



Review and Update of the World Bank's Safeguard Policies

The World Bank has begun a two-year process to review and update its environmental and social safeguard policies. These policies embody core values of the institution and are the cornerstone of the Bank's efforts to protect people and the environment and to ensure sustainable development outcomes. This review and update provides an opportunity for the Bank to build on the core principles of the current safeguard policies; improve coverage of environmental and social risks; deliver better environmental and social outcomes in the projects and programs it supports; and help strengthen country systems and institutions to deliver sustainable results on the ground.

The three-phased approach to the review, as described in [The World Bank's Safeguard Policies Proposed Review and Update](#), was endorsed by the Board of Executive Directors on October 10, 2012. Throughout the review process, the Bank will seek the views of shareholders and a wide range of stakeholders to help shape the next generation of safeguard policies.

Why the Safeguards Review?

The current safeguard policies have served the Bank, its client countries, and the development community well over the past two decades. In the spirit of continuous improvement in the face of changing contexts and circumstances, the Bank is updating these crucial policies to better address new development demands and challenges, and to better meet the varied needs of borrowers, which range from middle-income countries with well-developed institutions and capacities, to low-income countries with weaker governance and institutions, to fragile and conflict-affected states where more tailored and coordinated interventions are required. The Safeguards Review and Update is part of a larger modernization effort within the institution, which includes separate but complementary reviews of Investment Lending, as well as operational procurement policies.

Scope of the Review

The policies under review are the eight environmental and social safeguard policies – OP 4.01 **Environmental Assessment**, OP 4.04 **Natural Habitats**, OP 4.09 **Pest Management**, OP 4.10 **Indigenous Peoples**, OP 4.11 **Physical Cultural Resources**, OP 4.12 **Involuntary Resettlement**, OP 4.36 **Forests**, OP 4.37 **Safety of Dams** – as well as the **Policy on Piloting the Use of Borrower Systems for Environmental and Social Safeguards** (“Use of Country Systems”), OP 4.00.

As part of the review process the Bank will also consider if and how it could potentially address a number of emerging areas that stakeholders have asked us to consider. These include human rights; labor and occupational health and safety; gender; disability; the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples; land tenure and natural resources; and climate change. The Bank will consider these areas through internal dialogue and consultations with shareholders, as well as through a global series of dialogues with external experts.

Objective of the Review

The main objective of the review is to strengthen the effectiveness of the safeguards policies in order to enhance the development impact of World Bank-supported projects and programs. While the final form and content cannot be determined at the outset, it is anticipated that the review process will lead to an integrated safeguards framework that will distinguish principles, policies, procedures and guidance;



enhance policy clarity and coherence; clarify objectives and desired outcomes; improve synergies across policies; consolidate fragmented or duplicative policies; streamline guidance; and better delineate roles and responsibilities of the Bank and the borrower.

Beyond the objective of enhancing the development effectiveness of the projects and programs it supports, a new integrated safeguards framework can serve as the basis of a renewed partnership between the Bank and its borrowers – a partnership rooted in a common commitment to environmental and social sustainability. Such a partnership would better leverage the increasing capacity of many borrowers to identify and manage environmental and social risks and impacts. Where a borrower lacks such capacity, the Bank could, working with other development partners, deliver tailored capacity and institution building programs to strengthen the borrower's institutions and systems. In this way, a new integrated framework could be global public good that can yield sustainability benefits for its borrowing countries, development partners, and the international community more broadly.

Consultations

The three phases of the review will include each a consultation period to elicit input and feedback from shareholders and a broad range of external stakeholders in an inclusive and transparent manner. During the **first consultation period (October 10, 2012 to February 15, 2013)**, the World Bank will seek input and views on the review and possible directions for the development of an integrated framework. The consultations process will include a mix of on-line and face-to-face exchanges with shareholders and interested stakeholders, focus groups with project-affected communities, and a global dialogue series on emerging areas with external experts. The input collected will inform the development of a first draft of an integrated framework to be presented to the Committee on Development Effectiveness of the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors for its consideration in May 2013.

In the **second consultation period (May 2013 through October 2013)** the World Bank will seek feedback on the first draft integrated framework. The Bank will organize face-to-face meetings and connect multiple sites via video-conferencing to reach as many countries as possible. Focus groups with project-affected communities will continue during this phase, and interested stakeholders will also be able to comment on-line through the dedicated consultation website. Issue-specific e-conferences to gather feedback on particular topics will also be conducted.

In the **third and final consultation period (January 2014 through March 2014)** consultations will be conducted largely on-line to seek feedback on the revised draft framework. Additional face-to-face meetings may be held as needed. It is anticipated that the final integrated framework and policy recommendations will be presented to the Board of Executive Directors in June 2014.

A dedicated consultation website (www.worldbank.org/safeguardsconsultations) provides information related to the overall consultation approach and plan, the review and timeline, links to related resources, the schedule of face-to-face meetings, participant lists, summaries of views from consultation meetings, focus groups, global dialogue series and online questionnaires, and other relevant information as the review and consultation process progresses.

All input and feedback received during face-to-face meetings, online, focus groups and the global dialogue series on emerging issues will be summarized and posted online. Consultation meetings will be announced with as much advance notice as possible to facilitate informed participation from a diverse set of stakeholders.

For more information, please visit www.worldbank.org/safeguardsconsultations. If you have questions, please send an email to safeguardconsult@worldbank.org

