



INSTRUCTIONS

**APPLICATION OF THE ESSA TOOL FOR THE
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING
OF THE CONCEPT NOTE**

E&S RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS FOR GLF-FUNDED PROJECTS

GLF's approach to E&S risk management involves comprehensive E&S screening and evaluation of all potential grant-funded projects. This process entails identifying, evaluating, and managing E&S risks and impacts to ensure appropriate mitigation and management measures are put in place and implemented to avoid, minimise and mitigate risks and impacts to the extent possible. The identification of these risks is carried out at the beginning of the process, **during the preparation of the project's Concept Note**.

As part of the initial GLF grant application process, during the Concept Note preparation process, all prospective projects undergo an **Environmental and Social Screening process**. This screening helps to identify potential risks and impacts and determines the proposed project risk category.

Grantees screen the activities set out in their Concept Note against GLF's Exclusion List and conduct the Environmental and Social (E&S) Screening using the *Environmental and Social Screening and Assessment (ESSA) Tool*. After conducting the screening, Grantees assign a preliminary E&S category (see subsection below) and include a summary of the E&S Screening conclusions in their project Concept Note (Annex 2 of the Concept Note).

The ESSA tool is an Excel-based integrated tool that supports the application of the ESMS to GLF-funded projects during the concepts and proposals preparation, evaluation and approval phases. It also facilitates preparing the basic information for monitoring projects' environmental and social performance during the implementation and closure phases.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISK CATEGORIZATION

All GLF grant-funded projects are categorized into one of three categories presented below, depending on their level of risk¹.

Table 1: E&S Risk Categories

| Risk | Category | Examples |
|------|--|--|
| High | <p>Category A:</p> <p>Projects with the potential for significant adverse risks and/or impacts that are diverse, sensitive, irreversible, or unprecedented.</p> <p>High risk projects will not be considered further by GLF.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale industrial plants. • Large resettlement. • Large infrastructure projects. • Projects with serious SGBV issues |

¹ It should be noted that GLF does not provide financing for Category A projects.

| Risk | Category | Examples |
|----------|---|---|
| Moderate | <p>Category B:</p> <p>Projects with the potential for causing limited adverse risks and/or impacts that are generally site-specific, few in number, easily addressed through mitigation measures, and largely reversible.</p> <p>Additionally, in specific cases, this category includes projects that may have potentially significant risks or impacts or heightened potential for adverse social and environmental risks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community based natural resource management. • Habitat restoration. • Construction of small-scale infrastructure. |
| Low | <p>Category C:</p> <p>Projects with minimal or negligible environmental or social risks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training. • Monitoring programs. • Studies and research projects. |

The level of risk assigned during stage 1 of the application process (Concept Note) helps to determine the requirement and the level of the E&S Assessment and the type of safeguard instruments needed for each project which must be developed during stage 2 of the application process (preparation of a full proposal).

- **Category A (High Risk):** projects identified as high risk are not eligible for GLF funding.
- **Category B (Moderate Risk):** projects identified as moderate risk require an E&S assessment tailored to the specific risks and impacts identified during screening. GLF may offer financial support for these assessments.
- **Category C (Low Risk):** projects deemed low-risk after screening are exempt from a **full** E&S assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT TOOL (ESSA)

The Environmental and Social Screening and Assessment (ESSA) tool is an **Excel**-based integrated tool that supports the application of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) to Galápagos Life Fund (GLF)-funded projects during the **Concept Note preparation phase (E&S Screening)** and the proposal preparation phase (E&S Assessment).

The Excel-based ESSA tool for the Concept Note comprises three sections, each in a separate Tab:

1. Background Information
2. Exclusion List
3. Environmental and Social Screening of Concept Notes

Each Tab contains protected spaces that cannot be modified by the user, shaded in pale grey, and spaces intended for the user to include specific information, shaded in light blue. The Tabs feed information from one to the other to avoid repetitive work and, more importantly, digitization mistakes. Each Tab Also contains instructions on how to complete it, presented in light green shaded boxes.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This sheet contains the project's background information. This is the first section to be filled in by the Grantees. It includes the following elements:

- A. TITLE: A short project title.
 - B. NAME OF APPLICANT: Name of the Grantee presenting the Concept Note or the Project Proposal to GLF.
 - C. PARTNER ORGANIZATION: Any partner organization participating in this project.
 - D. PROJECT LOCATION: Province (most of the time, Galapagos) and Canton.
 - E. PROJECT COORDINATES (WGS84): Geographical coordinates of the project
 - F. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET (all sources): Include the total project budget.
 - G. TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTED TO GLF: The amount requested to GLF.
 - H. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING: Organizations participating in the project financing, if any.
 - I. PROJECT SUMMARY: Project summary of no more than 200 words.
 - J. PROJECT OBJECTIVES: Project objectives with no more than 100 words.
 - K. PROJECT OUTCOMES: Project outcomes with no more than 100 words.
 - L. PROJECT MAIN ACTIVITIES: Main project activities with no more than 200 words.
- OTHER INFORMATION:
 - Use the drop-down menu in the blue-shaded cells to select the grant category for the project from the following options:
 - Small grant (up to us\$100,000)
 - Medium grant (up to us\$250,000), and
 - Large grant (over us\$250,000).
 - Use the drop-down menu in the blue-shaded cells to select the project duration in months (up to 36 months).

2. EXCLUSION LIST

This Tab presents the GLF Exclusion List, which includes activities that GLF does not finance or support in any capacity. Grantees must realize that GLF does not provide financing or support for projects involving any listed activities. If Grantees answer [YES] to any of the questions, their proposed project will not be considered for further assessment and will not be eligible for funding. Grantees should ensure **to answer all 17 questions** when filling out the form.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING OF CONCEPT NOTES

This tool includes **23 screening questions about the Concept Note**, each **requiring a YES or NO answer**, and provides specific guidance for each question. The last question refers to the Concept Note's risk-based classification. Columns J and K are reserved for GLF review of the Grantee's screening.