

Introduction

1. Background of the Project

The project “Green-Ag: Transforming Indian Agriculture for Global Environmental Benefits and the Conservation of Critical Biodiversity and Forest Landscapes” is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through its sixth funding cycle with emphasis on cross-cutting focal areas such as Biodiversity Conservation, Land degradation, Sustainable Forest Management, and Climate Change Mitigation.

The Green-Ag project is being implemented in five landscapes namely i) Dampa Landscape, Mizoram; ii) Chambal Landscape, Madhya Pradesh; iii) Similipal Landscape, Odisha; iv) Desert Landscape, Rajasthan; and v) Corbett-Rajaji landscape, Uttarakhand. These landscapes are representative of different agroecological conditions with high conservation value. Each landscape includes a mix of conservation and production areas. They serve as habitats of critical biodiversity with Protected Areas embedded within their boundaries and productive landscapes within the adjoining areas of these Protected Areas.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is the GEF Operational Focal Point and coordinates all GEF Projects in the country. However, it has been observed that the agriculture sector is a major polluter and poses a serious threat to the environment. Hence, this project is being routed through the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation, and Farmers’ Welfare (DAC&FW), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, which acts as the National Executing Agency. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the designated GEF Implementing Agency for this project.

2. What is the purpose of this manual?

The manual attempts to outline the elements required to achieve an effective FPIC process in the State of Mizoram. Designed to demonstrate a flexible approach for ensuring FPIC, this document acts as a guidance tool, meant to equip and assist project representatives/facilitators with the information and knowledge necessary to ensure that the right of FPIC is respected.

It enumerates the concept and relevance of FPIC in the context of the project and outlines the necessary steps to be undertaken in carrying out FPIC process with Village Council Presidents and the

local communities in the target villages in Mamit and Lunglei districts of the Dampa landscape, Mizoram, through inclusive consultations, based on full disclosure of the intent and scope of the activities planned and their implications under the Green-Ag project.

Each step contains recommended actions that demonstrate how the steps may be achieved. These actions are illustrative but not necessarily exhaustive. While the recommended actions guide the user in how to approach the step, the steps and activities should be adapted to the specific circumstances of the user of this guide. Additionally, the user may also need to identify additional or different steps or actions relevant to a particular context or a place.

Note: The terms indigenous peoples and indigenous communities are used interchangeably in the document

3. Who is the intended audience of this manual?

This document is particularly intended for a team of project facilitators/representatives who will be undertaking consultation and soliciting consent to the project from the indigenous communities in the project landscape through their chosen representatives.

It is assumed that a team consisting of a Gender & Social Inclusion Expert / District Support Officer at Green Landscape Implementation Unit (GLIU) along with Community Resource Persons (CRPs) will undertake this exercise collectively.

It is to be noted that the facilitators of this process will receive continued technical backstopping and support from the National Project Management Unit (NPMU) in stakeholder engagement and implementation of FPIC process.

4. What are the contents of the manual?

This manual on FPIC has eight modules with elaboration below. The content and methodologies can be adjusted or customized to fit the needs and other specific considerations of the users as well as other important factors.

- **Module 1:** Concept, Framework and Principles of FPIC
- **Module 2:** Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement
- **Module 3:** Participatory Communication and Documentation of Demographic and Geographic Information
- **Module 4:** Collective Decision Making and Consent of Indigenous Communities
- **Module 5:** Budget
- **Module 6:** Monitoring Plan

- **Module 7:** COVID-19 protocols

Module 1 gives orientation on FPIC and its concept. Module 2, 3 and 4 focus on implementation of FPIC process to obtain the consent of indigenous communities. Module 5 gives details of budgetary allocations to the FPIC process. Module 6 details out the indicators required to monitor the FPIC process. Module 7 talks about COVID-19 appropriate behavior to be observed by project representatives throughout their interactions with various stakeholders.

5. Intervention (FPIC Timeline)

Various activities in the FPIC process correspond to different stages of Green-Ag's project cycle, as explained in the following table.

Different Stages of Project Cycle	FPIC related activities
Project Design	A preliminary stakeholder, socio-economic and natural resource base mapping of indigenous communities has been undertaken
Project Implementation	
a) Landscape Assessment Secondary Research, Key Information Interviews (Govt. Officials) Focus Group Discussions with local NGOs and other community representatives	Step 1 – Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement
Focus Group Discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Council President and other VC members • Village Chiefs and other key representatives like Women Groups, and Youth Groups etc. 	Step 2 – Participatory Communication and Mapping of geographic and demographic information through Participatory Rural Appraisal Tools (PRA) like Village Resource Maps, Transect Walks, and Social Maps etc. Step 3 – Collective Decision Making and Consent of Indigenous Communities
b) Project Interventions	Step 2 – Participatory Communication (Disclosure of Project Implementation) Step 3 – Collective Decision Making and Consent of Indigenous Communities

c) Project Monitoring	Step 4 – Monitoring of FPIC process
d) Project Closure	Step 5 – Documentation of information, best practices and lessons learnt and shared with key stakeholders in the project