

**INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATASHEET
APPRAISAL STAGE**

I. Basic Information

Date prepared/updated: 09/14/2005

Report No.: AC1711

1. Basic Project Data

Country: Kazakhstan	Project ID: P078301	
Project Name: Forest Protection & Reforestation Project		
Task Team Leader: Jessica Mott		
GEF Focal Area: L-Land degradation	Global Supplemental ID: P087485	
Estimated Appraisal Date: September 15, 2005	Estimated Board Date: November 22, 2005	
Managing Unit: ECSSD	Lending Instrument: Specific Investment Loan	
Sector: Forestry (80%);General public administration sector (15%);Animal production (5%)		
Theme: Other rural development (P);Other environment and natural resources management (P);Environmental policies and institutions (S);Participation and civic engagement (S)		
IBRD Amount (US\$m.):	30.00	
IDA Amount (US\$m.):	0.00	
GEF Amount (US\$m.):	5.00	
PCF Amount (US\$m.):	0.00	
Other financing amounts by source:		
<u>BORROWER/RECIPIENT</u>		28.80
		28.80
Environmental Category: B - Partial Assessment		
Simplified Processing	Simple <input type="checkbox"/>	Repeater <input type="checkbox"/>
Is this project processed under OP 8.50 (Emergency Recovery)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2. Project Objectives

The project objective is to develop cost effective and sustainable environmental rehabilitation and management of forest lands and associated rangelands, with a focus on the Irtysh pine forest, the dry Aral Seabed, and saxaul rangelands.

3. Project Description

The project would include: (a) rehabilitation and effective management of 650,000 ha of damaged Irtysh pine forest in the northeast (Pavlodar and East-Kazakhstan Oblasts), including replanting of about 41,000 ha, fire management, and a small social forestry pilot; and (b) accelerating the spread of vegetative cover by planting of 44,000 ha of dry Aral seabed and pilot rehabilitation of 6,000 ha of saxaul rangelands (Kyzyl-Orda Oblast); and (c) capacity building of the Forest and Hunting Committee and associated organizations (e.g., policy analysis, information systems including mapping, human resource development, and a competitive grant program). The project is intended to reduce, prevent, or ameliorate land degradation with a focus on restoring and maintaining

tree and other vegetative cover. Benefits will include increased amenity values, increased recreation values, preservation of pasture and arable land, increased biodiversity, improved sheltering from wind, improved air quality, as well as the wood and fodder products themselves. The project will not only address land degradation, but also establish revised arrangements for flexible, performance based budgeting and contracting.

4. Project Location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis

The two main project areas are located in

(a) two northern oblasts i.e. Pavlodar and East Kazakhstan which are dominated by pine forests which, among others things, protects the city of Semey from sand dune encroachment. The areas is dominated by pine forests, interspaced with grassland, and occasional salt pan and salt lake. It is inhabited by (state paid) forest workers, some other forest workers and farmers; most whom are ethnically Russian.

(b) the southern oblast of Kyzyl Orda with saxaul and tamarix woodlands on the north and south side of the Syr Dara river irrigation system and adjacent dry Aral Sea coast. The project areas are rural and are seasonally populated with mainly Kazakh or Uzbek livestock herders; some parts were abandoned during the transition due to the lack of employment. There are also villages of former fishermen, railway workers, and rice farmers.

The project also includes a small competitive grant program which would support forestry activities anywhere in the country.

5. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists

Ms Janna Ryssakova (ECSSD)

Ms Jessica Mott (ECSSD)

6. Safeguard Policies Triggered	Yes	No
Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01)	X	
Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04)		X
Forests (OP/BP 4.36)	X	
Pest Management (OP 4.09)	X	
Cultural Property (OPN 11.03)		X
Indigenous Peoples (OD 4.20)		X
Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12)	X	
Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37)		X
Projects on International Waterways (OP/BP 7.50)		X
Projects in Disputed Areas (OP/BP 7.60)		X

II. Key Safeguard Policy Issues and Their Management

A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts: Environmental Assessment. No significant adverse environmental impacts are foreseen. The project will have beneficial environmental impacts including reforestation of degraded lands, improved conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in selected ecosystems, improved sheltering from wind and associated better air quality, and reduced use of potentially harmful pesticides. Environmental considerations are mainstreamed into the project objectives and components, and will be integrated in planning, implementation, and monitoring at both the local and national levels. The reforestation is expected to utilize native species of pine, saxaul, tamarix, herbaceous plants and grasses for the main components and also include native species of poplar, willow, aspen, etc. for the competitive grant fund. The forest planning and management activities (including fire management strategies) will address natural habitat considerations in both the site-specific and landscape context. Where possible the project will include the development of knowledge and monitoring of good environmental practice. Temporary minor impact (dust, minor soil loss) can be expected from planting activities, building construction and other works. Within the Irtysh forests roads radiating from each main fire fighting base within the forest are envisaged, but these would not increase external access. Improvement of shelter and access to water in the woodlands that could increase livestock movement and lead to trampling and some loss of topsoil will be carefully managed with necessary safeguards to prevent environmental deterioration.

Pest management. The project will help develop more environmentally acceptable pest management strategies. There is a possibility of using a limited amount of pesticides in preparing planting stock in nurseries and in major pest outbreaks, but overall pesticide use is likely to be reduced in favor of biological controls.

Consideration of Radiation Issue. The Irtysh Forest may have been affected by radioactive fall-out of 1949-1962 nuclear tests on the nearby Semipalatinsk testing grounds. Preliminary data indicate that the radionuclide levels in the relevant regions are low and that the project activities are not likely to pose a significant risk of radiation exposure. The risks associated with this radioactive fallout and the implications for forest management and related aspects such as soil erosion, fire management, and use of forest products have been assessed in an analysis carried out by a multi disciplinary team. This analysis has been peer reviewed by an international specialist and has been publically disseminated along with the EA report. The project includes support for additional measurement and analysis of radionuclide levels in the project area. Disbursement of Bank loan funds for forestry and infrastructure works in the Irtysh component is subject to completion of a study satisfactory to the Bank involving field sampling, lab analysis of radionuclide levels, and interpretation. If levels exceeding accepted norms are encountered in some part of the project area, the Borrower will take appropriate management measures.

Forest Policy. The forests policy is triggered because the project is intended to affect forested areas. It will be implemented in accordance with the Bank's operational policy. It will support investment in rehabilitation of existing degraded forests and woodlands to restore protective cover and to make these and other forests more productive. The project will not finance plantations that involve any conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats. The project will not finance industry-scale commercial harvesting operations. Any harvesting by local communities or other local entities supported by the project will be within a standard of forest management developed with the meaningful participation of locally affected communities, consistent with the principles and criteria of responsible forest management.

Involuntary Resettlement. The project would not involve physical involuntary resettlement. There is no encroachment of human settlements in the project area forests and the project itself will not cause involuntary physical displacement of people. Overall, the project is likely to actually increase the access of local people to natural resources, and would impose increased restrictions for only limited areas, as part of participatory resource management schemes. However, existing restrictions applicable to the project areas may also affect the reputation of the project. An Access Restriction Process Framework (ARPF) has therefore been prepared which describes: the project components potentially associated with restrictions of access, the people likely to be affected, and the participatory processes by which the project was prepared and will be implemented.

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:

No negative long-term impact is expected. In the aggregate, the project is expected to have significant positive environmental impacts. The quality of Kazakhstan's natural habitats and forests, and associated environmental services is likely to improve, especially in contrast to the continuing decline which would likely take place in the without project scenario. Similarly, on forest management and social aspects, local people are likely to begin to participate in forest management in a meaningful way, gain more control over their destiny (empowerment and security) and to receive livelihood benefits. The principles underlying the safeguard policies are imbedded in the project's results framework.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

Various technologies, including the use of rolling choppers for site preparation, the use of pelletized seeds instead of seedlings, and the planting of additional native species on the Dry Aral Seabed, will be tested during the first portion of the project, and if found to be manageable within the capacity of the implementing agencies and potentially successful under Kazakhstan's challenging field situation, will be replicated on a larger scale during the second half of the project.

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described. Environmental Management. The EA includes an environmental management plan for the project, which specifies the preventive actions/mitigation measures, monitoring and institutional strengthening activities that should take place during implementation of the project to ensure sound environmental management. A brief description of the key provisions of this plan follows:

Preventive Actions/Mitigation Measures. The EA identifies a number of actions and mitigation measures to address the potential adverse impacts of the project. This includes standard measures for addressing the direct physical impacts of project activities (e. g. planting, construction, roadwork, etc.) in environmental management guidelines. It also highlights actions/measures that should enhance the environmental and social benefits of the project (e.g. public awareness, training, mapping).

Monitoring. The EA identifies a number of key ecological and social indicators for monitoring project impacts (e.g. localized incidence of water pollution, soil erosion, habitat disturbance; trends in forest fires and vegetative cover.). These include several indicators of the global benefits of project interventions that justify GEF financing (e.g. indicators of sustainable land management, improved biodiversity or natural habitat conditions, etc.) supported by mapping and field surveys.

Radionuclide monitoring and management. The project includes support for radionuclide monitoring. If levels exceeding accepted norms are encountered, appropriate management measures, such as avoiding project activities in the hot spot and raising public awareness of risks associated with contaminated forest areas and products, will be implemented.

Institutional Strengthening. The EA recognizes the need to develop institutional capacity for effective forest protection and management and recommends a range of institutional strengthening options, including training, study tours, consultant services, special studies, etc., for building environmental management and monitoring capacity in the local forestry and/or environmental institutions. These include measures for building pest management capacity.

Pest Management. Basic project interventions that will improve overall forest management, by upgrading fire control measures and by enhancing forest health through thinning, will likely result in a much less favorable environment for pest and disease development. project interventions in integrated pest management, international cooperation, and biological control demonstration will place the Irtysh forest in better condition to withstand periodic pest and disease events, improve the capacity of local forest staff to practice IPM, establish a better pest management planning framework and provide a demonstration of biological insect control methods that should reduce the future use of insecticides in the Irtysh forest.

Access restriction framework. Overall, the project is likely to actually increase the access of local people to natural resources and would impose increased restrictions for only limited areas, as part of participatory resource management schemes. Support teams established under the project for participatory initiatives in the Irtysh pine area and the saxaul rangelands area will help to mediate any conflicts that might arise between vulnerable users and government agencies or other stakeholders.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people. Key stakeholders will include the rural people living in and around the forests, livestock-herder families, forest users, forestry staff, as well as environmental NGOs. Project preparation included a series of stakeholder consultations, including a consultation focused on the draft environmental assessment report, the access restriction framework, and the overall project design on May 21, 2005 in Kzyl Orda. Now that the radionuclide report has been completed, a similar consultation took place in Semey on September 2, 2005. A Russian version of the EA report has been disclosed within Kazakhstan, and Russian and English versions are being made available in the Bank's Infoshop.

B. Disclosure Requirements Date

Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other:

Date of receipt by the Bank	05/15/2005
Date of "in-country" disclosure	05/21/2005
Date of submission to InfoShop	08/15/2005
For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors	

Resettlement Action Plan/Framework/Policy Process:

Date of receipt by the Bank	05/12/2005
Date of "in-country" disclosure	05/21/2005
Date of submission to InfoShop	08/22/2005

Pest Management Process:

Date of receipt by the Bank	05/15/2005
Date of "in-country" disclosure	05/21/2005
Date of submission to InfoShop	08/23/2005

*** If the project triggers the Pest Management, Cultural Property and/or the Safety of Dams policies, the respective issues are to be addressed and disclosed as part of the Environmental Assessment/Audit/or EMP.**

If in-country disclosure of any of the above documents is not expected, please explain why:

C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting)

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment	
Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?	Yes
If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit review and approve the EA report?	Yes
Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?	Yes
OP 4.09 - Pest Management	
Does the EA adequately address the pest management issues?	Yes
Is a separate PMP required?	Yes
If yes, has the PMP been reviewed and approved by the regional safeguards team? Are PMP requirements included in project design? If yes, does the project team include a Pest Management Specialist?	Yes
OP/BP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement	
Has a resettlement plan, abbreviated plan, or process framework (as appropriate) been prepared?	Yes
If yes, then did the Regional Social Development Unit review and approve the plan / policy framework / policy process?	Yes
OP/BP 4.36 - Forests	
Has the sector-wide analysis of policy and institutional issues and constraints been carried out?	Yes
Does the project design include satisfactory measures to overcome these constraints?	Yes
Does the project finance commercial harvesting, and if so, does it include provisions for certification system?	No
BP 17.50 - Public Disclosure	
Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank's Infoshop?	Yes
Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?	Yes
All Safeguard Policies	
Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes
Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?	Yes
Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes
Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?	

D. Approvals

<i>Signed and submitted by:</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
Task Team Leader:	Ms Jessica Mott	08/23/2005
Environmental Specialist:	Ms Jessica Mott	08/23/2005
Social Development Specialist	Ms Janna Ryssakova	07/22/2005
Additional Environmental and/or Social Development Specialist(s):	Ms Jessica Mott	08/23/2005
<i>Approved by:</i>		
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Ms Marjory-Anne Bromhead	08/23/2005
Comments: As acting regional environmental safeguards coordinator, I clear the ISDS for the above project.		
Sector Manager:	Mr Juergen Voegele	08/25/2005
Comments: I clear the ISDS		