Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 15-Nov-2021 | Report No: PIDA32035

BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Project ID	Project Name	Parent Project ID (if any)
Central Asia	P171524	RESILAND CA+: Tajikistan Resilient Landscape Restoration Project	
Region	**Estimated Appraisal Date**	**Estimated Board Date**	**Practice Area (Lead)**
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	15-Nov-2021	24-Feb-2022	Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Financing Instrument	**Borrower(s)**	**Implementing Agency**	
Investment Project Financing	Republic of Tajikistan	The Committee for Environmental protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective is to increase the area under sustainable landscape management in selected locations in Tajikistan, and promote Tajikistan's collaboration with Central Asia countries on transboundary landscape restoration.

Components

Component 1. Strengthen Institutions and Policies, and Regional Collaboration
Component 2. Enhance Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods
Component 3. Project Management and Coordination

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	45.00
Total Financing	45.00
of which IBRD/IDA	45.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	45.00
IDA Grant	45.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

1. **Drylands in Central Asia are one of the most rapidly degrading and climate vulnerable areas in the world.**[1] A mix of natural arid conditions and increasing anthropogenic pressures, such as converting land to intensified commercial agriculture, logging, and grazing, have led to land degradation, deforestation, erosion, loss of vegetative cover, and biodiversity. This, in turn, has affected the productivity of agriculture, the resilience of transport and infrastructure, and the potential for tourism development, while increasing the fragility of the region. The region is increasingly exposed to intense weather events and natural disasters, which further degrade landscapes and living conditions and economic opportunities. Climate change impacts are expected to worsen the condition of countries' natural resources and the overall resilience of their populations and ecosystems.

2. **Land degradation, including deforestation, costs on average 6 percent of Central Asia countries' Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with the cost of inaction being 6 times higher than the cost of action**[2] **due to a strong dependency of the population and the economy, including the forestry and agriculture sectors, on landscapes.** Since 1990, degradation-related disasters have affected the lives of over 10 million people in Central Asia and caused damages worth around US$2.5 billion.[3] One key example is the degraded Aral Seabed, which produces massive sand and salt storms with tragic impacts on livelihoods and health of communities in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Another example is the increased frequency of landslides and mudflows in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, that has led to an economic cost of about US$750 million to Tajikistan alone in the last decade.[4] Arresting the degradation of regional pubic goods, such as water and land, will improve the livelihoods of the poor, including their climate resilience, and increase global interest in Central Asia's vast and largely pristine natural resource endowment for 'clean and green' agricultural exports and tourism.[5]

[1] Magero. C. 2019. Drylands and Climate Change – Synthesis Paper. URL: https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/drylands_and_climate_change_gdi.pdf; and, World Bank. 2019. URL: https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/fighting-climate-change-planting-trees-sea.

[2] Kazakhstan: 3 percent; Kyrgyz Republic: 11 percent; Tajikistan: 10 percent; Turkmenistan: 4 percent; Uzbekistan: 3 percent. Source: Mirzabaev, A., Goedecke, J., Dubovyk, O., Djanibekov, U., Quang, B.L., & Aw-Hassan, A. (2016). Economics of land degradation in Central Asia. In Nkonya, E. et al (Eds), Economics of Land Degradation and improvement – a global assessment for sustainable development. Springer. Retrieved on [2016, 01/11] from [DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-19168-3_10].

[3] EM-DAT International Disaster Database, *Université Catholique de Louvain*, D. Guha-Sapir, Brussels, Belgium. URL: *https://www.emdat.be/.*

[4] According to World Bank data.

[5] World Bank Group Regional Engagement Framework for Central Asia (REFCA, June 2020).

3. **The World Bank Central Asia Resilient Landscape Restoration Program (RESILAND CA+ Program) was formed in 2019 to provide Central Asia countries with a regional framework for landscape restoration with the aim of increasing resilience of regional landscapes in Central Asia.** This umbrella program finances analytics and advisory on FLR, and supports investment projects in Central Asia countries, one of which is the proposed Tajikistan Resilient Landscapes Restoration Project. The Project is developed alongside RESILAND CA+ Program of projects in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyz Republic, glued together by a Regional Exchange Platform for high-level dialog on FLR (see Annex 5 of the PAD for further details on the RESILAND CA+ Program). A collective, harmonized, and regional approach of the RESILAND CA+ Program is considered the most effective method for FLR with shared border areas being hotspots of land degradation, deforestation, and poverty, thereby making national approaches not as effective. The Program is also aligned with national vision of addressing the degradation of regional public goods by working together as one region.

Country Context

4. **Tajikistan – a mountainous country with over 90% area covered by mountains – has had rapid economic growth between 1998 and 2016.** During this period the country's per capita real income more than doubled and the poverty rate rapidly declined. GDP doubled between 1998 and 2018.[6] Between 2000 and 2020, the poverty rate fell from 83% of the population to 26.5%. Although the COVID-19 pandemic caused a major economic slowdown in Tajikistan, disproportionately impacting the poor, the country is experiencing a fast recovery.[7] However, social vulnerabilities and fragility risks persist for a number of reasons. These include the legacy of the 1992−97 civil war, persistent poverty pockets, especially certain regions, income insecurity, under-and unemployment, and security risks emanating from the 1,400 km[8]. Data from 2016 suggest that about 29% of youth aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education, and training in Tajikistan. Consequently, the government has emphasized creating youth job opportunities as a priority.

5. **Tajikistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change.** Tajikistan had the lowest level of GHG emissions in Central Asia with agriculture as the primary source.[9] However, Tajikistan is the most vulnerable to climate change due mainly to its low adaptive capacity. Climate change affects all types of interventions – (1) agriculture (2) forest (3) land restoration – in pasture and protected areas – through drought; erratic precipitation pattern; poor growth of vegetation; and increased incidence of fire, disaster risks, loss of biodiversity and pest and disease outbreak

Sectoral and Institutional Context

6. **Land degradation and unsustainable use of natural resources pose considerable constraints for rural development**. Rural poverty remains concentrated in communities dependent on natural resources – particularly on forest, pasture, water resources and agriculture.[10]At least 10% of Tajikistan's population is living on degraded lands[11] while soil erosion affects about 70% of arable land.[12] **The key challenges in addressing land degradation include:** (i) inadequate technical capacity, investment and collaboration at regional and national levels that hinder adequate planning, and implementation of landscape restoration; and (ii) lack of financial incentives, preventing

[6]https://tradingeconomics.com/tajikistan/gdp-per-capita
7 https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/d5f32ef28464d01f195827b7e020a3e8-0500022021/related/mpo-eca.pdf.

[8] World Bank. 2019. Country Partnership Framework FY19 – FY23
[9] The Government of The Republic of Tajikistan. 2014. The Third National Communication under UNFCCC
[10] UNDP.2012. Tajikistan Poverty in context of Climate Change
[11] Government of Tajikistan. 2016. National Development Strategy of The Republic of Tajikistan (up to 2030). Dushanbe.
[12] World Bank.2018. Systematic Country Diagnostic.

government agencies and local communities from adopting landscape restoration practices. **The project addresses these challenges in four key interconnected sectors: forestry, pasture, protected areas (PAs), and agriculture.**

7. **Tajikistan's limited forest cover is diminishing rapidly due to overexploitation and uncontrolled grazing.** From having 25% forest cover, the country now has only 3%, which is also under tremendous pressure. Of the forest area, only 13% is under the State Forest Agency (SFA), and mostly maintained as grazing land. For 70% of the population, fuelwood is the primary energy source due to an inconsistent energy supply.[13] Additional constraints in the sector include unclear responsibilities and jurisdictions, weak administrative, managerial and law enforcement capacities, and lack of sustainable forest management schemes.[14] Evidence-based forest policy making, and monitoring is very much impaired due to lack of up-to-date data and mapping. There has been no national forest inventory since 1990. Damage due to fire, pest, disease, die-back are also not recorded in any systematic manner. Until a robust national forest monitoring system is established, Tajikistan will suffer from a lack of credibility in international reporting.

8. **Pasture stocks are also rapidly deteriorating, partly due to overgrazing.** Factors involved in the deterioration of pastureland, which accounts for some 80% of agricultural land[15], include: a) the deterioration of the socialist system of livestock production and organized structure of pasture management starting in the early 1990s; b) the challenges of administering and maintaining a public good such as pastures while over 90% of animals are held in household farms; c) the limited effectiveness of Pasture User Unions (PUUs) as a result of incomplete transfer of land use rights and uncertain financial viability; d) the additional pressure on resources from the more than threefold growth of the rural population over the past 50 years; and e) climate change impacts, in particular the increasing erosive capacity of rainfall exacerbating soil erosion. Following the collapse of the Soviet pasture management system, there has been little funding for restoration and maintenance of pastures and related infrastructure.

9. **Climate change is expected to increase the intensity and frequency of extreme climate events, leaving Tajikistan's economy and people increasingly vulnerable.** In terms of disaster risk -Tajikistan faces relatively high disaster risk, ranked 64th out of 191 countries in the INFORM 2019 Index for Risk Management[16]. This risk is driven most significantly by exposure to drought, for which Tajikistan ranks 8th in the world. Risk is also enhanced by moderate levels of flood exposure and relatively low levels of coping capacity. The implications of climate change for exposure to natural hazards are costly to the economy and its people, for example - average annual losses to all types of flood are estimated at $48 million[17] USD in Tajikistan. Tajikistan also faces significant risks from flash floods, and notably glacier lake outburst floods (GLOFs). These events can also happen as a result of, or cause, landslides and dangerous mudflows[18].

10. **Agriculture sector makes critical contributions to food security and reduction of rural poverty.** It accounts for 18.7% of national GDP, provides employment, income, and livelihoods to around 60% of the population, and contributes to 30% of official exports. **However, climate change will affect Tajikistan's agriculture and in turn food security due to dependence on water resources.** Climate change is expected to lead to increased

[13] World Bank.2018. Systematic Country Diagnostic
[14] GTZ. 2010. Forest Sector Analysis of the Republic of Tajikistan
[15] The Government of The Republic of Tajikistan. 2014. The Third National Communication under UNFCCC
[16] Climate Change Risk Profile, World Bank, 2021 - https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/15919-WB_Tajikistan%20Country%20Profile-WEB.pdf
[17] UNISDR (2014). Prevention Web: Basic country statistics and indicators. URL: https://www.preventionweb.net/countries [accessed 14/08/2018]
[18] GFDRR. (2017). Disaster Risk Profile: Tajikistan. URL: https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/Tajikistan.pdf

annual mean temperatures [19], more intense heavy precipitation events and increase of precipitation shortening of rainfall seasons, fewer frost days and changes in growing season length. These processes along with mismanagement of land resources, will likely lead to increased desertification, landslides, and erosion. Available estimates indicate that ~82% of all land in Tajikistan is already affected by soil erosion to some degree.[20] The poor who are mostly dependent on agricultural livelihoods will become increasingly vulnerable as impacts on agriculture and food production may increase relative food prices and reduce agricultural wages.[21]

11. **Landscape quality and people's livelihoods are interlinked and attempts to improve one while ignoring the other do not produce optimum results.** Landscape restoration increases productivity of the land base which results in higher income for farmers, enabling them to adopt more sustainable practices and further contributing to landscape health and vigor. Landscapes can be resilient through integrated and spatially focused approaches and improved rural livelihoods. Making landscapes resilient requires long-term commitment and sustained efforts from the government and other stakeholders. Hence, strengthening policy frameworks and institutional capacity are crucial for sustainable landscape restoration outcomes. Such positive outcomes are multiplied when such a transboundary challenge is addressed regionally, through concerted efforts and maximization of resources. Government's commitment to NDC, Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), Bonn Challenge, ECCA30 and Astana Resolution provides strong basis for projects aiming at landscape restoration.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

12. **The goal of the RESILAND CA+ Program is to increase resilience of regional landscapes in Central Asia**. The regional impact of the Program will be measured by aggregating the results of individual country projects and monitoring the results of regional activities. For this purpose, the projects' PDO and PDO level Indicators have been harmonized. See ***Annex 6*** for more details about the Program and impact indicators.

PDO Statement

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

13. The Project Development Objective is to increase the area under sustainable landscape management in selected locations in Tajikistan, and promote Tajikistan's collaboration with Central Asia countries on transboundary landscape restoration.

14. This PDO is uniform across the RESILAND CA+ projects with sustainable landscape management practices differing based on the specific country contexts. In the case of Tajikistan, sustainable landscape management includes practices like agroforestry (intercropping with trees, shelterbelts); improved grazing land management through temporal enclosure, rotational grazing, and enrichment planting; plantations and reforestation; protected area management; soil fertility and water harvesting and efficiency measures; climate smart agriculture, and other relevant sustainable landscape management practices, Sustainable landscape management practices will be carried out by the government, SFE, the private sector, and rural communities in the targeted locations,

[19] As per Nationally Determined Contribution towards Climate Change submitted by the Government of Tajikistan – NDC https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/nap/tainap01e.pdf
[20] UNDP and UNEP. 2012. Poverty-Environment Initiative in Tajikistan
[21] Shah, M., & Steinberg, B. 2012. Could droughts improve human capital? Evidence from India. Retrieved from http://www.frbsf.org/economic-research/files/Shah_Steinberg.pdf

whose capacities will be increased to carry these out.

Key Results

15. The following are the indicators to measure the achievement of the PDO and the project's key results
    a) Land area under sustainable landscape management practices (CRI, Ha)
    b) People benefitting from landscape management practices (Number, sex disaggregated)
    c) Transboundary sustainable landscape management policies harmonized (Number)

D. Project Description

16. **Project approach**. Land degradation in Tajikistan as outlined in earlier sections is broad-based covering multiple land uses and sectors. The approach to landscape management in the project recognizes multiple drivers of degradation and country specific challenges and constraints. Thus, the project will support sustainable land management in areas such as forestry and protected areas, pasture, and climate smart agriculture, for the reasons explained earlier. Other areas, namely water resource management particularly for irrigation, livestock husbandry and commercial agriculture have not been chosen for support since there are donors, including the World Bank, IFAD and others, active in these sectors. Regionally, the project aims to strengthen collaboration with neighboring countries in key aspects of landscape management.

17. **Project areas/districts** have been selected in consultation with government and other stakeholders based on a combination of criteria - poverty incidence, potential for integrated landscape restoration (incorporating pasture, agriculture, water, forestry, biodiversity), regional and transboundary corridors, and complementarity with government and donor-funded initiatives. When overlaid on the current arrangements of river basins, project sites fall in the following river basins: a) Zarafshon basin covering three districts – Ayni, Panjekent, and K. Mastchoh (in Sughd oblast, bordering Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic); b) greater Panj covering four districts – Vanj, Rushon, Shughnon, and Murghab (in Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast - GBAO, bordering the Kyrgyz Republic and Afghanistan); and c) Lower Kofarnihon covering three districts – Shahrituz , Nosir Khosrov, Qubodiyon (in Khatlon oblast, bordering Uzbekistan and Afghanistan). These sites include sub-basins and tributaries of regionally important rivers, as well as protected and forest areas, and KBAs that share boundaries with the above countries. Resources of national and regional significance in these sites include riparian forests (tugai), threatened fauna (snow leopard) and transport infrastructure.

Project Components

18. **Project activities are grouped into the following three inter-related components**, which are further grouped into sub-components. See ***Annex 2*** for further details, and III.A. for a summary of implementation arrangements.

19. **Component 1. Strengthen Institutions and Policies, and Regional Collaboration (US$6.50 million).** Sub-component 1.1. supports national level efforts to improve policy and legal frameworks, capacity building in national and international obligations related to landscape restoration and climate change, and for improved skills, knowledge and operations in forestry, pasture and protected areas. Sub-component 1.2. will promote Tajikistan's collaboration with Central Asian countries on transboundary cooperation and landscape restoration.

20. **Sub-component 1.1. Strengthen Institutions and Policies*. a) Strengthening policy, legal and implementation frameworks.*** This sub-component will support the development of appropriate policy and legislative reform to support integrated landscape restoration. The project will support: (i) analysis and revisions of existing policy, legal and

implementation frameworks for forests, pastures, and PAs for new and innovative approaches to integrated landscape management, (ii) strengthening the role of CEP and other agencies to align revisions with national and international obligations of monitoring and reporting on commitments including NDC, LDN (targets will be refined based on data collected in the project and a submission of a revised communication document for government approval), climate change, etc., (iii) preparation of national landscape restoration and protected area strategies and action plans; (iv) capacity building of operational and technical personnel in forestry, pasture, and protected areas for sustainable land management and landscape restoration; (v) provision of office and field equipment, as well as vehicles and machinery to improve field operations in forestry, pasture and protected areas management; (vi) activities to strengthen the country's research base and knowledge management for landscape management approaches, e.g., analytical studies, facilitate knowledge exchange and platform such as Sustainable Land Management Tajikistan (SLMTJ)

21. **Sub-component 1.2. Strengthen Regional Collaboration.** The objective of this sub-component is to promote Uzbekistan's collaboration with Central Asia countries on transboundary cooperation and landscape restoration, given the critical need to address emerging threats at the regional level, including impacts of climate change. It will finance a Regional Exchange Platform and support the implementation of several key regional activities, including: (i) development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for facilitating border-crossing for NBT in PAs and unique natural sites shared between countries, (ii) development of an MoU for using common modern methods of inventory of flora and fauna diversity, and ecosystem condition among transboundary corridors, (iii) development of a joint transboundary management plan for ecological corridors for migratory animals, and transboundary cooperation agreements for addressing issues of protection of key species and habitats, including PAs from fires, invasive species, etc., (iv) development of a protocol for using nature-based solutions; and (v) development of an MoU for the designation of a transboundary 'Peace Park' between countries along the lines of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Peace Forest Initiative (2020).[22] A regional online database will be established and hosted at the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) to store and publish data and publications on sustainable landscape management and restoration.

22. **Component 2. Enhance Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods (US$ 35.50 million).** Both government institutions and communities will implement a range of landscape restoration investments. To support the selection of investments, assistance will be provided for landscape restoration planning, e.g., forest management plans, pasture management plans. At the community level, organizations/firms will work with local government and CEP IG, to assist and train PUUs, groups of farmers, WUAs and FUGs to prepare, implement and monitor participatory plans. Other than sub-grants for which fund flow arrangements will be in place, CEP will be responsible for all expenditures.

23. **Sub-component 2.1 Forest Restoration and Sustainable Forest Management.** The State Forestry Agency will lead on the technical aspects of this subcomponent, which includes the following key activities:

24. *(a) National Forest Inventory*. The project will finance a national-level systematic National Forest Inventory (NFI) using a low sampling density. The NFI exercise will employ state of the art methodologies for conducting forest inventories, including geospatial and earth observation data.

25. *(b) Preparation and implementation of forest management plans.* The project will finance the preparation of up to eight sustainable forest management plans for SFEs in the project sites. Preparation of the plans will build upon experience of earlier methods [23]. Based on these activities, 10-year plans will be elaborated, with measures and costs

[22] URL: *https://www.unccd.int/news-events/unccd-ready-welcome-countries-new-peace-forest-initiative*.
[23] Under the KfW supported project "Climate Adaptation through Sustainable Forestry in Important River Catchment Areas in Tajikistan" a methodology

identified for sustainable forest management (including JFM plans) and corresponding maps developed. The project will finance selected activities from the plans, including: (i) afforestation in approximately 4,120 ha (including 220ha of fuelwood plantation), all under Joint Forest Management in the project districts. This will include restoration/afforestation encompassing pistachio forests, plantations of poplar and fruits, saxaul planting and fruit plantations. Assessments and plans will be prepared of proposed locations, species to be planted, and risks and mitigation measures. will be established. To supply growing demand of fuelwood, fast-growing native species will be planted. Forest User Groups comprising households will sign contracts for the land use rights with the SFEs for a period of at least 20 years; (ii) natural/assisted regeneration – SFEs will improve a further 8,000ha through natural/assisted regeneration, including enrichment planting of native species, fencing, soil improvement measures, etc.; and (iii) forest nurseries including semi-modernization measures in eight SFE-operated nurseries in the project site, and development of private backyard nurseries to bolster seedling supply for JFM and afforestation, and as an income generation activity for rural households. About 50 such nurseries are expected to be established in the project sites.

26. **Sub-component 2.2 Integrated Pasture Management and Restoration.** The Pasture Reclamation Trust (PRT) of the Ministry of Agriculture will lead on technical aspects of this sub-component, which includes the following key activities.

27. *(a) Geobotanical surveys and pasture inventories.* The project will finance cadastral assessment of pasture resources and geobotanical surveys in the project districts, with data digitized for planning and monitoring purposes. Staff at the State Committee for Land Management and Geodesy (SCLMG) and PRT will conduct the assessments. The resulting surveys and inventories will be used for the overall monitoring system for pasture in the country, and in the preparation of pasture management plans (PMPs) that are mandated by the Pasture Law.

28. *(b) Forage seed demonstration plots*. Establishment of seed demonstration plots covering about 200 ha for native forage species. These plots will be under the management of the PRT, and will demonstrate the production of forage seeds, as well as supply suitable seeds to PUUs and others.

29. *(c) Pasture/livestock Management Plans.* The project will support sustainable pasture/fodder-based livestock production systems in selected areas. The focus of support will be PUUs, whether these are to be created or existing unions are to be strengthened. Where PUUs are to be created, these will be primarily at village and jamoat levels. Organizations will be contracted to provide facilitation support to establish PUUs and prepare PMPs. Sub-grants will be provided to PUUs for the implementation of up to 65 PMPs. Within specified budget limits, the plans will identify activities to support: (a) measures to improve pasture productivity, such as protecting areas for regeneration, pasture rehabilitation, weed removal, improving access to remote pastures, and supplementary fodder production; (b) erosion and landslide control through plantations, small retention structures; (c) improved grazing management and promotion of silvo-pastoralism; (d) animal health requirements and breed improvement measures; and (e) implementation responsibilities, targets and indicators. Pasture management will be complemented by the establishment of small facilities such as shelters, feeding stalls, salt licks, scratching posts, drinking water troughs, and fences to enhance animal welfare and improve the productivity and resilience of livestock systems.

30. **Sub-component 2.3 Protected Area Management and Biodiversity Conservation.** This subcomponent will be technically led by the State Institution of the Specially Protected Natural Areas (SISPNA), as part of CEP, and includes the following key activities.

for the preparation of participatory forest management plans for SFEs has been developed. At present only Khovaling SFE, a project site for KfW has a such a plan.

31. *(a) Priority PA Management Plans*. Four management plans will be prepared or updated for Tajik National Park and Zorkul Special Reserve in GBAO (bordering the Kyrgyz Republic and Afghanistan), Yagnob National Park in Sughd and State Natural Reserve Tigrovaya Balka in Khatlon (bordering Afghanistan). Plans will comprise management arrangements, conservation and restoration, protection and enforcement, monitoring, education and awareness, stakeholder engagement, ecotourism and recreation, prioritized actions, and associated costs. Planning activities will involve boundary mapping, spatial planning, economic and financial analysis, and stakeholder consultations.

32. *(b) Implementation of PA management plans.* Selected activities will be supported including i) establishment of monitoring systems/protocols with community participation; ii) interpretation of assets and attractions for visitors; iii) restoration of degraded natural land-based habitats; and iv) general PA management, e.g., boundary demarcation, mapping, provision of facilities. Community-based nature tourism is an income-generation opportunity, while providing incentives to conserve biodiversity when planned in line with PA objectives. Households organized as common interest groups (CIGs) will be eligible for sub-grants for: i) development of homestays and small cafes; ii) training of tourism guides; iii) development of ecotourism activities, e.g., trekking routes, horse trekking, nature trails; and iv) products such as handicrafts, promotional materials, interpretation.

33. **Sub-component 2.4. Landscape Restoration and Livelihoods.** The project will provide sub-grants to farmers organized as common interest groups (CIGs) to implement small-scale livelihood investments based on Village Development Plans. CEP IG will provide the technical lead for this sub-component and oversee the management of sub-grants to beneficiaries. The project will support crop land-based livelihoods - climate-smart crop production practices and technologies – through sub-grants for sub-projects identified and selection in the above plans to groups of farmers that form CIGs. They will be eligible for grants to address degradation issues such as on-farm salination, erosion, and low productivity in ways that can increase income for members and reduce degradation impacts and increase climate adaptation. The focus will be the adoption of practices such as: a) diversification of agricultural/horticultural crops; b) improved crop varieties and biotechnology that reduce emissions; c) adoption of water-efficient crops and varieties, and cultivation methods; d) erosion control measures such as increasing vegetative cover along the sides of linear infrastructure such as roads and planting of shelterbelts; e) harvesting and processing of different crops, including cooling, storage; f) reduced tillage intensity and cover crops, crop rotation, perennial cropping systems, cultivation of deep rooting species; g) higher inputs of organic matter to soil, processing and application of manure. Activities and CIGs would be prioritized and identified during a participatory planning process and supported to prepare proposals. Project financed sub-grants to CIGs will not exceed US$10,000 and will require a match of 5% if provided in cash, or 10% if provided in-kind as beneficiary contributions.

34. **Component 3. Project Management and Coordination (US$3.00 million).** This component will finance the operating costs of an Implementation Group (IG) within CEP to carry out project management functions for both Components 1 and 2. Support will be provided for procurement, financial management, coordination, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation. The IG will be responsible for i) coordinating closely with project partners in forestry, pasture and protected areas, as well as with other stakeholders, and ii) ensuring project compliance with environmental and social standards, attention to gender aspects, and citizen engagement. The central CEP IG will be supported by project-financed province-level technical units with core staff in key areas such as pasture management, forestry and biodiversity conservation as needed.

Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

35. Both environmental and social risks are assessed as Substantial, making the overall environmental and social risk rating for the project Substantial. The following World Bank environmental and social standards (ESS) are relevant: ESS 1, ESS 2, ESS 3, ESS 4, ESS5, ESS 6, ESS 8, and ESS 10. The project also triggers OP 7.50 on International Waterways, as some minor works are expected to be held at tributary of larger rivers that are considered as transboundary.

36. The environmental impact of the project is expected to be largely positive as it will support restoration of degraded landscapes and improve management of pastures, pilot protected areas and forests, land and water management, the project is also expected to increase the adoption of effective agricultural, land and water management practices. However, the risks associated with activities related to landscape restoration activities, repair of office buildings in protected areas, establishment of guesthouses and small cafes, agroforestry, climate smart agriculture practices are also expected. Such potential environmental risks may include temporary local disturbances to biodiversity and living natural resources; habitat disturbances; soil loss related to planting activities; dust; and temporary, construction related, air or water pollution, waste generation and wastewater.

37. The project is expected to have positive social impacts, as the project will support investments in rural livelihood development and landscape management selected through a multi-stakeholder planning process, and the bulk of which will be designed and managed primarily by communities, farmers, and resource user groups through the small grant program. Issues of social inclusion, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and the dependence of their livelihoods from selected resources are assessed through social and environmental assessment and considered in the project design to ensure that stakeholders have equal access to project benefits. The key project interventions will require extended interface between local communities and government bodies. It is likely that project will have to address potential conflicts to bring together differing perspectives. This would mean that the project will have to develop appropriate strategies and implementation plans to ensure that the local communities are provided with an opportunity to participate in decision making and derive full benefits. The project will finance resilient infrastructure rehabilitation, including protected areas, roads, agroforestry, and small construction works, which may cause minor economic and resettlement impacts, as well as restrictions on land use and access to natural resources that cause a community or groups within a community to lose access to resource usage, including legally designated protected areas, forests, or biodiversity areas to be restored in connection with the project. The Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) risk is rated low based on the SEA/SH Assessment completed during project preparation. The risk of child labor/forced labor is considered to be limited, as based on the national legislation the contractors have to comply with the minimum age of employment and mutually agreed written contracts.

38. To address the environmental and social risks, the following instruments are to be prepared: (i) Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF); (ii) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); (iii)

Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF); (iv) Labor Management Procedures (LMP); and (v) Environment and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). Once the investments are defined, site-specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plans/Checklist, as well as Biodiversity Management Plan, Pest Management Plan, and Process Framework will be developed during implementation, where necessary. CEP has experience in implementing the Bank-financed projects, but this will be their first project under the Environmental and Social Framework. Environmental and social specialists will be hired by the PIU to support project implementation. In additional several technical specialists will be recruited by the PIU to support the ESF implementation.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

39. **Implementing Agency (IA).** The project is implemented by the CEP, whose mandate is to coordinate policies and investments on sustainable natural resource management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental monitoring, and awareness. The CEP as the lead IA will be supported by and work closely with three agencies: (i) State Forest Agency and SFEs for activities related to forestry including NFI, forest management planning, afforestation; (ii) Pasture Reclamation Trust (in the Ministry of Agriculture) for pasture activities including inventories and pasture management plans; and (iii) SISPNA for protected areas management planning and investments. Cooperation between the CEP and SFA and PRT will be set out in MOUs that define roles and responsibilities and will be signed by project negotiations.

40. **Project Steering and Management Committees.** A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will include representatives of key agencies. Chaired by CEP Chairman, the PSC will provide oversight, coordination, and guidance on project management. A Project Management Committee (PMC) will provide a technical level support and coordination and will be chaired by the IG coordinator. The PMC will include Project Coordinator, technical specialists from the IA, project partners and other technical institutions relevant for project implementation.

41. Sub-component 1.2 (Strengthen Regional Collaboration) will be executed by CAREC through a direct contract with the CEP. CAREC will subcontract other entities as needed to execute specific activities.

42. Annex 1 of the PAD includes more information on implementation arrangements, while the POM includes details on implementation arrangements by activity.

CONTACT POINT

World Bank

Drite Dade
Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist

Rajesh Koirala
Environmental Specialist

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Republic of Tajikistan

Implementing Agencies

The Committee for Environmental protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
B. A Sheralizoda
Chairman
cepprj@gmail.com

Mr. Faiziddin Qahhorzoda,
Minister of Finance
invetdiv@mail.ru

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: http://www.worldbank.org/projects

APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Drite Dade Rajesh Koirala

Approved By

Practice Manager/Manager:		
Country Director:	Tatiana A. Proskuryakova	18-Nov-2021