - 1% of the global population seasonally at the site; or  2.4. Globally significant source populations - 1% of the global population at the site; | |  |