[Project/Area] Context Analysis

Understanding a context for project design

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This template includes suggested questions to answer to provide a good understanding of a project’s context. This can be useful for developing a project design, funding proposals, and sharing with new colleagues and partners who will be involved in delivering the work.

For all of your answers, it is useful to record the evidence used to inform that answer – whether it’s from a team’s own data collection, practitioner experience, local and indigenous knowledge, or grey and scientific literature.

# Summary

*In brief, outline what we know already regarding the following questions.*

* *What species, habitats or ecosystems do we want to conserve OR what themes are we focusing on to further conservation efforts?*
* *When site based, where specifically are we focusing our work?*
* *Why is it important that we do this work?*
* *What are the main problems to be addressed?*
* *How does this align with the Fauna & Flora strategy?*

# Project Vision

*What is the desired state that we are working to achieve in the next ten years?*

# Biodiversity Context

* *What are the priority species? What do we know about the? E.g. number, diet/pollination, reproductive age, behavioural traits, preferred location/habitats, cultural/livelihood value, protection status & threats*
* *What are the priority habitats or ecosystems? What do we know about them? E.g. habitat/ecosystem features, cultural & livelihood use, tenure & jurisdictional* *boundaries, protection status, ecosystem services, & threats, are there existing land use plans and concession zonations*

# Political & Legal Context

* *Is the political environment stable and supportive of conservation?*
* *What policies could support or hinder our work?*
* *What customary, national and international laws and regulations are relevant to our work?*
* *Are there any changes to legislation in the pipeline over the next 10 years?*
* *Is there an opportunity for the project to influence policies and laws or be involved in their development?*
* *How effectively are laws enforced? What enforcement powers do any rangers we might work with have?*
* *Do we have a relationship with all relevant government and enforcement agencies? I*
* *Are there any*

# Social & Economic Context

* *Are there different ethnic groups and indigenous people within the population that could affect or be affected by the project?* 
  + *If so, do these groups have different levels of political influence or values and interests in the environment?*
* *Who are the local rightsholders[[1]](#footnote-1) and resource users?* 
  + *What are their main livelihood activities? Differentiate by sex, age, wealth status, location & season if possible*
* *What are the tenure rights of local communities to land and / or natural resources in the area affected by the project (also consider the national legislation on land rights and any gaps in that which we would need to consider)?*
* *How are community decisions made, including in relation to natural resources, are women and men equally represented and able to influence decisions?*
* *If known, does / will the project involve conservation measures that restrict the access of women and men in local communities to land and natural resources?*
* *What industries are important in the project area and surroundings?*
* *How stable is the economy? What economic factors (nationally & internationally) could impact the project?*
* *Are there infrastructure projects in the pipeline that could impact the project?*

# Stakeholders

* *Which stakeholders[[2]](#footnote-2) are most likely to influence our work either positively or negatively?*
* *Which stakeholders are most likely to be affected by our work either positively or negatively?*
* *Which stakeholders do we need to engage with for our work to succeed?*

# Threats

* *What are the direct threats stopping your vision becoming a reality?*
* *What are the underlying causes or drivers of these threats?*
* *Who is involved in driving / causing these threats? What are their motivations and barriers to change?*

# Implementer Context

* *Who will be implementing the work on the ground? If working in partnership, what role does each partner have? Is there an existing MoU in place? Has partner due diligence been completed (if needed)?*
* *Are we building on existing work? If so, what lessons have we learnt? What knowledge have we gained?*
* *What are our strengths & weaknesses? Think about reputation, expertise, experience, connections & networks, funding. How do we build on / improve these?*
* *Are there opportunities outside our team/partnership that could help us realise our vision? Are there constraints outside our team/partnership that could hinder us realising our vision? Can we overcome these?*
* *Are there other conservation actors working in this context and on the same issues? What are they doing? Could they (or others) deliver components of work that we aren’t well placed to?*
* *Are there known potential sustainable financing opportunities for our project? Have any been trialled so far? How has work been funded to date?  Are there funding gaps?*
* *What is the operational situation for the implementers (whether Fauna & Flora or partners)?* 
  + *What policies and procedures are in place (finance, HR, Health, safety & security, disciplinary, procurement & recruitment….)?*
  + *What finance systems, accounts, and auditing history are there?*
  + *What is the IT set up & internet connectivity like?*
  + *Is there a register of assets?*
  + *What taxes need to be paid?*
  + *What legal contracts are currently in place? Is there access to legal expertise?*
  + *Does infrastructure present challenges for operations?*
  + *Is legal registration needed?*

1. rightsholder is defined as: individuals and groups who have legal or customary rights to land and/or natural resources within or around the areas that we work. In some contexts, it is important to make a clear distinction between stakeholders and rightsholders. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A stakeholder is anyone who can affect or be affected by your work, may place demands on you, or have an interest in your work. The stakeholders will vary from project to project and might include: government agencies, NGOs and international NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), private sector organisations, research institutions and universities, the media, local stakeholders (e.g. smaller-holders, resource-users, co-operatives etc.) or vulnerable groups. You will already have identified some stakeholders within the political, legal, social and economic analysis already conducted, and there may be others as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)