



COMMUNITY BASED SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FOR WATER RESOURCE CONSERVATION

TECHNICAL GUIDELINE

Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)



Project Result 1: **Participatory watershed planning, coordination and monitoring**

Target group: (DPMU, NGOs, CSOs)

Version: **August 2022**

Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)

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Abbreviations

CBOs	Community-based Organisations
CDLOs	Community Development Livelihood Officers
COSFOM	Community-based Sustainable Forest Management for Water Resources Conservation in Manipur
CPF	Community Planning Framework
DFO	District Forest Office
DPMU	District Project Management Unit
EPA	Entry Point Activity
ESCAP	Environmental & Social Codes of Practice
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FPIC	Free Prior Informed Consent
GFA	GFA Consulting Group, Germany
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German development bank)
LIP	Livelihood Improvement Plan
MFD	Manipur Forest Department
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-government Organisation
PLUP	Participatory Land Use Planning
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
VA	Village Authority
VMP	Village Micro Plan
WRCC	Water Resource Conservation Committee
WRCG	Water Resource Conservation Group

1 Introduction

The Community-based Sustainable Forest Management for Water Resources Conservation in Manipur (COSFOM) is an Indo-German natural resource management project intended to improve environmental stewardship in Manipur as well as livelihoods amongst the participating communities.

Participation in the project is based on the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of communities and activities to be funded by the project will be developed in a participatory manner and with full inclusion of community members.

COSFOM's participatory engagement process is set out in the Community Planning Framework (CPF), which forms part of COSFOM's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). All staff and consultants engaged in COSFOM should be familiar with ESMF, which provides the overarching project guidance on environmental and social risk and impact management. The CPF provides the principles and step-by-step procedure for communities' engagement and participation in local planning, negotiation and decision-making. COSFOM's participatory community-based approach aims at specifically ensuring that the voice of the directly affected and most vulnerable groups and community members will be included. A key principle in the CPF is to safeguard that all community decisions in the context of COSFOM are derived in line with FPIC principles and are truly voluntary and inclusive.

This FPIC guidance provides an accompanying operational guidance to project officers tasked with working with communities to obtain FPIC and ensure adequate documentation of the process. GFA Consulting Group (GFA) has provided relevant training and will continue to provide support to ensure front line implementation of FPIC. Particular focus will be given to capacity building of facilitators from Manipur Forest Department (MFD) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who are working with the communities and Water Resource Conservation Groups (WRCGs) on all technical matters for COSFOM.

Good practice on information sharing

Be transparent and accountable as a means of promoting understanding. Lack of information can lead to the spread of misinformation can undermine efforts to engage in an informed dialogue.

Apply good practice principles by sharing information early, in advance of decision-making, including providing explanations on next steps.

Disclose objective information – 'tell it like it is' whether the information may be perceived positively or negatively. Share actual data when available.

Provide meaningful information in a format and language that is tailored and readily understandable and tailored to the community needs. The information should enable communities to make informed judgments about changes that will affect their lives.

Ensure the accessibility of information by thinking through how various community members will most readily receive and comprehend the information e.g. sharing information in public meetings, smaller gatherings of specific stakeholder sub-groups

2 FPCI Principles

FPIC is a mandatory requirement for all KfW projects that would affect the land or access to natural and cultural resources of ethnic minorities (in international publications often referred to as indigenous people). Furthermore, FPIC to developments affecting Scheduled Tribes is mandatory under the Indian Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act of 2006. FPIC is therefore applicable in COSFOM due to the predominant presence of the Naga and Kuki

who are distinct social and cultural groups with collective attachment to the forest areas in Manipur. The Kuki and Naga have distinct customary, cultural, economic and political institutions as well and language differing from Hindi.

Due to their assessed relative vulnerability, all community members of the Project's target communities, disregarding whether they belong to an ethnic minority or not, will be fully included in the FPIC process and are eligible for the same mitigation measures and project benefits, as applicable. It is also not sufficient to simply achieve FPIC related to some of the activities and not others. FPIC is adopted in COSFOM as an all-inclusive approach. Where FPIC is not established, communities have the right to opt out of the project.

FPIC is an essential part of exercising the rights of communities in Manipur to their land, territories and resources as well as the right to self-determination. FPIC is a reiterative process that shall be undertaken in good faith to ensure mutual respect and meaningful participation of ethnic communities in decision-making.

2.1 The Four FPIC concepts

Free: consent is given voluntarily and without coercion, intimidation or manipulation. A process that is self-directed by the community from whom consent is being sought, unencumbered by coercion, expectations or timelines that are externally imposed. More specifically:

- Rights-holders determine the process, timeline and decision-making structure;
- Information is offered transparently and objectively at the request of the rights-holders;
- The process is free from coercion, bias, conditions, bribery or rewards;
- Meetings and decisions take place at locations and times and in languages and formats determined by the rights-holders; and
- All community members are free to participate regardless of gender, age or standing.

Prior: consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities, at the early stages of a development or investment plan, and not only when the need arises to obtain approval from the community. It should be noted that:

- Prior implies that time is provided to understand, access, and analyse information on the proposed activity. The amount of time required will depend on the decision-making processes of the rights-holders;
- Information must be provided before activities can be initiated, at the beginning or initiation of an activity, process or phase of implementation, including conceptualization, design, proposal, information, execution, and following evaluation; and
- The decision-making timeline established by the rights-holders must be respected, as it reflects the time needed to understand, analyse, and evaluate the activities under consideration in accordance with their own customs.

Informed: refers mainly to the nature of the engagement and type of information that should be provided prior to seeking consent and also as part of the on-going consent process. Information should be:

- Accessible, clear, consistent, accurate, and transparent;

- Delivered in the local language and in a culturally appropriate format (including traditional/local media, video, graphics, photos, oral presentations, or new media);
- Objective, covering both the positive and negative potential of the proposed activities and consequences of giving or withholding consent;
- Complete, including a preliminary assessment of the possible economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts, including potential risks and benefits;
- Complete, including the nature, size, pace, duration, reversibility and scope of any proposed project intervention, its purpose and the location of areas that will be affected;
- Delivered by culturally appropriate personnel, in culturally appropriate locations, and include capacity building of indigenous or local trainers;
- Delivered with sufficient time to be understood and verified;
- Accessible to the most remote, rural communities, including youth, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities, who are sometimes neglected; and
- Provided in an on-going and continuous basis throughout the FPIC process, with a view to enhancing local communication and decision making processes.

Consent is a collective decision made by the rights-holders and reached through the customary decision-making processes of the communities. Consent must be sought and granted or withheld according to the unique formal or informal political-administrative dynamic of each community. Local communities must be able to participate through their own freely chosen representatives, while ensuring the participation of youth, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities as much as possible.

The community has the right to withhold consent; however, FPIC does *not* necessarily require unanimity. Dissenting views among community members are fully considered and documented as to their causes, and, especially in case of adverse impacts, such as restriction of access, mitigation measures for adverse impacts are planned and provided through FPIC-based decisions. Consent is hence understood as the *collective support* of local communities for the project activities that affect them, as reached through a culturally appropriate process.

Consent is:

- A freely given decision that may be a “Yes”, a “No”, or a “Yes with conditions”, including the option to reconsider if the proposed activities change or if new information relevant to the proposed activities emerges;
- A collective decision (e.g. through consensus or majority) determined by the affected peoples in accordance with their own customs and traditions;
- The expression of rights (to self-determination, lands, resources and territories, culture); and
- Given or withheld in phases, over specific periods of time for distinct stages or phases of the project activities. It is not a one-off process.

Consent vs. Consultation

Consent is not the same as consultation.

Consultation is a process of gathering or expressing views and opinions for consideration in making a decision.

Consent is an end product or result of a collective but independent decision-making process.

2.2 FPCI as inclusive and on-going process

Good Faith Negotiation

Good faith negotiation is the only path to FPIC. In principle, good faith negotiation includes:

- Willingness of all parties to engage in the consultation and negotiation process;
- Agreement by all parties on a mutually acceptable process and procedures for negotiation;
- Timely provision of information needed to support informed discussion and decision-making;
- Dialogue to explore key concerns and issues of importance to all parties;
- Willingness to change initial positions and amend project design in response to feedback, and to seek compromise where needed; and
- Allowance of sufficient time in which conduct engagement and enable decision-making processes.

Note: In an FPIC process, the “**how**”, “**when**” and “**with and by whom**”, are as important as “**what**” is being proposed!

For an FPIC process to be effective and result in consent or lack of it, *theway* in which the process is conducted is paramount.

FPIC requires the inclusion of all relevant social groups within the village community in the meaningful consultations and good faith negotiation of activities, including women and men, all ethnic groups, all occupational groups, beneficiaries and adversely affected persons, poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, the Chief, the Village Council and Authority, village societies and Community Based Organisations (CBOs), as well as legitimate users of village land from outside the village. COSFOM is focused on the most vulnerable community members and must thus ensure that individuals or households that may be disproportionately affected by access and/or use restrictions are included in the decision-making and considered for livelihood restoration. This includes such individuals or households participation in the design of activities for livelihood restoration and their inclusion in monitoring the effectiveness of those restorative activities. This approach ensures that the livelihood activities respond to the needs of those impacted. Where individuals or households are adversely affected by activities, in addition to obtaining the communities consent, it is required that these affected individuals and households also sign a disclosure form to ensure the voluntary consent – related details are provided in the ESMF.

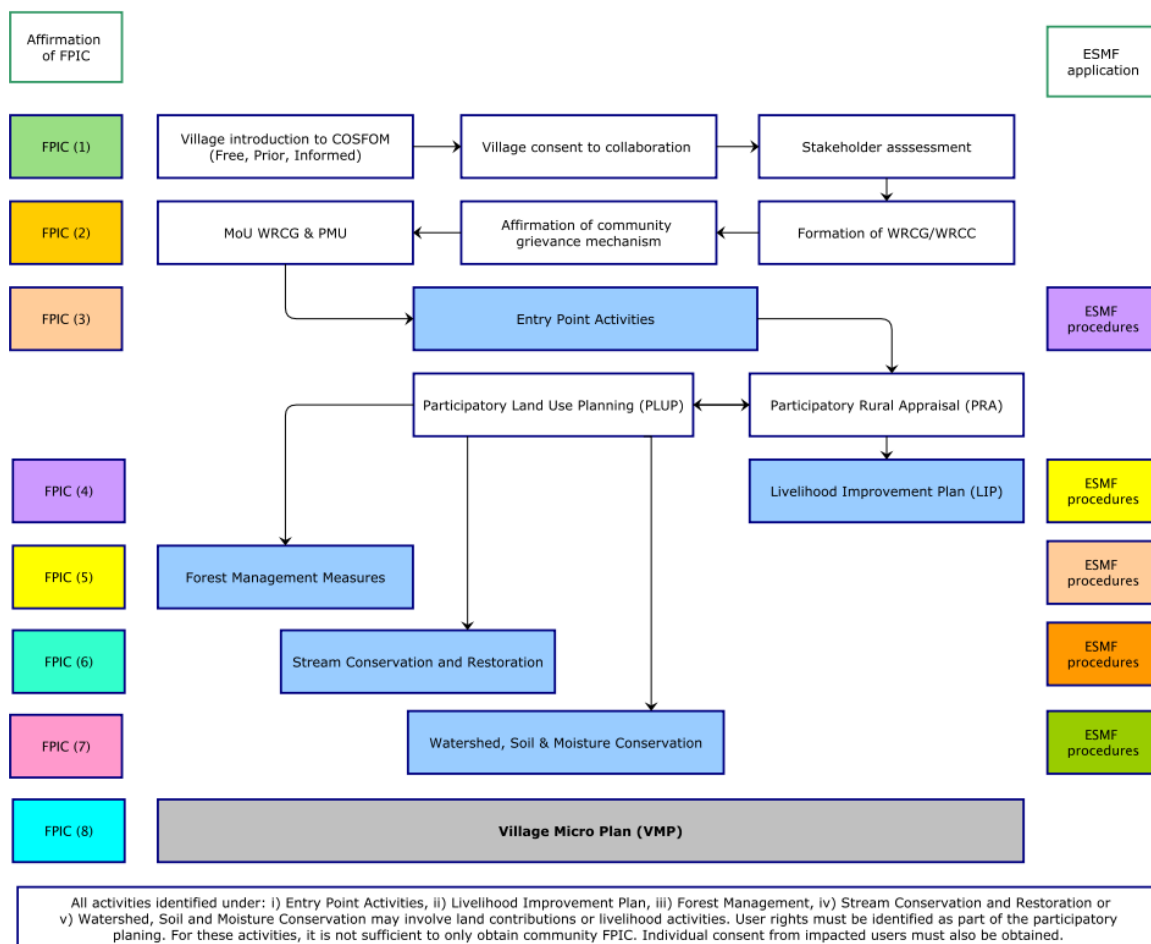
Therefore, FPIC cannot be achieved without comprehensive mapping of community stakeholders to ensure that it is an inclusive process. A key objective under the CPF is to properly identify key stakeholders who may have a strong interest in or ability to influence what is being planned including potential groups who may benefit from the project, those who may also be adversely impacted and groups potentially opposed to the planned interventions. This stakeholder assessment is further detailed in the ESMF.

FPIC is not a single one-time activity establishing the consent of a village community to participate in COSFOM. This initial consideration of participation is the starting point of community planning and implementation under FPIC and is marked by a signed **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**.

FPIC is an on-going process, beginning with the first encounter with a community and needs to be sustained until the completion and evaluation of activities. Throughout planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation FPIC is used to decide upon activities, including reconsideration and modification of some decisions or corrective actions in response to insights and adaptive learning, prompted by implementation experiences and monitoring and evaluation.

FPIC must therefore be continuously affirmed at various points in planning, as illustrated in Figure 1, which forms part of the CPF. A more detailed flowchart on COSFOM FPIC steps and consultation topics is provided in chapter 4.

Figure 1: Community Planning Framework Flowchart



2.3 FPIC Outcomes

The CPF, as illustrated in Figure 1, provides the structure for a process that ensures inclusivity and promotes understanding in the local community of COSFOM objectives, activities and likely impacts to allow for the agency of every villager. Through deliberate application of FPIC, communities and individuals can decide whether or not to participate in the project. FPIC has a number of intended outcomes:

- People of all ethnic backgrounds and regardless of social status are aware of and understand their rights under the project at all stages, including planning, implementation and evaluation
- Following initial FPIC consultations, all community groups understand the objectives, goals, benefits and potential impacts on the community and make a free decision on consenting to or rejecting COSFOM engagement and/or related activities.
- Providing consent continues throughout the engagement and villagers are free to accept or reject any COSFOM measure or activity at any stage of implementation.

- All activities are designed in a participatory and inclusive manner involving all community members, obtaining their mutually decided and agreed consent.
- Documented and signed evidence is obtained at each stage of the process showing that the desired outcomes have been achieved in accordance with this FPIC Guideline.
- A grievance redress mechanism is in place that allows any individual or community to lodge a complaint in regard to a COSFOM activity or impact that they find unacceptable.

3 Management of FPCI Process

In implementing FPIC, it is critical to allow for adequate time for awareness rising and consider a range of approaches to communicate to communities, for example, to ensure the inclusion of women at adequate times or consider illiteracy. Communities need to understand the project in the local context and the potential risks and impacts, as well as fully comprehend the commitments being made in the context of the COSFOM investments.

COSFOM's Community Development Livelihood Officers (CDLOs) are responsible for ensuring the due implementation of the CPF overall as well as oversee all steps of FPIC. However, the initial village introduction to COSFOM, conducted as a first meeting under FPIC (1) shall be conducted by a partnering NGO to avoid any undue influence or persuasion. COSFOM will engage a number of NGOs that will provide support to COSFOM's Project Management Unit (PMU) in particular to facilitate CPF implementation and support to the WRCGs for the implementation of various fields of work. Technical experts from COSFOM as well as GFA consultants will support various aspects of implementation, including the PRA and PLUP and development of the LIP and priority investments. Staff from MFD will furthermore serve as key technical experts when warranted, but will not play a core role in FPIC implementation. MFD however, will shadow the CDLOs in order to gain experience from the community engagement.

3.1 Training of FPCI Facilitators

Initial training will be undertaken by ESMF Consultants to capacitate COSFOM's CDLOs as well as NGOs with key tasks in COSFOM's FPIC implementation. The CDLOs and NGOs will serve as the key FPIC facilitators, but may be supported by external CPF and FPIC consultants. The MFD will ensure that any CDLOs and NGOs as well as other MFD staff involved in community engagement under COSFOM are trained in the CPF and FPIC in order to identify and integrate appropriate methodologies and deliver key COSFOM messages in an appropriate manner as well as ensure adherence to FPIC procedures at all times and throughout all activities. The CDLOs will also be responsible for proper record keeping (see chapter 4.5 Grievance Redress Mechanism).

The FPIC facilitators have to:

- be skilled in engaging participation and interactive exchanges,
- be able to lead group exercises to ensure a deliberate approach which does not seek to influence local decision making,
- be fluent in communities' first language to avoid the need for translation and reduce risk of misunderstandings or miscommunication.

3.2 Village Consultation Arrangements

3.2.1 *Setting the right frame*

At the outset of any activity, the Project needs to inform the potential participating communities about the approach followed by COSFOM. The activity aims to pre-inform villagers about potential project interventions and to enable them to contribute to the further development of their community. The goal is to achieve community participation and stakeholders need to know by providing them with information to enable successful decision-making. The success of working in rural villages is contingent upon having a sound understanding of the stakeholders' perspective of issues and how they manifest in the community.

Purpose of visit. To inform the villagers about the project, the purpose for visiting in their village must be specified. For example, it may be based on preliminary research of the area and the occupational pattern. When the Project conducts the visit, the villagers should be informed about the purpose of the COSFOM project and potential activities, including the vision on how engagement could reduce the poverty and inequality by generating employment among the villagers with the water and forest conservation. The purpose should be to develop a clear understanding of the potential benefits, but also the changes, and potential risks and impacts. The meeting should inform the community about how activities may work with the limited resources and what are the facilities being provided by them. It is about the interaction and participation with the community.

Agenda. An agenda ensures that the pertinent information concerning the issues to be discussed is passed to the participants in advance. It will give participants ample time to consider the potential changes and impacts, as well as positions and contributions. The agenda is the list of topics that will be discussed. It is important to prepare and submit the agenda well in advance so that the participants can prepare and can make a more valuable contribution. The agenda also makes sure that a meeting stays on track and that everyone knows what is happening and what is going to happen next. An agenda is much more than a list of things to do.

Time. The villagers are engaged in daily earnings therefore the meetings should be arranged at the time suitable to them to ensure maximum participation of all groups (youth, elderly, disadvantaged, women etc.). Don't let villagers wait, respect their time allocation and be on time for set meetings!

Place. When the Project conducts a visit in project area, villagers should know about the meeting and potential project location. Appropriate location can significantly boost a project's participation. The meeting should be arranged at place, where no person or community is uncomfortable to attend the meeting.

In any subsequent engagement with communities, a clear agenda and prior notice of time and place, as well as purpose of the engagement should be clearly stated and distributed to stakeholders well in advance.

3.2.2 *Stakeholders Consultative meeting during various decision-making processes*

The objectives of the meeting is to give stakeholders the opportunity to provide their viewpoint on the development of the consolidated visions, the planned modelling, pathway and trade-off analyses designed to identify the way towards the future visions. In the consultative meeting stakeholders' views on livelihood, forestry or other measures is very important to discuss. It also enables the project to identify the most powerful stakeholders and have them help shape our project in its early stages. The outcome of meaningful consultations will result in shaping the livelihood/forestry/village micro plans etc. to be developed under COSFOM. The consultation will result in activities with participation and ownership by the communities.

The consultative meeting will result in scoping and developing the various plans for the project in its life cycle.

Record minutes and decisions. Minutes are a tangible record of the meeting for its participants and a source of information for members who were unable to attend. Minutes record meeting decisions, which makes them a useful review document when it comes time to measure progress. The minutes should include suggestions and alternatives discussed. Minutes should also recognize any significant absence of key groups and ensure that record actions to ensure participation in forthcoming decisions an accountability tool because they make it clear whose duty it was to perform which action. For example, if the Project conducts the meeting for livelihood, minutes record meeting decisions, which make them a useful review document when it is time to measure progress. A template for minutes can be found in Annex 4.

Attendance Sheet. Attendance sheets help to track community member's presence and contribution, as well as the absence, so that the participation of members can be recorded. The attendance sheet should record a person's membership or representative duties, as well as age and gender in order to keep a record of youth/elder representation and female inclusion. A template for attendance sheet can be found in Annex 3.

3.2.3 Obtain Consent, observe customary resolution mechanism

Obtain consent is key to community participation in COSFOM activities. It is the process where a villager is informed about all aspects of the issue at hand, which are important for the participant to make a decision. After studying all aspects, the participant ideally voluntarily confirms his or her willingness to participate in a particular activity. Obtaining informed consent from individual participating in a project, which is related to a livelihood activity, is vital to the ethical validity of the project. If there is a dissent, then it shall be recorded and amicably resolved on the issue raised. The resolution shall be also recorded. A template for recording community consent is provided in Annex 2 and should be appended meeting minutes, where key decisions have been reached.

Among the Kuki and Naga tribal communities the Chief, Village Authorities and Village Assembly discuss, negotiate and decide on land allocation and uses. During the WRCG formation, the CDLOs will work with the WRCG to determine local modalities for receiving, assessing and resolving grievances, the principles for the community grievance mechanism.

Customary tribal governance structures involve hereditary chieftains with hereditary representation of clans in village councils. The Manipur (Village Authorities in Hill Areas) (Amendment) Act, 1984 provides for the election of Village Authorities, but recognizes the position of the Chief as the ex officio chairman of the Authority (para 3). The preferred practice among the Kuki tends to be the representation of the council members and other community members in the Village Authority, while among the Naga in Ukhrul election of representatives tends to be favoured. The village assembly, constituted by all adult members of a village, is consulted in all critically important matters and meets at least once a year in January.

Among the Naga land ownership is vested in both the Village Authorities and private individuals or families. The village councils do not have the authority to make decisions about private land, but control the use and allocation of community land. Among the Kuki all land belongs to the Chief, who allocates land to individuals and families and determines the use of land, under consideration of feedback from his council and the Village Assembly.

The Village Councils or Authorities thus determine the conservation and use of forest resources in village forests. The vast majority of forest land in the project area is not located in National Parks & Sanctuaries, but in so-called un-classed forests. Some of the villages studied emphasize environmental ethics, which stress the conservation of forest resources in community lands, especially upon recognition of the adverse impacts of forest and water resource depletion. The formation of Water Resource Conservation Committee (WRCC) in villages comprise of different

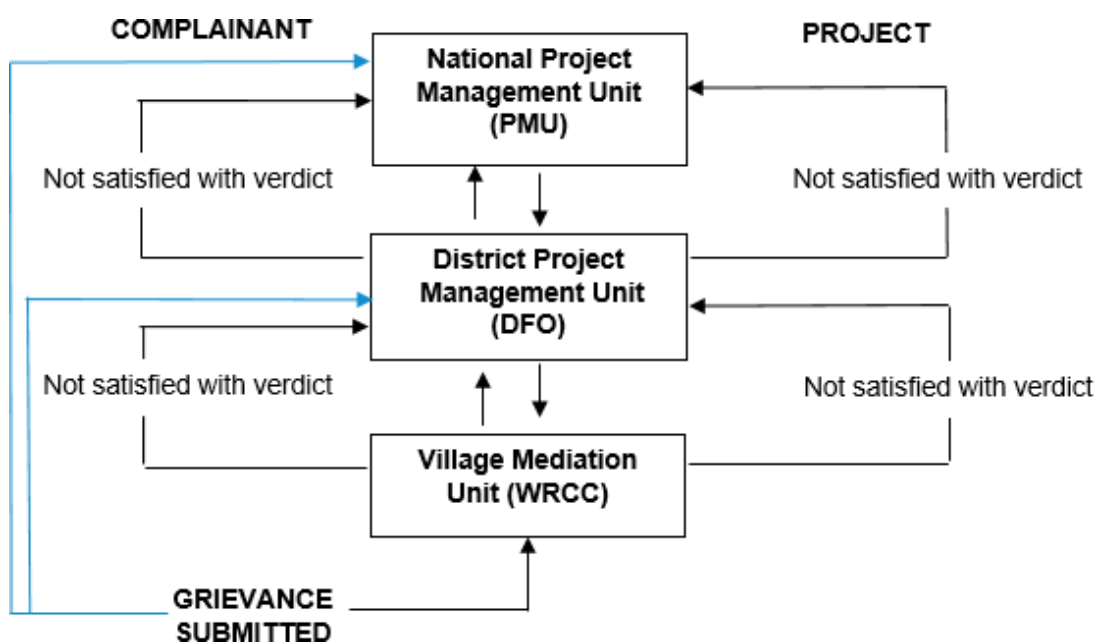
section of the community, including women, elderly and other vulnerable group. Residents of the village will have the voice in deciding any activity of COSFOM.

3.3 Grievance Redress Mechanism

In accordance with the CPF, the WRCC will, as part of its formation, adopt a grievance mechanism to ensure appropriate responses to issues, concerns and potential disputes. Grievances should be first addressed in the community, but be referred to COSFOM management units where it is not possible to resolve an issue in village level. The mechanism is an integral part of the community engagement to ensure response to feedback. Grievances raised at any point, including during consultative meetings, should be recorded using the form provided in Annex 5.

Effective grievance mechanisms have straightforward ways to accept submissions, assess the issues raised, resolve and provide feedback to stakeholders. It is therefore important develop a predictable process with clear institutional responsibilities assigned and targets for timeframes for each step of the mechanism.

Figure 2: COSFOM Grievance Redress Mechanism



The community grievance mechanism should establish modalities for:

- a) **Access.** Determine the effective modality for stakeholders to provide feedback, whether in person, in writing or via phone or email (more than one channel can be used). Stakeholders should:
 - Understand the nature and impact of the activity
 - Receive publicly accessible information and updates related to COSFOM
 - Know the procedures for providing feedback, which should be transparently and fairly designed
 - Be allowed to raise issues anonymously if preferred

- Communicate the PMU appeals procedures where agreements cannot be reached through the community grievance mechanism
- b) **Registration.** Whether there are one or more channels through which stakeholders can register feedback and grievances, the WRCC must ensure that the information received is registered using the Grievance Form provided in Annex 5 in order for the PMU to access the record of all steps of the resolution process to enable effective resolution and learning. In case any grievance is reported directly to the District Forest Office (DFO) or PMU, the responsible officer has to record the same in the mentioned grievance form (Annex 5).
- c) **Assessment & Response.**
- Within 14 days of receipt, the WRCC (or DFO/PMU) must acknowledge the registration of the complaint and outline resolution process to the complainant
 - The WRCC will determine eligibility to refer for assessment or rejection. If the issue is related to labour conditions the issue is automatically referred to the PMU. If rejected, provide feedback to the complainant with the reasoning
 - Refer the issue to the relevant office/institution to assess, investigation and determine solution/corrective action if the issues raised cannot be resolved locally
- d) **Feedback & Resolution.** Where a resolution or corrective action is proposed, provide feedback and allow for discussion/negotiation to reach acceptance of resolution in a participatory manner
- e) **Record keeping.** COSFOM's CDLOs will quarterly review the community records to jointly assess with the WRCC :
- The adequacy of the mechanism
 - The timeliness of the process
 - Lessons learned and adjust procedures in response

Grievances may also be emailed directly to cosfommanipur@gmail.com by persons not comfortable with raising a concern in the community setting. The PMU grievance and appeals mechanism will consist of the COSFOM Project Director and the two CDLOs to form a quorum for decision-making. The appeals mechanism will meet as needed.

3.4 FPIC Documentation

FPIC requires the full documentation of all procedures, information disclosure, discussions, negotiations and decisions throughout the process of community planning, including dissent and failure to reach consent.

The considerations, negotiations and decisions taken during implementation of measures also need to be recorded and fully documented, including:

- **Invitations and agendas for meetings and events:** the participants are pre-informed about the agenda for the consultations, community meetings, deliberations, events etc.
- **Attendance records:** list of participants of the meeting (Annex 3).

- **Minutes of meetings signed by a Water Resource Conservation Committee (WRCC) representative and village consent form:** the outcome of the discussions are shared and consented to be appropriate (Annex 4).
- **Village Consent Form** (Annex 2).
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between WRCC and the Project Management Unit (PMU).
- **Any grievances raised by village participants**, either to WRCC or DFO/ PMU (Annex 5).
- **Photos and videos.**
 - **Others**, as appropriate and depending on topic.
 - **Monitoring reports:** monthly monitoring reports by WRCCs, quarterly monitoring reports by DFOs.

Templates for FPIC documentation are provided in the annexes. All records shall be collected by the CDLOs and stored with the PMU (collected by the M&E officer); a copy shall be provided to the WRCCs.

3.5 Monitoring and Reporting

In accordance with the ESMF, the key indicator is to verify community satisfaction with COSFOM investments. This is done through review of the PLUP and PRA records, documentation of FPIC and the grievance mechanisms to ensure compliance throughout the whole project implementation.

The PMU has the overarching responsibility for monitoring and reporting, but is supported by the CO through verifications and quality-assurance support, including quarterly site visits. On a day-to-day basis the CDLOs will ensure record keeping of the CPF implementation and FPIC observance. The PMU M&E officer should follow up regularly to ensure proper documentation. Monitoring will be based on the following sources of information:

- (i) signed minutes of all FPIC consultations and respective documentation as per individual FPIC step (outlined in chapter 4),
- (ii) monthly monitoring reports by WRCC (with support by NGO and FSU) and quarterly monitoring reports by DFOs
- (iii) grievance claims made by participating villagers.

The information will be reviewed and acted on by the CDLOs, and important issues or problems will be reported to COSFOM project management (PMU) for further action.

COSFOM progress reports will reflect on on-going corrective actions (where needed), lessons learned and provide an overview of adjustments made to improve the implementation.

Documents to be obtained under the different FPIC steps throughout COSOFM implementation are highlighted in the following chapter, which serves as monitoring checklist for each step

4 Steps to Affirm FPIC under COSFOM

This provides an overview of the individual stages during the COSFOM implementation to obtain consent by the villagers.

FPIC (1): COSFOM information and initial consultation to engage

FPIC (1) involves an initial village introduction to the overall COSFOM objectives and planned interventions to ensure that villagers are fully informed which is carried out by the PMU and supported by consultants. At the initial introduction the COSFOM team explains the Project objectives to the Village Authority (VA), the village chief and the elders of the village. On the request of the Project team, the VA, the village chief and the elders will organise a meeting between COSFOM and the whole village. One to two weeks should be allowed between the initial and such subsequent meetings for the community to have sufficient time to reflect and have internal discussions among themselves. Subsequent visits will involve COSFOM staff who can help to clarify any technical issues or questions that may arise.

The type of information disseminated during this meeting for engagement should include:

- Explanation of the objectives and the rights of villagers' under FPIC procedures;
- Orientation and overview of COSFOM: goal, objectives, activities, potential impacts and mitigation measures;
- Explanation of COSFOM's organisation, implementation process, project management arrangements and support structures available;
- Explanation of the ESMF and CPF, including potential impact;
- Explanation of the COSFOM grievance mechanism.

The VA takes up COSFOM participation on the agenda in a Village Assembly meeting which may be convened especially for the Project or in the next Village Assembly. Participation in COSFOM is discussed in details in the Assembly. On the approval of the Assembly, the Chairman/ Village Chief conveys their willingness to participate in the COSFOM.

During the FPIC 1 process, which may consist of several meetings and visits, COSFOM's CDLOs will initiate a stakeholder assessment to inform the inclusive participation and ensure vulnerable groups have voice. More information and a sample stakeholder assessment can be found in COSFOM's ESMF. COSFOM will ensure and impress upon the VA for participation in the meeting by all section of the society in the village including women and other vulnerable groups. COSFOM personnel will work with the community to explore and investigate land and water use practices, the village settlements and their socio-economic condition and the environmental problems experienced and conduct a walk through to understand issues in the landscape.

Output/result: Village consent to participation in COSFOM

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (1) template completed, including documentation of:

- Agendas
- Records from meetings:
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- stakeholder analysis done by CDLOs
- Consent form (FPIC (1) record)

FPIC (2): WRCG formation and MoU for participation

Based on the stakeholder assessment conducted by the CDLOs under FPIC (1), it is established whom are eligible to be part of the WRCC, although the WRCC essentially consists of the village community. FPIC (2) involves the village formation or affirmation (where a suitable CBO already

exists) of the WRCG, which is the executive of the WRCC. As part of the WRCG formation, the WRCC adopts by-laws and a village grievance committee or use existing grievance structures (in accordance with the COSFOM requirements), which may refer issues to the PMU.

Following the village establishment of the WRCG, the WRCG prepares a MoU with COSFOM which outlines the project implementation and financing of activities. The MoU is shared with the WRCC for discussion and to obtain formal and written consent.

Output/result: Signed MoU

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (2) template completed, including documentation of:

- WRCG membership list
- WRCC membership list
- Grievance procedure for village
- WRCG by-laws
- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- MoU
- FPIC (2) consent record

FPIC (3): Entry point activities (EPA)

Entry Point Activities (EPAs) will be identified following the WRCG establishment and signing of the MoU between WRCGs and PMU. The WRCC will facilitate the attainment of FPIC to proceed with EPA activities. COSFOM officers will conduct environmental and social due diligence to manage any residual impact which may require mitigation, following the procedures set out in the ESMF.

Output/result: Consent on EPAs

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (3) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- EPA identification
- FPIC (3) consent record

FPIC (4): Livelihood Improvement Plan (LIP)

FPIC (4) starts out with a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), which will result in the establishment of a Livelihood Improvement Plan (LIP). The LIP may include various support measures that establish micro-enterprises or existing/new self-help groups that will provide economic empowerment to WRCG members. While the analytical work to establish the LIP is participatory, through the PRA, the LIP required formalisation of FPIC through engagement with the WRCG to proceed to receive monetary support from COSFOM.

Output/result: Consent on LIP activities

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (4) template completed, including documentation of:

- PRA exercise records (PRA report as per PRA Guideline)
- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- LIP
- FPIC (4) consent record

FPIC (5): Forest Management Plan (FMP)

Incorporating PRA results as well as through the joint development of Participatory Land Use Plan (PLUP) and appraisals for each village area, strategic forest management measures will be identified jointly by COSFOM and the WRCG with a focus on sustainable community forestry. The PLUP is supporting various measures, in this case the detailed activity plan related to Forest Management, but also for Stream Conservation and Restoration or Watershed, Soil and Moisture Conservation. Forest management activities for improved watershed management may include participatory community forest development, afforestation, improving secondary forests, riparian forest conservation buffer or stream bank stabilization sustainable jhum cultivation, and community nursery establishment.

A draft forest management plan will be presented to the WRCG to consult on livelihood measures and alternatives, and seek consensus on protective measures prior to obtaining community FPIC.

Output/result: Consent to Forest Management Plan

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (5) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- PLUP records as per PLUP guideline
- Forest Management Plan
- FPIC (5) consent record

FPIC (6): Stream conservation & restoration

Based on the PRA and PLUP results and field assessments by respective experts, strategic stream conservation and restoration activities will be identified jointly by COSFOM PMU and the WRCC. Investments can include (i) artificial rainwater harvesting works, (ii) trenching and pits, (iii) vegetation establishment (trees, hedges, fodder grasses), (iv) gully plugging and (v) recharge areas. Efforts may also include engineered designs for torrent control. COSFOM will only work on the headwaters under the direct control of communities.

A draft plan for strategic stream conservation and restoration will be presented to the WRCG to consult springshed protection and restoration as well as potential engineering measures, and seek consensus on protective measures prior to obtaining community FPIC.

Output/result: Consent to Stream conservation and restoration investments

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (6) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- Stream conservation and restoration investments
- FPIC (6) consent record

FPIC (7): Watershed, soil and moisture conservation

COSFOM may support, based on the PRA and PLUP, watershed, soil and moisture conservation which will fund conservation improvement on current jhum areas to conserve soils through contouring and terracing, staggered trenches. FPIC for watershed, soil and moisture conservation must be obtained from the current jhum cultivators as well as through the WRCG to have community consent to priority investments.

Output/result: Consent to Investments in water, soil and moisture conservation

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (7) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- Investments in water, soil and moisture conservation
- FPIC (7) consent record, which should include:
 - Community consent

- Consent from affected jhum cultivators (each individual/household)

FPIC (7): Watershed, soil and moisture conservation

COSFOM may support, based on the PRA and PLUP, watershed, soil and moisture conservation which will fund conservation improvement on current jhum areas to conserve soils through contouring and terracing, staggered trenches. FPIC for watershed, soil and moisture conservation must be obtained from the current jhum cultivators as well as through the WRCG to have community consent to priority investments.

Output/result: Consent to Investments in water, soil and moisture conservation

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (7) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- Investments in water, soil and moisture conservation
- FPIC (7) consent record, which should include:
 - Community consent
 - Consent from affected jhum cultivators (each individual/household)

FPIC (8): Village Micro Plan

All previous consultations and developed plans (PRA, LIP, PLUP, FMP, etc.) will ultimately result in a 3-year Village Micro Plan (VMP). The villagers have to give their consent to the final VMP, as well as to resulting annual work plans, to be jointly developed and implemented by WRCGs. Implementation includes an established regular monitoring and reporting system as well as development and monitoring of potential Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) or Environmental & Social Codes of Practice (ESCP) where required.

Output/result: Consent to 3-year VMP and annual work plans

Documents to be obtained: FPIC (8) template completed, including documentation of:

- Records from meetings:
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Attendance list
 - Photos and videos where relevant
- Annual work plans
- ESMP, ESCOP (where applicable)
- FPIC (8) consent record

Figure 3 Flow Chart on COSFOM FPIC Steps and Consultation Topics

FPIC steps	Consultation Topics		
FPIC 1 Orientation	Village Introduction to COSFOM's objectives	Village Consent to collaborate	PRA; Stakeholder Assessment
FPIC 2 MoU	Signing of MoU between WRCG & PMU	Affirmation of Community Grievance Mechanism	Formation of WRCG and WRCC and by-laws
FPIC 3 EPAs	Village Development Needs Identification - Entry Point Activities	PRA; Expected livelihood changes caused	PRA+PLUP; Assess Village Profile, forest products, springsheds...
FPIC 4 LIP	PLUP; Village Land Use Analysis with GIS and field verification	PRA; Identify potentially PAP and estimate impacts	Establish/ strengthen SHGs
FPIC 5 FMP	Identification of Community Forest and Forest Resources	Formation of FUG with forests delineation	Determine forest management/ forestry measures
FPIC 6 Stream Conservation/ restoration	Identification of Springsheds & Biodiversity hotspots	Strategic stream conservation /restoration activities	Engineering measures where needed
FPIC 7 Watershed, Soil & Moisture Conservation	Springshed development/ protection	Assessment of current <i>jhum</i> plots and land use for improvement	Conservation measures on current <i>jhum</i> plots
3-Year Village Micro Plan			
FPIC 8 VMP implementation	Village Micro Plan - consent on annual work plans	Establish regular Monitoring and Reporting	ESMP/ ESCOP where applicable

Annexes

Handouts

Annex 1: Template for recording FPIC

This record is maintained by the Community Development and Liaison Officers (CDLOs) in the PMU.

Name of village			
FPIC (1): COSFOM information and initial consultation to engage			
1a. Introductory meeting	Date	Time	Location
Agenda covered	☐ FPIC procedures ☐ COSFOM objectives ☐ COSFOM organization		☐ ESMF & CPF ☐ Grievance ☐ Other_____
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other_____
1b. Stakeholder analysis	Record of stakeholder analysis conducted:		
1c. Consent to participate - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other_____
Consent to engage obtained on (date):			
FPIC (2): WRCC formation and MoU for participation			
2a. WRCC participants	Record of community affirmation persons eligible to participate – andelect WRCC:		
2b. Meeting to elect WRCC	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other_____
Grievance structure	Attach record of community grievance procedure adopted		

2c. Meeting to affirm MoU w. COSFOM	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ MoU ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____
Consent to MoU obtained on (date):			
FPIC (3): Entry point activities			
3. Entry point activity discussion - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____
Consent to EPAs obtained on (date):			
FPIC (4): PRA, PLUP, LIP			
4a. PRA & PLUP	☐ PRA completed ☐ PLUP completed		
4b. LIP discussion - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____
Consent to LIP obtained on (date):			

FPIC (5): Forest Management Plan

5. Forest Management Plan discussion - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____

Consent to FMP obtained on (date):

FPIC (6): Stream conservation and restoration

6. Stream conservation and restoration discussion - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____

Consent to stream conservation and restoration obtained on (date):

FPIC (7): Water, soil and moisture conservation

7. Water, soil and moisture conservation discussion - meeting	Date	Time	Location
Records from meeting	☐ Agenda ☐ Attendance list ☐ Minutes ☐ Photos		☐ Video ☐ Other _____

Consent to water, soil and water conservation obtained (community) on (date):

Consent from all affected jhum cultivators obtained on (date):

FPIC (8): Village Micro Plan

8. Village Micro Plan discussion - meeting

Date

Time

Location

Records from meeting☐ Agenda☐ Attendance list☐ Minutes☐ Photos☐ Video☐ Other _____

Consent to Village Micro Plan obtained on (date):

Annex 2: Village Consent Form

_____ Village;

_____ District;

_____ Date:

This document is to verify that the residents of _____ Village,

_____ District have given their consent to _____

The Village decision regarding consent is acknowledged by the signatures below.

Signed by (print name):

the Village Authority of _____ Village,

_____ District

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Representative of District Forest Office (print name):

Signature: _____

Date: _____

District: _____

Annex 3: Template for Recording Attendance

To record the date, location and purpose of the meeting as well as attendance by villagers/WRCG members:

WRCG:		Place:		Date:
Topic/ Purpose of meeting:				
Name	Representing/membership	Contact details	Gender	Signature/affirmation of attendance

Total participants =

Total village population =

Signature by the village head _____

Annex 4: Village Consultation meeting Notes

District: _____

Village: _____

Date of visit: _____

Report Author: _____

General description of visit (number of people, organization, time of day and location, level of interest):

Decision on selected option to give consent:

Concerns raised and responses and additional actions required:

Other comments and observation:

Signature Reporter: _____

Date: _____

Annex 5: Grievance Form

Grievance Form		
Reference No (assigned by PMU):		
<i>Please enter the contact information of the complainant and grievance. This information will be dealt with confidentially.</i>		
Full Name		
Anonymous submission	☐	Complainant wants to remain anonymous
Please mark how the complainant wishes to be contacted (mail, telephone, e-mail).	☐ ☐	By Telephone (Please provide Telephone number): By E-mail (please provide E-Mail address): By Mail (Please provide mailing address):
Preferred Language for communication	☐ ☐ ☐	English Manipuri Other, please specify:
Description of Incident or Grievance:		
What happened? Where did it happen? Who did it happen to? What is the result of the problem?		
Date of Incident/Grievance:	☐ ☐ ☐	One time incident/grievance (date _____) Happened more than once (how many times? _____) On-going (currently experiencing problem)
What would the complainant like to see happen to resolve the problem?		
Suggested resolution:		
Final solution:		
Signed by complainant (where relevant):		
Signed by WRCC/DFO/PMU (closure of issue):		

Annex 6: Summary COSOFM Village Consultation Meetings to date

Village Profile					WRCG			WRCC			FPIC 1	FPIC 2	FPIC 3	FPIC 4		FPIC 5	FPIC 6	FPIC 7	FPIC 8
District	Village	Pop.	Total HH	HH Beneficiaries (WRCG members %)	Established (date)	M	F (%)	Disadvantaged (%)	Total	Tenure (term to)	General consent	MoU signed	EPA compl.	PLUP compl.	LIP compl.	FMP compl.	Stream conserv./re stor.	Water, soil & moisture conserv.	VMP compl.
Singda Sub-watershed																			
Kangpokpi	Konsakhul	350	71	47 (66)	07/07/2019	9	4 (31)	TBC	13	TBC	x	x	x	x					
Imphal Sub-watershed																			
Kangpokpi	Loungphou	400	90	60 (67)	15/09/2020	9	3 (27)	2 (18)	11	01/05/2022	x	x	x	x		x			
	Maohing	1250	189	59 (31)	26/09/2019	6	5 (45)	TBC	11	15/01/2021	x	x	x	x					
Thoubal Sub-watershed																			
Ukhrul	Choithar	1392	258	182 (71)	05/02/2020	11	3 (21)	TBC	14	03/10/2020	x	x	x	x	x				
	Langdang	1135	207	123 (59)	05/02/2020	13	2 (13)	TBC	15	16/01/2020	x	x	x	x					
	Shirui	TBC	TBC	196 ()	26/02/2020	10	5 (33)	TBC	15	TBC	x	x	x	x					



COMMUNITY BASED SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FOR WATER RESOURCE CONSERVATION

List of related Technical guidelines

- Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) Technical guideline
- ...
- ...

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