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Resettlement Policy Framework

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	4
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	7
2. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK	19
3. POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	26
4. PROCESSES RELATED TO COMPENSATION AND RESETTLEMENT	29
5. METHODS OF VALUATION OF AFFECTED ASSETS	33
6. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	34
7. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)	37
8. BUDGET AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUNDING	47
9. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	47
10. MONITORING & EVALUATION OF IMPACTS	55
ANNEX 1: SOCIAL SCREENING CHECKLIST	59
ANNEX 2: OUTLINE FOR RESETTLEMENT ACTION PLANS (RAPs)	63
ANNEX 3: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS	66
ANNEX 3: SAMPLE SURVEY FORMAT	78

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AUMCO	Austria Multi-Country Office
AGSC	Azerbaijan Gas Supply Company
CSO	Civil Society Organization
E&S	Environmental & Social
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GRC	Grievance Redress Council
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
KMG	KazMunayGas
MENR	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
M&E	Monitoring &Evaluation
MEP	Ministry of Environment Protection
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MPA	Maritime Protected Area
MSE	Medium and Small Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAP	Project-Affected Person
PDO	Project Development Objective
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SOCAR	State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic
TCIS	Tehran Convention Interim Secretariat
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WB	World Bank

Glossary of Terms

Table 1 Glossary of Terms

Census	A complete and accurate count of the population that will be affected by land acquisition and related impacts. When properly conducted, the population census provides the basic information necessary for determining eligibility for compensation and for preparing and implementing RAPs.
Compensation	Payment in cash or in kind for an asset or a resource that is acquired or affected by a project at the time the asset needs to be replaced
Cut-off Date	The date the census and assets inventory of persons affected by the project begins. Persons encroaching on the project area or establishing new assets after the cut-off date are not eligible for compensation and/or any other type of resettlement assistance.
Economic Displacement	loss of land, assets, or access to assets leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood
Eligibility	Definition of displaced persons and criteria for determining their eligibility for compensation and other resettlement assistance, including relevant cutoff dates.
Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	Complaints mechanism is a means through which PAPs and communities may raise their concerns or provide feedback to the Project when they believe the project has caused or may cause them harm. The GRM ensures that complaints are being promptly received, assessed and resolved by those responsible for the project.
Household	A Household refers to a group of people who reside together and share in the functions of production and consumption. It is also the smallest unit of consumption, and sometimes production.
Household Head	For purposes of a census, the household head is considered to be that person among the household members who is acknowledged by other members of the household as the head and who is often the one who makes most decisions concerning the welfare of the members of the household.
Livelihood Restoration	The measures required to ensure that PAPs have the resources to at least restore, if not improve, their livelihoods. It requires that people are given the means and assistance necessary for them to improve, or at least restore, their livelihood and living conditions to pre-project levels. Inventory of Losses means the pre-appraisal inventory of assets as a preliminary record of affected or lost assets.
Project Affected Person (PAP)	PAPs are persons on whom the project has a direct economic and social impact. The impact may be caused by the involuntary taking of land resulting in; a) relocation or loss of shelter; b) loss of assets or access to assets; c) loss of income sources or means of livelihood whether or not the person should move to another location; or d) by the involuntary restriction of access to legally designated parks and protected areas resulting in adverse impacts on the livelihoods of the displaced persons.
Replacement Cost	Method of valuation yielding compensation sufficient to replace assets, plus necessary transaction costs associated with asset replacement.
Resettlement Action Plan	A resettlement action plan (RAP) is the planning document that describes what will be done to address the direct social and economic impacts associated with involuntary taking of land

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) is developed to support the social due diligence provisions for activities financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and managed by the World Bank 'Blueing the Caspian Sea'. The project will support Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan to monitor pollution and improve biodiversity planning in the Caspian Sea, which will complement ongoing national efforts to meet Tehran Convention obligations. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the World Bank plans to finance the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to implement the Blueing the Caspian Sea: Building Capacities for Pollution Management and Biodiversity Conservation Project. UNEP will receive direct financing through the GEF to implement additional components of the Project.

The project impact is expected to be overwhelmingly positive, however, in order to ensure that risks of negative environmental or social impacts emerging from the complexities of this project in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are addressed, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared.

Project activities include the increase of the size of existing Marine Protection Areas (MPA) and the establishment of new MPAs in Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. These activities may include involuntary resettlement impacts. They include restrictions of land (marine area) use that may lead to economic displacement through the loss of access to assets, loss of jobs through affected industries - both leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihoods.¹ Under the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 5 on Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, restrictions on land use is defined including restrictions on access to legally designated parks and protected areas.² The Project-related restrictions of access to natural resources in legally designated MPAs can cause economic losses through loss of access to resources; and they may lead to prevention of industrial development, banning of aquatic products like sturgeon caviar, and navigation restrictions for ships leading to loss of jobs.

This Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) is prepared in addition to the ESMF to allow for the mitigation of these risks as the magnitude of the impacts are still unknown at the time of Project preparation. Once the details of the activities are defined, following assessments around the MPAs, this RPF will be expanded into site-specific plans proportional to the risks and impacts (Resettlement Action Plans - RAP). The RPF should be read in conjunction with the Process Framework, which has been prepared for this project.

1.2 Objectives of the RPF

The objective of this RPF is to:

¹ Livelihoods refers to the full range of means that individuals, families and communities utilize to make a living, such as wage-based income, fishing, and other natural-resource based living.

² World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework, 2018, p.53.

- To avoid involuntary resettlement or, when unavoidable, minimize involuntary resettlement by exploring project design alternatives;
- To define the restrictions of access to natural resources in proposed protected areas;
- Identify and quantify the impacts that those restrictions may have on different segments of the local communities;
- To ensure that any physical and economic displacement is carried out in a manner consistent with basic principles of due process, including avoidance or unnecessary disproportionate or excessive force (ESS5, Paragraph 31);
- To mitigate unavoidable adverse social and economic impacts from land acquisition or restrictions on land use by: (a) providing timely compensation for loss of assets at replacement cost; and (b) assisting displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore their livelihoods and living standards in real terms, to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to the beginning of project implementation, whichever is higher.
- To improve living conditions of poor or vulnerable persons who are physically displaced, through provision of adequate access to community services and facilities;
- Implement and monitor remedial measures to compensate for the loss of those assets and the income associated with them;
- To establish a process of informed and meaningful consultations and negotiations with members of potentially affected communities;
- To suggest tools for addressing disagreements and potential conflicts around access to PAs;
- Provide a GRM in order to resolve any issues that may arise due to restrictions of access to resources over the course of the project.

This RPF sets out resettlement procedures acceptable to all stakeholders. The preparation and implementation of the RAPs under this RPF will require the provision of adequate resources to meet the needs of the project-affected people (PAPs), who are physically and/ or economically affected by the project. It also requires adequate, meaningful and participatory consultation with the PAPs through the resettlement process. Such consultations should include and pay particular attention to all vulnerable groups. Initial consultations have been undertaken to inform the preparation of this RPF.

2. Project Description

2.1 Project Development Objective and Project Components

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen pollution monitoring and biodiversity planning in targeted sites within the Caspian Sea in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan and coordinate action on pollution control, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation in the Caspian Sea region.

Component 1: Strengthening Pollution Monitoring

Comparability. Given the multiple sources, kinds, and varying impacts of pollutants affecting the Caspian Sea, the project will focus on developing systematic approaches and comparable monitoring, assessment, and action across the three countries in several dimensions of critical impact of pollution on

biodiversity, ecosystem health, and water quality. The generation of comparable parameters and formats for pollution monitoring will enable countries to establish the state of pollution at regional level.

Caspian Sea focus. Each country has documented and addressed pollution challenges in different ways over time, with discontinuous investment in capacity and data collection and sharing of information and analysis on the common resources. Activities will focus on common areas at the national level with maximum impact on the Caspian Sea ecosystem and waters including (a) monitoring pollution from freshwater inputs (watersheds and runoffs), (b) enhancing coastal and marine pollution monitoring within the MPAs and nature reserves, and (c) addressing pollution originating from oil and gas exploration and production.

Scale-Up. The project will provide technical assistance to establish a national-level consultative and collaborative mechanisms for private and public sectors in the oil and gas industry with other sectors—notably regarding environment and marine resources—active in the Caspian Sea. The intent is to engage on the application of best practices to monitor and improve control of pollution and explore leveraging of companies' compliance monitoring of oil and gas industry operations. During project implementation, each country will convene at one national roundtable, followed by participation in one regional roundtable.

Subcomponent 1.1: Multi-country technical assistance to strengthen pollution monitoring.

Multi-country activities. A set of activities benefiting the three countries simultaneously will develop national programs of action consistent with the common and comparable approach mentioned above. The assistance aims to improve policy harmonization, share knowledge, and make comparable data available. The project will provide a balance of technical assistance for policy, training, knowledge exchange, methods, and equipment. Multi-country activities also offer economies of scale such as for provision of guidebooks/approaches and training.

Marine pollution roundtables and prefeasibility studies. The roundtables will be the main multi-country activity as it will allow economies of scale in the technical assistance and provide an opportunity for cross-learning among the three countries (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan). Three linked activities will be undertaken:

- a. Organise national pollution roundtable discussions to engage stakeholders (government, private sector, academia, civil society, and international experts) on opportunities for better pollution monitoring and identify needs for scale-up;
- b. Organise a multi-country (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan) roundtable to present findings of instruments and policy/regulations needed to capitalize on opportunities for pollution monitoring; and
- c. Develop with each country one or more concrete prefeasibility studies of finance and policy instruments for pollution monitoring and reporting.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by the three governments (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan):

- d. Provide feedback and input on the prefeasibility studies.
- e. Facilitate stakeholder participation in the national and multi-country roundtables.
- f. Consider finalization of prefeasibility studies and potential adoption after the project of related policy instruments.

Subcomponent 1.2: Pollution monitoring in Azerbaijan.

The Environment Policy Department of the MENR will be the recipient of technical support in the following areas:

Development of a marine pollution monitoring scheme. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Conduct a gap review of pollution monitoring practices and provide recommendations for a MENR coordinated marine pollution monitoring scheme for Azerbaijan.
- b. Support MENR in developing a marine pollution monitoring scheme.
- c. Organize a national validation workshop with stakeholders to review and endorse the scheme, including institutional arrangements.
- d. Provide technical assistance to MENR to draft the policy instruments needed to facilitate adoption and implementation of the scheme (e.g., policies/laws, institutional frameworks, coordination, execution, and reporting/monitoring)

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR:

- e. Review and provide feedback on the gap analysis and proposed monitoring scheme.
- f. Participate in and validate the scheme at the national workshop, including institutional arrangements.
- g. Adoption of a marine pollution monitoring scheme based on the draft policy instruments prepared under this sub-component.

Capacity building in the pollution monitoring scheme. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop a MENR capacity-building plan, training manuals, and tools for marine pollution monitoring, with particular focus on pollutants affecting marine protected areas (MPAs) and river estuaries.
- b. Support MENR to implement the capacity-building plan by delivering targeted training programs for MENR staff and partners on the use of the monitoring system and other identified areas, and by supporting MENR in applying the acquired knowledge and integrating monitoring practices into institutional processes.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR:

- c. Nominate staff and focal points to participate in training and knowledge transfer activities.
- d. Endorse and implement the MENR capacity-building plan within institutional structures.

Equipment for implementing the pollution monitoring scheme. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Procure and hand over to MENR selected equipment to monitor and analyze key pollutants identified in the scheme, with emphasis on impacts on MPAs (seal rookeries) and river estuaries (fish spawning areas).
- b. Provide training on the operation and maintenance of equipment to MENR staff.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR:

- c. Assign technical staff for operation and maintenance of procured equipment.
- d. Ensure provision of adequate resources (staff time, utilities, O&M budget) for equipment sustainability.

Awareness raising, education and outreach, incl. monitoring report. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop and implement awareness raising and outreach campaigns on marine pollution highlighting valuation of Absheron National Park MPA area in Baku metropolitan area and sturgeon regeneration in river estuaries with focus on urban audiences and ecotourism.
- b. Provide technical assistance to MENR for the preparation of the annual pollution monitoring report in collaboration with its partners, including SOCAR and AGSC.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR:

- c. Support UNOPS's implementation of outreach campaigns to ensure wide dissemination
- d. Develop and disseminate the annual pollution monitoring report, in collaboration with partners (e.g., SOCAR, AGSC).

Subcomponent 1.3: Pollution monitoring in Kazakhstan.

The Kazakh Scientific and Research Institute of the Caspian Sea (KSRICS) of the MENR located in Aktau on the Caspian coast will be the recipient of support on pollution monitoring. A Presidential Decree created the institute on January 25, 2024, with a mission to coordinate national actions and regional engagement to address the multiple, diverse challenges to the Caspian Sea and its resources.

Development of a marine pollution monitoring scheme. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Conduct a gap review of pollution monitoring practices and provide recommendations for a KSRICS (MENR) coordinated marine pollution monitoring scheme for Kazakhstan
- b. Support KSRICS in developing a marine pollution monitoring scheme
- c. Organise a national validation workshop with stakeholders to review and endorse the scheme, including institutional arrangements.
- d. Provide technical assistance to KSRICS to draft the policy instruments needed to facilitate adoption and implementation of the scheme (e.g. policies/laws, institutional frameworks, coordination, execution, and reporting/monitoring)

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- e. Review and provide feedback on the gap analysis and proposed monitoring scheme.
- f. Participate in and validate the scheme at the national workshop, including institutional arrangements.
- g. Adopt a marine pollution monitoring scheme based on the draft policy instruments prepared under this subcomponent.

Capacity building in pollution monitoring scheme. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop a KSRICS capacity-building plan, training manuals, and tools for marine pollution monitoring, with particular focus on pollutants affecting marine protected areas (MPAs) and river estuaries.
- b. Support KSRICS to implement the capacity-building plan by delivering targeted training programs for KSRICS staff and partners on the use of the monitoring system and other identified areas, and by supporting KSRICS in applying the acquired knowledge and integrating monitoring practices into institutional processes.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- c. Nominate staff and focal points to participate in training and knowledge transfer activities.
- d. Endorse and implement the KSRICS capacity-building plan within institutional structures.

Equipment for implementing the pollution monitoring scheme. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Specific equipment procured and handed over to KCRIS based on the key pollutants to collect and analyze as identified in the scheme affecting MPAs (with focus on seal birthing areas).
- b. Provide training on the operation of the operation and maintenance of the equipment to MENR staff.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- c. Assign technical staff for installation, operation, and maintenance of procured equipment.
- d. Ensure provision of adequate resources (staff time, utilities, O&M budget) for equipment sustainability.

Awareness raising, education and outreach, including monitoring and reporting. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop and implement awareness raising and outreach campaigns on marine pollution and biodiversity impacts for affected stakeholders including coastal communities and actors, polluting sources, decision makers.
- b. Provide technical support to KSRICS for the preparation of the annual pollution monitoring report, developed jointly with KazHydroMet (MENR) and KazMunayGaz.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- c. Support UNOPS's implementation of the outreach campaigns to ensure wide dissemination.
- d. Develop and disseminate the annual pollution monitoring report, in collaboration with partners.

Subcomponent 1.4: Pollution monitoring in Turkmenistan.

The CaspEcoControl of the MEP located in Turkmenbashi on the Caspian coast will be the recipient of support on pollution monitoring. The project will reinforce monitoring through targeted purchase of equipment vital to monitoring key pollutant inputs from rivers and runoff areas, with particular focus on biodiversity impacts and protected areas.

Development of a marine pollution monitoring scheme. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Conduct a gap review of pollution monitoring practices and provide recommendations for CaspEcoControl (MEP) coordinated marine pollution monitoring scheme for Kazakhstan
- b. Support CaspEcoControl (MEP) in developing a marine pollution monitoring scheme.
- c. Organize a national validation workshop with stakeholders to review and endorse the scheme, including institutional arrangements.
- d. Provide technical assistance to CaspEcoControl (MEP) to draft the policy instruments needed to facilitate adoption and implementation of the scheme (e.g., policies/laws, institutional frameworks, coordination, execution, and reporting/monitoring).

Anticipated activities to be implemented by CaspEcoControl of the MEP:

- e. Review and provide feedback on the gap analysis and proposed monitoring scheme.
- f. Participate in and validate the scheme at the national workshop, including institutional arrangements.
- g. Adopt a marine pollution monitoring scheme based on the policy instruments prepared under this subcomponent.

Capacity building in pollution monitoring scheme incl. key pollutants (i.e. hydrocarbon sources). Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop a CaspEcoControl capacity building plan, incl. training manuals, and tools to monitor key sedimentary, seawater and atmospheric pollutants focusing on MPA areas including river estuaries.
- b. Support CaspEcoControl to implement the capacity-building plan by delivering targeted training programs for CaspEcoControl staff and partners on the use of the monitoring system and other identified areas, and by supporting CaspEcoControl in applying the acquired knowledge and integrating monitoring practices into institutional processes.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by CaspEcoControl of the MEP:

- c. Nominate staff and focal points to participate in training and knowledge transfer activities.
- d. Endorse and implement the CaspEcoControl capacity-building plan within institutional structures.

Equipment for pollution monitoring scheme. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Specific equipment procured and handed over to CaspEcoControl of the MEP based on the key pollutants to collect and analyze as identified in the scheme affecting MPAs (with focus on seal birthing areas).
- b. Provide training on the operation and maintenance of the equipment to CaspEcoControl staff

Anticipated activities to be implemented by CaspEcoControl of the MEP:

- c. Assign technical staff for installation, operation, and maintenance of procured equipment.
- d. Ensure provision of adequate resources (staff time, utilities, O&M budget) for equipment sustainability.

Awareness raising, education and outreach, including monitoring and reporting. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop and implement awareness raising and outreach campaigns for identified pollution sources (i.e., oil and gas sectors), decision makers and the public nationally and specifically Turkmenbashi and the Caspian coast.
- b. Provide Technical Support to CaspEcoControl for the preparation of the annual monitoring report in association with the oil and gas industry and other partners.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by CaspEcoControl of the MEP:

- c. Support UNOPS's implementation of outreach campaigns to ensure wide dissemination
- d. Develop and disseminate the annual pollution monitoring report, in collaboration with partners.

Component 2: Strengthening Biodiversity Planning

A keystone species approach. The project will focus on visible and well-known keystone species, Caspian seal and sturgeons, as beacons for advocacy and rationale for protected areas management with the aim of bringing demonstrated successes to scale post-project. Each country has documented and addressed biodiversity challenges in different ways over time, with discontinuous investment and coordination in data collection and sharing of information and analysis on the common resources. For example, the population of Caspian seal today is a rough estimate, and without a functioning protocol for monitoring seals and keystone species, the population cannot be effectively managed at the national or regional level. The project will go beyond recommendation for monitoring to actual reporting on the status of seal populations in the three countries.

Phased approach to marine protected areas. The project will apply the phased approach to protected areas management (described in para 126 of the PAD) which includes “conceptualization” with biophysical and socioeconomic assessments to confirming protected areas boundaries, “establishment” with drafting and enacting required legislation and regulations, and “management” with training of personnel and provision of selected equipment.

Biodiversity finance for scale-up. To raise the ambition and scale of results beyond project life, the project will engage the government and partners on innovative financing instruments. Specifically, the project will explore the opportunity to leverage the World Bank’s bond issuance platform and seek non-government contributions. Innovative finance has been demonstrated successfully, for example with the Bank’s “Rhino Bond.”³

Subcomponent 2.1: Multi-country technical assistance to strengthen biodiversity planning.

Multi-country activities. The focus will be on addressing biodiversity monitoring and planning consistent with the “Impact Accelerator” and the phased approach to protected areas mentioned above. The assistance will aim to understand the ecosystem in specific areas, analyze institutions and regulatory frameworks, inform protected areas management plans, and evaluation of and conservation measures for flagship species indicative of Caspian Sea viability, notably the Caspian seal and sturgeon populations.

Keystone species approach. The project will include activities that guide national implementation for biodiversity monitoring and planning. Two linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Carry out technical studies and develop a how-to guidebook on biodiversity monitoring building in part on existing guides and incorporating latest innovations.
- b. Organize learning events and exchanges among national experts from the three countries and with international scientists on comparability of biodiversity/species information.

Anticipated activities implemented by the Project Focus Countries (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan):

- c. Provide feedback and input on the guidebook.
- d. Facilitate stakeholder participation in learning events and exchanges.

Phased approach to marine protected areas. One activity will be undertaken by the project:

³

<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/7039bd837e60e484fb3a93ea63951306-0340022022/original/CaseStudy-WildlifeConservationBond.pdf>

- a. Prepare a guidebook on the “phased approach to protected areas management,” including guidance on managing environmental and social issues, on the phased approach that will be put in practice with the proposed MPAs in each country.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by the Project Focus Countries (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan):

- b. Provide feedback and input on the guidebook.

Biodiversity finance for scale-up. To sustain and scale up results beyond the project’s lifetime, the project will engage with the government through two interlinked activities to be implemented under the project.

- a. Organize a regional workshop presenting models of finance instruments that could be applied in the context of the biodiversity finance gap.
- b. Prepare pre-feasibility study of a government-selected finance instrument (one per country), assessing its applicability, operational requirements, and potential for long-term implementation.

Anticipated contributions from the three governments (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan):

- c. Identify one innovative financing instrument to be further developed through a project-supported pre-feasibility study.

Subcomponent 2.2: Biodiversity planning in Azerbaijan.

The project will contribute to biodiversity monitoring and planning through an increase in and improvements to its MPAs system and evaluation of the status of flagship species. Through the Biological Diversity Protection Service in the MENR, the project will add a marine protected area to the existing Absheron National Park, which is located in central Azerbaijan adjacent to the Baku metropolitan area.

National biodiversity priority setting. One linked activity will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Stocktaking of lead species, with particular attention to status Caspian seals, fish and waterfowl in Absheron MPA.

Anticipated activity to be implemented by MENR:

- b. Provide data and technical input for stocktaking of lead species and baseline assessments, particularly on Caspian seals, fish, and waterfowl populations.

Technical assistance to enhance the protected areas management system with emphasis on expanding the Absheron National Park. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Develop a technical study and recommendations for the overall protected areas system enhancement, including application of the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) approach.
- b. In view of the expansion of the Absheron NP, support the consultation process led by MENR for the proposed Absheron MPA with participation of government, research, tourism, oil companies, fish companies, and civil society on MPAs and use of GEF promoted METT approach for Absheron MPA.
- c. Provide technical assistance to MENR to strengthen the management framework for the expanded Absheron Marine Protected Area, including support in drafting the management plan,

and preparing related policies, charters, and legal instruments required to formalize the updated status and governance structure of the MPA.

- d. Preparation of site-specific environmental and social instruments for Absheron MPA.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR :

- e. Support access to protected sites and relevant documentation needed for technical studies and assessments.
- f. Organize and lead stakeholder consultations and validation workshops related to the Absheron MPA expansion and policy recommendations.

Capacity building in managing the Absheron National Park. Three linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Provide technical training for government, academia, NGOs and private sectors (including tourism) on issues related to MPA management with the Absheron NP pilot (incl. training plans, training/workshop and training on public communications, stakeholder consultations, and equipment).
- b. Procure selected equipment for Absheron National Park based on identified needs for the implementation of the METT approach, including support in defining technical specifications and providing training on the operation and maintenance of the procured equipment.
- c. Develop and implement awareness/outreach strategy on MPAs and biodiversity conservation highlighting Caspian seals and sturgeon regeneration. The target audience may include private sector (including the tourism industry) to promote understanding of marine conservation, the planned expansion of the Absheron National Park MPA, the ecological importance of islands for seals, and river estuaries for fish habitats, at both local and national levels.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MENR:

- d. Engage national institutions, research institutes, and park authorities in the preparation and review of the MPA management plan and environmental and social instruments.
- e. Coordinate across ministries and agencies to review and comment on draft policies, laws, and charters for the Absheron MPA's updated legal status and management framework.
- f. Nominate staff and specialists to participate in capacity-building activities, technical training, and workshops on MPA management, stakeholder engagement, and equipment operation.
- g. Promote visibility and participation of the private sector in awareness and outreach initiatives implemented by UNOPS, including tourism, fisheries, and oil companies.

Subcomponent 2.3: Biodiversity planning in Kazakhstan.

The project will contribute to Kazakhstan biodiversity monitoring and planning through support to a recently created Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve in the Mangistau Region that serves as an important habitat for the migratory Caspian seal.

National biodiversity priority setting. One linked activity will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Stocktaking of lead species with particular attention to status Caspian seal birthing areas in Mangistau marine area.

Anticipated activity to be implemented by KSRICS:

- b. Provide data and technical input for stocktaking of lead species and baseline assessments, particularly on Caspian seals, fish, and waterfowl populations.

Technical assistance to enhance the protected areas management system with emphasis on the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Organize Validation workshop with the KSRICS and Forestry and Wildlife Committee and other government, research, ecotourism actors and civil society on MPAs and use of GEF METT approach for the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve in the Mangistau Region.
- b. In view of the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve, support the consultation process led by MSRICS for the reserve with participation of government agencies, academia, tourism operators, oil companies, fish companies, and civil society on MPAs and use of GEF promoted METT approach for Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve.
- c. Provide technical assistance to MENR to strengthen the management framework for the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve, including support in drafting the management plan, and preparing related policies, charters, and legal instruments required to formalize the updated status and governance structure of the MPA.
- d. Preparation of site-specific environmental and social instruments for Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- e. Support access to protected sites and relevant documentation needed for technical studies and assessments.
- f. Organize and lead stakeholder consultations and validation workshops related to the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve and policy recommendations.

Capacity building in managing the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve. Three linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Provide Technical assistance KSRICS and its partners to draft the MPA management system/plan, specifically for the recently created Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve in the Mangistau Region.
- b. Procure selected equipment for Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve based on identified needs for the implementation of the METT approach, including support in defining technical specifications and providing training on the operation and maintenance of the procured equipment.
- c. Develop and implement awareness/outreach strategy on MPAs and biodiversity conservation highlighting Caspian seals and sturgeon regeneration. Implement an awareness and outreach strategy targeting the private sector (including the tourism industry) to promote understanding of marine conservation, the ecological importance of islands for seals, and river estuaries for fish habitats, at both local and national levels.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by KSRICS:

- d. Provide technical data and expertise for stocktaking of lead species and assessments of Caspian seal birthing areas in the Mangistau marine region
- e. Engage national institutions, research institutes, and park authorities in the preparation and review of the MPA management plan and environmental and social instruments.
- f. Coordinate across ministries and agencies to review and comment on draft policies, laws, and charters for the Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve legal status and management framework.

- g. Nominate staff and specialists to participate in capacity-building activities, technical training, and workshops on MPA management, stakeholder engagement, and equipment operation.
- h. Promote visibility and participation of the private sector in awareness and outreach initiatives implemented by UNOPS, including tourism, fisheries, and oil companies.

Subcomponent 2.4: Biodiversity planning in Turkmenistan.

The project will support the Government of Turkmenistan in strengthening biodiversity monitoring and planning through assistance to the creation of a new Garabogaz marine protected area, improvements to MPAs system and evaluation of the status of flagship species.

National biodiversity priority setting. One linked activity will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Stocktaking on lead species with particular attention to status Caspian seal and sturgeon in the proposed Garabogaz marine protected area.

Anticipated activity to be implemented by MEP:

- b. Provide data and technical input for stocktaking of lead species and baseline assessments, particularly on Caspian seals, fish, and waterfowl populations.

Technical assistance to enhance the protected areas management system with the example of Garabogaz marine protected area. Four linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Carry out a technical study and recommendations for the overall protected areas system enhancement, including application of the GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) approach in the Garabogaz marine protected area.
- b. In view of the creation of the Garabogaz marine protected area, support the consultation process led by MEP for the proposed Garabogaz marine protected area with participation of government, research, tourism, oil companies, fish companies, and civil society on MPAs and use of GEF promoted METT approach for Garabogaz marine protected area.
- c. Provide technical assistance to MENR to strengthen the management framework for the Garabogaz marine protected area, including support in drafting the management plan, and preparing related policies, charters, and legal instruments required to formalize the updated status and governance structure of the MPA.
- d. Preparation of site-specific environmental and social instruments for Garabogaz marine protected area.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MEP:

- e. Support access to protected sites and relevant documentation needed for technical studies and assessments.
- f. Organize and lead stakeholder consultations and validation workshops related to the Garabogaz marine protected area and policy recommendations.

Capacity building for the Garabogaz marine protected area. Three linked activities will be undertaken by the project:

- a. Provide technical training for government, academia, NGOs and private sectors (including tourism) on issues related to MPA management with the Garabogaz marine protected area (incl. training plans, training/workshop and training on public communications, stakeholder consultations, and equipment).

- b. Procure selected equipment for Garabogaz marine protected area based on identified needs for the implementation of the METT approach, including support in defining technical specifications and providing training on the operation and maintenance of the procured equipment.
- c. Develop and implement awareness/outreach strategy on MPAs and biodiversity conservation highlighting Caspian seals and sturgeon regeneration. The target audience may include private sector (including the tourism industry) to promote understanding of marine conservation, the planned Garabogaz marine protected area, the ecological importance of islands for seals, and river estuaries for fish habitats, at both local and national levels.

Anticipated activities to be implemented by MEP:

- d. Engage national institutions, research institutes, and park authorities in the preparation and review of the MPA management plan and environmental and social instruments.
- e. Coordinate across ministries and agencies to review and comment on draft policies, laws, and charters for the Garabogaz marine protected area updated legal status and management framework.
- f. Nominate staff and specialists to participate in capacity-building activities, technical training, and workshops on MPA management, stakeholder engagement, and equipment operation.
- g. Promote visibility and participation in awareness and outreach initiatives implemented by UNOPS of the private sector, including tourism, fisheries, and oil companies.

Component 3: Project Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation

This component will ensure overall coordination of the technical implementation of the project activities. Coordination functions include project activity planning, procurement of technical assistance, M&E of project results, production of progress reports, management of ESF compliance including the establishment of the GRM. The PIU will be housed at UNOPS offices in Vienna, Austria, and will comprise professional, administrative, and support staff.

Specifically, the PIU will:

- a. Oversee the preparation of annual implementation/operating plans.
- b. Procure expertise and equipment per identified needs and workplan.
- c. Organization of the biannual project steering committee meetings.
- d. Prepare progress and other reports, as required by the GEF and the World Bank.
- e. Prepare required ESF instruments, and establishment and manage the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).
- f. Identify and engage additional expertise needed to deliver agreed activities Identify additional expertise needed to support the acts required by the government.

2.2 Methodology for the Preparation of the RPF

The preparation of this RPF included a literature review and desk study of the documents to assess potential risks and impacts and develop risk mitigation measures. Documentation included: The WB ESF and its ESSs to determine applicability, especially ESS5; relevant legislation of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan; WB Project Appraisal Document (PAD) for the Project; the Project Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP); and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); information on the

protected areas as available. Furthermore, WB guidance notes have been considered, such as the 'Interim Guidance Note on Managing the Risks of Projects Involving Protected Areas' from January 2025.

Furthermore, stakeholder consultations were conducted in all three countries between May-August 2024, as well as March-April 2025. In addition, Government stakeholders have completed initial MPA profiles, laying out socio-physical details around the MPAs. These have been used to assess ESS5-related risks.

3. Legal and Institutional Framework

This RPF complies with the laws and regulations of the countries of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan as well as with the World Bank's ESS5, laid out in the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Where there are gaps or discrepancies between the national laws and the ESSs, the regulation with higher standards/ provision prevails. This section has been prepared in compliance with ESS1 paragraph 26, requiring consideration of the countries' national laws, regulations, institutional capabilities, and obligations directly applicable to the project under relevant treaties and agreements.

3.1 Legal Framework Azerbaijan

Table 2 Relevant Legal framework Azerbaijan

	Law	Description and Relevance to Project Activities
Land Acquisition & Resettlement	The Civil code (2000)	The Code requires the Decree on acquisition of lands for state needs should be registered in state real estate registration. It also states that Executive Agency should; a) send official notifications to all affected persons about land acquisition; b) pay full compensation to the affected persons within 90 days after the agreement made with the right holder; c) assist relocated people; and d) pay compensation for affected assets on the market rates (in case it is not possible to identify market rates, replacement prices is used). It states that an affected person can select one or more compensation such as land by land, cash compensation and provision of dwelling. It is relevant as it entitles persons who have no legal rights on the land to resettlement assistance and compensation
	Law of Azerbaijan Republic on Acquisition of Lands for States Needs (LAL, 2010):	Specifically address matters related to involuntary resettlement (IR), including the process and institutional arrangement for land acquisition, compensation and valuation, consultation requirements, entitlements of various categories of displaced persons and grievance redress mechanism. The law is relevant as it considers various categories of displaced persons, including those without state registration, renters, non-formal long-term users of land, and persons who have no legal rights on the land that they live in.
	Law on valuation (2023)	The law states that valuation of real estate is mandatory in cases of land acquisition for state needs and the results of

		the valuation are to be reflected in a valuation report. This is relevant to access the value of the property in order to get the replacement cost during compensation
Protection of national parks village lands and fisheries	Law on Specially Protected Natural Territories and Objects (2000)	The law establishes the legal basis for the organization and protection of PAs, protection of specially protected natural sites on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Its relevance is that it outlines the categories of PAs and specifies the regulations for their use and conservation. The law ensures the protection of ecological systems while regulating land use and acquisition processes.
	Law on Environmental Protection (1999)	This law establishes the legal, economic, and social foundations for environmental protection in Azerbaijan. Its relevance is that it aims to ensure ecological safety, maintain environmental balance, and prevent harmful impacts from economic and other activities on natural ecosystems. The law also emphasizes the preservation of biological diversity and the effective use of natural resources. The law ensures the protection of ecological systems while regulating land use and acquisition processes.
	Land Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1999) Amended (2023)	The Land Code regulates land relations, including ownership, use, and protection of land resources. It provides the legal basis for land acquisition processes, ensuring that land use aligns with environmental protection requirements. The relevance is that the code specifies that land designated for environmental protection, such as national parks and reserves, is subject to special regulations to preserve their ecological value. The law ensures the protection of ecological systems while regulating land use and acquisition processes.
	Fisheries Law (1998)	Outlines legal foundations for organizing and managing fisheries, focusing on conservation, reproduction and sustainable use of fish stocks.
	Ministerial Decree No 202 on Fisheries Registration	Mandates the registration of individuals and entities engaged in fishing activities.
Public Participation and community engagement	Law on Public Participation (2014)	The law outlines the mechanisms for involving citizens and civil society in decision-making processes. The relevance of the law is that it mandates public hearing and discussions on significant issues ensuring transparency and inclusivity as it also emphasizes the importance of conducting surveys and other activities to understand public sentiment on various issues.

3.2 Legal framework of Kazakhstan

Table 3 Relevant legal framework Kazakhstan

	Law	Description and Relevance to Project Activities
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Land acquisition and resettlement	The Constitution	<p>The law states that land (surface and underground) is owned by the state but can also be privately owned (Article 6.3). Article 6.3 also states that No one may be deprived of property unless stipulated by a court decision. Forcible alienation of property for public use may be exercised upon the condition of relevant equivalent compensation provision in exceptional cases stipulated by the law. The relevance of the law is that it establishes foundational principles regarding property rights and the conditions under which property, including land, may be expropriated, Article 26 specifically addresses these aspects. All the land related disputes are heard and determined in the court systems.</p>
	Land Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Code No. 442 dated June 20, 2003)	<p>Defines compulsory Acquisition 'expropriation' as actions by state bodies aiming to terminate a private owner's or land user's rights to a land plot in the manner and under conditions provided by the Code and other laws. The Land code governs how the land will be expropriated and under which circumstances. Forced alienation of land or other immovable property in connection with the land acquisition for public use is allowed only in the volume which is necessary to meet the public needs.</p>
	The Civil code (2000)	<p>This law stipulates the amount of compensation is determined in accordance with paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 9 of the Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the basis of the value of property and losses to its full extent that have affected the owner or non-state land user as a result of expropriation of land for public use and (or) caused by the termination of the owner's or non-state land user's obligations fulfillment to third parties.</p>
Protection of national parks village lands and fisheries	Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas (2006)	<p>This law provides a legal framework for establishment, protection and management of national parks, national reserves and other protected areas.</p> <p>The law allows for reclassification of the land for purposes not related to conservation with reservations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting an environmental impact assessment. • Obtaining a positive conclusion from the state ecological expertise. • Holding public hearings in the relevant administrative-territorial units and settlements, with coverage in the mass media. • The land must not be transferred to third parties or used as collateral. <p>The relevance of this law is that it ensures that any land acquisition or project implementation within national parks adheres to strict environmental assessments and public involvement, maintaining the integrity of Kazakhstan's protected natural areas.</p>
	Law on Protection, Reproduction, and Use of the Animal World (2004)	<p>Mandates wildlife management, including fishery. Defines fishing zones and fishery resources and outlines rights and responsibilities of individuals and entities engaged in fishing activities. Guides conservation and sustainable use of aquatic animals.</p>

	Restrictions and Prohibitions on Wildlife Use (2015)	Establishes specific restrictions and prohibitions on the use of wildlife object including fishery resources. Designates PA and specifies prohibited fishing gear, and techniques to prevent overexploitation and ensure the regeneration of fish populations.
Public Participation and community engagement	Access to information law (2015)	The law promotes public engagement and participation of the citizens. The relevance of this law is that it ensures citizens' right to access government-held information, promoting transparency and enabling informed public participation.

3.3 Legal Framework Turkmenistan

Table 4 Turkmenistan legal framework on land acquisition

	Law	Description and Relevance to Project Activities
Land acquisition and resettlement	The Constitution	The Constitution of Turkmenistan emphasizes state ownership of land and the equitable treatment of citizens in matters related to land acquisition and resettlement. Land is primarily owned by the state, and individuals or entities can acquire usage rights under specific conditions. The relevance is that the Constitution supports sustainable development and the protection of natural resources, which indirectly impacts land acquisition and resettlement practices.
	Land code 1992	This law establishes the principles of land use and ownership. All lands of Turkmenistan, except for lands granted to citizens of Turkmenistan in private ownership, are owned by the state. While there are no specific laws on resettlement, any displacement caused by land acquisition must comply with general legal frameworks, ensuring fair compensation and minimal disruption to affected communities.
	Law on Environmental Protection (2017)	This law indirectly impacts land acquisition by emphasizing sustainable land use and the protection of natural resources.
Protection of national parks village lands and fisheries	The Law of Turkmenistan "On Specially Protected Natural Territories" (2012)	<p>This law regulates the organization, management, protection, and use of areas with special nature conservation, scientific, cultural, aesthetic, recreational, and health-improving value, aiming to protect and restore ecological balance. For the first time, the law formalizes elements of the ecological network, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land plots for health and recreational purposes; • buffer zones of protected areas; • ecological corridors; • forest fund lands and hunting grounds. <p>These areas are granted an environmental-legal status, which promotes the resilience of natural and cultural landscapes and enables comprehensive environmental monitoring</p>
	Law on fishing and conservation of Aquatic Biological Resources	The law regulates fishing activities and ensures the sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems.
Public Participation and community engagement	Law on public Associations (2003)	Turkmenistan, public engagement and participation are governed by laws that emphasize the role of public associations and the rights of citizens to participate in decision-making processes. The relevance of this law is that it allows citizens to form public associations to

		protect common interests and achieve shared goals. It ensures the state's support for such associations and prohibits discrimination against them
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3.4 World Bank ESS5

The Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) sets out the World Bank's commitment to sustainable development through a Bank Policy and a set of Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) that are designed to support borrowers' projects with the aim of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity.

The ESSs set out the requirements for borrowers relating to the identification and assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts associated with projects supported by the Bank through Investment Project Financing. The Bank believes that the application of these standards, focusing on the identification and management of environmental and social risks, will support borrowers in their goal to reduce poverty and increase prosperity in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the environment and their citizens.

ESS5 – Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use, and Involuntary Resettlement. ESS5 recognizes that project-related land acquisition and restrictions on land use can have adverse impacts on communities and persons. Project-related land acquisition or restrictions on land use may cause physical displacement (relocation, loss of residential land or loss of shelter), economic displacement (loss of land, assets or access to assets, leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood), or both. The term “involuntary resettlement” refers to these impacts. Resettlement is considered involuntary when affected persons or communities do not have the right to refuse land acquisition or restrictions on land use that result in displacement.

Experience and research indicate that physical and economic displacement, if unmitigated, may give rise to severe economic, social and environmental risks: production systems may be dismantled; people face impoverishment if their productive resources or other income sources are lost; people may be relocated to environments where their productive skills are less applicable and the competition for resources greater; community institutions and social networks may be weakened; kin groups may be dispersed; and cultural identity, traditional authority, and the potential for mutual help may be diminished or lost. For these reasons, involuntary resettlement should be avoided. Where involuntary resettlement is unavoidable, it will be minimized and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts on displaced persons (and on host communities receiving displaced persons) will be carefully planned and implemented.

ESS5 also applies, where ‘restrictions on land use and access to natural resources that cause a community or groups within a community to lose access to resource usage where they have traditional or customary tenure, or recognizable usage rights.’⁴ It further applies in cases of ‘restriction on access to land or use of other resources including communal property and natural resources such as marine and aquatic resources, timber and non-timber forest products, fresh water, medicinal plants, hunting and gathering grounds and grazing and cropping areas’⁵.

⁴ The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54

⁵ The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54

In addition, communal decision on communal land should be taken with evidence that the ‘community decision making process is adequate and reflects voluntary, informed consensus, and that appropriate measures have been agreed and put in place to mitigate adverse impacts, if any, on the vulnerable members of the community.’⁶

ESS5 outlines classifies three categories of PAPs, those:

- (a) Who have formal legal rights to land or assets;
- (b) Who do not have formal legal rights to land or assets, but have a claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law; or
- (c) Who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use.

3.5 World Bank ESS5 and Key Gaps with the National Framework

The Table below outlines the applicable World Bank ESSs relevant to project activities and identifies key gaps between World Bank standards and national frameworks (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) and suggests how to overcome the gaps.

Table 5 Gap Analysis between ESS and National Laws

ESS	Country	National Laws	Gaps	Proposed Actions
ESS 5 Avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement by exploring project design alternatives Mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts from land acquisition or restrictions on land use through timely compensation for loss of assets at replacement cost and assisting displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore, livelihoods and living standards, in real terms, to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to the beginning of project	Azerbaijan	h. The Civil code (2000) i. Law of Azerbaijan Republic on Acquisition of Lands for States Needs (LAL, 2010): j. Law on valuation (2023) k. Law on Specially Protected Natural Territories and Objects (2000) l. Law on Environmental Protection (1999): m. Land Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1999) Amended (2023)	Weak protection of informal land users, compensation is only provided for legal landowners. Formal and informal land users are not recognized. Compensation is mostly cash-based without requirement for livelihood restoration While public consultation is required, it is often not implemented	The project will adopt ESS5.

⁶ The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54

<p>implementation, whichever is higher</p> <p>Ensure that resettlement activities are planned and implemented with appropriate disclosure of information, meaningful consultation, and informed participation</p>		<p>n. Fisheries Law (1998)</p> <p>o. Ministerial Decree No 202 on Fisheries Registration</p>		
<p>Kazakhstan</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (of June 20, 2003 No. 442-II - as amended on 22-11-2024) ● The Civil code (2000) ● Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas (2006) ● Access to information law (2015) ● Law on Protection, Reproduction, and Use of the Animal World (2004) ● Restrictions and Prohibitions on Wildlife Use (2015) 	<p>Informal landowners are not entitled to compensation.</p> <p>Seasonal workers and sharecroppers do not receive compensation</p> <p>Compensation is mostly cash-based without requirement for livelihood restoration</p> <p>While public consultation is required, it is often not implemented</p>	<p>The project will adopt ESS5</p>
<p>Turkmenistan</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land Code (1992) ● Law on Environmental Protection (2017) ● The Law of Turkmenistan "On Specially Protected Natural Territories" (2012) ● Law on fishing and conservation of Aquatic Biological Resources ● Law on public Associations (2003) 	<p>Informal settlers and customary land users may not be eligible for compensation.</p> <p>Compensation is based on government assessed market-value, which may not reflect the full cost</p> <p>No clear law on livelihood restoration</p> <p>Public participation in land acquisition is limited</p> <p>Tenants, sharecroppers and seasonal land users do not receive adequate protection</p>	<p>The project will adopt ESS5</p>

4. Potential Impacts and Eligibility Criteria

4.1 Potential Impacts

The project Component 2 supports one recently created, and two proposed MPAs. The creation and expansion of MPAs may restrict access to natural resources for communities and businesses, which may lead to economic pressure on local communities. There could also be negative impacts on vulnerable groups through land appropriation for the expansion or creation of MPAs.

The project is proposed to work in three specific areas, and the potential risks of the expansions in terms of number of people displaced, number of people whose livelihoods may be affected, and estimated area of land to be expropriated is characterized as follows:

- **Azerbaijan, Absheron National Park.** The boundaries for the expansion of the existing national park to include marine areas will be determined in year 1 of the project. It is not anticipated that people will need to be displaced. Livelihoods are unlikely to be affected negatively as recreational fishing is likely to continue to be allowed. No land is expected to be expropriated.
- **Kazakhstan, Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve:** The boundaries of the marine reserve, which includes the “Seal Island” site and the “Prorva” site, were established by the government in 2024. No communities live in the area that was declared, and no people are expected to be displaced. Livelihoods are unlikely to be affected negatively as fishing with permits will likely continue to be allowed. There could be changes needed to shipping routes. No land is expected to be expropriated.
- **Turkmenistan, Garabogaz marine protected area .** The boundaries of the sanctuary have been proposed and will be confirmed in year 1 of the project. There are no settlements, farms, or villages located within or adjacent to the proposed sanctuary. As a result, there is currently no significant local human impact on the area's ecosystems through agriculture, fishing, or other resource-based activities. No land is expected to be expropriated.

The key impacts of the creation or expansion of MPA boundaries or rules may relate to restriction of local communities' ownership, use of resources by the communities leading to economic displacement. This may include restricted access to water and fishing rights. These rights may differ depending on the ownership, management arrangements, and usage rights based on the type of MPA. Furthermore, some industries may be affected by the creation of MPAs, which may result in job losses for the workers.

The anticipated permanent impacts may affect the following assets/land use:

- right to use of maritime resources;
- right to access maritime areas for fishing activities;
- loss of job in affected industries.

The permanent effects can result in the permanent loss of access to resources and economic income.

The table below is a summary of potential impacts, and a qualitative assessment of the economic displacement implications. Once quantitative information is available and a footprint of each of the

activities are known, this RPF will be expanded into RAPs to address economic displacements and physical displacements, if any.

Table 6 Summary of relevant activities and displacements implications

Project Activity	Potential Impacts
<p>Increasing the size of existing marine protected areas</p> <p>Azerbaijan: Expansion of Absheron National Park</p> <p>Kazakhstan: New Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve</p> <p>Turkmenistan: New Garabogaz marine protected area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permanent loss of access to resources, such as fishing, leading to economic displacement ● Increased monitoring of existing MPAs leads to lack of access to resources and economic displacement ● Permanent loss of sources of income or means of livelihoods through limitations to industries ● Potential for conflict between MPA enforcement entities and communities facing lack of access to resources ● Economic displacement may affect vulnerable groups in particular

4.2 Eligibility criteria for defining various categories of displaced persons

This RPF details an eligibility criteria for persons and groups, who will be eligible for compensation and R&R assistance based on site-specific assessment, and their entitlements in the different anticipated economic displacement scenarios. Eligibility classification as per ESS5 includes persons a) who have formal legal right to land or assets; b) who do not have formal legal rights to land or assets, but have a claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law; c) who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use.

The below table represents eligible groups and their entitlements, as they are anticipated at this stage. This will help standardize entitlements across the project for similar types of cases. RAPs developed for specific Project activities will also be based on socio-economic surveys and other research and insights, which will feed into the updating and refining of this matrix for each RAP.

Table 7 Entitlement Matrix

Asset	Type of Impact	Eligible Person or Group	Entitlement
Geographic area at sea	Marine area uses for fishing permanently affected	Persons with formal legal rights to the asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative fishing areas - Aquaculture support - Or financial compensation
		Persons with a claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative fishing areas - Aquaculture support - Or financial compensation
		Persons with no recognizable legal right or claim to the assets they use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative fishing areas - Aquaculture support - Or financial compensation
	Permanent loss of sources of income or means of livelihoods through limitations to industries	Persons with formal legal rights to the asset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial compensation for lost earnings - Assistance to transition to alternative income source
		Persons with a claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial compensation for lost earnings - Assistance to transition to alternative income source
		Persons with no recognizable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial compensation for lost earnings - Assistance to transition to alternative income source

5. Processes related to Compensation and Resettlement

5.1 Screening

The project will conduct a social screening with the help of a Social screening checklist for all the interventions, processes and developments that may lead to resettlement and livelihood impacts (e.g., natural hazards, access restrictions). The screening shall identify all aspects that could lead to adverse social impacts and involuntary resettlement, regardless of the source of financing - from all activities that are necessary to achieve project objectives as set forth in the project documents and are carried out, or planned to be carried out, contemporaneously with the project. This will help with considerations on whether resettlement might be induced or facilitated by the project. All potential activity sites will be screened using the Social screening checklist (Annex 1 of this RPF). The form will facilitate an assessment of the need for any land acquisition, restriction on land use and involuntary resettlement, and will help determine the requirement of Resettlement Action Plan (RAP).

The screening process will identify potential land-related risks and impacts based on which the appropriate mitigation measures will be suggested. The E&S screening will also identify any impacts on livelihoods of the community, especially vulnerable groups, due to access restriction and the need to assess alternative sites.

The screening will further help to confirm that all reasonable efforts are made to avoid and minimize adverse impacts; determine whether proportionate RAPs are required; determine whether there are vulnerable PAPs that require special provisions in the RAP; and ensure the initiation of consultations for the RAP preparation. The consultation process provides opportunities for continuous identification and communication of issues of interest for the proper management of the land and resettlement issues.

5.2. Preparation of RAP

The respective Governmental Focal Point will be responsible for the preparation of the RAP in accordance with the principles, procedures and provisions of this RPF. Where the entity does not have the capacity to prepare the RAP, the PIU will assist with the preparation of the RAP. The RAP will include the definition of objectives, project site description, description of scope of the RAP, description of eligibility criteria, description of the planned activity, definition of impacts caused by the activity, description of alternatives that have been considered, definition of the valuation methodology, description of proposed institutional arrangements, description of the GRM, a Livelihood Restoration Plan, RAP budget estimate for implementation of the instrument, description of M&E, preparation of survey instrument and monitoring of data collected during census and socio-economic surveys, support to livelihood improvement or restoration program, and the implementation of stakeholder consultations for the preparation of the instrument.

The following steps will have to be implemented as part of the preparation of the RAP:

Step 1 Consultation Process. Public consultations start during the planning stages of the creation or expansion of the MPA, when the exact measures and geographic areas are decided on, and at the E&S

screening stage. Consultations will be held early on during this process, and extend throughout the RAP preparation process, including throughout the survey activities.

Step 2 Disclosure and Notification. Stakeholders will be informed about the planned creation or expansion of the MPA, and the RAP process. A cut-off date is announced to the stakeholders to help determine eligibilities for compensation and other forms of assistance. PAPs must be notified of the cutoff date both in writing and by verbal notification delivered in the presence of all the relevant stakeholders.

Step 3 Documentation and verification of assets. Meetings with all PAPs will be arranged by the local authorities responsible for the census and socio-economic survey and determination of PAPs. The meetings will include local government authorities as well as community elders. The purpose of the meetings will be to discuss the compensation and valuation process. For each individual or household affected, the survey team will complete a compensation report containing necessary personal information of the individual or household, their total land holdings, inventory of assets affected, impact on their livelihood, and demographic and socio-economic information for the monitoring the restoration/ improvement in their socio-economic status post the mitigation measures are implemented as per RAP. The monitoring reports will be regularly updated and monitored by the respective local authorities.

The census and socio-economic survey (see Annex 4) will be undertaken by the local authorities with assistance from the PIU where necessary. For this matter, the local authorities will recruit a consultant specialist to implement the survey. The survey will be implemented and determine which communities live in or near the MPAs and to what extent they depend on MPA resources for their livelihoods. The purpose of the census is to register and document the status of the potentially project affected persons (PAPs). The census shall cover 100 percent of the PAPs. The census and socio-economic survey will provide a demographic overview of the population and will cover PAPs' assets and main sources of livelihood. The census will help in determining the magnitude of impact on private land and structures, targeting of vulnerable groups, ascertaining the compensation amount for securing/ acquiring private land and rehabilitation and resettlement.

The process of identifying PAPs should be based on reliable and up-to-date socio-economic data on aspects such as where they are located, in what ways and how regularly they make use of the MPA resources and how dependent they are on those resources for their livelihoods and economic development, their social and political institutions (including long-standing conflicts or alliances among groups), demographics, relevant cultural practices, etc.

The survey will further include:

- a. the identification of all populations living near the MPAs;
- b. Identify past, existing, or planned government efforts to adjust boundaries or change rules governing the MPAs;
- c. Identify past, existing or planned government efforts to resettle communities living near the MPAs;
- d. Collect baseline data on illegal access to MPA resources (e.g., poaching, fishing);
- e. Assess to what extent communities will be adversely impacted by project activities' establishment or strengthening of access restrictions or stricter enforcement of existing ones;

- f. Identify existing stakeholder consultations and outreach mechanisms related to the enforcement of MPA rules;
- g. Assess whether access restrictions induced by the project may result in indirect or cumulative impacts within or outside the supported MPAs (e.g., migrations or displacement of economic activity outside the MPA);
- h. Assess any legacy issues related to customary rights or uses and whether they have been or can be resolved.

The respective government Focal Points will further liaise closely with the respective local authorities in order to obtain their agreement and willingness to support the RAP or process. They will then assist the local authorities in the defining of the number of PAPs affected by the activities, implementation of the census and socio-economic survey of PAPs, the economic/asset inventory, the proposed assistance to the PAPs, and the development of the options for compensation (including the calculation of compensation amounts, or the types of in-kind compensation, and determination of PAPs to receive compensation or other assistance). The respective local authorities to assist them in the implementation of compensation payments or other measures that are determined by the RAP.

Step 4: The valuation report will be prepared, and on the basis of the report, the RAP will be drafted. The Governmental Focal Points will submit the draft RAP to the PIU for review. When the PIU deems the plans satisfactory, it will submit them to the World Bank for approval. The plans must be approved by the World Bank prior to any resettlement and land acquisition for the activity.

The RAP document will include:

- A description of the sub-project activity;
- A list of the potential adverse impacts;
- Objectives of the RAP;
- Results from the census / socio-economic survey;
- Description of the legal framework, definition of eligibility of PAPs;
- Description of the community consultations undertaken;
- Implementation schedule, Valuation of and compensation for losses, a budget for the implementation of the RAP;
- Description of the institutional arrangements for the implementation of the RAP;
- A description of the GRM and M&E processes to be followed during RAP implementation.

Step 5: Disclosure of draft entitlements matrix, valuation report, RAP. After World Bank approval is obtained, the Governmental Focal Points will prepare a final version of the plan for public disclosure. The copies of the plan will be prepared in English and in any of the relevant local languages, and made accessible to all the project stakeholders and on the World Bank website for the whole project period. Potential comments from the public consultation will be incorporated into the final plan prior to implementation. The names of the identified PAPs and the respective entitlements will be removed in disclosed versions of the plans.

5.3 RAP Implementation Procedures and Implementation Schedule

All compensation and other forms of assistance will have to be completed prior to the commencement of project activities. Compensation payments or other forms of benefits will be clearly explained to the individual and households eligible, including the basis for valuing all assets.

5.4 Special Restoration Measures for Vulnerable PAPs

The RAP will include a vulnerable group support plan with a detailed implementation plan. The RAPs will include solutions to the following aspects:

- Ensure that local decision making mechanisms pay attention to women land users and other vulnerable groups and their needs;
- Ensure that compensation payments are made to women directly in the case of women-headed households;
- Provide livelihood trainings to women groups and other vulnerable groups organized in Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE's) with special attention to female-headed households;
- Provide special attention to the impact of economic displacement on women and other vulnerable groups during monitoring and evaluation of the RAP;
- Income restoration measures must target the vulnerable persons or groups to ensure that they are reasonably assisted to overcome potential economic shocks and maintain the quality of life not less than prior to the activity;
- Ensure that assessments identify potential risks and impacts as well as mitigation measures , especially those that affect vulnerable groups;
- Where necessary, conduct a social, legal and institutional assessment in order to identify potential economic and social risks and impacts, in particular those of vulnerable groups.;
- When establishing entitlements, pay particular attention to gender aspects and the needs of vulnerable groups.

Since vulnerable individuals or groups often do not participate in decision-making meetings, it is crucial to identify them prior to any consultations. The Governmental Focal Points will assess vulnerabilities and their cause and impacts, based on identification mechanism proposed by the respective communities, as well as those developed during the implementation of the SEP.

Payment of compensation and any other type of assistance will then be adjusted to the vulnerable persons' requests and needs. This can include assistance in the compensation payment procedure (e.g. specifically explain the process and procedures, make sure that documents are well understood); assistance in the post payment period to secure the compensation money and reduce risks of misuse/robbery.

6. Methods of Valuation of Affected Assets

The valuation for the loss of assets and livelihoods due to access restrictions to natural resources, such as fishing grounds, or access to jobs, due to project-related activities or restrictions, will be done as per the procedure laid out in this RPF.

Livelihood Restoration Measures: Affected persons must receive assistance to restore or improve their livelihoods. This includes providing alternative access to similar resources or other means of livelihood, for example access to other fishing areas.

Compensation for lost resources: If replacement access is not feasible, affected individuals or communities should receive monetary compensation or alternative benefits. Compensation should at full replacement cost to ensure affected people do not suffer economic loss.

Support for transition periods: temporary assistance, such as cash grants, job training or food support may be provided until livelihoods are restored. For groups highly dependent on natural resources, the project must develop sustainable alternatives.

Consultation and participation: Affected persons must be consulted on compensation measures and livelihood restoration plans.

Special considerations for vulnerable groups: women and other vulnerable groups must receive additional support to ensure they do not suffer disproportionate impacts This may include land redistribution programs, skills training or microfinance initiatives/

Loss of access to natural resources (fishing):

PAPs losing access to fishing resources due to project-related maritime acquisition or restrictions, they are entitled to compensation and livelihood restoration measures to ensure they are not worse off.

- a) **Alternative access to fishing areas:** The project must explore providing alternative fishing areas with similar or better resources. This may involve negotiating new access rights or improving infrastructure at alternative locations
- b) **Livelihood restoration programs:** If alternative fishing grounds are not available the project must support livelihood restoration, such as aquaculture and fish farm support (resources, training, and access to markets); new employment opportunities (in related industries such as fish processing, tourism or maritime services);
- c) **Compensation for loss of income:** Fishers are entitled to monetary compensation for lost income during the transition period. Compensation should be based on past fishing earnings and calculated as per the entitlement matrix provided in this RPF;
- d) **Support for fishing communities:** if entire fishing communities are affected, broader development measures may be required, including infrastructure improvements (new fishing ports, storage facilities); access to financial assistance (microgrants for new businesses)
- e) **Special support for vulnerable groups:** small scale fishers and informal workers should receive tailored assistance to prevent disproportionate hardship.

Loss of job-related opportunities:

PAPs are entitled to compensation and livelihood restoration. The entitlement depends on their industry-based income and include:

- a) Compensation for lost income: affected individuals should receive cash compensation for lost earnings during the transition period. Compensation should be calculated based on average past income from work activities
- b) Alternative Livelihood Support: If job-based livelihood cannot be restored in the same location, affected persons should receive assistance to transition to alternative income sources. This can include: Training in new job skills; support for starting new business

7. Institutional Arrangements

7.1 Project Implementation

Regional Steering Committee (RSC): The project is proposed to have an RSC that would approve the annual work program and budget, identify links to relevant sectoral policies and programs in the region, and assist in resolution of any implementation issues. The RSC will be co-chaired on a rotating basis by one senior representative of the three countries designated by their respective focal point ministry and one representative of UNOPS. Members will include representatives of national institutions related to the themes of the project (biodiversity and pollution) and a civil society representative from each country. The World Bank, UNEP and UNDP will be invited as observers. The RSC will be set up during the first six months of implementation of the project and will meet at least once a year. A detailed terms of reference for the RSC will be developed ahead of the first RSC meeting as part of the Project Operations Manual (POM).

Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): It will be established by UNOPS to advise on specific technical issues and guidance on coordinating technical matters with other ongoing activities. Members of the TAC would include representatives of academia, technical agencies, private sector, civil society organizations, and fisheries committee(s), including existing committees that are part of the Tehran Convention. It is envisioned that the TAC will convene at least once a year or at the frequency needed for technical questions that may arise.

Project Implementation Unit (PIU): The Bank project will have a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) housed at UNOPS. In each of the three countries, a national BCSP Focal Point would be designated by the government to ensure engagement of relevant national institutions and a designated national BCSP Liaison Person for communications and monitoring the project calendar. The UNOPS BCSP PIU will be responsible for the overall coordination of the project and will, among others, (a) oversee the preparation of annual work plans and (b) prepare progress and other reports, as required by the GEF through the World Bank. The UNEP Project Implementation Unit is housed at the Tehran Convention Interim Secretariat (TCIS). The UNOPS BSCP PIU will coordinate with the UNEP PIU on a regular basis to provide updates and ensure cohesiveness of the two projects.

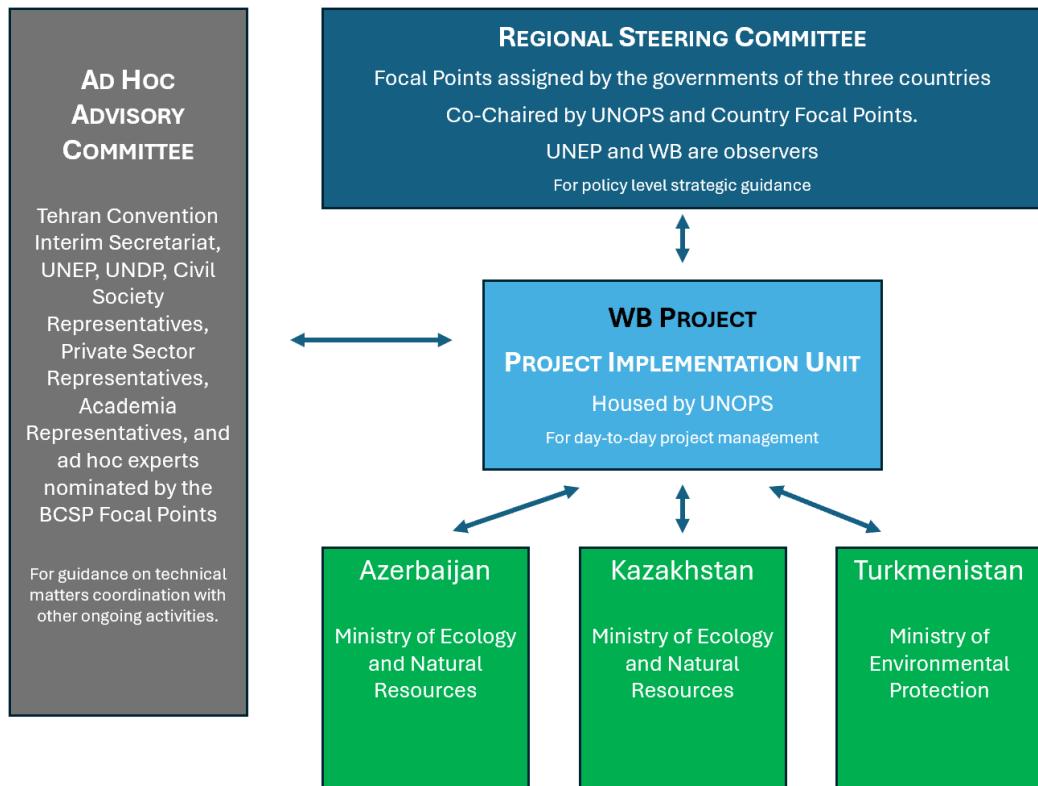


Figure 2 Organizational Chart

The UNOPS BCSP PIU office will be established in the UNOPS Austria Multi-Country Office (AUMCO) and will be composed of professional, administrative, and support staff: BCSP Technical Lead, Project Support Officer, and support staff. The project will further engage personnel to manage the requirements of the relevant Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) as well as consultants and, or contractors to support the implementation of the project in each country as required in the agreed implementation plan. The UNOPS BCSP PIU will be responsible for coordination, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project, as well as procurement, FM, and E&S compliance, including approving and tracking the distribution of funds and environmental and social management and monitoring.

7.2 Project E&S Risk Management Set-Up

The UNOPS BCSP PIU will be responsible for coordinating with each national Governmental Focal Point assigned by the respective Government for the execution of national-level activities in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. The national agencies include the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Environment Protection of Turkmenistan. The UNOPS BCSP PIU will mobilize/contract national expertise as needed to implement the E&S instruments including regular reporting. The national agencies will provide technical guidance for the overall

implementation of the project in consideration of the RSC observation and in support of the PIU.

The PIU will include an Environmental and Social Specialist who will be responsible for the compliance with this RPF. The Specialist will be embedded in the E&S team of the PIU and report directly to the Project Manager. The Specialist will oversee the compliance with the RPF and any RAPs. The PIU's Risk Management Team will further be responsible for the regular monitoring and supervision of the implementation of all risk mitigation measures. These Specialists will also assume basic monitoring and training activities for implementing partners.

The PIU E&S team will receive all screening assessments of site-specific activities and RAPs and review them for compliance against this RPF prior to the commencement of all activities. It will then monitor the implementation of the RAPs by governmental partners. It will also liaise with the World Bank to obtain the necessary approvals of the instruments.

The PIU will further ensure that sufficient training is provided to all implementers on resettlement related issues and this RPF.

7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

In order to comply with this RPF, the government Focal Points will conduct an E&S screening process for each MPA site. The PIU E&S Specialists will review screening results and provide the PIU's no-objection to the screening results and proposed mitigation measures for the activity or the preparation of additional social safeguard instruments. At this stage, potential land and resettlement impacts will become clear, and decisions will be taken by the E&S team to prepare additional RAPs. This process is laid out in the above sections.

The implementation of the RAP should take place prior to any project activities taking place. The implementation will be the responsibility of the respective governmental entity. In Azerbaijan this will be the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources; in Kazakhstan the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources; and in Turkmenistan the Ministry of Environmental Protection. The Ministries will be cooperating with the respective local government entities and other responsible entities in the MPA areas, including potential enforcement agencies.

The project will not pay or administer any compensation payments or livelihood restoration. Since the Project does not include community development aspects, it also cannot offer project benefits to PAPs. This will be the responsibility of the respective Ministry. Compensation payments and livelihoods restoration programs will need to be administered by the national or local authorities. The specific responsibilities between the project and national and local authorities will be laid out in the activity-specific RAP.

The PIU E&S Specialists and the government Focal Points will be responsible for the monitoring of the RAP implementation. Furthermore, the local government will be responsible for the implementation of a GRM, through which PAPs can file complaints and provide feedback, including on land and resettlement issues, or the implementation of RAPs. It will be the responsibility of the government Focal Points to handle complaints filed under this mechanism. It is anticipated that this mechanism becomes a permanent institution around the MPA.

8. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

This section guides the management of complaints and grievances under the Project. The purpose is to provide a suitable, centralized GRM where stakeholders of the Project can lodge their feedback, complaints, and grievances and have these resolved. World Bank-supported projects are required to facilitate mechanisms that address concerns and grievances arising from a Project. One of the key objectives of ESS10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure) is ‘to provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow borrowers to respond and manage such grievances’.⁷

This section outlines clear processes and procedures (including resolution processes and timelines), defines the grievance uptake, sorting and processing, acknowledgment and follow-up, categorization, verification, and investigation, monitoring & evaluation, and feedback.

The objective of the GRM is to allow an avenue for project stakeholders to comment on or express concern on matters relating to project implementation, including on RPF-related matters. In addition, it is intended to allow these various stakeholders to pass important information to higher levels of project oversight and management in a neutral and, if necessary, anonymous way.

8.1 Core Principles

The GRM is based on six core principles:

Fairness: Grievances are treated confidentially, assessed impartially, and handled transparently.

Objectiveness and independence: The GRM operates independently of all interested parties to guarantee fair, objective, and impartial treatment in each case. GRM officials have adequate means and powers to investigate grievances (e.g., interview witnesses, and access records).

Simplicity and accessibility: The GRM does not use complex processes that create confusion or anxiety.

Responsiveness and efficiency: The GRM is designed to respond to all complainants’ needs. Accordingly, staff handling grievances are trained to take effective action and respond quickly to grievances and suggestions.

Speed and proportionality: All grievances, simple or complex, are addressed and resolved quickly. The action taken is swift, decisive, and constructive.

⁷ World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework, 2018, p. 131.

Participation and social inclusion: A wide range of stakeholders is encouraged to bring grievances and comments to the attention of the Project staff. Special attention is given to ensuring that marginalized groups are able to access the GRM.

8.2 Grievance Redress Procedures

8.2.1 Objectives

The objective of the GRM is to allow an avenue for project stakeholders to comment on or express concern on matters relating to project implementation as well as PA implementation. In addition, it is intended to allow various stakeholders to pass important information to higher levels of project oversight and management in a neutral and, if necessary, anonymous way.

The GRM is based on six core principles:

Fairness: Grievances are treated confidentially, assessed impartially, and handled transparently.

Objectiveness and independence: The GRM operates independently of all interested parties to guarantee fair, objective, and impartial treatment in each case. GRM officials have adequate means and powers to investigate grievances (e.g., interview witnesses, and access records).

Simplicity and accessibility: The GRM does not use complex processes that create confusion or anxiety.

Responsiveness and efficiency: The GRM is designed to respond to all complainants' needs. Accordingly, staff handling grievances are trained to take effective action and respond quickly to grievances and suggestions.

Speed and proportionality: All grievances, simple or complex, are addressed and resolved quickly. The action taken is swift, decisive, and constructive.

Participation and social inclusion: A wide range of stakeholders is encouraged to bring grievances and comments to the attention of the Project staff. Special attention is given to ensuring that marginalized groups are able to access the GRM.

8.2.2 Approach to address grievances

This section guides the management of complaints and grievances under the Project. The purpose of this GRM is twofold: one the one hand it is to provide a centralized Project GRM where stakeholders of the Project can lodge their feedback, complaints, and grievances in regard to the general Project and have these resolved. World Bank-supported projects are required to facilitate mechanisms that address concerns and grievances arising from a Project. One of the key objectives of ESS10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure) is 'to provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow borrowers to respond and manage such

grievances'.⁸ On the other hand, it includes a GRM level that handles PA-related grievances, and that can assist in building a GRM for the PA, beyond the duration of the Project.

A 'PA GRM' shall initiate a local level mechanism that caters for grievances related to specific PAs that are established or expanded under the Project. The aim of the Project is that these PA GRM will become part of the PA management function and will be taken over by the respective Government as part of the current and future PA management. While during the Project implementation, both GRM are included as part of the Project, it is anticipated that the PA-level GRM will go beyond the duration of the Project.

A centralized Project GRM, where stakeholders of the Project can lodge their feedback, complaints, and grievances in regard to the general Project and have these resolved.

As per World Bank ESS, both GRM make the following distinctions:

- a) Project-related grievances: it focuses on project-related complaints and grievances and defines the different steps of handling such.
- b) Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) / Sexual Harassment (SH) related grievances: grievances related to SEA/SH, given their sensitivities and special considerations, are reported to the Project GRM, but the grievances follow a different process. This counts for grievances from stakeholders and workers deployed by the project, other than those working in the PIU.
- c) Labor-related grievances: Grievances from project workers raising workplace concerns, terms of employment, and other related concerns shall be reported through the respective institutional channels or shall be filed through the GRM.
- d) 2nd Tier / Appeals mechanism: Grievances that cannot be solved by the first tier or have been escalated by complainants dissatisfied with the responses from the GRM. The Project GRM describes procedures addressing these grievances through an appeals mechanism.

This section outlines clear processes and procedures (including resolution processes and timelines), defines the grievance uptake, sorting and processing, acknowledgment and follow-up, categorization, verification, and investigation, monitoring & evaluation, and feedback for both GRM.

8.2.3 Grievance Redress Procedures

The PIU will ensure the information about the GRM is disseminated among all project stakeholders, including government entities, academia, CSOs/NGOs, private sector entities, etc. Means of communication are defined in the information dissemination strategy in the SEP. In addition, the PA-level GRM will be disseminated based on the needs of the specific stakeholders around each PA, as further defined in the Process Framework.

Step 1: Grievance Uptake

- a) Project GRM

The Project GRM provides the following means for people to file a grievance:

Online mechanism: An online mechanism will allow people to leave a message and request a call back from the Project. The mechanism will be clearly visible on the website. The PIU E&S Specialist will respond to the request for the call back via the online form. The Specialist will also register the grievance in a grievance log. After providing appropriate responses to the complainant and registering the grievance, the Specialist will transfer the grievance to the relevant entity responsible for the grievance-related activity.

Email address - an email address will be set up by the PIU and posted on the Project website, and/or the website must provide a way to file a grievance. The online mechanism will be administered by the PIU E&S Specialist. Grievances can be filed in writing through this method. The Specialist will register grievances in the grievance log.

b) PA GRM

On site suggestion box – There will be suggestion boxes installed at relevant locations, such as community centers or government offices. This will allow the direct local submission of grievances or feedback for community members, especially members of vulnerable groups that may not have other means to communicate.

Local phone number – The authority responsible for the PA will be encouraged to set up a local phone number in order to receive grievances through phone calls in relation to the PA.

c) General

Details of Grievance logged: While grievances can be submitted anonymously, the more information is made available, the better the Project or the PA administrative authority can respond to the grievances, investigate the matter where necessary, or provide feedback to the aggrieved party. The minimum information that should be made available is the following (except for SEA/SH cases, which follow a different process as described below):

Table 7 Details of Grievance log

Name of complainant	
Decision and consent of complainant on whether the identity of the complainant should remain confidential or can be made available where necessary	
Contact details: physical address, telephone number, email address	
Details of the grievance: - What happened - Where did it happen - Parties involved - Time when it happened - Description of the case - Supporting documents if available.	

Submission of incomplete information for a grievance may not allow a case to be investigated or may delay investigations.

GBV/SEA/SH-related Grievance: Given the sensitive nature of GBV-related complaints, the GRM provides different ways to submit grievances and applies the survivor-centered approach. All grievance uptake channels can be used to report on SEA/SH-related grievances. The PIU or PA Officer receiving grievances will be trained in the handling and processing of SEA/SH-related grievances. Information on relevant legislation will be delivered to survivors before disclosing case details.

Confidentiality: The grievance recipients and anyone handling the SEA/SH-related grievances must maintain absolute confidentiality in regard to the case. Maintaining confidentiality means not disclosing any information at any time to any party without the informed consent of the person concerned. There are exceptions under distinct circumstances, for example, a) if the survivor is an adult who threatens his or her own life or who is directly threatening the safety of others.

Informed Consent: The survivor can only approve a case's processing when he or she has been fully informed about all relevant facts. The survivor must fully understand the consequences of actions when providing informed consent for a case to be taken up. Asking for consent means requesting the permission of the survivor to share information about him/her with others (for instance, with referral services), and/or to undertake any action (for instance, investigation of the case). Under no circumstances should the survivor be pressured to consent to any conversation, assessment, investigation, or other intervention with which she/he feels comfortable. A survivor can also at any time decide to stop consent. Where possible, the consent form can be used (in cases of direct person-to-person reporting). By signing this form, the survivor can formally agree (or disagree) with further processing the case. The form will clearly state how the information will be used, stored and disseminated. If a survivor does not consent to share information, then only non-identifying information can be released or reported on.

Step 2: Sort and Process

a) Project GRM

The grievances registered online and through the email mechanism will be sorted and processed by the E&S Specialist at the PIU. After the E&S Specialist has received and registered the complaint, he/she will categorize the complaint.

For grievances handled under the general Project GRM, the project will establish a Project Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) at the PIU level, consisting of the E&S Specialist, the Project Manager and one other selected Officer or any other relevant unit or officer or a national Focal Point where applicable. The E&S Specialist will share all necessary information with the Project GRC. Grievances handled elsewhere (e.g., at the court) will be excluded, records for the same will be maintained by PIU.

The E&S Specialist will transfer the grievance information into a more comprehensive grievance register. It will maintain a central grievance register for logging, managing, monitoring, and reporting grievances. All cases will be treated confidentially.

b) PA-level GRM

For grievances registered at the PA level in the respective countries, through suggestion boxes or other appropriate means, a GRM Focal Point will be appointed in the local authority that is responsible for the PA management. The GRM Focal Point will register the grievances and will assist in the formation of a PA Grievance Redress Committee (local GRC). The PA GRC should consist of relevant staff or government counterparts responsible for PA management, as well as representatives of the local communities and civil society organizations. The constitution of the PA GRC will be decided at the PA level prior to the commencement of project activities. The GRM Focal Point will share the registered grievances with the PA GRC during the sorting and processing step.

c) General

SEA/SH Cases: Under both GRM, all reporting will limit information in accordance with the survivor's wishes regarding confidentiality and in case the survivor agrees on further reporting, information will be shared only on a need-to-know-base, avoiding all information that may lead to the identification of the survivor and any potential risk of retribution.

Referrals are a process through which the survivor gets in touch with professionals and institutions regarding her or his case. Services can include health, psycho-social, security and protection, legal/justice, and economic reintegration support. The E&S Specialist will provide the survivor with contacts of the available referral services in the respective area. If the survivor wishes for any assistance with transport or payment for services, the grievance recipient will provide allowances. Referral services are provided even in cases where the survivor opts to not pursue the case through the GRM or through legal channels.

Step 3: Acknowledgement and Follow-Up

a) Project GRM

The E&S Specialist will carry out an initial screening review and confirm that the grievance is (i) a matter related to the Project; and (ii) a substantive issue that can be investigated. Any grievances that do not relate to the Project will be passed to the relevant institution. The E&S Specialist will prepare a response (i) acknowledging that the grievance has been received; (ii) notifying the complainant of what action will be taken; and (iii) stating the rights of the complainant.

At all times, the E&S Specialist will provide a response/acknowledgement of reception of the grievance promptly to the aggrieved party (unless the case was filed anonymously), within a maximum of five working days after the grievance is filed. A response can be provided over the phone, in writing or through the community facilitators. A response / acknowledgement can also be communicated through stakeholder meetings and beneficiary meetings during Project activities. For sensitive issues, feedback is given

to the concerned persons bilaterally.

All responses are documented and categorized for reporting and follow-up if necessary.

b) PA GRM

At the PA level, the GRM Focal Point will carry out an initial screening review and confirm that the grievance is (i) a matter related to the Project or to the PA or both; and (ii) a substantive issue that can be investigated. Any grievances that do not relate to the Project will be handled at the PA level. Grievances related to activities funded by the Project will also be handled at this level, but they will be recorded and shared with the PIU. The GRM Focal Point will prepare a response acknowledging that the grievance has been received, notifying the complainant of what action will be taken and stating the rights of the complainant.

At all times, the GRM Focal Point will provide a response/acknowledgement of reception of the grievance promptly to the aggrieved party (unless the case was filed anonymously), within a maximum of five working days after the grievance is filed. A response can be provided over the phone, in writing or through the community facilitators. A response can also be communicated through stakeholder meetings and beneficiary meetings during Project activities. For sensitive issues, feedback is given to the concerned persons bilaterally .

Step 4: Verify, Investigate and Act

a) Project GRM

The E&S Specialist will verify the case, as appropriate. Verification includes:

- h. Check for the complaint's eligibility (objectively based on set standards and criteria) regarding its relevance to the project. Refer to the PAD, POM, ESMF, sub-project agreements, or other documentation to determine the validity of the grievance.
- i. Escalate outright grievances that require specific interventions, such as SEA/SH cases.
- j. Refer grievances outside of the Project's jurisdiction (e.g., refer to relevant external institution), for example where a grievance relates to a different project.

The PIU GRC, where applicable, will investigate the grievance. The investigation may include interviewing the complainant(s), project staff, and other stakeholders; and inspecting physical evidence and documents. All project staff must cooperate with the investigation, including sharing documents where necessary. If the complainant has requested to remain anonymous, the investigator(s) must not do anything that results in the disclosure of the complainant's name. Independent investigator(s) make no recommendation other than reporting the facts.

b) PA GRM

The PA GRC will investigate the grievance where necessary. The investigation may include interviewing the complainant(s), project staff, and other stakeholders; and inspecting physical evidence and

documents. All project and PA staff must cooperate with the investigation, including sharing documents where necessary. If the complainant has requested to remain anonymous, the GRC must not do anything that results in the disclosure of the complainant's name. The PA GRC review the results and make final decisions for a resolution of the case, which is then communicated to the aggrieved party.

c) General

The investigation includes the following steps:

- g. Collect basic information (reports, interviews with other stakeholders while ensuring triangulation of information, photos, and videos).
- h. Collect and preserve evidence.
- i. Analyze to establish facts and compile a report.

The responses will include the following elements and will be based on the following timelines

Table 8 Typed of GRM actions and timelines as per type of cases

Type of Case	Actions Required	Response Required
Straight-forward cases with little anticipated complications	Minimal checks and consultations by GRM Focal Point or E&S Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. GRM Focal Point or PIU E&S Specialist to acknowledge reception of the grievance, detail follow-up steps and set timelines (number of days) for follow-up activities: verify, and communicate outcomes and next steps based on outcomes f. 1-3 days
Cases that require some minimal processes of verification and clarification	Analyze existing information and request clarification if necessary - GRM Focal Point or PIU E&S Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. GRM Focal Point or PIU E&S Specialist to acknowledge reception of the grievance, detail the steps to follow, communicate outcomes h. 7-14 days
Cases that require investigation	Access and review of relevant documentation (reports, policy documentation), field-based fact findings missions (visits and interviews), analysis and preparation of reports, consultative sessions to rectify or adjust the implementation approaches – by PA GRC or PIU GRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. GRM Focal Point or PIU E&S Specialist to acknowledge reception of the grievance, provide follow-up steps and set timelines for a comprehensive response, initiate investigations, communicate response j. 14 to 21 days

Cases that require escalation	GRM Focal Point to transfer case to the PA management; E&S Specialist to transfer case to Project Manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. GRM Focal Point or E&S Specialist to acknowledge reception of the grievance, provide the need for escalation of the grievance to the next level, and set timelines for a comprehensive response l. 7-14 days
Cases that require referral to other institutions	PIU or PA authority to transfer case to relevant institution (National Police Service, Judiciary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> m. GRM Focal Point or E&S Specialist to acknowledge reception of the grievance, provide the need for referral of the grievance to an appropriate institution, and set timelines for a comprehensive response on referral progress n. 7 – 21 days

SEA/SH Cases: If a project worker allegedly committed the SEA/SH grievance, the grievance will be reported to the UNOPS Internal Investigation and Audit Group (IAIG) for further processing.

Where the survivor has opted to take a formal legal route with the case, the PIU will ensure that the survivor has all the support required to file a lawsuit in court. The GRM process will still proceed with the survivors' consent. Ensuring due process is a matter of the formal justice system and not the grievance handlers. Unlike other types of issues, it is not part of the GRM's remit to conduct investigations, make any announcements, or judge the veracity of an allegation. The GRM should refer the case to the domestic regulatory framework to process the claim if the consent of the survivor is received.

Case closure requires a) the case has been referred to GBV service providers (if the survivor consented) for support and appropriate actions, and appropriate actions have been taken against the perpetrator according to SEA mechanisms; b) the service provider has initiated accountability proceedings with the survivor's consent.

Step 5: 2nd Tier / Appeals Mechanism

a) Project GRM

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response and solution provided by the Project GRC, he or she has the right to appeal. The appeal must be made in writing within 20 days of receipt of the decision. The purpose of the request is to provide an independent view of the complaint and to review the decision through an appeals body. the complainant can appeal to the UNOPS Multi Country Director, who will be engaged at critical points and will identify a representative who will be involved and follow the process. In both cases, appeals processes should be completed within 21 days.

b) PA GRM

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response and solution provided by the PA GRC, he or she has the right to appeal to the Project GRC. The appeal must be made in writing within 20 days of receipt of the decision. The purpose of the request is to provide an independent view of the complaint and to review the decision through the Project GRC. The PIU E&S Specialist shall receive the written appeal to decide on the request, and advise the complainant in writing on the outcome of the appeal.

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response and solution provided by the Project GRC, the complainant can appeal to the UNOPS Multi Country Director, who will be engaged at critical points and will identify a representative who will be involved and follow the process. In both cases, appeals processes should be completed within 21 days.

Step 6: Monitor, Evaluate and Provide Feedback

a) Project GRM

The PA GRM will report all Project-related cases to the Project GRM. The Project GRM will include those cases in its Project monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Recording: The PIU will record all complaints and ensure their status is updated in internal recordings. Public records will be provided on the status, timeframe, feedback, resolution of complaints, and summary reports. The information on complaints will be used for the project to improve its effectiveness.

Monitoring: The PIU has developed indicators and a methodology for monitoring the steps of the GRM value chain, tracking grievances, and assessing the extent to which progress is made to resolve them. The PIU may amend indicators as necessary. The following indicators will be applied:

Table 9 Indicators and targets

Indicator
IR3.1 Number of GRM awareness campaigns conducted (Number)
IR3.2 Percentage of grievances responded to within the stipulated timeline (Percentage)
IR3.3 Percentage of grievances resolved within the stipulated timeline (Percentage)
IR3.4 Percentage of grievances referred/ escalated timely (Percentage)

Reporting: The PIU will report on the status of all GRM cases and on the above indicators, as well as provide a trend analysis to the Bank every quarter – as part of the regular Project Progress report.

9. Budget and Arrangements for Funding

The project will prepare a budget for implementation of mitigation measures of the identified E&S impacts of project interventions. This budget will be a part of the respective RAP.

9.1 Arrangement for Funding

Project funds will be used to prepare the RAPs. This includes staff costs for the PIU and the Government Ministries, management and supervision costs as well as the costs of facilitators of implementation, GRM, M&E of all compensation and mitigation measures. All compensations (in-kind and cash), provision of alternative access rights where applicable, will be covered by the respective government authorities in each country. Since the exact subprojects are not known yet, it cannot be stated that the funds are available yet. If funds are not available or the authorities reject payment of compensations, subprojects cannot be implemented.

10. Stakeholder Engagement

10.1 Stakeholder Consultations Conducted to Date

During the Project preparation phase a variety of stakeholder engagements have been undertaken in the three Project countries between April 2024 and May 2025 (see Annex 3 for more details).

Key issues raised during the stakeholder consultations in the project preparation phase included the following:

Country	Key Issues Raised
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- interest in the funding of international expertise to help bring respective ongoing initiatives in Azerbaijan to scale, including the understanding of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning tools- interest in the expansion of the marine part of the Samur-Yalama National Park, located in the north of the country, or possibly another national park such as Absheron;- interest in the elaboration of management plans for selected PAs, application of more effective PA management practices through the promotion of sustainable ecotourism practices; and the development of exchange platforms for national parks managers from the three participating countries with dedicated capacity-building sessions.- interest in improving pollution monitoring in the Caspian Sea, specifically: i) identifying the most suitable locations for monitoring stations, ii) supporting offshore monitoring by purchasing equipment for a monitoring vessel, iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring following international standards, iv) developing guidance/methodology on coastal

	<p>clean-up from oil exploration activities, v) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries and other regions on the monitoring of the marine environment, and vi) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation that a new MPA in the marine area surrounding "Absheron National Park" would be created for a focus on biodiversity, including knowledge/studies to better understand how the habitat for migratory birds, Sturgeon, and Caspian seal.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inadequate coordination among countries and insufficient data sharing, as well as a low interest from stakeholders to cooperate with government institutions. The role of local communities in decision-making should be increased.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anticipated social impacts: potential closures of polluting industries, unemployment may occur. Recommendation for diversity income sources and rely more on sustainable incomes, like environmental tourism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In case there are reduced fishing opportunities for local populations due to PAs, designated fishing grounds should be established in alternative areas with sustainable fishing opportunities, for example an increase of fish farms. Furthermore, awareness raising of local communities is very important. Recommended to organize an inception meeting. This meeting can ensure the participation of all interested parties. For example, such meetings can be organized in Absheron National Park and on the islands included in the territory of the National Park to be expanded, with local population, fishermen and industrial workers, as well as civil society institutions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the most vulnerable stakeholders are local communities, some traditional tourism stakeholders, and women. Key stakeholders named are NGOs, government, fishermen, oil industry representative, tourism actors. Vulnerable stakeholders are women, local stakeholders, local families with low income.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research institutions indicated that one of the key challenges to pollution and biodiversity is the lack of infrastructure, informal settlements in areas close to the sea, lack of sewage systems, needs arising from low awareness levels of the local populations, and a lack of good coordination between countries. Strengthen cooperation between scientific institutions of the coastal countries and develop various scientific programs related to pollution and biodiversity.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investigate how pollution and biodiversity problems affect the situation of Caspian coastal communities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include "polluter pays" scheme.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - representatives of the private sector and some industries located on the Caspian coast are concerned that their activities may be suspended. A number of job closures could increase unemployment. This is mostly related to polluter industries.
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government expressed interest in improving Caspian Sea pollution monitoring, specifically i) increasing the motoring potential

	<p>of the Kazhydromet, which is responsible for the state monitoring of the Caspian Sea environment; ii) supporting the monitoring of sea-based pollution (from offshore oil and gas exploitation and maritime transport) by purchasing satellite images and integrating them with the national monitoring structure and procedures; iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring that follows international standards; iv) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries; and v) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment. The Caspian Sea Institute in Aktau is expected to also carry out relevant scientific research on the drivers, pressures, and measures related to pollution of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key challenge: The need to develop a state system of monitoring of pollution and biodiversity of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea - inform the population about the relevance of the problem of protecting these territories, their importance for the natural environment and the population, as well as awareness the population with the protection measures that the state is taking for conservation of these nature reserves - social risks connected to the Project in terms of aquatic biological resources are not envisaged - Key stakeholders on biodiversity conservation activities include local governments, specialized scientific organizations, as well as environmental and law enforcement agencies
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government is considering the expansion of existing PAs and to this end, more scientific research is required to identify the rationale for the expansion of the PAs from ecological and biological perspectives - The government expressed interest in improving Caspian Sea pollution monitoring, specifically i) increasing the monitoring potential of the CaspEcoControl Service by improving the capacity and providing measuring methodologies of the laboratory facilities which would be aligned with ones of other Caspian countries; ii) supporting the monitoring of sea bottom sediments; iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring that follows international standards; iv) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries; and v) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment. - pollution monitoring capacity needs to be strengthened in pollution surveyance, including revision of the pollution monitoring and reporting scheme, and equipment provided to the Caspian Environmental Control Service in Turkmenbashi - The government has decided to create a new protected area named “Garabogaz marine protected area” as protected habitat for Caspian seal and migratory birds, and for which the project will support the preparation of the management plan.

	- Participants expressed a desire for more meetings and discussion
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10.2 Mechanisms for Stakeholder Consultations During Project Implementation

The stakeholder consultation and information dissemination methods for this Project are laid out in the SEP and the Process Framework. The Project will ensure that efficient communication campaigns are launched around the expansion or establishment of MPAs to inform all relevant stakeholders at site, including members of vulnerable groups.

The Project GRM will allow any stakeholder to voice potential concerns and receive resolutions or responses. Inclusive participatory processes will ensure that local communities, members of vulnerable groups, local government agencies, MPA rule makers and enforcers, local businesses and conservation organizations are identified at each relevant site and included in consultation efforts and discussions around the expansion or establishment of MPAs. These consultation processes will specifically focus on the local communities whose cultures and livelihoods are closely tied to the maritime resources that will be affected through the Project activities.

The Project will ensure early and ongoing engagement, as per the SEP, with these stakeholders to create mutual understanding, reduce the risk of conflicts, and establish clear rules for access. This will enable agreements on usage and the management of MPAs to be adopted locally and minimize misunderstandings.

11. Monitoring & Evaluation of Impacts

The PIU will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and compliance with this RPF. As also outlined in the ESMF, the Social Specialist in the PIU will be the key responsible person for the monitoring activities, and will report on the implementation, and flag potential non-compliances. The extent of monitoring activities will be proportionate to the project's risks and impacts as defined in this RPF and in the ESMF. Affected persons will be consulted during the monitoring process. Periodic monitoring and supervision field trips will be undertaken and reports will be prepared and affected persons will be informed about monitoring results in a timely manner.

More detailed monitoring and evaluation approaches and strategies will be defined in the respective RAPs. Monitoring activities will be planned as early as possible during the preparation of the respective plans. The census, including socioeconomic baseline studies and the assessment of impacts, are conducted in a manner that enables subsequent tracking of resettlement outcomes. This will be achieved through the early identification of key indicators to be tracked over time. Implementation of a RAP will be considered complete when the adverse impacts of resettlement have been addressed in a manner that is consistent with the RAP.

Monitoring of project activities as they relate to the RPF will help review any impacts on persons by the activity, and will help understand if mitigation measures improve (or at least restore) incomes,

livelihoods and living standards. The Project will therefore implement monitoring and evaluations, as part of the general Project M&E Plan. The concrete objectives of the monitoring are to determine whether PAPs were paid in full and whether they were paid prior to the activity implementation; whether PAPs have a better standard of living than before, or at least if their standards of living are unchanged; whether grievances were solved in a timely manner; whether assistance to vulnerable persons was provided; and whether livelihood restoration was effective.

The specific instruments to be prepared, the RAPs, will indicate the parameters to be monitored. They will provide the concrete monitoring tools and frameworks and indicate the resources required to carry out the monitoring.

The monitoring and evaluation processes will be closely linked to the Project's general M&E Plan, and will be embedded in the broader monitoring of environmental and social monitoring plans as part of the implementation of the ESMF and other E&S instruments. With that, the overall monitoring of the implementation of the RPF and its related instruments will be the responsibility of the PMU, especially the Social Specialist embedded in the PIU and the Government Focal Persons.

11.1 Periodic Monitoring

Periodic monitoring will be made and progress reports prepared, which assess the effectiveness of the system, report on the number of grievances and complaints, resolutions and pending cases, and allow for a trend analysis. Consultations with community members, including vulnerable groups, will allow for participatory monitoring of impact indicators of the RAPs. In case of any issues identified during monitoring, redress or assistance will be provided. Local stakeholders identified in the SEP will act as the main local interlocutors in the monitoring exercises. The PIU and the Government Focal Points will collect monitoring data and confirm it with these community stakeholders. Results will be captured in the progress reports.

Monitoring and reporting will collect and present data on the implementation of the respective RAPs, in view of: the status of the assets, occupation and living conditions, and supervision of implementation of compensation as agreed upon with the PAPs; implementation status of all aspects of the RAP; timely and sufficient disbursement of funds; list of complaints and grievances and their status and responses to them; livelihoods restoration progress.

The Social Specialist and the Government Focal Point will travel to activity sites and will monitor RAP implementation using performance review checklists that has been prepared for in the RAP. The Specialist will keep a record of information from monitoring the RAP and prepare a report on the conclusion of compensation for presentation in consultation with the PAPs. Corrective actions will be taken whenever deviations are identified.

The PIU will then prepare regular progress reports in an agreed format focusing on performance indicators.

11.2 Final Evaluation

A final evaluation will be implemented in order to determine the RAP results. This will help ensure that the process has been completed and that livelihoods are properly restored. The evaluations will further provide lessons and help improve future RAP. The evaluation will include leadership dynamics, representation, and equality and treatment of individuals vulnerable to particular difficulties.

The evaluation will be undertaken by the PIU. If necessary, a final audit can be conducted on the outcomes of the compensation.

The evaluation process will be participatory and will include the PAPs and other relevant stakeholders at the local levels. It will be implemented after the RAP has been concluded.

The evaluation will include an evaluation of the survey, or the socio-economic project impact on the PAPs, on the supervision of the implementation of the RAPs, an assessment whether the RAPs improved or at least maintained the living standards of the PAPs.

11.3 Indicators

The two key objectives of the RAPs are to allow PAPs to maintain their quality of life prior to the activity, and if they subsequently are able to improve it; and that local communities continue to support the project. These two objectives also guide the main indicators during the monitoring and evaluation processes.

Detailed indicators will be used to help determine the situation of PAPs in before and after the implementation of the RAP. Baseline data for the 'before' situation will be established through household or other surveys during the preparation of the RAPs. The data will include the sources of livelihoods, maritime use, housing patterns, household incomes, access to services, number of children in school, and health standards.

Presented below are some standard indicators that can be used in the RAPs and can help guide the monitoring and evaluation processes.

Table 10 Sample Indicators

Type of Activity	Sample indicators
Identification of all involved parties and their profiling and definition of roles and responsibilities	List of relevant project stakeholders
Handling of effective management and reporting system	Household data sheets Final contracts/agreements with the PAPs GRM
Continuous communication and dissemination of information to all stakeholders, including on cut-off dates	# of radio shows, leaflets, letters, word of mouth, meetings dedicated to communication of cut-off dates and other issues related to the RPF
Tracking and finding absent PAPs	# of PAPs identified after RAP commencement

Prepare PAPs for receipt of compensation; e.g. communication on impacts and options for compensation	Minutes of meetings on project impacts and options for compensation
Prepare lists of PAPs to be compensated according to method of payment.	Lists and # of PAPs and entitlements
Oversee that PAPs receive cash compensation	% of PAPs with compensation paid
Handling of grievances filed in regards to land and resettlement issues	Number of grievances filed, timelines and status of resolution % of PAPs satisfied with resolution
Assisting compensated households to normalize and where possible to improve their livelihood systems in relevant areas	Assessment of income and livelihoods in project-affected areas as compared to pre-RAP implementation
Restoration of living standards	Status of entitlements Status of payment of transitional and other allowances Status of provision of special needs of vulnerable groups.
Restoration of livelihoods	Status of provision of training to PAPs % of PAPs with change in income status Status of livelihoods and access to services (improved or at least the same as pre- displacement) Additional measures required to improve livelihood
Implement baseline study	Baseline Studies prepared
Implement Final Evaluation	Final RAP Report

Annex 1: Social Screening Checklist

The objective of the screening checklist is to guide the Project in 1) assessing the various environmental and social risks and impacts that the MPAs will pose, and 2) selecting the right environmental and social risk mitigation measures that will be applicable to the respective site activities.

Preliminary Social Screening Checklist Blueing the Caspian Sea Project

Sub Project Name:

Sub Project Location/s:

Name of Person / Agency Carried out Screening:

Part A: General Information About the Sub- project

1. Project Details:	
Type of proposed sub-project activity	:
Location of the subproject activity (Please attach a Map)	:
Project area (please include a brief description)	:
2. Information About IPs in the Sub-project Area	
Does the project site has indigenous people (Y or N):	
3. Information on Project area	
a. Sub Project components/ activities	:
b. Existing area of Protected Area (PA)	:

c. Area of Buffer zones and areas proposed to be converted to PAs	
d. Does the project work with or affect National Park(s) or any category of Protected Area(s) (PA) established through legal or other effective means (please add details)	
e. If there is more than one PA, break down information for each one as follows: -the name, location (coordinates), area (Km ² or hectares)	
f. How were the boundaries of each PA established	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legally declared/gazette (Yes/ No) - Physical markers/beacons present (Yes/ No) - Boundaries recognized by local communities (living inside or in adjacent areas including any buffer zone) (Yes/ No) 	

Part B: Social Screening

1.	Does the proposed sub-project activity require any private/ community land? If so, please include details	
2.	Are there any settlements or activities in the PA, buffer or adjacent areas and are these settlements or activities known or deemed to be legal or illegal?	
3.	Project impacts on:	
a.	villages and total estimated number of people?	
b.	Private structures, if so, type	
c.	Economic users (agriculture, resource gathering, grazing, hunting, fishing, water use, collection of firewood, timber, plants, fruits, medicinal materials, etc. Please mention estimated number.	
d.	Fishing activity or usage by fisherman / boat operators	
e.	Social religious and ritual uses. Please mention estimated number.	
f.	Seasonal or temporary users: nature, extent and frequency of use, and number of users	
3.	Are there areas with planned or prior incomplete or partial resettlement in PAs?	
4.	Buffer Zone, boundary information:	
a.	villages and total estimated number of people?	
b.	Private structures, if so, type	
c.	Economic users (agriculture, resource gathering, grazing, hunting, fishing, water use, collection of firewood, timber, plants, fruits, medicinal materials, etc. Please mention estimated number.	
d.	Fishing activity or usage by fisherman / boat operators	
e.	Social religious and ritual uses. Please mention estimated number.	
f.	Seasonal or temporary users: nature, extent and frequency of use, and number of users	

g.	Indigenous/pastoral users under any category	
5.	Information about IPs in the sub-project area	
a.	Are IPs present or do they have any interest in the project area? If so, what is the nature of their presence/use and number of people involved?	
6.	Are forest dwellers, ethnic minorities or other vulnerable groups present in the PA or adjacent areas?	
7.	What vulnerable groups will be affected by access restrictions and the creation of new PAs or imposition of new or enhanced restrictions?	
8.	Are legacy issues present, such as those related to the creation of the PA, resettlement (including pending or unfinished), alleged acts of violence, lack of recognition of IPs' customary and other rights, human-wildlife conflict, land claims; pastoralist customary claims/uses; displacement; conflict?	
9.	Stakeholder's consultation	
a.	Have all people who may be adversely impacted by access restrictions to PAs been informed/ consulted?	
b.	Were consultations broad and transparent so as to identify all relevant issues and stakeholders, and provide enough information for Project decision-making?	

Annex 2: Outline for Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs)

Table 14 Outline for RAPs

Outline For RAPs		
	Section	Description of Content
1.	Introduction	<p>Project Background</p> <p>Description of objectives of RAP</p> <p>Description of the sub-project or activity</p>
2.	Project information and minimization of impacts	<p>Description of activities that will cause economic displacement, including explanation why the selected area must be acquired for use within the timeframe of the activity</p> <p>Description of the zone of impact;</p> <p>Description of any project-imposed restrictions on use of or access to natural resources;</p> <p>Listing of alternatives that have been considered to avoid or minimize displacement and why those were rejected;</p> <p>Description of mitigation measures to minimize displacement</p>
3.	Census / socio-economic survey	<p>Description of impacts</p> <p>Description of characteristics of displaced households, including a description of production systems, labor, and household organization; and baseline information on livelihoods (including, as relevant, production levels and income derived from both formal and informal economic activities) and standards of living (including health status) of the displaced population;</p> <p>Information on vulnerable groups or persons for whom special provisions may have to be made;</p> <p>In conjunction with establishment of a cut-off date, provide a basis for excluding ineligible people from compensation and resettlement assistance;</p>

		Description of baseline conditions for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
4.	Legal framework	Description of the applicable legal and administrative procedures, Description of laws and regulations relating to the agencies responsible for implementing resettlement activities; Analysis of gaps, if any, between laws of the country and ESS5, and the mechanisms to bridge them.
5.	Eligibility	Provision of definition of displaced persons and criteria for determining eligibility for compensation and other assistance, including cutoff dates.
6.	Valuation of and compensation for losses	Description of methodology for valuing losses to determine replacement cost; Description of the proposed types and levels of compensation for loss of access to natural resources and other assets under the national law and such supplementary measures as necessary to achieve replacement cost for them.
7.	Community consultations	List involvement of communities in the in the design and implementation of the resettlement activities; Provision of a summary of the views expressed and how these views were taken into account in preparing the resettlement plan; Provision of a review of the resettlement alternatives presented and the choices made by displaced persons regarding options available to them; and Presentation of arrangements through which displaced people can communicate their concerns to the project, and measures to ensure that vulnerable groups are adequately represented.
8.	Additional Planning requirements	List additional planning requirements where resettlement involves economic displacement Provision of measures relating to livelihood improvement or restoration (establish entitlements of affected persons or communities; pay particular attention to gender aspects and the needs of vulnerable groups) Provision of arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of livelihood measures
9.	Institutional Arrangements	Description of entities responsible for resettlement activities
10.	Implementation Schedule	Provision of an implementation schedule with dates for displacement, and estimated initiation and completion dates for all resettlement plan activities – and linkages to the overall project.

11.	Costs	<p>Table showing categorized cost estimates for all resettlement activities, including allowances for inflation, population growth, and other contingencies;</p> <p>Timetables for expenditures; sources of funds; and arrangements for timely flow of funds, and funding for resettlement.</p>
12.	GRM	Description of GRM including the availability of judicial recourse and customary dispute settlement mechanisms.
13.	M&E	<p>Description of the monitoring of displacement and resettlement activities by the local authorities, to ensure complete and objective information;</p> <p>Listing of performance indicators to measure inputs, outputs, and outcomes for resettlement activities;</p> <p>Description of involvement of the displaced persons in the monitoring process; evaluation of results for a reasonable period after all resettlement activities have been completed; using the results of resettlement monitoring to guide subsequent implementation.</p>
14.	Arrangements for adaptive management	Provisions for adapting resettlement implementation in response to unanticipated changes in project conditions, or unanticipated obstacles to achieving satisfactory resettlement outcomes.

Annex 3: Stakeholder Consultations

Stakeholder Consultation details:

A joint scoping mission was conducted by the World Bank and the United Nations Environmental Program Tehran Convention Interim Secretariat (UNEP TCIS) in Azerbaijan from 16-18 May 2024 in order to discuss the utilization of the GEF for the Project with key governmental stakeholders. The stakeholder consultations were targeted to define the Project's interventions and identify focus areas. An orientation meeting was held with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR). As well as a one-day stakeholder workshop, which was facilitated by MENR. The workshop included government agencies, civil society, academia, and members of the private sector (see SEP for details of stakeholders). A field trip was undertaken to the Samur-Yalama National Park, and to a trout fishery farm located next to the park.

Key issues discussed during the consultations were the application of the Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), which will include the preparation of an ESMF, LMP, RPF and ESCP to mitigate the Project's E&S risks and impacts. The government further expressed its interest in the funding of international expertise to help bring respective ongoing initiatives in Azerbaijan to scale, including the understanding of integrated coastal management and maritime spatial planning tools. The government further stated that it is working to expand four of its protected areas, namely Samur-Yalama National Park, Gizilaghaj National Park, Absheron National Park, and Hirkan National Park. The Bank team and the Government discussed several options for the project to support these ongoing efforts on biodiversity conservation, which can potentially include assistance with: the expansion of the marine part of the Samur-Yalama National Park, located in the north of the country, or possibly another national park such as Absheron; the elaboration of management plans for selected protected areas, applying more effective protected area management practices through the promotion of sustainable ecotourism practices; and the development of exchange platforms for national parks managers from the three participating countries with dedicated capacity-building sessions. The government further expressed interest in improving pollution monitoring in the Caspian Sea, specifically: i) identifying the most suitable locations for monitoring stations, ii) supporting offshore monitoring by purchasing equipment for a monitoring vessel, iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring following international standards, iv) developing guidance/methodology on coastal clean-up from oil exploration activities, v) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries and other regions on the monitoring of the marine environment, and vi) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment.

Another joint scoping mission was conducted by the World Bank and the UNEP TCIS in Kazakhstan, from 20-24 May 2024. Key issues discussed during the consultations were also the application of the Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), including the preparation of an ESMF, LMP, RPF and ESCP to mitigate the Project's E&S risks and impacts. Furthermore, the team visited the Karagiye-Karakol'skiy Gosudarstvennyy Zakaznik, as well as the Port of Aktau to assess the potential inclusion of the former into the project and consult with the Port. Subsequently, a meeting was convened by the Oblast Akimat (governor of the province) with the participation of the respective local stakeholders to discuss their role in the project preparation. Following the meeting, the team visited Kendirli Bay, which is a natural reserve of the Oblast, located close to the border of Turkmenistan, to assess a potential inclusion of the work on this reserve in the project. On the last day of the visit to Aktau, the team met with representatives of the local fishery association to discuss their role in the conservation of marine resources. In Astana, a one-day workshop was held with stakeholders from the government, civil society, and academia to present and discuss the project's objectives and timeline, the WB ESF and the proposed institutional arrangements for the project.

In view of biodiversity protection, the Government of Kazakhstan is working to expand Kazakhstan's PA surface. A new marine PA is to be established next to Port Shevchenko to enhance the conservation of the Caspian Seal. The government is also considering the expansion of existing protected areas and to this end, more scientific research is required to identify the rationale for new protected areas from ecological and biological perspectives. The government is also working on applying more effective PA management practices while promoting sustainable ecotourism practices. It expressed that the project could provide assistance in elaborating the management plans of selected existing or new PAs.

The government expressed interest in improving Caspian Sea pollution monitoring, specifically i) increasing the monitoring potential of the Kazhydromet, which is responsible for the state monitoring of the Caspian Sea environment; ii) supporting the monitoring of sea-based pollution (from offshore oil and gas exploitation and maritime transport) by purchasing satellite images and integrating them with the national monitoring structure and procedures; iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring that follows international standards; iv) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries; and v) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment. The Caspian Sea Institute in Aktau is expected to also carry out relevant scientific research on the drivers, pressures, and measures related to pollution of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea.

The joint WB and UNEP TCIS team further undertook consultations in Turkmenistan from 11-15 August 2024. The objective was to discuss with key government stakeholders the scope of the Turkmenistan part of the proposed Project

At the invitation of the Ministry of Environment Protection (MEP) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Turkmenistan, the team attended the International Caspian Day held in the city of Turkmenbashi. In Turkmenbashi, the mission attended a round table facilitated by the MEP to discuss the project's potential interventions and identify areas of focus with related government agencies, academia, civil society and fish production units. Beyond the project's interventions the mission presented and discussed the ESF requirements. Together with MEP, the team visited the Khazar State Reserve and the laboratory of the Caspian Ecological Control Service under MEP.

The government expressed that it is working to expand Turkmenistan's PA surface. The government is considering the expansion of existing PAs and to this end, more scientific research is required to identify the rationale for the expansion of the PAs from ecological and biological perspectives. The government is also working on applying more effective protected area management practices while promoting sustainable ecotourism practices. The government also indicated the need for assistance in developing National Convention Action plan under the Tehran Convention as well as law enforcement and harmonization activities.

The government expressed interest in improving Caspian Sea pollution monitoring, specifically i) increasing the monitoring potential of the CaspEcoControl Service by improving the capacity and providing measuring methodologies of the laboratory facilities which would be aligned with ones of other Caspian countries; ii) supporting the monitoring of sea bottom sediments; iii) developing a legal framework for pollution monitoring that follows international standards; iv) supporting cross-learning among the participating countries; and v) supporting the activities of the Working Group of the Tehran Convention on Monitoring and Assessment.

From 15 – 30 April 2025, the World Bank and UNOPS undertook a Technical Mission to all three countries with the objective to confirm all elements of project design, including the prepared draft E&S instruments. The team met with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) in Baku, Azerbaijan; the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) in Aktau, Kazakhstan; and the Turkmenistan Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP). The mission

included site visits to Absheron National Park in Azerbaijan and to Fort Shevchenko, Kazakhstan, for visual inspection of the sites and discussions on stakeholder risks associated with protected areas management.

The mission confirmed the following the countries: Project PDO, indicators, components and activities; Budget allocation; Implementation and governance arrangements (incl. implementation arrangements between UNOPS and the three countries); Provisions, content, and consultation requirements for the Project's ESF Instruments; Location and areas of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) to be supported by countries and related risks. Based on mission meetings, site visits, and Google Earth views, the Bank engagement in these MPAs is assessed as Low to Moderate risk and will be reviewed when the MPA Profiles have been completed.

The Government of Azerbaijan confirmed the priority activities to strengthen the pollution monitoring capacity at the Caspian Environmental Monitoring Unit under the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. Biodiversity: The Government confirmed that a new MPA in the marine area surrounding "Absheron National Park" would be created for a focus on biodiversity, including knowledge/studies to better understand how the habitat for migratory birds, Sturgeon, and Caspian seal.

The government of Kazakhstan expressed interest in improving Caspian Sea pollution monitoring by supporting the recently created Kazakh Scientific and Research Institute of the Caspian Sea (KSRICS) located in Aktau. The mission visited the building provided by the government for the institute. On October 24, 2024, Kazakhstan adopted a resolution to create the "Caspian Itbalygy State Nature Reserve". The project would support the development of the management plan of the MPA in which studies would clarify what management measures are needed to benefit the Caspian seal which is an endemic, migratory and a transboundary bioresource.

Turkmenistan requested the Caspian Environmental Control, which is responsible for monitoring that associated laws are respected in practice. For this, the pollution monitoring capacity needs to be strengthened in pollution surveyance, including revision of the pollution monitoring and reporting scheme, and equipment provided to the Caspian Environmental Control Service in Turkmenbashi. The government has decided to create a new protected area named "Garabogaz marine protected area" as protected habitat for Caspian seal and migratory birds, and for which the project will support the preparation of the management plan.

Furthermore, UNOPS undertook stakeholder consultations from March-April 2025. In Turkmenistan a stakeholder consultation meeting was held 28-29 April in Turkmenbashi City. More than 40 participants attended the workshop, including representatives of State enterprises in Turkmenbashi: Turkmenbashi Oil Refinery Plant (TORP), departments of the ministry in the Balkan velayat, "Turkmenchemistry" State Corporation, representatives of the Khyakimlik (city administration), representatives of public associations, NGOs, the Nature Conservation Society of the Balkan velayat (region), fishermen, local citizens, etc. The audience was very interested in environmental issues and solutions to these issues. Participants expressed a desire to have more such meetings and discussions.

Stakeholder meetings in Azerbaijan were held between 2-8 April 2025, including with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, State Agency on Water Resources, the Institute of Geography, Ekolife Public Union, Public Council under the MENR, Nardaran Community, the 'My Beach' Hotel in Novkhani, and the Amuran Resort. During the consultations, the Ministry pointed out that there is inadequate coordination among countries and insufficient data sharing, as well as a low interest from stakeholders to cooperate with government institutions. It recommended that the role of local communities in decision-making should be increased.

In terms of social risks, the Ministry anticipates that due to potential closures of polluting industries, unemployment may occur. There is a need to diversify income sources and rely more on sustainable incomes, like environmental tourism. In case there are reduced fishing opportunities for local populations due to PAs, designated fishing grounds should be established in alternative areas with sustainable fishing opportunities, for example an increase of fish farms. Furthermore, awareness raising of local communities is very important. The most effective way is to organize an inception meeting. This meeting can ensure the participation of all interested parties. For example, such meetings can be organized in Absheron National Park and on the islands included in the territory of the National Park to be expanded, with local population, fishermen and industrial workers, as well as civil society institutions. The Ministry further named the most vulnerable stakeholders: local communities, some traditional tourism stakeholders, and women.

Research institutions were consulted as part of civil society. They indicated that one of the key challenges to pollution and biodiversity is the lack of infrastructure, informal settlements in areas close to the sea, lack of sewage systems, needs arising from low awareness levels of the local populations, and a lack of good coordination between countries. It is necessary to strengthen cooperation between scientific institutions of the coastal countries and develop various scientific programs related to pollution and biodiversity. Participatory governance should be strengthened in all areas. They recommended that the connection of local communities with the Caspian Sea should be studied. In addition, it should be investigated how pollution and biodiversity problems affect the situation of Caspian coastal communities. For this, it is necessary to conduct surveys or field interviews. Key stakeholders named are NGOs, government, fishermen, oil industry representatives, tourism actors. Vulnerable stakeholders are women, local stakeholders, local families with low income.

Private sector entities, including from the tourism sector, were consulted and listed challenges and potential solutions to pollution, including that certain activities can be included through the "polluter pays" scheme. On the other hand, collecting wastewater and treating it through the private sector should also be considered as a solution. Asked to list the E&S risks of the project, they responded that representatives of the private sector and some industries located on the Caspian coast may be concerned that their activities may be suspended. Many tourism facilities need to be renovated, but this must be done in a way that does not cause financial losses to the private sector. A number of job closures could increase unemployment. This is mostly related to polluter industries.

Stakeholder consultations in Kazakhstan were held on 2 April 2025. The meeting included government entities, private sector entities, NGOs, civil society and academia. Government representatives named the key challenge: The need to develop a state system of monitoring of pollution and biodiversity of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea. However, it should be mentioned that some measures are already being taken. In particular, on the instructions of the President of Kazakhstan, the Kazakh State Research Institute of the Caspian Sea is being created. Furthermore, there is need to provide appropriate state agencies with specialized sea vessels that would allow them to monitor the state of the Caspian Sea environment. One sea vessel is being built at the expense of the state budget, which will be ready for operation in 2027. There is a lack of modern devices and equipment to control pollution of the marine environment and biological resources of the Caspian Sea.

All participants thought there were no E&S risks that would come from the project. All participants noted that the main activities to raise public awareness are related to informing the population about the relevance of the problem of protecting these territories, their importance for the natural environment and the population, as well as awareness of the protection measures that the state is taking for conservation of these nature reserves.

Consultations with the Fisheries Committee in Kazakhstan were held on 3 April 2025. The Committee responded that social risks connected to the Project in terms of aquatic biological resources are not envisaged. The main activities to raise awareness among the population include holding regular meetings and public hearings on draft regulations concerning the conservation of biodiversity. Key stakeholders on biodiversity conservation activities include local

governments, specialized scientific organizations, as well as environmental and law enforcement agencies. The Committee believes that the best way to consult with stakeholders is to hold joint meetings both offline and online.

Azerbaijan

The following stakeholders were met during stakeholder consultations in Azerbaijan in May 2024:

1. Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
3. Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (National Hydrometeorology Service, Caspian Complex Ecological Monitoring Department, State Environmental Security Service Biological Diversity Protection Service)
4. Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan
5. Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan
6. Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Institute of Geography named after Academician Hasan Aliyev
7. Institute of Zoology of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
8. State Border Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan
9. Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan
10. Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency
11. State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan
12. Azerbaijan Caspian Sea Shipping Closed Joint Stock Company
13. Baku International Sea Trade Port Closed Joint Stock Company
14. State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan
15. ADA University
16. Baku City Executive Authority
17. Sumgayit City Executive Authority
18. FAO representatives
19. UNDP representatives
20. Samur Yalama National Park

Kazakhstan

The following stakeholders were met during stakeholder consultations in Kazakhstan in May 2024:

1. Aigerim Kuat	Director of the Department of International Cooperation, MENR
1. Natalia Ivanovna Dauletayarova	Acting Director of the Department of Environmental Policy, MENR
i. Alena Nikolaevna Sakabaeva	Head of the Department of Environmental Policy, MENR
1. Nurman Nurtasuly Tanatov	Head of the Department of Green Technologies and Projects, Department of Climate Policy and Green Technologies, MENR
h. Aliya Altaevna Sadvokasova	Chief Expert of the Department of Environmental Policy, MENR
1. Kuat Khazievich Chumakaev	Chief Expert of the Department of Specially Protected Natural Areas, Committee of Forestry and Wildlife, MENR
1. Danabek Bakitgereyevich Jangunisov	Head of the Department of State Environmental Control, Committee of Environmental Regulation and Control, MENR
1. Asem Orazbayevna Bagdauletova	Lead Engineer of the Department of Surface Water Data Analysis, Department of Environmental Monitoring, RSE 'Kazhydromet', MENR
1. Didar Nurlubekovich Karimssakov	Chairman of the Board, NAO 'International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects'
1. Erlan Edgeevich Tasbaev	Deputy Chairman of the Board, NAO 'International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects'
1. Temirlan Muratkhanovich Atarbayev	Director of the Department of Project Management, NAO 'ICGTIP'
1. Syrim Seilbekovich Nurgaliyev	Project Manager of the Department of Project Management, NAO 'ICGTIP'
1. Nurgazy Seilbekovich Abdulmanov	Head of the Digitalization Service, NAO 'ICGTIP'
1. Aliya Bauyrzhanovna Abdildina	Director of the Department of International Cooperation, NAO 'ICGTIP'

1.	Aidar Maratovich Yesembaev	Chief Expert of the Department of International Cooperation, NAO 'ICGTIP'
1.	Muslim Rysmakhanovich Zhiembaev	Director of the Department of Science and Innovative Technologies
1.	Edil Abraimov	Head of the Department of Innovation Policy
1.	Ayan Kairatovich Bakhiyanov	Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Fisheries
1.	Askhat Zhubayev	Head of the Department of Fish Resources Reproduction and Scientific Support
1.	Serik Kabdualiyevich Akhmetov	National Liaison Officer with the Tehran Convention
1.	Kanat Kulyzhanov	Deputy Akim of Mangystau Region
2.	Assel Balmanova	Head of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental

Turkmenistan
People Met

No	Names/surname	Job title
1	Mr. Nury Jumashov	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment Protection
2	Mr. Begench Meminov	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment Protection
3	Mr. Berdy Berdyev	Head of the International Department, Ministry of Environment Protection
4	Mr. Mahtumkuli Akmyradov	Advisor, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5	Mr. Murad Atajanov	Director of the Caspian Sea Institute
Mr. Rustem Nuryyev		Department of Flora and Fauna Conservation, Ministry of Environmental Protection
6	Mr. Juma Saparmuradov	Officer of the Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna
7	Ms. Joragul Halbaeva	Chief Lawyer, Ministry of Environmental Protection
8	Mr. Mergen Yusupov	Deputy Head of the International Department, Ministry of Environment Protection
9	Mr. Dovran Yagmurov	Head of the Environmental Protection Department, Ministry of Environment Protection
10	Mr. Rustem Nuryev	Head of the Flora and Fauna Department, Ministry of Environment Protection
11	Ms. Gozel Orazdurdyeva	National Tehran Convention Liaison Officer
12	Ms. Jemal Durdykova	UNDP "Sustainable Cities" Project
13	Mrs. Victoria Akopova	UNDP "Sustainable Cities" Project
14	Mr. Mekan Akmuradov	Turkmenbashi International Port
15	Mr. Nuryagdy Orazgulyev	Turkmendenizyollary Agency
16	Mr. Muhammet Komekov	Turkmenbashi International Port
17	Mr. Nurmyrat Esengulyev	Turkmendenizyollary Agency
18	Mr. Dayanch Aydogdyev	Director of the Hazar State Reserve
19	Mr. Merdan Mammedov	Head of the Scientific Department of the Hazar State Reserve.
20	Mr. Kemal Akhmedov	Ecological service "Caspecocontrol"
21	Ms. Yazgul Khankelova	JSC "Hazarbalyk", Financial specialist
22	Mr. Parahat Shadurdyev	JSC "Hazarbalyk", Safety engineer
23	Mr. Merdan Arazmedov	Nature Protection Society of Turkmenistan
24	Mr. Ovlyakulyev O	Nature Conservation Society of Turkmenistan of the Balkan Velayat
25	Mr. Guvanch Garadzhaev	State Administration for the Protection of Fish Resources and Control of Aquatic Bioresources (Gosrybokhrana)
26	Mr. Bayramgeldy Gylyjov	Acting Director of the Balkan Velayat Branch
27	Mr. Nurmyrat Mammedov	State Administration for the Protection of Fish Resources and Control of Aquatic Bioresources (Gosrybokhrana), Inspector for small-sized vessels
28	Mr. Ata Chapaev	Head of the "Caspecocontrol" Service
		Head of the Department of Finance and Development of Economic Sectors, Ministry of Finance and Economy

29	Ms.Galina Romanova	Head of the Consolidated Department of Public finance and economic policy, Ministry of Finance and Economy
30	Mr. Maksat Ovezov	Head of Financial Analysis Division of Agro-Industrial Complex, Department of Finance and Development of Economic Sectors, Ministry of Finance and Economy
31	Mr. Jumamuhammet Geldiev	Chief Specialist of the Division of Agro-Industrial Complex, Department of Finance and Development of Economic Sectors, Ministry of Finance and Economy
32	Mr. Khydirmuhammet Orazmuhammedov	Head of the Department of Fishery Facilities, Agency for Economy Risk Mitigation, Ministry of Finance and Economy

UNOPS Stakeholder Consultations in 28-29 April 2025 in Turkmenistan:

**List of participants of the meeting for 28-29April 2025 Turkmenbashi city
"Blueing the Caspian Sea"**

№	Name/surname	Position
1	Yakhmammedov Balakhmet	Specialist Department of Finance and Economy of the Balkan Velayat, Ministry of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan
2	Nazarov Guychglych	Head of Fisheries Protection of the Balkan Velayat
3	Guvadzhaev Sahetglych	Senior Fisheries Protection Specialist of the Balkan Velayat
4	Begench Tagangeldiyev	Executive Environment Petronas Carigali Sdn. Bhd
5	Kurbanov Ovlyakuli	Chairman of the Nature Conservation Society of the Balkan Velayat
6	Kurbanov Mekan	Specialist of the Nature Conservation Society of the Balkan Velayat
7	Musaev Ashirgeldi	Head of the Hunters and Fishermen Society
8	Shiriev Vepamammed	Chief Specialist of Nature Conservation of the Turkmenbashi Oil Refinery
9	Bagdasaryan Evelina	
10	Arjikov Tuvakdurdy	Chief Specialist of Special Works of the Public Association "Senagat Plastik"
11	Аманклычева Алия	Power Engineer of the Public Association "Senagat Plastik"
12	Mammedov Amanshih	Manager of the Turkmenbashi City Administration
13	Shadzhanov Tachnazar	Specialist of the Turkmenbashi City Administration
14	Ataeva Nurjemal	Chief specialist of the safety department of the state concern "Turkmenhimiya"
15	Kurbanaliev Ashyr	Public Association "Toverek"
16	Tochilina Elena	Head of Laboratory
17	Mammedova Amangul	Head of Laboratory
18	Dosmetov M.	Deputy Director of Individual Enterprise "Deniz Yelkeni"
19	Kakyshova G.	State Inspector "Kaspiekokontrol"
20	Keriev R.	Hotel Charlak Controller
21	Gylyjov P.	Hotel Charlak Controller
22	Saryev D.	Citizen of Turkmenbashi city
23	Ovezgeldiev G.	Citizen of Turkmenbashi city
24	Markizov Serdar	Citizen of Turkmenbashi city

25	Mammedov Sahetmurad	Khazar State Reserve, Head of the Scientific Department
26	Sherbina Alexander Alekseevich	Freelance Ecologist
27	Kabitov Hummet	Fisherman
28	Geldimammedov K.	Fisherman
29	Nobatov N.	Fisherman
30	Kurbanov K.	Fisherman
31	Orazova G.	Microbiologist
32	Bashimova J.	Accountant
33	Fatellaev V.	
34	Griko Elena	Public Association
35	Zakharova Victoria	
36	Vepaeva Alarm	Public association "Yash tebigatchi"
37	Shikhammadova Leili	
38	Nurmukhammedova Guldzhemal	Director
39	Kupraev Rakhman	Public Association "Ynanch Vepa"
40	Gylyjova Maral	Khazar Balyk
41	Saryguliev Annaberdi	"Gundogar" Public Association
42	Aydogdiev Dayanch	Manager Environment Petronas Carigali Sdn Turkmenistan
43	Orazgeldiev N.	Director of the Khazar State Reserve
44	Bagshieva Zeynep	Specialist of the Balkan Hydrogeological Expedition
45	Komekova Gunchagul	Specialist of the Khazar State Reserve

List of the participants: stakeholder consultations in
Aktau, Kazakhstan 2-3 April 2025

- Akimat of Mangystau oblast (local authorities)
- Mangystau Department of the Ministry of Environment and National Protection
- Mangistau Regional Territorial Inspectorate of Forestry and Wildlife
- Fisheries Department of Mangistau Region
- Mangystau Department of Hygrometeorology
- Center of Caspian Seals Protection
- University named in honor of Essenov
- The Enterprise "Морской порт" (Sea Port)
- Mangystau MynaiGaz (Oil Company)
- NGO "Eco Mangystau"

- List of participants in the meeting in Aktau on April 2, 2025

Name of participants	Title of the Institution	Position
Dzhusupkaliev A.Zh.	Department of Ecology of Mangistau Oblast	Head of the Department of Ecology of Mangistau Oblast

Galymov M.H.	Department of Ecology of Mangistau Oblast	Head of the Division of State Environmental Regulation
Adilbaev E.E.	Department of Ecology of Mangistau Oblast	Head of the State Environmental Control Division
Nadirbek K. N.	Department of Ecology of Mangistau Oblast	Head of the Laboratory and Analytical Division
Dzhanalieva N. Sh.	Caspian University of Technology and Engineering named after Sh. Yessenov	Senior Lecturer, Department of Ecology and Geology
Akhmetov S.K.	International Water Assessment Centre	Deputy Director, National Expert UNOPS
Алиев Д.	Неправительственное учреждение «Эко Мангистау»	Менеджер по проектом
Bisikenov A. O.	The Party "Baitak"	Acting Chairman of the Party
Shapagatov T.Zh.	Mangistau Regional Territorial Administration of Forestry and Wildlife	Head of Division
Sarsenbaev N.S.	Hydrometeorological center in Mangistau Oblast	Deputy Head
Markina O. V.	Mangistau Nuclear Power Plant	Head of the Division of Environmental Protection
Tuleushov H. M.	Department of Natural Resources and Nature Management of the Mangistau Oblast	Deputy Head of the Division of Natural Resources and Nature Management
Kushakbaeva E.K.	North Caspian Operating Company (NCOC)	Permit Coordinator
Igilmanova N. B.	Aktau International Sea Trade Port	Main Environmental Officer

Photos of the stakeholder consultations in Kazakhstan:



Figure 2 Stakeholder Consultations in Kazakhstan in April 2025

Annex 4: Sample Survey Format

The household-level census identifies and enumerates affected persons, and, with the involvement of affected persons, surveys land, structures and other fixed assets to be affected by the activity, as part of the RAP. The below forms are samples that can be used in the RAPs.

Table 10 Household Survey

Name of Head of Household		
Name of Head of extended Family		
Name of Interviewer		Signature:
Name of Supervisor		Signature:
Date of Interview		
Location		

No.	Name	Relation to Head of Household (Head, Spouse, child, spouse of child, grandchild, parent, other)	Sex (f/m)	Place of Birth	Age	Marital Status (married, widowed, divorced, unmarried)	Occupation	Educational level (illiterate, primary secondary)	Income earner (yes/no)	Economic activities (primary/ry)

Table 11 Land Asset Inventory

Survey No.	Name Head of HH	No of persons in HH	Total land holding of HH (in m2)	Land to be acquired (in m2)	Land use type	Existing Structures	Loss of % in total	Loss of assets